

Ephesians 2:11-22

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[0 : 00] chapter 2. We're going to start in verse 11. We're going to go to the end of the chapter, which gets us down to verse 22. For the bulk of the book of Ephesians, Paul, at least up to this point, has just been declaring the glory of our salvation to us. He's taken the whole first chapter after a very short introduction, and the first half of the second chapter, just telling us how wondrous the salvation of man is. That it's not the efforts or the works or the goodwill of man, but it's the calling of God. It's God calling us to himself, redeeming us, restoring us, and renewing us. And then he hits a therefore in verse 11. And he shows us with all the glory of salvation, there has been a change in position, right? So I want you to see this morning the glorious position of the saints. Because of salvation, position has been changed. It says, therefore, remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by the so-called circumcision, which is performed in the flesh by human hands, 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. But now in Christ Jesus, you who formerly were far off, have been brought nearer by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall by abolishing in his flesh the enmity, which is the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in himself he might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

And he came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have our access in one spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Let's pray. Lord, thank you so much for your word. God, thank you for the grand privilege of gathering of brothers and sisters in Christ, reading it. Lord, we pray that now by the power of your presence that we would have eyes to see, ears to hear, minds to understand, and hearts to live out.

God, we just want to live it out for your glory. May the truth of Scripture resonate within us. We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. The glorious position of the saints.

[3 : 03] The book of Ephesians, I know we keep saying this, but it bears repeating. As often as we turn to it, if you turn to it every day and you read it every day, you need to remind yourself of this. As often as we come to it through preaching or teaching, and we're trying to learn from it.

The book of Ephesians is very evenly and very cleanly divided. The first three chapters give us theology, that is, great teaching, of the things of God and the things of man. It teaches us about our salvation.

It teaches us about our position because of our salvation. It teaches us about the riches that we have in Christ and the riches we are towards God. It teaches us that we have been united into one body called the church.

It teaches us all of these things. We'll get into the third chapter, and he'll begin to speak of what the church is and how the church should operate. And then, in chapter four, we get into application because of the theology.

Because, as we've said over and over again, theology with application is just useless information. Just because you know some good things about God and you know even the right things about God, if they're not applied to our life, they really mean nothing.

[4 : 07] The book of James says that faith without works is dead. So we understand these things by faith, and we accept them by faith. And then Paul tells us how we should live them because of what we know and what we understand and what we accept.

And he has spoken very clearly to us about the wonder of our salvation. And now he's going to speak about the glory of our position. And he will go on to talk about how that position just really affects everything.

But we see from our text this morning the glorious position of the saints. And it really is glorious. We're not just saved and one day we'll get to heaven. Right?

Salvation is not something that's future tense only. There is a future aspect to salvation. There is a past aspect to salvation. Before the foundations of the world were laid, you were redeemed in the blood of Christ.

Before the foundations of the world were laid, God predestined to call you to Christ Jesus. So in a sense, salvation is past. There is a future tense of salvation.

[5 : 09] One day you will be as you should be. Right? Paul says, I am not yet what I should be, but I press on towards that which I will be. There will be a day, Paul says, where I will see Christ as he is and I will stand in the glory of him.

And we will be face to face. I will be in his presence. I will be with him on the throne. I will be gathered around. In a sense, salvation is future. But salvation is also present.

That is, we are saved right now. And since we are saved, what we used to be has been completely changed in the present reality. It is not salvation.

It's not just one day we get heaven. No, salvation is today. We are in a new position which is represented in heaven. And one day we will get to accept that fully and finally and freely. Right?

Salvation has a present application. And it is that present application, that position which we hold as saints, the Bible tells us, which Paul takes time to remind us of here.

[6 : 07] And what a glorious position it is. I know I keep repeating that because you really need to understand it. You are in, in Christ. We are in a glorious position.

We see it here in a number of ways. Paul starts out with a call to remember the past. Because before we can ever really understand what we are today, we must never forget what we were then.

Right? To really appreciate and to stand in awe and wonder and glory of our salvation today, we need to remember who we were in that day.

I think too often the further we get away from that moment of salvation because we are saved in a moment. We are sanctified over a lifetime. I think the tendency is, is to sometimes, sometimes soften what we used to be.

We see the exact opposite in the life of Paul. The longer he is in a present position of salvation, the clearly, the more clearly he sees of who he used to be. He starts out with that I was an apostle born out of due season.

[7 : 12] Then he goes into, well, you know, I was the least of the apostles. And then he finally comes to the point where he says, I was the chief of sinners. Some Bible translators and Bible scholars have taught, pastors have declared.

The truth of scripture is that the longer you walk with God, the less you will think of yourself. Not just think of yourself less. No, the less you will think of who you used to be in yourself.

