

Ephesians. The Identity of the Church that Overcomes

Part 25: Jesus broke down our walls and now we are one

Houses of Light Church • April 13, 2025 • Pastor Netz Gomez & Ilse Marquez

Focus: Ephesians 2:14-18

“For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.” Ephesians 2:14-18

I. Introduction

- A. In the verses before this (Eph. 2:11-13) we learned about how we used to be far away from citizenship and the covenants of promise — we had no hope and no God. We were brought near by the blood of Jesus and now we are no longer strangers, we have a God!
Ephesians 2:19 - *“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God...”*
- B. Today, we will see how Paul continues to explain this blessing, where now Jews and gentiles can be one. The division between people groups and between people and God has been removed because we are reconciled at the cross of Christ. He proclaimed peace both among people and between people and God.

II. Jews and Gentiles united

- A. v. 14 - *“For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one...”* — God calls for this union between Jews and gentiles to create a new person, one body. When God united us to Christ by faith both Jews and gentiles become a new person. God sees us as believers as one body — where all the parts work together and none can be despised.
1 Corinthians 12:14-21 - *For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you...”*
- B. Christ is the head of this new body. While the church matures and becomes more united under the truth, we experience fulness by clinging to Him as the head. It is no longer about our own ideas or customs, but about following the head which is Christ.
Ephesians 3:6 - *“This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.”*
- C. We are no longer separate individuals. We are members of the body of Christ. Paul highlights this kind of unity when he explains what God accomplished between Jews and gentiles because there was a lot of prejudice and racism between the two groups. We can see it clearly when Peter goes to Cornelius’ (a gentile soldier’s) house.
Acts 10:28 - *And he said to them, “You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean.”*
- D. Jews were struggling with this racial prejudice because they had learned not to associate with any person of another nation, this was the wall of hostility that existed.
Acts 11:1-2 - *Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.”*

III. How did God accomplish this unity?

- A. "by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances" - The shedding of the blood of Jesus and His death on the cross resulted in abolishing the law.
Romans 7:4-6 - *"Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code."*
- B. When Christ died and by faith we also died with Him, this meant that our punishment was paid and the law has no hold over us. We have been forgiven which means we died to the law and therefore it is no longer the medium through which we reconcile with God.
Galatians 2:19-21 - *"For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose."*
- C. If you believe in Christ you have been justified and reconciled with God. You are not justified by keeping the law. Once the law is abolished both Jews and Gentiles need to do the same things to get right with God.
Romans 10:4 - *"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."*
- D. When Christ poured out His blood, the law was satisfied for everyone who is in Christ. We are reconciled with God in this way and God levels the ground between us and all of humanity — we are no longer in competition, we are in reconciliation.

IV. Christ is our peace with God and one another

- A. v. 17 - *"he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near..."* — Christ brought and proclaimed peace when He came to the earth! This is a message for everyone so all of us can have access to the Father by One Spirit!
- B. This is the message Christ carried, first to His own people and then expanded to all of humanity. Paul was likely referring to Isaiah's prophecy: **Isaiah 57:17-19** - *"Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain I was angry, I struck him; I hid my face and was angry, but he went on backsliding in the way of his own heart. I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and his mourners, creating the fruit of the lips. Peace, peace, to the far and to the near," says the Lord, "and I will heal him."*
1. God promised to heal, shepherd and counsel anyone who's gotten far away, this is what Christ did: **John 20:21-22** - *Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."*
 2. It is through Christ, His death, and His shed blood that we both have access in one Spirit. If we are going to go to God, we must go together or not at all. If in your heart you are saying, "I'm going to go to God, and I don't know why I don't like the others who enter through Christ," you most likely will not have access. It's not just you and God, but God is our Father, and we are His children, and we approach Him with confidence.
- C. This was what the Father planned from the beginning and carried it out through the work of Christ.

V. We all have access to the Father by the same Spirit

- A. The Spirit is the presence of God within us. He has sealed us and is the guarantee of what we will enjoy forever.
Ephesians 1:13 - *"In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,"*
Ephesians 2:22 - *"In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit."*

- B. We are already a dwelling place for God because He has given us His Spirit. We are in Him, and He is in us. The Holy Spirit is the Person of the Trinity through which we know God. If we know Him, we can draw near to Him, experience Christ, and know the love of God that surpasses human capacity.

Ephesians 3:16-19 - *“that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- 1. Why are Jews and Gentiles now able to be one? What does this mean for us?**
- 2. How did Jesus accomplish bringing peace between us, God, and each other?**
- 3. Have you noticed any racial prejudice you carry? According to what we’ve learned to day, what are some steps you can take to walk in unity with the body of Christ no matter what?**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Prophetic Ministry: Wednesday, April 16 at 7:00 p.m. • Healing Ministry: Thursday, April 17 at 7:00 p.m. Sign up in www.heartbeatprayerroom.la
2. Resurrection Day: 'Amazing Love' Join us and bring a friend for a special time on Sunday, April 20, as we celebrate the miracles of Jesus.
3. Do you want to be baptized? We invite you to attend our preparation class on Thursday, April 24 at 7:00 PM in the overflow. Baptisms will take place during the service on April 27. Sign up at www.housesoflight.org.