

One in Christ (Ephesians 2:11-22)

Sermon Date: 11th April 2021 – Pr. Mark Tan

Discussion Questions

1. Share a time when you felt like you were on the "outside looking in". How do you think the Gentiles felt about being on the "outside looking in"?
2. Have you ever been "at odds" with loved ones? What impact did it have on you? What would you have given to be reconciled and at peace with them? How can you compare that to spiritual separation from Christ?
3. Paul states that Jesus abolished the law with its commandments and regulations. If this is true, are there any OT commands that we must still keep? Which ones and why?
4. In Eph. 2:19 we are described as foreigners and aliens to the kingdom of God. What would this life be like? But now in Christ we are citizens and members of God's household. Imagine and discuss the range of emotions connected with that amazing inclusion.

5. Paul says that the church is a growing, interrelated, temple made up of living stones in which God lives by His Spirit. Does it make a difference to the overall building integrity if some of the stones are weak or made of inferior materials or improperly cut? How can you relate this to church and your role as a living stone?

Prayer:

Merciful God, we celebrate the way that you chose to bring unity and peace to people—through the gift of your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. He broke down longstanding walls of prejudice and hostility between Jew and Gentile, male and female, slave and free. He abolished rules that restricted life and replaced them with the new commandment to love as he did. Where have we gone astray? Walls of prejudice still exist and barriers of racism still hold people back from reaching their true potential. We hear the great message of Jesus reconciling people to you, O God, and to one another, and yet we still hesitate to reach out to people when they are different in some way from us.

Forgive us when we create barriers rather than tear them down.

Jesus has made us members of the household of God and he holds us together through the power of his Spirit. Maybe it is because we like to do things the way that we've always done them that creates barriers and excludes strangers, preventing them from ever having the opportunity to experience the reconciling power of Jesus in their lives.

Forgive us when we fail to take risks for the gospel's sake.

We remember with gratitude how people shared their faith with us so that we are no longer strangers and aliens. So we pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to bind us together in love and peace, building us up as a witnessing, welcoming and forgiving community of grace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Assurance of Forgiveness (Ephesians 2:13, 10)

"In Jesus you who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

"In him we have been reconciled to God through the cross,

made citizens with the saints and members of the household of God."

Hear then, the good news that in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!