The longer you walk in holiness and the wonder of God. Think of Isaiah in the book of Isaiah, right? I was reading and studying this week. Sinclair Ferguson makes this great assessment in the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah is a prophet from the very beginning of the book. Isaiah chapter one. Isaiah chapter five, he gives six woes. I'm not going to tell you what they are. But he goes, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.

Six times, right? In Isaiah chapter five, he's telling the community around him. As a prophet of God, everything is wrong with them. And he's walking with God. He's walking with God.

[8 : 11] You know, we know this is before Christ, right? This is before Christ manifests. Not before Christ, but before Christ manifests in the flesh. He's walking and he's telling everybody what's wrong with them, what's wrong with them, what's wrong with them.

Then in the year of King Uzziah's death, Isaiah walks into the presence of God. And then he doesn't say, whoa, are you. He says, whoa, is me. Because for five woes, or six woes, he's told everybody what's wrong with them.

But then in that seventh woe, he said, now let me tell you what's wrong with me. Because the closer we get to God, the less we see that is wrong with our fellow man, the more we see that is wrong with us. Because only when we assess ourselves accurately, then can we be of benefit to those.

And that's what Paul says. Remember them. Remember. Look at what he says in chapter, verse 11. Therefore, remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by the so-called circumcision, which is performed in the flesh by human hands.

Paul starts out by telling them what they were by birth, naturally. In the church at Ephesus, there were both Jews and Gentiles. The city of Ephesus was a conglomerate of nationalities.

[9 : 17] It was a conglomerate of people. Within that church, we can read about it in the book of Acts. We know that Paul spent longer there than any other church. But the majority of the church were Gentile believers, that is, non-Jew believers.

The majority of the people reached from Ephesus because all of Asia, it says, heard the gospel when Paul was in Ephesus. Because the church began to be missional and the church began to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

And the majority of the people that would have heard that were Gentiles or non-Jewish people. So now Paul is speaking to that group in particular. By the way, unless you are Jewish by descent, that means all of us, right?

He says, therefore, remember that you, who are the Gentiles, who you were by birth. We have no say-so in our birth. We have no really choosing in what we are born into, our nationality, our family, or anything of that nature.

It's God ordains who we are, where we are, even what season we live in. Paul declares in the book of Acts, Acts chapter 17. But we see here that Paul is reminding them of where they were naturally from a national perspective.

[10 : 25] Because it matters. It matters. And he tells them, you were Gentiles, that is, you're non-Jew. So, okay, well, okay, that's good news. I need to understand who I am.

He says, remember that you as Gentiles, that is, non-Jewish people, there is a certain reality that is here. Because then he goes on, he says, this is who you were naturally, this is who you were by birth.

And then in verse 12, he says, remember, now pay attention to this, remember that you were at that time separate from Christ. Now, let's stop right here for just a moment, right? Let's set it in its proper setting.

Just because they were non-Jewish, does that mean they were non-religious? No. The city of Ephesus actually housed the Temple of Diana, which was one of the grand seven wonders of the world.

You remember an introduction in the book of Ephesians, the Temple of Diana was actually the bank for all of Asia, even Rome. And all the wealthy citizens would deposit their money there. It was such a glorious thing.

[11 : 25] Really, the only thing that stands in the city of Ephesus today, which is completely wiped off the map, or some of the pillars partially there, and even the platform where the temple used to be, is this grand wonder of the ancient world.

And it was great as Diana of the Ephesians was the cry that was ringing out when everybody was brought into the Roman Colosseum there. And everybody was going to have this great revolt because the preaching of Paul was going on.

These were very, very, very religious people. Okay? We need to understand it. Because the reality is this. All men of all time, of all places, worship something.

Worship is the natural desire of all of humanity. There is created within us this desire to worship. You say, well, what about those people who deny the existence of God?

Or they're agnostic. They don't know of God. They're worshiping something. What about the atheist that says that God does not exist? And that he's dead and all this stuff. Normally they're worshiping self. Or they're worshiping, you know, Satan.

[12 : 30] Or they're worshiping just something completely. They're worshiping their own wisdom. They're worshiping their own intellect. They're worshiping something. But all men of all time, of all ages, worship. And have this desire to fill this void.

The book of Ecclesiastes tells us why. God has said eternity in the heart of all men. So that all men of all places, of all times, realize there's something greater than themselves. And they're just seeking to fill that void.

And the Gentiles here at Ephesus are very, very, very religious people. So Paul is not writing to non-religious people. He's writing to very religious people. But he makes this stipulation. That remember as Gentiles.

