

**"United in One Body"**

**Ephesians 2:11-22**

**Part 7**

**Introduction:** The last time we were in our study of Ephesians was March 8<sup>th</sup> so for that reason I need to do a short review of where we have been.

The book of Ephesians was written to a church that consisted mostly of *Gentile* believers. For that reason, Paul is teaching them theology to ground them in the Truth of God's Word. He started this letter by taking them back to eternity past to explain to them how God had predestined that there would be a bride for His Son known as the church. He then went on to explain the blessings which they had **IN CHRIST**. Chapter 1 of Ephesians was written to tell the *Gentile* believers and us who we are **IN CHRIST**.

1. **Blessed with all spiritual riches in Christ.**

**Ephesians 1:3**

2. **Made holy and blameless.**

**Ephesians 1:4**

3. **Placed into God's royal family.**

**Ephesians 1:5**

4. **Accepted in Christ.**

**Ephesians 1:6**

5. **Redeemed by His blood.**

**Ephesians 1:7**

6. **Forgiven of all our sin debt.**

**Ephesians 1:7**

7. **Blessed with an Eternal Hope.**

**Ephesians 1:8-10**

8. **Sealed with the Holy Spirit**

**Ephesians 1:13-14**

Then as we moved on to chapter 2 Paul reminded his readers of where they had come from and how God had saved them by grace through faith. He explained to them they would be displays of God's grace for all eternity.

### **Ephesians 2:7**

<sup>7</sup> *That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

Paul went on to explain to them they were God's workmanship created in Christ unto good works.

### **Ephesians 2:10**

<sup>10</sup> *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

Now, we must understand that many of the Gentile believers would have felt intimidated because of how they were looked at by the Jews. There was racism that existed in Paul's day and it was between the Jew and the Gentile. The Jews looked at the Gentiles as the outcasts of society.

### **Notice Ephesians 2:11-12**

Paul then taught these believers that IN CHRIST they were new creations. He taught them that IN CHRIST the divisions were gone and that all who are IN CHRIST are one.

### **Notice Ephesians 13-18**

Now the Gentiles had peace with God because of the finished work of Jesus Christ. They had access to the Father by the Holy Spirit. They were part of a body that had not existed before the day of Pentecost.

This now brings us to where we are in our study.

#### **I. We have a New Family**

### **Notice Ephesians 2:19**

Now that we are saved, we are no longer strangers and foreigners but now we are fellow citizens with ALL THE SAINTS of God, and we are now members of the household of God.

Let me explain what this means and what it does NOT mean.

#### **a. What it means.**

We now are in the same family as all the Old Testament saints and the New Testament saints. All the saints from Adam to the last person saved makes up the family of God and

we are now part of that family. This would have been so important to many who read this letter because they had been abandoned by their earthly families because of their faith.

**Application:**

You may have been rejected by your family because of your faith and you might even be considered an outcast because of what you believe. So, in this life you do not have any family that embraces you. But I can tell you that you have a Father that loves you with an everlasting love and you hold a very special place in His family. You may not be as popular as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Daniel, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Paul but you are just as important as they are. They are your spiritual brothers and we are all of the household of God.

**Notice Ephesians 2:19 again.**

We are no longer STRANGERS and FOREIGNERS. Let me break these two titles down to help you to understand the importance of each.

If I am a **stranger** in a town or a city then I will not know where things are located, and neither will I know the resources of the place I am in. Strangers are ignorant of many things. When we were unsaved, we too were strangers and we were ignorant of God. We did not know of His love and all that He was offering to sinners. We were ignorant of the greatest sacrifice that was ever given. We were ignorant of the peace which God wanted us to enjoy. We were ignorant of the riches one could have IN CHRIST. As strangers we knew nothing of God.

**1 Corinthians 2:12-14**

<sup>12</sup> *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; **that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.***

<sup>13</sup> *Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

<sup>14</sup> *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

If I am a **foreigner**, I am different than a stranger. As a foreigner I can live in a town or a city and I can know a great deal about the place I am in. I may live as a foreigner in a certain place for years but as a foreigner I have no rights. I live on a passport and I have no birth certificate that declares I am a citizen as born in that land, so I am an alien.

