

# The One New Man

September 2, 2012

## I. Our Text: Eph 2:11-3:13

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—

12 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.

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

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

15 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,

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.

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,

21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,

22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

3:1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—

2 if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you;

3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief.

4 By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,

5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;

6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.

8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,

9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things;

10 so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.

11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,

12 in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.

13 Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.

## II. The mystery of the gospel Eph 3:3-11 Jew and Gentile are one new man in Christ.

v. 3 there was made known to me the mystery,

v. 4 my insight into the mystery of Christ,

v. 5 in other generations was not made known to the sons of men,

v. 6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus

v. 8 grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,

v. 9 to bring to light what is the ... the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God ...

v. 10 so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to ...

v. 11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus

### III. Two Kinds of People: 15 Comparisons

| Before Christ: (Unbelievers)             | In Christ: (Believers)  |
|--|---|
| Uncircumcision                           | Circumcision  |
| Separated (distant) from Christ          | Brought near by the blood of Christ                                   |
| No peace with God                        | He is our peace<br>Peace to all who are near or far off               |
| Excluded from the Commonwealth of Israel | Fellow-heirs  |
| Division between Jew and Gentile         | He makes Jew and Gentile one (one new man)                            |
| Strangers to the covenants of promise    | Fellow partakers of the promise                                       |
| Enmity and strife                        | He has removed (put to death) all enmity from failure to keep the Law |
| No hope                                  | Hope and a future   |
| Without God                              | Part of God's household   |
| Far off from God                         | Reconciled to God   |
| Strangers                                | He broke down every barrier of the body wall                          |
| Aliens                                   | Fellow-Citizens (with Jewish believers)                               |
| No purpose or destiny                    | Fellow-members  |
| Sinners                                  | Saints  |
| Excluded from worship                    | Part of God's temple (building)                                       |

#### 1. The power of religion circumcision / uncircumcision; religion divides -Jesus unites!

Gen 4:2-7 Cain killed Abel because of a religious difference.

And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. And Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it."

Jn 4:19-24 the woman at the well asks a religious question when confronted with her sin.

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship ." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father. "You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews. "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Ge 11:1-9 false religion (demonic/occult) seeks unity without God's approval.

1 Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. 2 And it came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. 3 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. 4 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." 5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. 6 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. 7 Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." 8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city. 9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth.

2. Separated from Christ or brought near by the blood of Christ.

Eph 2:12-13 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 near by the blood of Christ.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

In the temple courts a partition wall divided the court of the Gentiles from the court of Israel with an inscription forbidding a Gentile from going further (Josephus, Ant. VIII. 3, 2). (from Word Pictures in the New Testament; by Robertson)

3. Peace or no peace with God; He declares peace to those who are near and far off.

Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace,

Eph 2:17 AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR;

Isa 57:19-21 Creating the praise of the lips.

Peace, peace to him who is far and to him who is near,"

Says the LORD, "and I will heal him. "

But the wicked are like the tossing sea,

For it cannot be quiet,

And its waters toss up refuse and mud.

"There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

4. Excluded from the Commonwealth of Israel or included as fellow heirs.

Eph 2:12 ... excluded from the commonwealth of Israel ...

Eph 2:19 ... but you are with the saints ...

The word rendered here as "commonwealth" - politeia - means properly citizenship, or the right of citizenship, and then a community, or state. (from Barnes' Notes)

The word "fellow citizens," (sumpolitai); an old, but rare word, it is used only here in the New Testament, believers in Christ are now members of the (politeia) of Israel (Eph 2:12). (from Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament)

Php 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,

5. Racism or one new man

Eph 2:14-16 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.

Col 3:10-11 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 --a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

6. Strangers to the covenants of promise or fellow partakers of the promise.

Eph 2:12 strangers to the covenants of promise,  
Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens,

2 Co 1:20 For as many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes;

Ro 15:7-9 therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God. For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers, and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written

...

Gal 3:16 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.

Gal 3:22 But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

7. Enmity and strife or peace.

Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one

Eph 2:15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances,

Eph 2:17 and He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near;

Colossians 1:20-22 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—

8. Hope or no hope

Eph 2:12 ... having no hope ...

Col 1:27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

1 Ti 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope;

1 Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Jer 29:11 'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope .

