

Ephesians 2:11-22



Part I: SEATED

YES, NO & MAYBE

1. There are some things about me that are quite different from everyone else in this room.
2. God would rather us be united than peculiar.
3. As church members, we can bring peace into our community.
4. We do a great job at our church of making outsiders feel like one of us.
5. God wants us to continually change and upgrade everything that we do at church to incorporate outsiders.

DIG DEEPER

« What are some of the things that are distinguishably different between us and those who are not Christians?

➤ **READ Ephesians 2:11-22 (NLT)**

*11 Don't forget that you Gentiles used to be **outsiders**. You were called "uncircumcised heathens" by the Jews, who were proud of their circumcision, even though it affected only their bodies and not their hearts. 12 In those days you were living **apart** from Christ. You were **excluded from citizenship** among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope. 13 But now you have been **united with Christ Jesus**. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.*

*14 For **Christ himself has brought peace** to us. He **united Jews and Gentiles** into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the **wall of hostility** that separated us. 15 He did this by ending the system of law with its commands and regulations. **He made peace** between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself **one new people** from the two groups. 16 Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God **by means of his death** on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death.*

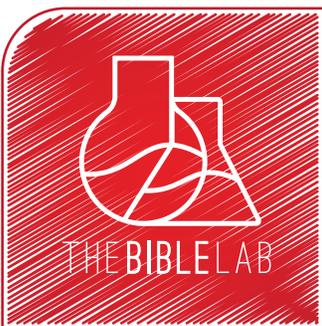
*17 He brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were far away from him, and peace to the Jews who were near. 18 **Now all of us can come to the Father** through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.*

*19 So now you Gentiles are **no longer strangers and foreigners**. You are **citizens** along with all of God's holy people. You are **members of God's family**. 20 Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. 21 We are **carefully joined together** in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. 22 Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.*

» **outsiders**

• (Vs. 11) - In an environment where there were religious and racial tensions between Jews and Gentiles, the Church was to live and model radical unity. This physical difference between Jews and Gentiles affected every area of their lives. A great social and spiritual boundary existed between them.

« What are some of the challenges we face today as we strive for unity? Who might be considered outsiders in our present day?



DIG DEEPER...CONTINUED

• (Vs. 12) **The Gentiles lacked 5 privileges:**

1) They were separate from (lit., “without”) Christ not only personally (true also of many Jews) but also in that they had no national hope of the Messiah.

2) They were excluded from citizenship in Israel. They did not belong to the theocratic state of Israel (cf. Rom. 9:4). The word “excluded” is *apēllotriōme noi*, “alienated” or “estranged.” It is used only two other times (Eph. 4:18; Col. 1:21).

3) They were foreigners to the covenants of the promise (cf. Eph. 3:6). They were deprived of direct participation in God’s covenants and thus had no hope of future glory and blessing as Israel did.

4) The Gentiles were without hope. Unlike Israel they had no expectation of a personal Messiah-Deliverer and the Messianic Age.

5) They were without God (atheoi, “apart from God”) in the world. The Gentiles were in a desperate situation. They had no meaning, hope, purpose, or direction in life.

« What do verses 13 to 16 say that God did in order to undo the Gentile’s lack of privileges?

• (Vs. 15) **one new man out of two** - The word “new” (*kainon*) means new or fresh in character or quality rather than new in the sense of recent in time (*neos*).

« Why do you think that unity is such a consistent concern for God? How can He command us to be “peculiar” and united at the same time?

« (Vs. 16) **ending hostility** - Christ had two purposes in ending the hostility. The first purpose was to create in Himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace within mankind. Christ’s second purpose was to reconcile both Jewish and Gentile believers to Himself in ... one body (cf. 3:6). Ultimately, God wanted to bring peace between the humans so that then they could also experience peace between mankind and God .

« What does this say about God’s blueprint for the church?

• (Vs. 19) **from strangers & foreigners to members of God’s family** -

« How is this desire of God different from how He is portrayed in 1) church; 2) entertainment media; and 3) politics?

• (Vs. 21) **joined together** - The participle translated “is joined together” is *synarmologoumenē*, used only here and in 4:16. It denotes that the various parts of the building are skillfully fitted to each other, not haphazardly thrown together. This structure rises to become (lit., “continually grows [pres. tense] into”) a holy temple in the Lord. This indicates that the church is a living and growing organism, as new believers are included in this temple’s superstructure.

« What do you think this methodology reveals about God’s character here?

MY PRAYER...

1. What are some of my challenges as I strive for the unity that God is calling us to?
2. As a Gentile, what privileges is God bringing into my life?
3. What new aspect of God’s character does He want me to know?



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