

Ephesians- A New Way To Be Human

Part 11: A New Ethnicity

INTRO:

In Christ, not only are we reconciled to God, but to one another

1. We Like Jesus But Not The Church

2. Actually, They Were FULL Of Hostility Towards One Another

Ephesians 2:14 - "For He Himself is OUR peace, who has made US both one & has broken down in His flesh the dividing wall of hostility"
Words used: Peace, hostility, dividing wall...what do you think of?

Luke 18:11-14- Jewish Pharisee praying in the temple thanking God

1 Corinthians 6:9-11- perverts, idol worshippers, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, drunks, greedy people, cheaters, those who despised each other, all of them in the church having surrendered to Jesus & depending on Him to change them...

3. People Still Have Hostility Towards Those Not Like Them

4. They Were Instead Reminded Of The Depth Of Their Sameness

5. Reason #1: They Shared The Same Depravity

VS. 14-17- "For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one & has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, & might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came & preached peace to you who were far off & peace to those who were near."

Luke 15:11-32- Jesus tells the story of a Father who had 2 sons
One broke all the rules & lived a terrible, outwardly sinful life

6. Reason #2: They Also Had The Same Amazing God

VS. 18- “For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father” (all 3 parts of the Godhead/Trinity mentioned)
As different as us Christians are, we have the same Jesus who Saved us, same Spirit who Empowers us & same Father who loves us

John 14:6- “Jesus said to him, “I am THE way, & THE truth, & THE life. NO ONE comes to the Father EXCEPT through me.”

7. Reason #3: They Were To Live As Part Of The Same Nation

VS. 19a- “So then you are no longer strangers & aliens, but you are fellow citizens w/ the saints”

8. Reason #4: They Were Members Of The Same Household

VS. 19b- “& members of the household of God...” = family!

They were to literally love each other as Brothers & Sisters

Often we will say we are “brothers,” but we don’t “love”

Jesus says, because He loved us, we have to love each other

This is “obligatory” (mandatory) not “enabling” (informercial)

John 13:34-35- “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1 John 4:20- “If anyone says, “I love God,” & hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.” (no wiggle room there)

Well, the big question is obviously, “Who is my brother/family?”

9. Reason #5: They Were To Worship At The Same Temple

VS. 20-22- “built on the foundation of the apostles & prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”

1 Corinthians 10:16-17- “The cup of blessing that WE bless, is it not a participation in THE blood of Christ? The bread that WE break, is it not a participation in THE body of Christ? Because there is ONE

bread, we who are many are ONE body, for WE all partake of the ONE bread.”

10. Anyone Who Would Be Reconciled To God Can Be To Us!

Galatians 3:26-29- “for in Christ Jesus you are ALL sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is NEITHER Jew nor Greek, there is NEITHER slave nor free, there is NO male & female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.”

11. This Is Our Reason For Living

3:1-6- “For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles-- assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles & prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, & partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.”

12. The Solution, Like Always, Starts In Our Hearts

VS. 20- “built on the foundation of the apostles & prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,”

Cornerstones weren't always ornamental- they used to be crucial

The right placement of the first stone was crucial to successfully placing all the other stones that would follow- crooked/straight!

Paul says that we are not the center, the most important stone,

Jesus Christ is- however, we are all important stones that follow

How do you know if Christ is the Cornerstone? Ask yourself if He's the most central & beautiful part of your life?

You & I want unity in the church? Make Christ the cornerstone & everyone else who has been united Christ will be united to you