9. Without God or part of God's household

Eph 2:12 ... without God in the world ...

Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,

These Gentiles were "without Christ." Expositors says: "It describes their former condition as one in which they had no connection with Christ; in which respect they were in a position sadly inferior to

that of the Jews, whose attitude was one of hoping and waiting for Christ, the Messiah. Their apartness from Christ, their lack of all relation to Him; these Ephesians were without Christ as Saviour, but as Gentiles, they had no covenant connection with Him as the Jews had with Him as Messiah. (from, Wuest's Word Studies)

10. Far off or reconciled to God

Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Eph 2:18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

Col 1:21-22 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach--

11. Strangers or family.

Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,

Eph 3:6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

Ro 8:14-17 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,

Gal 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

12. Foreigners or citizens of God's kingdom.

Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,

Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,

13. Having no purpose, no destiny or being part of God's household, God's temple.

Eph 2:19-22 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 corner stone, 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.

14. Sinners or Saints

Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints ...

Gal 2:15-17 "We are Jews by nature, and not sinners from among the Gentiles; nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified. "But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be!

15. Excluded from worship or draw near (part of God's Temple).

Eph 2: 18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

Eph 2:21-22 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.

#### IV. Notes from the Experts

##### A. From Wuest, (Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament)

Now Paul enumerates five things that were true of these uncircumcised Gentiles. The first is that they were **"without Christ."** Expositors says: "It describes their former condition as one in which they had no connection with Christ; in which respect they were in a position sadly inferior to that of the Jews, whose attitude was one of hoping and waiting for Christ, the Messiah. Their apartness from Christ, their lack of all relation to Him—this is the first stroke in the dark picture of their former heathen life, and the four to which the eye is directed in the subsequent clauses all follow from that." To understand the above most clearly, we should know that the word "Christ" is the English spelling of the Greek word *christos* (χριστος), which in turn is the translation of the Hebrew word for Messiah. The word "Christ" here is not to be taken in its Christian sense, but in its Jewish one. The point is not that these Ephesians were without Christ as Saviour, but as Gentiles, they had no covenant connection with Him as the Jews had with Him as Messiah.

The second thing true of these Ephesians was that they were **"aliens from the commonwealth of Israel."** We have a participle in the Greek, "alienated from the commonwealth of Israel." Expositors says: "It does not necessarily imply a lapse from a former condition of attachment or fellowship, but expresses generally the idea of being a stranger as contrasted with one who is at home with a person or an object. The term *politeia* (πολιτεία) (commonwealth) has two main senses—a state or commonwealth, and citizenship or the rights of a citizen. The first of these is most in harmony with the theocratic term 'the Israel,' and so it is understood by most. These Ephesians, therefore, had no part in the theocracy, the O.T. constitution under which God made Himself known to the Jew and entered into relation with him."

The third thing true of them was that they were **"strangers from the covenants of promise."** The definite article is in the Greek text. It is, "strangers from the covenants of the promise." Expositors comments: "The word *xenos* (ξενος) (strangers), which has the particular meaning of one who is not a member of a state or city, is used here in a general sense of foreign to a thing, having no share in it. The *diathēkai* (διαθηκαι) (covenants) are the covenants with Abraham and the patriarchs. It is obviously the covenants of Messianic significance that are in view. That the Mosaic Law or the Sinaitic Covenant is not in view seems to follow from the mention of the promises; for that covenant was not distinctively of the promise, but is described by Paul as coming in after it and provisionally (Gal. 3:17–19). The 'promise' is the one distinctively so-called, the great Messianic promise given the Hebrew people."

The fourth thing true of these Gentiles was that they had **"no hope."** Expositors says: "It is not only that they had not the hope, the Messianic hope which was one of the distinctions of the Israelite, but that they were utterly without hope. Ignorant of the divine salvation and of Christ in whom it was found, they had nothing to hope for beyond this world."

The fifth thing was that they were **"without God in the world."** Again, Expositors has a helpful comment: "As they were without Christ, and without hope, so were they without God—without the knowledge of the one true and living God and thus destitute of any God. So in Gal. 4:8, Paul speaks of Gentiles like these as knowing not God and doing service unto them which by nature are no gods." As to the phrase: "in the world," the same authority says: "The domain of their life was this present evil world, and in it, alienated as it was from God, they had no God."

