

Ephesians 2:11-22  
Not About Jews, Not About Gentiles—  
Just About Jesus

“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in you, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You have sent Me. The glory that You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one even as We are one, I in them and You in Me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that You sent Me and loved them even as You loved Me.” (John 17:20-23)

Introduction: There was a recent poll taken among young people not too long ago. It only asked one question, “What do you want to be?” The overwhelming response? Famous! That was the most popular answer. It’s not really surprising in a world obsessed with “selfies”. But this is not the way of the cross.

Paul now begins to share with the Ephesians the purpose of their having been saved—and it is not so they can make much of themselves. And it isn’t so the Jews can make much of themselves either.

***Ephesians 2: 11-12, “Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands, remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.”***

In light of all that Paul has just written to these believers, he wants them to realize why there was such a division between Gentiles and Jews.

1. According to the Jews, they were considered complete strangers to the things of God by the Jewish community.
2. According to the Jews, they were closed off from Christ because they had no claim to the promises and covenants that had been given to the Jews.
3. According to the Jews, they had no reason to believe there was any hope for them to know God.

***Ephesians 2:13, “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”***

There it is again, “But God...”

1. But no matter how great their distance was from God, the blood of Jesus had brought them near.

***Ephesians 2:14-16, “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.”***

In these three verses Paul strips away all the “individuality” of the Gentiles and the Jews by pointing them to the work of Jesus on the cross. Paul gives us six important descriptions of that work.

1. Jesus’ broken body is the only true source of peace between those who are at odds with each other.
2. Jesus’ broken body brings down the walls of opposing sides.
3. Jesus’ broken body puts an end to the impossible demands of keeping the regulations required by the law.
4. Jesus’ broken body brings about the one new man or body.
5. Jesus’ broken body is all that can reconcile both Jew and Gentile to God.
6. Jesus’ broken body destroys enmity.

***Ephesians 2:17, “And He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.”***

1. The message of peace that Jesus preaches is meant for both Jew and Gentile; there is no other way to peace with God for anyone but through the cross.

***Ephesians 2:18, “For through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.”***

1. Only by the finished work of Jesus can we receive the Holy Spirit who puts us in contact with the Father.

***Ephesians 2:19-22, “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”***

Paul gives both the Gentiles and the Jews their new identity.

1. For the Gentiles, he gives them the identity of citizenship and family members of God’s household.
2. For the Jews, he gives them the identity of being the temple rather than going to the temple.
3. For both, he reminds them that the message of the gospel is the foundation that the apostles and prophets preached.
4. For both, he reminds them that Jesus is the cornerstone of the gospel.  
(The **cornerstone** (or **foundation stone**) concept is derived from the first stone set in the

construction of a masonry [foundation](#), important since all other stones will be set in reference to this stone, thus determining the position of the entire [structure](#).)

5. For both, he reminds them they are being fashioned into a dwelling place for God's Spirit.

Conclusion: Frank and I went to two different churches this past Sunday. What a picture the Lord gave me of the "one man" or "one temple"! Even though both services had different personalities, the unity or oneness of belief was so apparent. And all because the focus was completely on Jesus—the Cornerstone, to the praise of His glory!

Digging Deeper: Read Isaiah 32:18. How does it compare to these scriptures from Ephesians?