



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

One In Christ

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The setting is a Roman prison (60-62 A.D.) and Paul is addressing the established Christian (mostly Gentile) church in Ephesus where he was a pastor for several years. Paul in this letter counters the false teachings that had started to plague the church and additionally provides encouragement and instruction in sound doctrine. In this second chapter of Ephesians, Paul describes to the church how all/we were lost and spiritually dead, separated from God, due to our sin nature, but God in His love and mercy by His grace through Christ reconciled believers and seated us with Christ. Paul now discusses the Jews and Gentiles in particular. While God had promised the Jews a kingdom, He did not make any messianic covenants with the Gentiles. So what is the program for Jews and Gentiles today?

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. (Eph. 2:11-2 NASB)

God made a distinction between Jews and Gentiles, starting with Abraham and continuing to the advent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. This distinction was as a nation and not as an individual (Rm. 10:11-13). The Gentiles had no promise of a Messiah; they were separated from the nation of Israel, no hope, and without God. The Gentiles were not only spiritually dead separated from God but also spiritually distanced (far off) from God. However, there was and is good news for the Gentiles.

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, 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; (vv. 13-17)

Christ’s death on the cross broke down all the barriers or walls that stood between Jews and Gentiles. Through Christ both groups were made one. The wall that separated those who were ‘far away’ was not removed by the Gentiles, but rather by God, who brought them near. God removed the legal law by the fulfillment of the Law in Christ, ending the ceremonial law and made peace between the Jews and Gentiles and reconciled both in one body to God. This new ‘one body’ of believers in Christ became the Church. What is the relationship of this one body to God?

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 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. (vv. 18-22)

Through Christ and in the Spirit, both have access to the Father. Jew and Gentile believers are part of the same family, the household of God. Christ is the corner stone (the key point of a sound foundation) of His house. His holy temple is growing today, individually in each believer and the Church as one body. What an honor and privilege to have our body be the growing holy temple of God through the Holy Spirit!

For Your Consideration:

- Do you remember the time when you were ‘far away’? Have you been ‘brought near’? Have you thanked God for bringing you ‘near’?
- As a Jew or Gentile believer, have you thanked God for the wall that He broke down through Christ, so that all may come to be part of the household of God?
- Are you treating your body as a holy temple?

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: WEDNESDAYS (SESSION OR HEARING DAYS) AT 7:30AM, STATEHOUSE ROOM 44

STATE STAFF AND LOBBYIST: WEDNESDAYS AT 12:10PM, STATEHOUSE ROOM 44