Now this is where, even with the video. And I didn't plan it this way. It just happened to be this IMB's lightning moon video. And I love it when it works out that way, right? And I was asked if we could play it this morning. It did. I love it when it works out that way.

Because why does it matter if they are non-Jewish people? Why does it matter if they have never heard the gospel? Because he makes this declaration without Christ. That by natural order you are without Christ.

[13 : 33] And here's the key to all of that. The man-centered religion will tell you that there are many roads that lead to heaven. There are many roads that lead to God. And it really doesn't matter which road you're on. As long as you're on a road.

Paul says the grand sum of it all is you are without Christ. And therefore, since you are without Christ, these other things are true.

If naturally, because they were, in this setting, non-Jewish individuals. Because Christ was born of the Jewish nation. The family of David. The tribe of Judah, right?

We understand that. He's a descendant. He's a seed of Abraham. We know that. They are away from that. Therefore, they have no connection. No tie. No investment in that. He says, you are without Christ.

Look at what it says. Excluded from the commonwealth of Israel. And strangers to the covenants of promise. That is, when you open up the Old Testament, you read all these covenants, right?

- [14 : 27] The Davidic covenant. The Abrahamic covenant. You see all these covenants. You see these covenants that are there. And these covenants are directly connected to a nation. A nation in particular. And that nation in particular could go back and look at these eternal covenants that God had given them.

These eternal covenants which had bearing and lasting impact. And therefore, it dictated how they were to practice that day. That doesn't mean they were saved. We're not saying saved. But at least had a covenant that they could look back on and have this stipulation.

Paul would write later that the law was there as a tutor to lead them to Christ. Or a guardian to show them they needed Christ. To be non-Jew is to be without a tutor. Right?

To have nothing that was pointing them in the way of Christ. They had no covenants. They had no laws. They had no regulation. It was all man-centered, man-focused, and man-founded. And they had nothing that was leading them to Christ.

And apart from Christ, it says, having no hope. Having no hope. The hope of Israel is the coming of the Messiah. At this time, the hope of the Gentiles was nothing.

- [15 : 34] It does not mean that those who are without Christ have no hope whatsoever. You will find hope. It just means they have no true hope. No lasting hope. There are hopeful men. And now hope in Scripture does not have this, well, I hope so.

The way we would say it, hope is this confident expectation that something will come. The Jewish people of the Old Testament always had this hope. That God had made a promise. And God's promises will not fail.

They were looking for that hope. The non-Messianic Jews, that is, still practicing in Judaism, Jews today, still live with that Messianic hope. They've missed the Messiah. They've missed the Savior.

We understand that. But they're still resting in that Old Testament hope. We'll get to that in just a moment. And they're looking at this, at least with a hope. But apart from that, there is no hope. Now, understand this, friend.

This has radical implications as to how we look at missions. Those without Christ, separated from Christ, who have never heard the gospel. The Bible tells us later on, they are without hope and separate from God.

- [16 : 35] They're without God in this world. So is it imperative that the gospel is declared to all nations? Yes. Because apart from Christ, there is no hope.

And they're in this world without God. You don't happen upon it. You don't stumble upon it.

Those things are imperative realities. And friend, listen to me. So too were we. This is who we were.

Paul says, remember then. You say, well, I didn't feel like that. It's amazing how the enemy of our souls can affect our feelings and make us feel so good in such a miserable position.

Have you ever noticed that sometimes sin feels good to the flesh? Sin doesn't always feel bad. But it is bad.

- [17 : 35] It has this declaration. And the reality is, without Christ, we were separated from Christ. We were excluded from the commonwealth of Israel. We had no covenant to point to.

We had nothing. We couldn't name it and claim it. We are without hope, without God. That's why we have to be careful. When we open up Scripture, don't declare Scripture promises to nonbelievers.

Because without Christ, they don't have them. The promises in Scripture are contained for those who are in the covenant of Christ.

Without Christ, nothing. No hope. Don't make unfounded declarations. Because that's who we were.

And that's presently who all apart from Christ are. But praise be to God, that's not where we stand today. There's the remembered past. Number two, look at the removed barrier.

[18 : 42] Paul goes on. He says, that's who we were. It's sobering, right? To look back and see who we were. But aren't you glad that we raise, as Samuel would declare, these stones of help?

We say it in the song. Here I raise mine Ebenezer. That stone of help, right? We put up an Ebenezer. And we put up an Ebenezer to remind ourselves that on the other side of that stone, that's where we were.

But at that stone, something changed. At that Ebenezer, something happened. Thus far, the Lord has helped me. Samuel would declare, they were raising up Ebenezers. I think sometimes we need to walk through our life raising up Ebenezers to remind us that that's who we used to be.

