

Ephesians 2:11-19 by Wayne Barber

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Ephesians 2:11-22: GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD

by Dr. Wayne Barber

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Let's remind ourselves of the theme so far in this book. Verse 9 of chapter 1 says, "He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him." In verse 11 we find, "we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose." Verse 13 says, "you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise." What an awesome salvation! So in chapter 1, Paul, a converted Jew wants these believers in Ephesus, converted Gentiles, to understand the depth and the awesomeness of their salvation.

In chapter 2 he wants them to understand they had nothing to do with it. It was all God's idea. In 2:1-3 he shows that they were totally helpless, dead in their trespasses and in their sins. If they were dead in their trespasses and in their sins, we are dead in our trespasses and in our sins. In verses 4-10, he shows them that grace, the grace of God, is what did it all for them. Look at verse 10. He is basically saying they are made in heaven by the grace of God. Verse 10 says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." It could be translated, "of Him we are the product." God made you and me. No man can pat himself on the back for his salvation. It's the grace of God.

Well, now he begins in verse 11 to show them that the Jew who is a converted believer and the Gentile who is converted have been made one in Jesus Christ. This is a beautiful truth, but sometimes you read through and just miss it. Let's read verse 11 through the end of the chapter to catch the whole flow of what he says here (Ed note: all underlined words link to definitions & #'s in parentheses link to tense, voice, mood of verbs)

"11 [Therefore remember](#) (5720) that [formerly](#) you, the [Gentiles](#) in the [flesh](#), who are [called](#) (5746) ["Uncircumcision"](#) by the [so-called](#) (5746) ["Circumcision,"](#) which is [performed](#) in the [flesh](#) by [human hands](#) -- 12 remember (5713) that you were at that [time separate](#) from [Christ](#), [excluded](#) (5772) from the [commonwealth](#) of [Israel](#), and [strangers](#) to the [covenants](#) of [promise](#), [having](#) (5723) [no hope](#) and [without God](#) in the [world](#). 13 But [now](#) in [Christ Jesus](#) you [who formerly](#) were (5752) [far off](#) have [been](#) (5675) [brought near](#) by the [blood](#) of [Christ](#). 14 For He [Himself](#) is (5748) our [peace](#), who [made](#) (5660) [both](#) groups into [one](#) and [broke down](#) (5660) the [barrier](#) of the [dividing wall](#), 15 by [abolishing](#) (5660) in His [flesh](#) the [enmity](#), which is the [Law](#) of [commandments](#) contained in [ordinances](#), [so](#) that in [Himself](#) He might [make](#) (5661) the [two](#) into [one new man](#), thus [establishing](#) (5723) [peace](#), 16 and might [reconcile](#) them [both](#) in [one body](#) to [God through](#) the [cross](#), by it having [put](#) to [death](#) (5660) the [enmity](#). 17 AND HE [CAME](#) (5631) AND [PREACHED](#) (5668) [PEACE](#) TO YOU [WHO](#) WERE [FAR AWAY](#), AND [PEACE](#) TO [THOSE](#) WHO WERE [NEAR](#); 18 for [through](#) Him we [both have](#) (5719) our [access](#) in [one Spirit](#) to the [Father](#). 19 [So then](#) you are (5748) [no longer strangers](#) and [aliens](#), but you are (5748) [fellow citizens](#) with the [saints](#), and are of [God's household](#), 20 having been [built](#) (5685) on the [foundation](#) of the [apostles](#) and [prophets](#), [Christ Jesus Himself being](#) (5752) the [corner](#) stone, 21 in [whom](#) the [whole building](#), being [fitted together](#), (5746) is [growing](#) into a [holy temple](#) in the [Lord](#), 22 in [whom](#) you [also](#) are being [built together](#) (5743) into a [dwelling](#) of [God](#) in the [Spirit](#).

Paul is saying, "You Jews, you have to come through Christ. You Gentiles, you have to enter in through Christ. The two of you now, in Christ, have been made one." I wonder how many of us really grasp the significance of this. You know, if you don't understand the history behind the Gentile nations and where Israel came from, then you don't really understand the significance of how powerful this truth really is. We have a Gentile mentality, as if we deserved it and as if God immediately came right to us. We don't seem to understand we are the late comers. We were the ones far off that the blood of Jesus now has drawn near. Sometimes when you study Scripture it is good to do some historical studies to better understand what the author is saying. So, if you will give me that privilege, in 2:11, what does he mean when he talks about the Gentiles? What does he mean in verse 12 that the Gentiles and the Jews are now one in Christ?

There are three questions you ought to be asking right now. The first one is this: Where did the Gentile nations come from? Where does the Word of God teach us the Gentile nations came from? Well, turn to the book of Genesis chapters 1 and 2. I want you to see this. Oh, it is awesome if you can see it come together. It's just thrilling to realize that we, that were far off, have been brought near by the blood of Jesus Christ. What does it mean to be far off? Well, the term "Gentiles" in verse 11 of our text is the word '

ethnos. We get the word "ethnic" from it. From that word we get the idea of different cultures, different peoples, different languages, etc. But where did those Gentile nations come from? You say, "I thought God created Adam and God created Eve." He did. From them the world was populated. Let's go back through Scripture and see how we can learn from it.

In Genesis 1-2 God created man. Among everything else He created, He especially created man. He created Adam, one man, and out of Adam He made Eve. He gave them a command in 2:16-17...

"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it, you shall surely die.'"

Well, very obviously in Chapter 3, man sinned. Eve was deceived, but Adam sinned. He chose between his wife and God and said, "I will do what she wants." He made his own conscious decision. Some skeptics say, "Well, he didn't die, so therefore the Word is full of holes." Oh yes, he did. Spiritually, he immediately died. Mentally, his mind was ripped away from the thoughts of God, and physically, his body began to decay. Death became a reality where man had never known it. Now it was a reality as a result of the consequences of sin.

Romans 5:12 Paul writes that,

"just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin."

In other words, because of Adam's sin, every single person born from then on was born into sin. That's why Ephesians 2 is so important. It says in verses 1-3,

"you were dead in your trespasses and sins."

There is not one thing you could do. You are hopelessly depraved because of Adam.

