

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: FROM EPHESIANS 2

11 Formerly you who are Gentiles by birth...were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15 by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, 16 and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. 17 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 access to the Father by one Spirit.

19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION & REFLECTION

1. What struck you from the sermon and why?
2. What do you make of the idea that pride and self-justification are what's at the root of division and hostilities?
3. How does the gospel of grace (or justification by grace) get to the root of this problem?
4. When are you tempted to defend rather than repent? How can we become the kind of people who look within rather than look for someone to blame?
5. Who is your "other"? Who does the world assume is your enemy? How could you make the first move toward friendship and brotherly love among equals with such a person?

FOR FURTHER READING

[Disunity in Christ by Christena Cleveland](#)

[Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church by Soong-Chan Rah](#)

[Peacemaker: a Biblical Guide for Resolving Personal Conflict by Ken Sande](#)

[Article: The Gospel and Our Prejudice by Tim Keller](#)

Sermon Notes