But we don't have to go back there anymore because there, God helped me. And since God helped me at that Ebenezer, something happened. And the first thing he reminds us is the barrier has been removed.

He says, but now. But now. But now presently. Remember, you were these things. Don't get caught up in who you used to be. But don't ever forget who you used to be either.

[19 : 41] Don't hang out there so long the enemy longs to keep you there. Don't hang out there so long that he gets you down. Go back every now and then and look around so you can come back to present reality and celebrate even more.

That's how I like to say it, right? Go back and see who you used to be so that you can come back to who you currently are so that you have greater ground to stand on to praise him for who he is. Who we used to be does not dictate how we should live today because he says, but now in Christ Jesus, you who formerly were far off have been brought near.

By the blood of Christ. There is no nearness without the shedding of blood. By the blood of Christ. You who were far off have been brought near.

That is, all nations, all tribes, all tongues, both Jews and Gentiles. This is the mystery of the gospel. Paul would write that he had become a steward of the mysteries of the gospel. The mysteries of the gospel is that God wasn't just redeeming the Jewish people.

God was redeeming all people. We don't have time to really lay it out here. We maybe can as we make our way through the book of Ephesians, but we don't have time. I'm not going to take your time to do it this morning to see the glory of how that mystery just works.

[20 : 49] God's not just redeeming a people. He's redeeming all people. He's calling all people to salvation, right? And he says that those who were far off were brought near. How did he do it? Well, he removed the barrier.

Because he says, but now in Christ Jesus, you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace. Isn't that wonderful? He himself is our peace who made both groups into one and broke down.

We'll come back to that both groups into one in just a minute, okay? And he broke down the barrier wall, or the barrier of the dividing wall. He broke down the barrier of the dividing wall.

At this time, Jewish worship centered around the temple, right? And in the temple, it started out in a tabernacle, and then it became a temple. And in the tabernacle, and in the temple, there was this wall.

This wall that was there. There was an outer wall. You could walk. Everybody could walk into the outer wall of the temple and temple square. And that was called the court of the Gentiles. All people were there.

[21 : 45] But then you would get to another, the first interior wall. And in that first interior wall, it has been declared that in Herod's great temple there, there was a plaque that was mounted on that wall.

They've actually found this inscription. And essentially, it says this. All Gentiles excluded beyond this point, those that enter will be liable for their own death. That if you were a non-Jew and you went through that gate, it's your fault that they killed you.

Why? Because there is a barrier of a dividing wall. Because access to the presence of God was limited to a particular people. And the thing that limited that access was not a wall.

It was the law and the covenants. It's the Old Testament. Because Paul reminds us here. What does he say? For he himself are our peace.

He's broke down the barrier of the dividing wall by abolishing in his flesh the enmity, which is the law of commandments. You say, well, the Jewish people should never put that plaque up. Well, yes, they should have because God had so ordained that they would because he was setting his people apart.

[22 : 50] He was separating them. We read our Old Testament. That's why we understand this. He wasn't showing favoritism. Actually, he was raising up a megaphone to call people to himself. And this megaphone was the nation of Israel to call people to himself.

And he was doing it. And this great dividing wall was the law. Now, the law wasn't for you and I. Now, there were people who would convert to Judaism and, therefore, they would have to be circumcised in the flesh.

And they would adhere to the law. But the law was a particular law for a peculiar people. And it was a peculiar law for a peculiar people. And that people were the Jewish people. Well, when you open up the Old Testament and you read of the law, you read of all these food regulations and all these dietary expectations.

And the people with leprosy and the houses. I mean, you know, there's all this stuff. People getting stoned. Houses getting torn down. Things getting broke apart all the time. They're eating weird, strange foods. Well, that was a peculiar law for peculiar people.

The Jewish people were made and called to stand out. That's what the law did. It made them look different than everybody else. Why? Because God wanted to show these are my people.

[23 : 52] And I'm using my people to call you to myself. It wasn't expected of the Gentiles. It wasn't expected of the non-Jewish people. It was expected of the Jewish people. So there was this thing like, well, y'all are different than us.

And we're not over here because, you know, we're not going to live according to that law. Gentiles over here are like, I'm eating bacon this morning. The Jews are like, well, I can't eat bacon ever. You know, and there's all these laws.

And then the Jewish people were like, you know, I know it's a Sabbath, so I can't go anywhere. And the Gentiles were doing business on the Sabbath because it wasn't their law. And you can't judge the Gentiles for living like that.

God did not call them to live like that. He called the Jewish people to live like that. And to show everybody else the blessing of being in fellowship. Now, the Jewish people failed in that. We see it in the Old Testament.