Well, in chapters 4-6, we find the downward plunge of man, beginning with the death of Cain by his brother Abel. In Genesis 7 God judges the whole earth. Now, it would look at first that God is so frustrated that He is going to annihilate all of mankind, but we've learned from Ephesians that He already had a plan before the foundation of the world. Part of that plan was to judge the world with water and to save a family out of that to re-populate the earth. We know that the earth was judged with water by the flood. We know one day it will be judged again, not by water, but by fire. So we know another judgment is coming. He has judged the world once and that is why we know the next one is coming. In chapter 7 He puts the flood on the earth. In chapters 8-10, the world is repopulated by those in the family of Noah who survived the flood. But they became proud. Look over in Genesis 11. In chapters 8-10 they have just repopulated the earth. In chapter 11 something happened. In verses 1-8 God sees how proud man is because of the depraved heart that he got from Adam. Men thought that they could now be as God. 11:1-8 reads:

"Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. And it came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar [Babylonia is another name for that] and settled there. And they said to one another, 'Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.' And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar. And they said, 'Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.' And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. And the LORD said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them [or will be withheld from them]. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.' So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city."

You can begin to see the formation of the Gentile nations right there when He scattered the people over the face of the whole earth. He changed their languages, and He put them apart. He disunited the people and put them in other places over the whole earth. That's why today we have different nations. That's why we have different languages. There are different people groups. There are ethnic groups. There are cultural groups. They're diverse in all the world. Where did it start? It was rooted in man's pride. God judged that pride and scattered them and changed their languages. Long before He had a people called Israel, God scattered the people over the face of the earth.

So we begin to see the formation of the Gentile nations. Every nation on the face of this earth was formed right out of chapter 11 through humanistic pride and pagan dishonor for God. Therefore, you see nothing of a good root for all the Gentile nations in the world. That's where the Gentile nations came from. Well then, where did Israel come from?

Some people think Israel was one of these nations. Oh, no. Israel hadn't even been thought of in Genesis 11 by man. In Chapter 12 we have a man come on the scene. If you want to know where he is from, go back to 11:31, and you will find out that the whole family is from Ur of the Chaldeans. Chaldean is the word for Babylonia. All history revolves around the Middle East, especially in the area we are seeing all the problems today. All history is going to end in the Middle East.

Right out of Babylon, right out of the very center where all these proud nations came from that God had to scatter, He picked a man. God had a plan. He picked a man by the name of Abram. God said, "I love all of these people, but there is no way they are going to turn to me until there is a sacrifice." God had the plan before the foundation of the world. Jesus was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. He pulled a man out from the very pit of all the pagan nations.

Abram was a man God wanted to covenant with. Look in Genesis 12:1-3.

"Now the LORD said to Abram, 'Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'"

By looking at Genesis 12, Genesis 15 and Galatians 3, there were three things that were promised to Abraham in the covenant, of which you and I are a part today. Number 1 was a land. That really doesn't have anything to do with us. It has to do with Israel. Number 2 was a nation. That really has to do with Israel. Number 3 was a seed. Here we are. We become involved here. Galatians 3:16 says that seed is going to be the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ."

It is going to be through Him that not only Israel is going to be blessed, but all the nations of the earth will be blessed. God so loved the world, but in order to do what He wanted to do, He had to make for Himself a nation through which would come the seed, through which all nations of this earth could finally find their way back to the Father.

Well, God promised him a son. It would be true to say that he had two sons. The one by Sarah was the one by faith. When Abraham first heard this, he was at an older, about 99 years old, and Sarah just laughed. That's what Isaac's name in the Hebrew means, laughter. God got the last laugh. Sarah said, "Go to my handmaiden, go to my concubine, and he did. The result was Ishmael.

Ishmael was the beginning of what is now known as the Arab nations. The Arabs and Israel have not enjoyed one another over the history of the nations. They hate one another. It all happened because Abraham was not willing to obey God when God told him it was going to be through Sarah that He would start the whole process.

Well, his son from Sarah was a man by the name of Isaac. The covenant was passed to him and then through Isaac to his sons. Isaac had two sons. His two sons were named Esau and Jacob. Jacob had already been prophesied to get the birthright, but Jacob, being like his granddaddy, wanted to get it on his own. So he tried it his own way, and he connived his brother out of it. His name meant "deceiver." His name was changed from Jacob, "deceiver," to Israel, "prince of God." Israel had twelve sons, and the process now has begun. There was a land, called Canaan, which is Israel today, and there is a nation, which is Israel, with twelve tribes. Why Israel? Israel was a conduit. The promise to Abram was through that nation. Every nation would be blessed. You have to go all the way to Galatians 3 to understand it says He promised him a seed. That seed was Jesus Christ. It is through Jesus that all nations will be blessed, including Israel. They don't get into the kingdom of God just because they are Jews. They get in by their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They are a conduit. The seed would come. Matthew 1 says it comes right through David, who was from the tribe of Judah, right down to Jesus Christ.

Mt 1:1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

The third question I hope you are asking is this: What was the relationship between Israel, which was God's own nation that He singled out through Abraham, and the Gentile nations in all of history that is past? God Himself purposely separated the two. God said, "You are not to get with them. You are not to intermarry with them. You are not to become part of their idolatrous worship. You are to remain separated unto me." The feelings of the Jews down through the years though developed into sort of a proud feeling. "We are better than you are." Moses said it real well. He said, "You are a stiff-necked, proud and rebellious people." They misunderstood what God had them for. They thought they were the only ones God could ever bless and ever wanted to bless, not realizing they were a channel, a conduit. It was through them the seed would come, and that seed would be for all nations.

Well, they had the covenants. They had the promises. They had the Tabernacle. Later on they had the Temple. They had a means of worshipping God that the Gentiles did not have. Back in our text in Ephesians 2:12 Paul says,

"remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."

In other words, there was a time that God said, "I am not here for the Gentiles. I am here for the Jews to show them I have come to fulfill their covenants." His message was just to the Jews all the way up to Acts chapter 8. That's when the doors were finally opened

up in honor of His promise to Abraham way back in Genesis 12.

Israel was told by God to shut the Gentiles out of any means of worshipping God. Inside the gates of their Temple, they had what they called a Court of the Gentiles, which was the outer court. The Gentiles could go no further. As a matter of fact, the barrier or the dividing wall that separated the Gentiles from Israel was three-fold. It was three walls thick. Only the Jews could go beyond the Court of the Gentiles. The Court of the Women was next. Only the Jewish men could go into the inner court of the Temple. The Gentiles were completely shut out. There was a barrier between the two. It was called the dividing wall.

Well, even though Israel had all the covenants and all the promises, they still had one thing in common with the Gentiles. Do you know what that was? If they didn't believe when Jesus came with the Gospel, they were dead in their trespasses and in their sins just like the Gentiles were dead in their trespasses and in their sins. There is only one way a Jew can come to know the Father, and that's through Jesus. There is only one way a Gentile can come to know the Father, and that's through Jesus. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world." That includes all of the Jews over here and all the Gentiles who are far away.