**Application:**

This describes many who are in the church today. They have been attending for years, they know the hymns, they are familiar with many of the verses in the Bible. They may even serve in the church in some manner. They may have been raised in a Christian family. But they have never been born again into the family of God. They are foreigners.

But when we are saved, we are no longer strangers and we are no longer foreigners. We have all the rights as the other children of God.

Now we are fellow citizens with the saints. We now have a new citizenship.

### Philippians 3:20

<sup>20</sup> **For our conversation is in heaven;** from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

The word "conversation" here means "citizenship". The idea is that when we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior, we are then made citizens of heaven. This world is not our home. We are just temporary residents here. There is something far better that awaits us one day.

### John 14:1-3

*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

<sup>2</sup> *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

<sup>3</sup> *And if **I go and prepare a place for you,** I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

### 1 Corinthians 2:9

<sup>9</sup> *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, **the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.***

**We now have an eternal home that far exceeds our imagination and we have a new family that of which we shall fellowship with for all eternity.**

#### b. What it does NOT mean.

This does not mean that we inherit the blessings promised to Israel. Paul makes a clear distinction in this passage. He is talking about a NEW BODY of believers that have never existed before. We are separate from Israel. We do not become Israel or become a Jew when we are saved.

**Galatians 3:28**

*<sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

## II. **We are a New Establishment**

Paul now goes on to describe the church as a great building. Paul is about to show us that as a family we are closely knit together.

**Notice Ephesians 2:20**

Here we see the idea that the church is a great building. There is much to see within this verse.

### 1. **The church started with the Apostles.**

This verse makes it very clear that the church did not exist in the Old Testament for the church is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and the prophets. These are not the Old Testament prophets, but they are the New Testament prophets. The order of mention here tells us they are New Testament prophets. They are not mentioned before the Apostles.

### 2. **There is no longer a need for Apostles and prophets.**

There are some people who teach that there are still Apostles and prophets today, but this verse helps us to understand that is not so. We are the stones that make up the building UPON the foundation.

When building a house or a building of any kind, there is only one foundation constructed to build upon. Once the foundation is built there are no longer a need for foundation builders. It is then time for house builders.

The Apostles and the prophets were used to lay the foundation and now that it has been built there is no longer a need for them. Thus, there are no Apostles and prophets today.

The church was built upon these men. It was the teaching of the Apostles which the early church followed because they had no New Testament Bible.

**Acts 2:42**

*<sup>2</sup> And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

God gifted the TRUE Apostles so the church could recognize the false apostles.

**2 Corinthians 12:12**

<sup>12</sup> Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

The foundation has been established and we are now built upon this foundation.

**Notice Ephesians 2:20 again.**

Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone. The chief cornerstone was the first stone that was placed in the foundation building. It was the stone which was used to align all the other stones. It was used to keep everything square and straight. The cornerstone kept everything in line.

The early church followed the Apostle's doctrine and the Apostles received their teaching from the Chief Cornerstone.

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-15**

<sup>13</sup> But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

<sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

<sup>15</sup> For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

Today, as the building upon the foundation of the Apostles we must be sure to conform our lives to the Word of God. We must be kept in line by the Chief Cornerstone.

**Notice Ephesians 2:21**

Here we see that each of us has been fitted together in the body of Jesus Christ.

**Illustration:**

Years ago, I built a stone chimney on our home. I took my truck up to the mountain and I gathered normal looking stones. I brought them back and I cut them with a hammer and a chisel, and I fitted each one into its place. I purchased mortar and sand and over an entire summer I built a stone structure.

This is exactly what God has done and is doing. He has taken Jews and Gentiles and He fits them into the building of the body of Jesus Christ.

This verse also tells us the building IS GROWING unto a holy temple. This means God is growing His church today.

**Acts 16:14**

<sup>14</sup> *Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.*

God is taking from the Gentiles today a people for His name. He is growing His church in number and in maturity.

**Notice Ephesians 2:22**

The church/body of Christ is the dwelling place of God today. He lives within each one of us who are saved.

**Conclusion:**

The Gentiles who were viewed as outcasts could now see how important they were as believers. God lived within them and they had the responsibility to live in a way that others could see Him.

The same is true for us also.

**2 Corinthians 4:8-11**

<sup>8</sup> *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;*

<sup>9</sup> *Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;*

<sup>10</sup> *Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.*

<sup>11</sup> *For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.*