Why? Because they began to be a little bit more like the Gentiles than they did the Jews. They began to behave like the world and behaving like this peculiar people. Because let's just be honest. It's hard to stand out, right?

[24 : 47] It's hard to look different. If it wasn't so hard to look different, then none of us would have a problem walking into the world in which we live. And really being, you know, labeled as Jesus freaks and being so crazy, everybody pointed at us.

And thought, well, what's so different about you? But it's hard to look different. And we see this. But there's this great wall with this barrier. But Christ came and it says that he removed that barrier. How did he do it?

Did he render the law useless? No. And the New American Standard says by abolishing in his flesh the enmity, which is the law of commandments. Even a fuller translation there would be he nullified.

He didn't remove the law by abolishing it. He abolished it by nullifying it. That is, the law of God is now null and void. Why? Because it has been fulfilled. Every expectation, every standard, every measure of the Old Testament law has been fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.

Now, stay with me here. This doesn't take the law and make it useless. We don't take the Old Testament and cast it aside. We don't need that anymore. Be careful there. Because the morality of the law still has application today.

[25 : 52] Be holy as I am holy. That's repeated. The legalism of the law has been fulfilled in Christ Jesus. So the standard is still there in Christ.

But the fulfillment of it is done. And once someone fulfilled it completely, once the one, that is, Jesus Christ himself, fulfilled it completely, the law has been removed.

Now there's nothing to divide. Christ has not only, by his death, torn the veil so that access to the presence of Holy of Holies, because remember the veil was torn from top to bottom.

Not only was access to the Holy of Holies, which signified and represented the presence of God. Not only was the presence of God opened up for people to walk in. The wall that told the Gentiles to stay out, which is the law, was torn down so that now all men can walk into the presence of God.

Isn't that wonderful? We have no sign that says, whoever draws near that is not Jewish, you're liable for your own death. Now we have, as the book of Hebrews says, we enter boldly through the blood of Jesus Christ.

[26 : 57] We go boldly into his presence. Because the wall has been knocked down. The veil has been torn. The position is now open for everyone. And now we have this removed barrier, which leads us to the third thing.

To reconciled enemies. No greater enemy in scripture than Jews and Gentiles in their natural state. Because they were to live completely different.

They were to eat different. They were, Gentiles were unclean to the Jewish people. The Jewish people were just strange and weird to the Gentile people. And they were just different. Remember, even the early church had a problem with this. The early church had a big problem that Peter went into the household of Cornelius and sat down with them.

Right? And he went into their house. And Peter declares that for me to come into your house, it's illegal. And, you know, I shouldn't do this. And it's contrary to our law. This is the reason Paul was arrested. Because they thought that Paul, when he went into the temple, brought a Gentile past that wall.

And so they drug him out trying to kill him. Because prior to that, they had seen a Gentile with him, even though he never did. Paul didn't violate that. But that was the accusation. Right? There was no greater enmity than between these two people.

[28 : 06] But look at what the scripture says. That he has made both groups into one. You know, the greatest way to reconcile enemies is to have them both come into Christ.

In Christ. Through the blood of Christ. He's reconciled them. One of the greatest testimonies of the early church is that Jews and Gentiles are worshiping together. One of the greatest apologetics for the early church, for the truthfulness of the gospel, is that for the first time in history, both Jews and Gentiles are sitting together.

Worshiping together. Fellowshiping together. You know why communion meant so much? They called it love feast. It was so twisted by the society of that time. But do you know why it meant so much?

That when they sat down around the Lord's Supper, it was both Jews and Gentiles having a meal together. Astounding in that time. Why could they do that?

Because in Christ, the enmity has been cast aside. In Christ, the two have become one. Right? It's not that the church displaced the nation of Israel.

[29 : 10] It's not that the nation of Israel is forgotten about. Paul would say in the book of Romans that we've been grafted in. Right? The two have become one. He says that he has done this in order that he might establish.

He broke down this in verse 15. So that in himself he might make the two into one new man. Thus establishing peace. The church. Capital C.

Is not a Jewish thing. It's not a Gentile thing. It is a mankind thing. The enemies have been reconciled. But that's not the greatest enemy that was reconciled. Jews and Gentiles.

Not only has he made all mankind into one new man. Look at what it says. Let's keep going on in verse 16. Here's the great glorious reconciliation that's taking place. And might reconcile them both.

Because see the Jews. Even with all their laws. Even with all their covenants. Even with all their commandments. They still were attempting to bridge the gap. The chasm. Between sinful man and holy God.

[30 : 08] And through their sacrifices. Were daily offering this hope. This expectation. Maybe we can get there. Maybe we'll be in his presence. But Paul says the glorious thing is. Then when Christ fulfilled the law.