Look in Luke chapter 2. One of the most beautiful prophecies of the Lord Jesus came from a man by the name of Simeon. Simeon was told that he would see the Lord Jesus before he died. He was told he would see the Savior of Israel and of the world. In Luke 2:25-32 we find this beautiful, beautiful passage:

"And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God and said, 'Now Lord, Thou dost let Thy bond-servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for my eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou has prepared in the presence of all peoples, A light of revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.'" He came for every nation, Israel and all the Gentile nations."

Well, after Jesus had gone back to heaven, the time was right to bring in the Gentiles, the ones who were far away, the ones who had not even been dealt with up until this time. It was Israel; it was the covenants; it was the Christ; it was the Messiah. Now He is here; He has died; He has gone back to the Father, it is time to get the message out to everyone.

In Acts 9:15 God found a man. Ananias was told to go give a message to him. Look what God said to Ananias:

"But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel.'"

God said, "I've got me a man now, and this man is going to go out. His main purpose is to get this message to the Gentiles, those who have been far off, but also to the sons of Israel." He had a two-fold ministry, but his focus was now going to be on the Gentile world. It is time to bring them near, the blood of Jesus has been shed. It's His blood that brings the Gentiles near to the salvation which was promised to Abraham.

Ephesians 1:1 says,

"Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God."

These are Gentile believers. He said, "I am just writing you in fulfillment of the task, an assignment, God had given to me."

Look in Acts 10:45, and you will see where God honored His word. God sent the Holy Spirit, not just to the Israelites that came to know Christ, but He also sent Him to the Gentiles. Verse 45 reads, "And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also."

Acts 11:1 says,

"Now the apostles and the brethren who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God."

The Gentiles were being brought in finally. Those who had been far off were being brought in because when Jesus died, it wasn't just for Israel. It was for all the nations of the earth. Acts 11:18 says,

"And when they heard this, they quieted down, and glorified God, saying, 'Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.'"

That is exactly what He told Abraham years before. He said, "Through your seed, through your nation, I will bless all nations." God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son. This is important to us. I'll tell you why. Since the apostle Paul's ministry is now focused on the Gentiles, Scripture shifts from Jerusalem as the center piece to the center piece being Antioch. Now the

message is going out to the Gentiles. It has been to the Jews. The Jews have rejected it. Now it's going to the Gentiles, just like it was promised.

Paul, on his second missionary journey, wanted to go up into a place called Asia. It was in the continent of Asia Minor, which is modern-day Turkey. He got up there, and the Holy Spirit said, "No, you can't go." God slammed the door in his face. In the 20th century, we hear on television when that happens, bind the devil because it couldn't be God. God slammed the door right in his face. He tried to go down to Bythinia, and God slammed the door right in his face. God sent him to Troas.

He got over to Troas and woke up during the night. He had a vision, and the vision was a man in Macedonia, which is the southernmost tip of Europe. God said, "I want the message given to those Gentiles who have never heard, who are far away. I want you to go over there and take the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ." Paul concluded that he must go.

He went over into Macedonia. That's important. Christianity got into Europe and spread up through Europe. Finally it came to a little place called England. Out of England there were some settlers who believed in the Lord Jesus and wanted Christian freedom. They made their venture over the ocean, and lo and behold, we now have it in America. We were gentiles who were far away but now are brought near by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Oh, folks, can you see that we are here only because of the grace of God? Like Paul said to those Ephesian believers,

"You were without hope in the world, and you were far away from any covenants, any promise. You didn't even know there was a Christ promised. Now He has come. He has died, and He has resurrected. Because of what He did, His blood draws even you near to the cross."

Those who were near and those who were far away have the same opportunity in Jesus Christ. Paul simply wants those Gentile believers to understand he does not have one single thing more than they do in Jesus Christ. Being a Jew, having had all the covenants of promise, he is no better off than they are in Jesus Christ. They all have everything, every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:11-15: CHRIST, THE AUTHOR OF OUR PEACE—PART 1

by Dr. Wayne Barber

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The title of this study is Christ, the Author of Our Peace. In our last study we tried to understand where the Gentile nations came from. They were called foreigners in the Old Testament. They were strangers. That word appears in Isaiah. Then through the New Testament we find the word "Gentile." In verse 11, Paul writes,

"Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh."

The word "[Gentiles](#)" is the word [ethnos](#). It's the word we get the word "**ethnic**" from. We get the idea of different languages, different cultures, and different peoples.

Of course, we know where that came from. The Gentile nations with all of their languages came in Genesis 11. The world had repopulated after the flood, and men had become very proud, due to the depravity of man. Sin had entered through Adam. They got worse and worse. God, before the foundation of the world, had already foreordained our salvation. He had already planned. He knew what was going to take place. The Lamb was ready even before the world was created. Man's sin did not catch God by surprise. However, God scattered the people in Genesis 11.

Now you know why many of the liberal schools in our country want to get rid of Genesis 1-11. If you knock out Genesis 1-11, you don't have anything on which to base the rest of scripture. Genesis 1-11 is the very basis for all of scripture.

In [Genesis 11](#), God scattered them and confused their languages. The whole world was made up of pagan Gentile people. There was no such thing as a Jew. There was no such thing as Israel. In [Genesis 12](#) God began to reveal what He was up to. Out of the Gentile nations, particularly Ur [Babylon], He reached right down in the Middle East, and pulled a man out by the name of Abram, whose name he changed to Abraham. In [Genesis 17](#) we read that

1...when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. 2 "And **I will establish My covenant between Me and you**, and I will multiply you exceedingly." 3 And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, 4 "As for Me, behold, **My covenant is with you**, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 "No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 "And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you. 7 "And **I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you** throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. 8 "And I will give to you and to your descendants after

you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

"Abraham, I want a covenant with you. Through you, I'm going to bring a nation, and through that nation will come a seed."

[Galatians 3:16](#) completes that thought and tells us that the seed is Jesus Christ.

"Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ."

It will be through that seed that all the nations of this world, including Israel, will be blessed.

Well, the covenant was passed on to Isaac ([Ge 26:3](#))

"Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.

It was passed on to Jacob ([Ge28:13-15; 35:11-12](#));

28:13 And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. 14 "Your descendants shall also be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 "And behold, I am with you, and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Ge 35:11 God also said to him, "I am God Almighty; Be fruitful and multiply; A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, And kings shall come forth from you. 12 "And the land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you, And I will give the land to your descendants after you."

Jacob's name was changed to Israel, and Israel had twelve sons. Those twelve sons became the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel. Through that nation would come the seed. Jesus Christ would be born of a virgin, Mary, who is a descendant of David of the tribe of Judah. Obviously, the prophecy would be fulfilled. Jesus would come. [Eph1:7](#) tells us that He would shed His blood to redeem us from the slave block of sin. God had that plan before the foundation of the world. Paul's point in chapter 2 is to let the Gentile believers know that they are a part of everything that God had promised. The focus had been on Israel for all these centuries, but he wanted them to know they were a part of the promise that was first given to Abraham. The Jew and the Gentile are now one in Christ Jesus.

