

# Jesus Unites

September 9, 2012

## I. Review: The One New Man (Eph 2:11-3:13)

### A. The mystery of the gospel (Eph 3:3-11)

The mystery (of Christ) which for ages has been hidden, revealed to Paul ... that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus.

### B. 15 Comparisons of two Kinds of People (Eph 2:11-22)

When God looks at people He sees them either:

Before Christ - or - In Christ

Comparison # 1 uncircumcision or circumcision  
Religion divides - Jesus unites!

Eph 2:11 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—

Ro 2:28-29 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

Col 2:11-13 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

## II. Jesus Unites (Eph 2:13-18)

### A. In our relationship to God:

Comparison # 2 Separated from Christ or brought near by the blood of Christ:

Eph 2:13 But no him and him w in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

"To be far off," and/or "to be near," were sayings among the Jews in the days of Paul.

Adam Clarke's Commentary says that this statement (to be far off or to be near) had three applications

1. To be near meant to be in favor with God; and to be far off signifies to be under his displeasure.
2. Every person who offered a sacrifice to God was considered as having access to him by the blood of that sacrifice.
3. Being far off, signified the state of the Gentiles and to be near state of the Jews.

Robertson (from Word Pictures in the New Testament) makes this comment from this verse; 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).

Comparison # 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; (this is a quote from 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."

## **B. In our relationship to people:**

#4. Enmity / strife or peace.

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

Barnes makes the following comment on Eph 2:14

"The best way to produce peace between alienated minds is to bring them to the same Saviour." That will do more to silence contentions, and to heal alienations, than any or all other means. Bring people around the same cross; fill them with love to the same Redeemer, and give them the same hope of heaven, and you put a period to alienation and strife. The love at Christ is so absorbing, and the dependence in his blood so entire, that they will lay aside these alienations, and cease their contentions. The work of the atonement is thus designed not only to produce peace with God, but peace between alienated and contending minds. The feeling that we are redeemed by the same blood, and that we have the same Saviour, will unite the rich and the poor, the bond and the free, the high and the low, in the ties of brotherhood, and make them feel that they are one. This great work of the atonement is thus designed to produce peace in alienated minds every where, and to diffuse abroad the feeling of universal brotherhood.

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

Barnes makes the following comment on Eph 2:15

Tyndale renders this, "the cause of hatred, that is to say, the law of commandments contained in the law written." This is expressive of the true sense. The idea is, that the ceremonial law of the Jews, on which they so much prided themselves, was the cause of the hostility existing between them. That made them different people, and laid the foundation for the alienation which existed between them. They had different laws; different institutions; a different religion. The Jews looked upon themselves as the favorites of heaven, and as in possession of the knowledge of the only way of salvation; the Gentiles regarded their laws with contempt, and looked upon the unique institutions with scorn. When Christ came and abolished by his death their special ceremonial laws, of course the cause of this alienation ceased.

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—

**#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.

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.

### **III. Conclusion:**

#### **A. We are called to be at peace.**

**With God:**

Ro 5:1 Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Col 3:15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

**With people:**

Ro 12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

1 Th 5:13 Live in peace with one another.

Heb 12:14 Pursue peace with all men,

**With believers:**

Jn 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Ro 14:19 So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

1 Co 1:10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

1 Co 12:12-14 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.

Col 3:13-15 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.