He died on the cross. He shed his blood for us. That in Christ. The two of them made one man. Jews and Gentiles both. Put together in the church. And now the church. Has also been reconciled.

He says in verse 16. In one body to God. Through the cross. And by it having put to death the enmity. See the great reconciliation.

Is not. Not only are. Two former enemies. One glorifying. God glorifying. God honoring body. But that all people now.

Can come into a presence of holy God. And what a position. That those who were far off. He says. He declared peace.

[31 : 04] And those who were near. He declared peace. You see this. Paul is putting himself now. Paul says. The Gentiles. Non-Jewish people. Were so far away from God. They had nothing to hope in.

They were so far away from God. They had no claim on the coming Messiah. They were so far away from God. That they had no expectation. That any reconciliation. Would ever take place. And Christ came.

And announced peace to them. But on the other hand. The Jews. Who were so near. So close. So right on the edge. Still couldn't find it.

Because through their efforts. And through their labors. And through their striving. They still had no true peace. And those who were far off. Had peace declared. And those who were close. They had peace declared. And he brought all these people.

And said. I've made peace. Between you and God. And through my blood. Through the shedding of the blood. On the cross. Now you are reconciled. And you can go into the presence. Of holy God. They're one new man.

[31 : 58] Which is the church. And they've been brought. Into the presence of holy God. And they're welcome there. Because of the blood. Of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful position. Because the Gentiles.

Couldn't do it. And the Jews. Couldn't do it. But in Christ. All can do it. What a wonderful position. They hold. And if that was the end. Of the story.

We would say. Glory. Hallelujah. Amen. We now have access. To the very presence. Of holy God. But it's not. Because Paul doesn't just stop.

With you have been reconciled. To God. He goes on. He says in verse 18. For through him. We both have our access. In one spirit. To the father. So through Christ. Through Christ.

Again. Without Christ. These things aren't possible. Through Christ. We have access. To the spirit. Or by the spirit. To the father. And you say. Oh that's awesome. It's good news. So then you are no longer.

[32 : 53] Strangers and aliens. But you are fellow citizens. With the saints. And you are of God's household. Remember that. We've been adopted. Into the family. God says his family. Is enriched. Because we're a part of the family.

I mean. I mean. What a thought. Right? That God says. His family is made better. Because we're a part of it. Some of us. Go through a list of names. And say. Well if they weren't in it. They weren't in it. And they weren't in it.

A family would be okay. Family gatherings. Wouldn't be so hostile. Or you know. If I could pick and choose. Some families. I've heard pastors say. Can I choose which members. I send you. I've never done that. By the way. I've heard pastors say.

Well I got something. I can send your way. And you know. Would the family be a little bit better. If we could weed out a few. God says. My family is better. Because I've brought you in. Now I know me. And I'm astounded.

That God says. I made his family better. Right? He's adopted me. Into his family. I'm a part of the household. Of God. But that's not it. That's not the end.

[33 : 46] Because the last one is. We are also the residents. Of the spirit. We are residents. Of the spirit. Look at what he says. He says.

We are members. Our God's household. Verse 20. Having been built. On the foundation. Of the apostles. And prophets. Christ Jesus himself. Being the cornerstone. Okay?

According to the verse. These are not. Old Testament prophets. These would be. New Testament prophets. Because the apostles. Come first. Apostles and prophets. Not prophets. And then apostles. So. We're not on this foundation.

Of this Old Testament. Prophetic word. Even though it has. Application. Even though. But the great truth. Of the Old Testament prophets. Were declared. To a particular nation. At a particular time.

Right? Don't ever. We have to be careful. Name it. And claim it. I know I've had people call me. I had a strange phone call. One Sunday afternoon. I mean. A really strange phone call. Somebody from Florida. Called me. Didn't.

[34 : 43] Never told me their name. Asked me. Was I the pastor? I was on the phone. For 45 minutes. With this individual. And they were so upset. Because a friend of theirs. Had told them. That Jeremiah 29 11.

Did not apply to them. For I know the plans. And purposes. And I have for you. Plans to prosper you. And now. And I had the glorious position. Of saying. Well I agree with your friend. Because that message.

Was declared to the nation of Israel. But. Because we can't name it. And claim it. But. What we see. Is a revelation. Of the heart of God.

Towards his people. And so then we went through. Where's the application. For us in that passage. Right? Some of you. Are real upset at me. Right now. Because you have a plaque. On your wall at home. And you're saying.

I've named it. And claim that all day long. That was a promise. Given to the nation of Israel. In a time of God's judgment. But the heart of God. Is revealed in that passage. Is that for God.