Paul points to the great gulf between the Gentiles and the Jews in verse 12. Three things help you to realize the seriousness of the situation. First of all he says in verse 12,

"remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel,"

You see, the Gentile world was made up of this nation and that nation, which had nothing in common with one another. Babylon and Greece and all the different powers that rose up represented the Gentiles. They didn't have anything in common with one another except their own sin. Nothing bonded them into a commonwealth like Israel. You see, they were excluded from any Christ, any Messiah, any Deliverer. They had no hope in front of them. The theologians of their day told them that every 3,000 years the world would repopulate itself, and the cycle would start all over again. They lived for nothing. There was nothing out there. There was no hope whatsoever for the Gentile world. They were living [separate](#) from Christ.

However, Israel had the Messiah to look forward to. That bonded them into a commonwealth. The word here for [commonwealth](#) is [politeia](#). We get the word "politics" from it. It's the word for "citizen". It refers here to the behavior of a community of people who have a common purpose. Their common purpose was they believed a Deliverer would one day come, the Messiah, the seed through which all nations would be blessed. That bonded them together into a commonwealth. While many Jews might depart from that, and did, they still had a **remnant**, (Click here for in depth study of remnant) and that remnant continued to be bonded together with that glorious hope of a Christ who would one day come. The Gentiles had no such promise. They were excluded from any such purpose.

The **second** statement he makes there in verse 12 is,

"and strangers to the covenants of promise."

These covenants were the anchor that pointed to the faithfulness of a God to deliver what He promised. The Gentiles had no anchor. They were sailors on a captain less boat on uncharted seas.

The **third** thing he said in verse 12 is,

"having no hope and without God in the world."

The Gentiles had no "one" god [i.e., they were "polytheists"]. The Jews did. They believed in Jehovah God Who would send His Son a Deliverer. The Gentiles had none of this. They were idolatrous, pagan people. That's why God had excluded the Jews from associating with the Gentile world for so many years. As a result, the Gentile world opposed the true God, accepted false gods and were dominated by Satan as [Eph 2:1-3](#) tell us so clearly. To say it another way, the Gentile nations were outcasts from both human and divine fellowship. The only thing they had in common was their sin.

Well, in verse 13, Paul has some good news for those Gentiles in Ephesus, which he wanted them to understand. He says,

"But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. "

Paul wants them to know that in Christ Jesus they have been brought near. That is a beautiful, beautiful truth. It is almost as if Paul, a converted Jew himself, is looking at the church, sees converted Gentiles and realizes that in Christ there is no north, no south, no east, no west, no racial barriers, no cultural or social barriers. He sees the church in oneness as the church ought to be seen. He sees the church through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:14 says,

"For He Himself is our peace"

That sets the stage for this study, Christ, the Author of our Peace. One of the basic definitions of the word for "peace" is when two things cohere together. "Oneness" and the word "peace" are very synonymous. When Jesus prayed for oneness in [John 17](#), that's the flip side of what peace is all about. It's when nothing is in between that can conflict or irritate, first of all with God, and secondly with man. Peace (Click here for in depth word study of peace) is that oneness that we can have with God and that oneness we can have with one another.

If you are looking for peace, you won't find it in America. If you are looking for peace and absence of conflict, you won't find it in this world. You will find it in the Lord Jesus Christ. That's who we are supposed to honor every day. Let's talk about it for a minute.

First of all Christ Himself is the essence of our peace with God. Before we start talking about the peace between the Jew and Gentile, we've got to talk about the peace that man has with God. You cannot begin to have relationships that are peaceful until first of all, your relationship with God is one of peace.

Ephesians 2:14 says,

"For He Himself is our peace"

Turn back to [Isaiah 9:6](#).

"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

Now we need to understand that. "**Prince**" means not only giver, but the one who maintains it. He gives the peace, and He maintains the peace. The first place that we find that peace needed is not with Jew and Gentile. It is with man and God. That peace was disrupted when Adam sinned. Man was separated from God, and was placed at enmity with God.

That is why [Eph 2:1-3](#) is so important. Man was dead in his trespasses and in his sins. There needed to be a [reconciliation](#). However, the wages of sin is death ([Ro6:23](#)). There was no man who was worthy who could pay the price because there were "none righteous, no, not one." ([Ro3:10](#)) The Lord Jesus, Who is the essence of God's grace, came to this earth and died on the cross to forgive us of our sin. When a man comes to understand that, he sees himself as a sinner, bows down, and receives Jesus into his life as Lord and Savior. Immediately **peace** is effected with the Father. **Peace** is never going to be there until Jesus is in an individual's life. Until a man has received God's grace, he will never know His **peace**. Look in [Eph 1:2](#):

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. "

You see the first thing that must be received is God's grace. **God's grace** is what God does to a man, in a man, for a man and through a man that a man can't do himself. God came down. Man could not ascend. He tried that in Genesis 11. That's where the nations came from. God came down as He told Nicodemus in [John 3](#). He came down to die for our sin. The greatest picture of grace in all of Scripture is Jesus coming to die for our sin and shedding His blood to redeem us off the slave block of bondage to sin.

When man receives God's grace, then and only then can he be at peace with the God that he has been estranged from since Adam's sin.

So before you ever talk about peace with man, you've got to realize Jesus is the essence of our peace with God. So often we do it the reverse. So often there is a problem between two of us, and we try to major on our relationship to make our relationship with God better. No, you major on your relationship with God, and that makes your relationship with others what it ought to be. Jesus is the essence of God's peace, the essence of our peace with God.

That's the first point I want to make. Paul is really not dealing with that at this point. He has already dealt with it in chapter 1 and all the way down through where we are. But when he says in verse 14, "For He [Himself](#) is our [peace](#) " I just want to make sure you understand that it is with God first, long before it's with man.

The second thing I want you to see is **He is the enabler of our peace with man** You see, Christ establishes our peace with God. Once we have Christ in us, He enables us to be at peace with man. What did Christ do that enabled peace between the Jew and the Gentile? There was quite a gulf between them as we have already read in verse 12. These Gentiles were called dogs. They had nothing to do with the promises. They knew nothing about Christ. They knew nothing of a true God. The focus had been on Israel from the book of Genesis all the way through Acts 9. Now, what did Jesus do then to bring the two groups together? Even in the Law they had been excluded from one another. How did Jesus become the enabler of our peace with man? There are two things that Jesus did to enable our peace man to man, Jew to Gentile if you please. There was quite a gulf between them. If you can't see a picture in this of other relationships daily in our life, then you are missing what Paul is bringing out. His concern is the Jew and the Gentile, but the application flows into all relationships.