Knowles, A. (2001). *The Bible guide* (1st Augsburg books ed.) (616). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg. Jews and Gentiles

Paul knows Jews who call Gentiles 'dogs'. Their argument is that Gentiles know nothing about the true God. Gentiles have no covenant with him, no law to govern their behaviour, no coming messiah, kingdom or hope. If a Jewish son or daughter marries a Gentile, the family holds a funeral

rather than a wedding. That son or daughter has ceased to exist. In Herod the Great's temple, a wall runs right round the central Jewish courts. This wall, a metre and a half high, keeps the Gentiles at a lower level and far away from the sanctuary. It separates the Gentiles both from the Jews and from God. Notices in Greek and Latin warn that any Gentile who passes this point will be executed.

**B. From Wiersbe, (Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament)**

**1. What the Gentiles were (vv. 11–12).**

God makes a distinction between Jews and Gentiles racially (1 Cor. 10:32), but not individually (Rom. 10:11–13). The Gentiles were without Christ; that is, they had no promise of a Messiah. They were not a part of the nation of Israel; in fact, the OT laws put a great gulf between Jews and Gentiles. Instead of being "the people of God," the Gentiles were aliens. They were strangers, without hope and without the true God in the world. Contrast this sad plight with the privileged position of Israel described in Rom. 9:4–5. Verse 13 sums up the Gentiles' condition in two words: "far off." While the problem of sinners in general (vv. 1–10) was spiritual death, the problem of the Gentiles in particular was spiritual distance from God and His blessings. Note in the Gospels that whenever Christ helped a Gentile, He did it at a distance (Matt. 8:5–13; 15:22–28).

**2. What God did (vv. 13–17).**

"But now" in v. 13 parallels "But God" in v. 4. When Christ died on the cross, He broke down every barrier that stood between Jews and Gentiles. In the Jewish temple, there was a wall that separated the "Court of the Gentiles" from the rest of the structure; and on this wall was a sign giving warning that any Gentile who passed beyond it would be killed. Jesus Christ tore down that wall! He tore down the physical wall, for in Christ all are made one (v. 15, and see Gal. 3:28–29). He tore down the spiritual wall and brought the "far off" Gentiles near (v. 13). He tore down the legal wall, for He fulfilled the Law in Himself and ended the reign of the Mosaic law that separated Jews and Gentiles (vv. 14–15). Christ not only made peace between sinners and God (Rom. 5:1), but He also made peace between Jews and Gentiles. He took sinful Jews and sinful Gentiles and through His cross made a "new man"—the church. Keep in mind that the mystery of the church was revealed through Paul (as we shall see in chapter 3), and that it took some time for the Jewish Christians to understand God's new program. For centuries, God had kept Jews and Gentiles separated, and the Jews had taught that the only way a Gentile could be brought near to God was by becoming a Jew. Now the truth was revealed that the cross of Christ condemns both Jews and Gentiles as sinners, but also reconciles to God in one body those that believe on Jesus.

**3. What the Gentiles and Jews are now (vv. 18–22).**

Both have access to the Father in the Spirit. Under the Jewish economy, only the high priest could go into the presence of God, and that only once a year. But in the new creation, every believer has the privilege of coming into the holy of holies (Heb. 10:19–25). Both Jews and Gentiles now belong to the household of God, and the Jew can no longer claim greater privileges. It is through faith in His blood that Jews and Gentiles are justified. Paul closes by picturing the church as a temple. This would be a fitting image not only for the Jews, who revered their holy temple at Jerusalem, but also for the Ephesians, who had the great temple of Diana in their city (Acts 19:21–41). Each believer is a living stone set into the temple (1 Peter 2:4–8). The apostles and prophets (NT prophets, 4:11) are not the foundation; they laid the foundation since they were the first to proclaim the message. Christ is the foundation of the local church (1 Cor. 3:11) and the chief cornerstone of the whole building. The church today is a living, growing temple; when it is completed, Christ will return and take the temple to glory. God dwelt in the Jewish tabernacle (Ex. 40:34), in Solomon's temple (2 Chron. 7:1), in the temple of Christ's body (John 1:14 and 2:18–22), and today in the individual believer (1 Cor. 6:19–20) and the church (Eph. 2:21–22). What a privilege to be the very habitation of God through the Spirit!