[35 : 36] With God. For his people. He has a purpose. We are part of his people. Right? So now. We have to bridge the gap. From the Old Testament. To the New Testament. And we have to say. That the God of the Old Testament.

Is the same God of the New Testament. It's not that God. Was just pick and choose. And I had to go through. A 45 minute conversation. So I can't do it with you here. Of what God was doing. With the nation of Israel. God was showing his character. To the world. And that these prophecies.

Are there to show his character. His attributes. To the world. With his people. Therefore. Can you claim that passage. As your own? No. But can you claim. The God of that passage. As your own. In Christ. Yes.

And you can say. That God has a purpose for me. Why? Because it tells us. In the book of Ephesians. That God created us. For a purpose. Of good works. Which he created. Before the foundations. Of the world were laid. And that's a good place.

To say amen pastor. Because he has a purpose. For you. And that purpose. Is good. In Christ. But don't go to the Old Testament. Prophets. Because we are built. On the foundation. Of the apostles.

[36 : 29] And prophets. Of the New Testament. And our foundation. Is on the covenant. Of the cross. On this side of it. And Jesus Christ. Is the cornerstone. Of our foundation. So when we open up. The New Testament.

We see all this thing. These truths. That is the preaching. And the teaching. And the declaration. Why is it so important. To know. What the apostles. And the prophets. Of the New Testament. Declared. Why is it so important. To know these things. Because that is the foundation.

We are built upon. Right? Jesus Christ. Is the cornerstone. Holding it all together. I told you this before. When we had our 150th anniversary. Celebration here. Several years ago. 2018. There is a cornerstone.

Of this building. That is why I point back here. All the time. There is a cornerstone. Right there on this building. It is clearly marked. It is a big old cornerstone. And I had a member. Come to me. Long time memory. He said. The story goes. That when they laid the cornerstone.

Of the church. They put things. In the middle of it. And there is a Bible there. There is newspaper clippings. And I looked at him. I said. I am not busting the cornerstone. That has been there 150 years. I said.

[37 : 24] I will gladly give you the sledgehammer. And you do it. Because at that time. I had been here like three years. Right? I said. I am not doing it. Not the guy. To think that it might be in there.

Nobody was here 150 years ago. Nobody really knows. If it is in there. It is just somebody once said. I am not busting that cornerstone. Because it is holding the whole building together.

Right? Christ is our cornerstone. He holds it together. But we are the building. And this is a glorious position. This is a glorious position.

Because look at what it says. We are built on this foundation. Christ is our cornerstone. Later Paul would say. Christ is the foundation. You say. Well. Or is the foundation Christ. Or is the foundation. The teaching of the apostles and prophets.

Yes. Why? Because the apostles and prophets declared Christ. Same foundation. Right? So that is the foundation. There is the cornerstone. In whom the whole building. That is us. Peter says we are spiritual stones. We are spiritual stones.

[38 : 18] Right? That is the believers. In whom the whole building. Being fitted together. Where is it? Together. That is why we do life together. Right? You are connected to me. I am connected to you. You are a stone. I am a stone. We are tied together.

Like it or not. You do not get to pick the stone. You are put next to. When I look around the foundation of this church. That stone did not go well. I would really like to be next to that one. That one is bigger than this one. No. They are just put together however the grand design and the builder determined.

Right? And the builder is God. And he stuck us together. And he united us together for a purpose. Look at this glorious purpose. Being fit together. Isn't it awesome how we fit together? You know Friday night I got asked to come up and dance.

And I didn't dance anything like the ones who were doing the show danced. You know why? Because that is their thing. Not my thing. But I am so glad they can do it so that I do not have to do it. You say pastor you were dancing in church.

Yes I was. And there is nothing wrong with that. Okay. Some of you others were dancing too. I didn't call you out. Okay. Anyway. So we go here. And they are fitting together. It says. And they are there.

[39 : 16] And Christ is holding it together. But look at what it says. As God is building this body. It is growing. Do you understand it? It is growing. Not just numerically. Spiritually. It is growing. The body is growing. It is an organism. And it is growing into a holy temple in the Lord.

Oh now. Man. Now we get excited. Oh we could be here like three hours. Right? Now we could go back to the Old Testament. And we could see what God promised David. That the seed of David would build a temple of the Lord. And now all of a sudden we are looking around.

And the seed of David is building the temple of the Lord. And we are that glorious temple. Right? We are not talking about Solomon's temple. We are talking about Jesus' temple. And that is us. He is building the temple of the Lord.

Putting us together. And gluing us together. And uniting us together. Stone to stone. Rock to rock. Look at this. Why? In whom you also. That is me. That is you. Right? In whom you. The believer in Jesus Christ.