First of all, Christ removed the barriers to our peace. He removed the barriers in verses 14 and 15. That's what we want to concentrate on. Let's read it.

"For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall "

Now this is important to understand.

What was the [dividing wall](#)?

Well, it refers to a wall that was ordered by God's law in the Temple. The Gentiles could not go beyond that wall. They could go inside the Temple to a place called the Outer Court or the Court of the Gentiles, but they couldn't go beyond it. Actually, the wall was three walls thick if you want to be technical about it. It wasn't just that wall that faced the Court of the Gentiles. There was another wall on the other side which housed the Court of Women, and still another wall which was the Inner Court. So before you could actually get into the place of worship, there were three walls that shut the Gentiles out. On the wall there was an inscription that read, "Any foreigner, any stranger, any Gentile that enters beyond this wall is under the penalty of death." They knew they had been shut out from the worship experience of Israel. Israel approached God through the Temple, and the Gentiles were shut away from ever being able to approach God or to relate to Him on any basis whatsoever.

As a matter of fact, there is a sad testimony to the hardness of the Jews after Jesus came. Here is Paul, preaching that the wall has been torn down. But the Jews, those religious Jews who had rejected Jesus and shut Him out of their lives, continued to hold to the belief that the wall was still there. Look back in [Acts 21:27-29](#), and we will see that. Ephesus, where he is writing this letter to, is in Asia. Probably some Jews from Ephesus, the very people he is writing this letter to, are mentioned here in Acts 21:27-29...

"When the seven days were almost over, the Jews from Asia, upon seeing him in the temple, began to stir up all the crowd and laid hands on him, crying out, "Men of Israel, come to our aid ! This is the man who preaches to all men everywhere against our people and the Law and this place; [Paul never did that. Paul simply opened up other people to it, and they thought they were preaching against them] and besides he has even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place."

They accused him of taking a man by the name of Trophimus into the Temple. Look at verse 29.

"For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple."

They accused him. They didn't even know this for a fact, but they knew they could get a case with the listening ears of those religious Jews who had rejected Christ. They told them he had taken this Gentile behind the wall of partition, the dividing wall, the [barrier](#) of the [dividing wall](#).. You see, many of the Jews, not all of them, but many of the Jews were just as evil in God's sight as the pagan Gentiles. They had made a horrible mistake.

You see, they had a privileged nearness to God because of God's choice of them. God had chosen Israel and because He had, the people born into that nation had certain rights and privileges. It may not have been because they sought after God, but because God

had chosen them. They knew nothing of a personal relationship with God, based on their choice of God. Do you see the difference? As a result of this, that which was meant to exclude the Gentiles for a time became the basis of hatred and discrimination of the Jew to the Gentile. What they said was, "We have a wall. You see there. God loves us better than He loves you. You can't come in. We are better than you." So the Gentile became as dogs to them. To mention the Gentiles as being a part of the promise God had made to Abraham made the hair stand up and bristle on the Jew's neck. The Jew would say, "No way! These are inferior people! We are racially, culturally and socially better people than they are. They couldn't be a part of God's loving plan."

But when Christ came, He tore down the wall of partition. With their observances and with their practices, they thought these external things made them more favorable in God's eyes. That has never been true, for God so loved the world. He promised Abraham, "I don't just love Jews, I love the world. I am going to raise up a nation through which the Seed will come in that all nations, both Israel and other nations, may have the same opportunity."

How did Jesus break down the barrier of the dividing wall? Well, it tells you in verse 15:

"by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances,"

Now I am going to try to simplify something that is not that simple. Let me just simplify it by saying this: the dividing wall in that temple was ordered by God. Why? Because He wanted Israel to be pure, to stay away from these pagan idolatrous people who didn't believe in God. They should never be allowed to come into that which is holy and sacred and specifically designed for His people at that time. So the dividing wall was ordered by God, along with the observances that were in the Law. The Jews had to observe the Sabbaths. They had to observe the eating of certain foods. They had to observe the commands not to touch certain things. All of these things were commanded. It was the way in which they related to God.

But remember, they had taken this and made it a symbol of racial and national pride. "You see, we do these things, we are more spiritual and loveable to God than others are." The Law was good and holy [Ro 7:12]. Don't ever think it was wrong. Galatians says it was a [tutor](#), a baby sitter [Gal 3:24]...

"Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith."

"Tutor" is another description for the law. The laws were simply given to hold the people within bounds until the Seed came. After the Seed came, Hebrews says, the new began ([Heb8:8ff](#)). When the New Covenant began, the old was made obsolete and useless. It is important to understand that when He came He didn't destroy it. He abolished it. The word "[abolished](#)" is [katargeo](#). That is the word that means to make useless, to render ineffective. He gave them a brand new way. Jesus abolished the Law.

He said it was an [enmity](#). The word "[enmity](#)" [[ecthra](#)] here in this context means the cause of enmity. What was the cause of enmity between the Jew and the Gentile? It was their Laws and their observances, which they thought made them more spiritual than anybody else and had become their source of pride. Jesus put an end to the cause of the hatred that existed between the Jews and the Gentiles. How did He do it? It says, "by abolishing in His flesh the enmity"

There are two things that are brought into that. First of all, by living a sinless life, He fulfilled the Law, which no man could do. Once He fulfilled it, He was qualified to take it from there [Ro 8:3-4]...

3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

He is God who gave the Law. Not only that, when He took sin upon Himself, He satisfied the curse of the Law. He became a curse for us.

"CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE " [Gal 3:13]"

The Scripture says. The curse of the Law was satisfied, therefore, rendering the Law ineffective when a person comes to Jesus Christ [[Ro7:1-6](#)]. The person who rejects Jesus is guilty of all points of the Law. If a person comes to Christ, the Law has no effect whatsoever in his life to ever condemn him again. In Christ we find the fulfillment of that Law [Ro 8:3-4]. We find what we are looking for, that is the oneness that we need with God. You could say it this way. In effect, what Jesus did when He came; when He lived the sinless life and went to the cross; when He made the Law obsolete and rendered it ineffective, what He did was, He took all their customs, all the dividing walls, all the observances, everything and wrapped them up in one big bunch, and He threw it away. He got rid of religion forever. He ended man's external religion forever and replaced it with an internal relationship with the Father through

Himself.

When He established peace, the Jew could not say, "Ah, but we honor the Sabbath." Jesus says, "What Sabbath?" "Oh, we have a dividing wall." Jesus would say, "What dividing wall?" The Gentiles on one hand ended paganism when they came to Christ, and the Jews had to end "religionism" when they came to Christ. You see, sin is sin. All of the external things they were doing that separated them from the Gentiles made them feel that pride that God put to death on the cross. He has brought in something now that is absolutely brand new. He removed the barriers to our peace.

But do you know what people have done? They don't want to relate to Jesus and have peace with Him. Therefore, they come up with the exact same thing the Jews did. If you want to know what you are like in the flesh and what I am like in the flesh, study Israel. They are a picture of the vine of flesh in the Old Testament. They had to have everything external. They had no internal relationship with God. God said, "I have come in and made a new order. I didn't raise the Gentiles up to the level of the Jews. I didn't lower the Jews to the level of the Gentiles. I raised them both up into a brand new man, brand new to this world. The world doesn't have a clue about us."

If you will think about it, some of the biggest problems we will ever face as a church are organizational problems. They will be external things that have nothing to do with the Word of God. I am going to tell you something, folks. May God deliver us from ever having the shackles of what this world does to govern what people think the church of Jesus Christ is. We are not an organization. We are an organism, which by necessity organizes itself. We are not here for the sake of organization. We are here for the sake of the organism, the body of Jesus. Folks, that means God could care less about how many people we have in Sunday School if we are not living daily that internal relationship with Him. Watch us in the conflicts of life. Watch how we raise our children. Watch how we deal when things go wrong in our family. Listen, I would rather any day of the week have somebody who didn't have a clue about how to organize something and have somebody who was filled with the Holy Spirit of God and exemplified the character of Jesus in everything that he did.

That's what Jesus did. He raised us out of this thing. He took away "religionism" from the Jew, paganism from the Gentile and raised us up to a brand new standard, a person who is a mystery to this world; a person filled with the Spirit of God, a person who has a divine relationship who walks in peace with God. As a result of that, he walks in peace with men. If you are not living in that relationship of grace which effects peace, then you've got a contention with somebody, and that contention is tied to that which Jesus made obsolete on the cross.

Folks, I want to tell you, if you've got contention in your heart towards anybody, the key is very clear. Jesus has come to be the very essence of your peace with God. He is the enabler of your peace with man. You can't come to me. You had better go to Him and get it right with Him [Ro 12:14,17-21]. Once you get it right with Him, He will enable you to get it right with man. It never says man will get it back right with you. Oh, he may spit in your face. Jesus died forgiving all men, and some people still spit in His face. It is a cycle that goes full circle. But we are to forgive one another and be at peace with one another. Why? Because Jesus is the essence of our peace with God, the enabler of our peace with man.

Ephesians 2:15-18:

CHRIST, THE AUTHOR OF OUR PEACE—PART II

by Dr. Wayne Barber

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Turn with me to Ephesians 2. We are looking at Jesus Christ, the Author of Our Peace in verses 15-18. In our last study we began to see how Christ is the Author of Our Peace. He is the means of peace between the Jew and Gentile, man with man, but especially between man and God. Paul is writing to Gentile believers and for centuries, the Jew and the Gentile had been estranged from one another, partly by design. God had shut them out from worshipping in the Temple. They had no covenants, they had no promises. God had formed His own nation called Israel, and through Israel would come the Seed through which all nations, including these Gentiles, would be blessed. When the time was right, He found the apostle Paul, gave him the commission to take the Word to the Gentiles, and the word began to come out so that now all of the world has the opportunity to come to know Christ Jesus. God so loved the world, not just the Jews.

Well, the apostle Paul, a converted Jew, wants these converted Gentiles over in Ephesus to understand that the animosity between the Jew and Gentile no longer exists when they come to Christ. As a matter of fact, he says in verse 14, "For He [Himself](#) is our [peace](#)" In our last study we saw, first of all, that He is the essence of our peace with God and with man. Secondly we saw how He is the enabler of our peace. You see, when I received the Lord Jesus into my heart, there is someone now living in me that has given me peace with the Father, and enables me to be at peace with my fellow man.

Now what did Jesus do in order to bring peace between the Jew and the Gentile? He says in verse 14, "For He [Himself](#) is our [peace](#), who [made both](#) groups into [one](#)." How did He accomplish that? First of all, He removed the barriers of our peace. He "broke down

the barrier of the dividing wall." There was a wall that had an inscription on it inside of the Temple, by the Court of the Gentiles, that said a Gentile could not go beyond that wall. The inscription said if they did go beyond that wall, it was under penalty of death that was ordered by God's Law. God wanted to keep idolatry out of there. He wanted to keep His people pure in their worship of Him.

Well, that had become a source of pride to the Jew. What was good and for an eternal purpose had been misunderstood and used as a source of pride by the Jews. It caused them to look down on those Gentiles. They began to say, "God loves us more than He loves those Gentiles. Why, He allows us inside the wall, they can go no further." Well, God broke down that barrier. That's what the Lord Jesus did to remove the barriers to our peace, the peace especially here between the Jews and Gentiles.

How did He do that? When He came He

"broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances."

The word "[abolished](#)" [[katargeo](#)] there means "to render useless, to render ineffective."

The moral law and the ceremonial law

The Law was divided into the moral law and the ceremonial law. He didn't abolish the moral law. That has always been here and is fulfilled when we obey the Lord Jesus Christ. The moral law says that we love God with all of our heart and our mind and our strength, and we are to love one another. That is always there and is morally built in. He did not make that obsolete. He did not make that ineffective. What He did do was to render ineffective the ceremonial law. It says here, the "[commandments](#)" contained in [ordinances](#)". In other words, what He did was put religion to death. No longer could the Jew say, "Oh, I sacrifice. I go to the Temple. I worship on the Sabbath. I do this. I do that. God loves me more than He loves you." Oh, no. He took all the external stuff and threw it out. He says, "Now there is only one way to God, and that's through Me. You can't work your way up the ladder."

This is what Paul was talking about in [Php 3:1-10](#). He says in essence...

"I used to be a Pharisee, zealous for the law, and righteous as far as men were concerned. Now I realize, however, that what was gain to me, I count as loss. I only want to be found being obedient to the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. What used to be a system, a religion to me, is gone out of my life. Now I have a relation-ship, and I want to walk in surrender to the One I am now related to by faith."

That's what He replaced for the Jew and for the Gentile. There is no more dividing wall. There are no more ordinances which we must do so God will think better of us. There is no way to approach Him now except by faith and through the Lord Jesus Christ, both for Jew and for Gentile. Therefore, He abolished, He broke down the wall by abolishing the ceremonial law. No longer can a Jew be proud. No longer can a Gentile be proud. Now they all have to bow at the cross together. The ground is level at the cross. They come in equally. The two have been made one in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, how did He abolish the law? His sinless life fulfilled its demands, and therefore, satisfied the claims of the law [Ro 8:3-4](#). Also His sacrificial death on the cross to take our sin upon Himself satisfied the curse of the law [\[Gal3:13\]](#). He fulfilled it, moved it aside and said, "The law was there as your school master [\[Gal3:24\]](#). I have come to replace it, extend it and make its moral qualities real in your life. Now you must come to the Father, not through a Temple, not through a Tabernacle, not through an earthly priest, but through Me [\[Jn14:6\]](#). I've torn all this other stuff down. Gentiles, you are welcome. Jews, you are welcome. There is only one way now a man can come to the Father." Once we come to Him by faith in Christ Jesus, He makes the two groups that were once divided by external religion, into one new person. He removed the barriers to our peace.