Also being built together into. Look at this. A dwelling of God in the Spirit. That is the Holy Spirit taking residence in the church.

[40 : 13] Which is the temple of God. That is awesome. You say wow. At least you should say wow. Think about it. Jesus tells us in John.

That we have the fullness of God dwelling in us. Right? The Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost. They make their tabernacle within us. So God tabernacles inside the believer. The Spirit is there to convict us. And to bring us in.

But as a church. When we come together. The Spirit is there among us. And we are the dwelling of the Holy Spirit on earth. This is why when you open up the book of Acts. When the church prayed.

The building shook. Why? Because the Spirit was moving. And the building was shaking. And the walls were there. Because that is not just this manifestation of something crazy. No. It's this demonstration of the Spirit's power within his temple.

Think about it. You go to the Old Testament. And people prayed. God moved into the temple. Boom. The Shekinah glory was there. Nobody could go in. Remember that? Solomon dedicated his temple. When the tabernacle was erected. Let's go all the way back to the tabernacle.

[41 : 08] Tabernacle was erected the first time. They offered sacrifices on the altar. Boom. The Shekinah glory falls into the tabernacle. And all the priests fall on their face. And nobody can go into the tabernacle. Because the presence of God is there. And the place is shaken.

And Solomon's temple is built. And it's there. And they erect Solomon's temple. And it's there. And they had the offerings that come there. And they pray. And they pray in that place. And they offer the sacrifices. And boom.

The Shekinah glory falls on the temple. And it says nobody could go into the temple. Because the Shekinah glory was there. The presence of God is manifested in that temple. So much so that the place is shaken. And then it tells us. I'm starting to sweat a little bit.

And then it tells us that Ichabod is written across it. Because the glory has departed. Because the glory of God departed from Solomon's temple. I know they built another temple. I've read the Old Testament. Right? But we never find that the spirit of God comes back into that temple.

Even Herod's temple. The spirit of God is not there. You know why? Because the spirit was waiting until God's temple was built. And that's us. So that the spirit could show up and take residence in that temple. And that's why in the book of Acts.

[42 : 03] When the church was gathered together. And the people could say amen. And they were praying together. And everybody should say amen. And then the spirit fell. Boom. The place was shaken. Because the Shekinah glory of God showed up. And dwelt in his temple.

Which is the church. And that's the position we hold. We are the household of God. But we're also the house of the spirit of God. And therefore don't ever let the world tell you the church is without power.

Because he lives in us. And among us. And with us. It's just a wonder if we will ever figure out our position. Because once we do. We will be a dangerous force to be reckoned with.

Because the spirit of God dwells in us. Somebody asked Jim Cimbala one time. And I'm closing. Jim. How can you explain to us.

Jim Cimbala. Pastor. Of the tabernacle in New York. Remember. Now I know their tabernacle choir is pretty amazing too. But you know what's amazing. Is the Tuesday night prayer meetings.

[43 : 02] Somebody asked Jim Cimbala. Jim how can you explain to us. That people will wait two. Three hours. For the doors open on Tuesday nights. Just to come in and pray. We can't figure it out. And Jim looked at them and said.

If you really believed. That God heard your prayers. And God answered your prayers. And God moved according to your prayers. You'd wait in line for two hours too. The people waiting in line.

Know that when they're gathering together as a church. They are. They are. The house. Of the spirit. And they're praying. That's not just. That's not going. You know. Bapticosta or anything like that.

They know according to scripture. The spirit of God dwells among them. And therefore. They're in the presence of the holy of holies. They're in a new position. And when they pray. He's there.

What a glorious position. We hold. Let's pray. Lord I thank you so much for this day. God I thank you.

[44 : 04] I thank you for the truth of scripture. And Lord we pray that we would take our lives. And we would conform it. To the realities of scripture. We all have things that we think.

We all have things that we would long to be. But Lord we see what your word says about us as a church. Lord we just want to pray. We just pray that we're that. May we be people united to one another.

Connected to one another. Built on the foundation. Of true biblical teaching. Held together by Christ. Indwelt with the power and presence of the holy spirit. And Lord may we know it.

So that as we know it. We have confidence moving forward. In uncertain days. In an uncertain world. And Lord in knowing that. We pray for those who don't know you.

God there are multitudes around the world. But Lord there are also multitudes in our backyards. So Lord we pray that we would be. Ambassadors for Christ.

[45 : 04] Sharing this great position we have. With whoever will listen. So that other stones can be added. To the temple of God. So that people could experience the power of the spirit in their life.

Lord we just praise you for it. And we ask it all in Jesus name. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.