Secondly, He enables our peace by the fact that He remade us into a body of peace, not just a peaceful body, but a body of peace. Now remember what the word "peace" means. It means when two things cohere and nothing is in between them to cause conflict or irritation. Because of what Christ did, He has now come into our life and made us one with the Father. If I possess Christ in my life, I am at peace with the Father. But if you possess Christ in your life, I am supposed to be one with you. He has made us, Jew, Gentile, or whoever comes by faith in Christ, a brand new body, a body of peace. You see, the removal of barriers does not guarantee peace. So Christ took another step. He did something in us that caused us to be the body of His peace. In other words, all of us are one with God. All of us are enabled to be one with one another.

Jesus didn't just remove the barriers He remade believers.

Now there are two things involved here in verses 15 and 16. First of all, it's on an individual basis, and secondly, it's on a corporate basis. It begins with His remaking us as individuals. Now, what did He do to enable our peace? Look in [2 Cor 5:17](#). It is an individual thing first, whether Jew or whether Gentile. Look at what he says here:

"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come"

Now everything that used to be is gone. We have been remade as a brand new creature. Now go back to our text in Ephesians 2:15, and we will see it again as he says it here. He says,

"by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace."

He did not take the Jew and make the Jew a Gentile. He did not take the Gentile and make the Gentile a Jew. He took the Jew who believed and the Gentile who believed, and raised them both up to a brand new standard and made them Christian. That's what Christianity is all about. It's a brand new race of people on this earth. Whereas Israel was separated unto Him in the Old Testament, now we have the absolute ultimate of that as He makes us His brand new creation. The world has never understood people like you and me. The word for "[new](#)" there is [kainos](#). It means absolutely, totally, qualitatively brand new, never before seen. Nobody has a clue until they finally look at someone and realize he is inhabited by the Lord Jesus Himself, a brand new creation.

The Jews cannot look at us and say, "Hey, I am a believer, but you need to be circumcised." They did that in the book of Acts, and Paul had to reprimand them. He started calling them legalizers, people who would come in and try to add law to grace. Oh no, the Jew does not have anything over us as Gentiles, but the Gentile, on the other hand, cannot point their finger at them. We have all been made one new body in the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, a Christian is just different. That's what God did to solve the problem. He tore down the dividing wall. He made the ordinances of the law, the ceremonial law, obsolete, and He said, "Now, there is only one way to approach Me. You don't come through a Temple. You come through Me. I am your High Priest [[Heb2:17.3:1](#)], and when you come through Me," Jesus said, "then you can have access to the Father. When you get to the Father, you are going to be a brand new creation. I'm going to transform you. You are now a believer."

Jesus abolished that law, that ceremonial law that made people proud. He put religion to death. External religion has no place in the Christian's life. He gave us a brand new internal birth that makes us one. Two have become one. The Jew and the Gentile have been made one in Jesus Christ.

You know, sometimes people say Colossians is the commentary on Ephesians, and Ephesians is the commentary on Colossians. Paul wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon from the very same prison, so it is very appropriate to think that as the burden hit him for the Ephesians, that burden hit him also for those Colossians.

Let's go over to [Colossians 3](#) and see what kind of new people we are in Christ Jesus. Look at Colossians 3:4. I want you to see that Jesus does not just simply give us life, Jesus is our life. Do we understand? We are not energized by what we do for Him, we are energized by His being in us and by our surrender to Him. It says in verse 4,

"When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory"

Now jump to verse 9:

"Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices."

Suppose I took my coat off and laid it aside. Now, I'd have to have another coat to put on. I have to take something off if I am going to put something else on. Paul says, "When you come to Christ, it is like taking off an old garment or lifestyle. You are not only who you were, but what you did. You put on a brand new garment. It is now who you are. You do what you do because you are what you are." Now he says, "You put on that new garment. This is the garment, the new man, which you have put on. This is the new man that we have now become in Christ Jesus, both Jew and Gentile."

Look at what he says in [Col 3:10](#):

"and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him."

This new self involves Jesus being in me; Jesus being in you; Jesus being in a converted Jew; Jesus being in a converted Gentile. Now, since He is inside of us, He is going to perfect in us a brand new character that is going to come out of us.

The way you know a Christian is not how well he plays church. The way you know a Christian is by how well he lets Jesus be Jesus in his life. The true miracle is His life-changing, transforming power within an individual's life.

Now he says, "Put on the new garment." Ephesians [[Eph 4:24](#)] says that very clearly.

"put on the new self."

Here [[Col 3:10](#)] he says, "You have already put Him on." Ephesians says, "Now put Him on." In other words, every day potentially He

is there. As I bow at the cross, as I decrease and put on Christ, then Christ perfects His character in and through my life. That is why we sing the song all the time,

**Jesus, be Jesus in me.
No longer me but Thee**

That's the new race He has created, not a religious bunch of people, but people surrendered to a Lord who has entered inside of them and raised them up to a brand new standard.

Well, in [Col 3:12-15](#) of Colossians 3 we find out what that new garment looks like:

"And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on"

This is the new garment that we have, a lifestyle. Please understand what I am saying. **You don't judge a Christian by how well he performs in church. You judge a Christian by how well he allows Jesus to be Jesus in his life.** We may not do so well in the organization called the church, but friend, the church is not the organization. The church is the body of Christ, allowing Jesus' life to be vibrant in and through it.

What's it all like? First of all, he says to **"put on a heart of compassion."** Now this word for compassion is a very tremendous word. It is the word that refers to compassion that you show and feel for somebody when they are suffering. You see, one of the first keys here is all of these things are relational. Everything has to do with our relationships with one another. If I put on that new garment, having made peace with God through Christ Jesus, then now something is different in me towards you. If you are suffering, my heart goes out to you. I am gifted certain ways, and out of my gift I will serve you. Out of your gift, you will serve someone. That heart of compassion is the first piece of that garment, the first thread.

Secondly, he says there is **"kindness."** [[chrestotes](#)] The word **"kindness"** goes far beyond kind deeds. It has to do with a heart that has been so touched by God that it has been tenderized. It has become so tender that people are literally drawn to you, never repulsed away from you. Do you know any Christians you don't like to be around? They either don't know Jesus or they are refusing to wear that new garment. As a result of that, they are not at peace with you, and they are not at peace with God, in the sense that they are not walking in that peace day by day. They are not maintaining that peace in their life. When you find a person surrendered to Him, you are going to find an attitude in them that is going to draw people to them, not push people away from them.

Thirdly, there is **"humility."** The word for humility here is [tapeinophrosune](#). It means a mindset of humility. All of a sudden you don't think of yourself as highly as you used to think. Those proud Jews crawl off that proud pedestal, and they come down. Those proud idolatrous Gentiles crawl off that pedestal, and they get down. When you get at the cross, you have got to get down. You begin to realize that you are nothing apart from Him, and you never put yourself in front of anybody else.

Next is **"gentleness."** The word "gentleness" could be translated meekness. The word is a picture here of a wild horse that has been tamed. It's power under control. Used in relationships, it means you have the right to burn your brother because he wronged you, but you refuse to use that power because you love your brother. You have been tamed by the precious love of Jesus Christ in your life.

Paul uses the word **"patience."** It means longsuffering [[makrothumia](#)]. It means you don't ever give up on people. This is that new garment. This is what we are. We are not known by how many Sabbaths we recognize. We are not known by how many church services we attend. We are known by how we treat our brother. We are known in our relationships one with another. If Christ is our peace, the enabler of our peace, then we are going to learn to be long-suffering. It is God in us. That's what God is to us. That's what He is in us to other people.

"Bearing with one another" means you hold one another up. I like that. You hold one another up whatever you are going through. You may not know the answer, but you just get in there and get up under that person and help hold him up. When you get tired, he holds you up for a while. You just hold one another up. Whatever a person is going through, you have that burden to hold them up.

[Col3:13](#) goes on to say,

"forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you."

Now folks, this is part of the new garment. He gives us the charge to forgive. It is part of the character. "If anyone has a complaint" actually has the idea that somebody owes you and they can't repay you. Forgive them. How do you do it? Well, the character involved here is, as He forgave us, we forgive one another. That's it, right there. This is the new garment.

God says, "I've taken a Jew over here, and I've taken a Gentile over here. I didn't make the Jew a Gentile, and I didn't make the Gentile a Jew. I took both of them when they received Me and raised them up and made them believers, filled with the Spirit of God, capable of allowing my character to be produced through their life. Don't measure them by how many they have in church. Measure them by the character of Jesus that is seen in their life. Folks, if you are not putting on that garment, you had better reexamine

whether you have it to put on. Secondly, find out what in your life has disturbed that peaceful relationship with God and that peaceful relationship with others.

Now look at [Col3:14](#) to see the glue that holds all these threads together. He says,

"Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity"

Now I like the way it is translated: the perfect glue or the perfect bond of unity. You know, you don't have one or two of these things. If you have one, you are going to have to have them all because they are all part of the same entity.

The garment is made up of many threads. You can't say, "Well, I've got two out of nine. Hopefully I'll get the other seven." No, sir. If you've got one, you've got them all. That's the garment, and the thing that holds it all together is that bond of love. Folks, everything we do is out of a heart of love, loving one another unconditionally, no strings attached, loving one another. That's what we are now. That's what the saved Jew is. That's what the saved Gentile is. We are not known because of how big the church is or where it is located. You are known by whether or not you have a relationship with one another that loves one another, that has a heart of compassion, and all these things that we have mentioned.

PEACE IS LIKE AN INTERNAL "REFEREE"

Look at [Col3:15](#):

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful."

Now what did He do? He remade us individually into a body of peace. That peace becomes a referee. Referees are there to blow the whistle when something is amiss. I had a referee one night grab me by the jersey in a college ball game and drag me to the scorer's table. He was so upset with me and told me not to do that again. That's the way referees are. That's what they are there for.

What Paul is saying here is, "Do you know whether or not you have the garment? Do you know whether or not you are a believer?" It does not depend on how well you do church, but by whether or not the peace of God is in your heart and you're at peace with God and with man. It's a referee. When it's not there, the whistle will blow; the Holy Spirit will let you know something is amiss in your life and in my life. Folks, we are measured by whether or not this garment is on in our life.

16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. 17 AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; 18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

As we go back to our text in Eph 2:16, he says,

"and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross"

Here it tends to look at all believers, Jew and Gentile, and how we are all brought into one body. There are no more barriers, no more races of people. Christ has removed it all. He has made us all one in Him. We have been made a holy nation. Israel was set apart unto God. God didn't do with Israel what He does with you and me. When He makes us and transforms us, we now are that holy nation that He has made, bonded together with a common purpose, bonded together with a common goal in life.

Look at [1 Pet 2:9](#). It says this very clearly.

"But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;"

You know the term that we use when we say the pledge of allegiance to the flag, **'One nation under God.'** You know we really can't say that about America. The only people that applies to are believers. We are a holy nation, one nation under God, from every different cultures and all different races and languages. We have all been made one in Jesus Christ. Our citizenship is in heaven as [Php 3:20](#) says

"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ"

Peter says, "While we are on this earth, we are ["aliens](#) and [strangers](#)." So whenever we get together, we ought to just rejoice.

Do you realize what goes on when you meet to worship is not possible any other time. When you get Christians together we can rejoice together. That is how we get fed and encourage one another and equip one another. That is not the place where we destroy peaceful relationships that God has freely given. Folks, that happens in church. It happens in my church, but it never happens

unless you have a contentious person who is not walking in the peace of God, who is not filled up with the peace of God and wearing the garment of that peace with his brother. We have the same Lord. He produces in us the same character. We have the same purpose. We have the same destiny. We are all one body. We are a holy nation, bound together by His work in us. This causes the Jew and the Gentile to be uniquely bonded together. Paul says, "He has made Jew and Gentile one in Jesus Christ." We are brand new creations. Not one single thing before is distinctive to us. What's distinctive now is the character of Jesus lived out of our lives.

Well, one more time, how do you get it? Verse 16 says, that He

"might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity."

All men are born in enmity with God. Jesus went to the cross so that enmity could be put away and we could be reconciled and have peace with God once again.

Verses 17-18 say,

"AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; 18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father."

The word "[access](#)" can mean entrance or doorway. What he is saying is...

"If the Spirit of God has done a work in your heart and in my heart, then we both have free access to the Father. That's where peace begins." From that point on, it's a matter of our choice to let it permeate our lives, putting on the new garment

Ephesians to me is just a wonderful book. He is laying the ground work for all the commands he is going to give in chapters 4-6. We are not to be known by how well we do church. We are to be known by how well we display Christ. There is a huge difference.