

7.21.19 ~ **Ephesians 2:14-18**, Peace with God, through Christ...

Read Ephesians 2:14-18. Jesus removed Sin's curse, bringing peace between Jew and Gentile, between God and anyone who would come to Him by faith.

Jesus Christ (**Ephesians 2:14**) is God's peace, bringing unity between Jew and Gentile, by destroying the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, making them one people.

Jesus Christ (**Ephesians 2:15**) has abolished [put an end to] the authority of the law with its commandments and regulations; and He did this by His own sacrificial death and sovereign resurrection, making the divine and complete payment for all sin -- creating in Himself one new man out of the two, bringing peace.

Sin causes conflict and division, it is the enemy of true peace. Sin is self-centered and self-serving, and is by its nature divisive and disruptive. The only cure is the peace of God, given to all those who trust in Christ.

If you belong to Christ, and seek to obey the Word of God, led by the Spirit of God -- you will know God's peace; but you will also know the hatred of the world. **John 14:27**, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."

John 15:18-19, "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you."

John 16:33, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

1John 3:13, "Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you."

COEXIST



The 'C' in the form of a Muslim Crescent, is a symbol for Islam.

The 'O' in the form of a Peace Sign, is a symbol for Pacifism.

The 'E' is a symbol for gay rights/diversity/gender equality.

The 'X' in the form of a Star of David, is a symbol for Judaism.

The 'I' dotted with a Pentagram (Satan Worship), is a symbol for Paganism.

The 'S' in the form of the "ying-yang," is a symbol for Taoism.

The 'T' in the form of a Cross, is a symbol for Christianity.

Christians will not be able to have peace with those who reject God; but we should have peace with those who belong to God, no matter what nationality, ethnicity, culture, etc.

The Jewish and Gentile converts in church in Ephesus, were having a hard time getting along; just like people of different backgrounds and personal preferences in the church today don't get along, because of sinful choice and actions.

The Bible is very clear that in Christ there is no Jew or Gentile, male or female, slave or freeman. There is only one Body of Believers, one True Church; many members, yes, but each one equal before God, placed in the Body of Christ, by God's Spirit (**Galatians 3:28-29; 1Corinthians 12-14, 18, 20, 27**).

Christ broke down and destroyed the dividing wall and barrier that hinders and often disrupts unity among God's people, the fellowship of believers, the church.

Two weeks ago I taught about how God intentionally set apart the nation of Israel, making the Jews so different that they could not be absorbed or blended into other cultures; for God had alienated Israel from other nations, by way of special commandments, diets, ceremonies, covenants, and rituals that clearly set the Jews apart.

All these distinctions had separated the Jews from the Gentiles for hundreds of years, but were now done away with through the death and resurrection of Christ, which brought equality to all men before God, based solely on believing faith.

Before Christ, Gentiles and Jews couldn't fellowship or worship together because of restricted foods, ceremonial washings, and cultural regulations, all set forth by God. Gentiles could not enter a Jewish Temple, and Jews would not set foot in a pagan [Gentile] temple. But now, in Christ, all the distinctions that caused alienation were removed, bringing equality, allowing unity, in Christ alone. **Colossians 2:16-17**, "Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day— things which are a *mere* shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ."

The cultural differences that had existed for so long were meaningless, for God now reconciles to Himself everyone who believes in Christ, nothing else matters. **Romans 10:11-13**, "For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes in Him will not be *disappointed* [Lit. *put to shame*, cf. **Isaiah 28:16**].' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for 'Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved' [cf. **Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21**].

No one coming to God will be turned away, and no one who belongs to God is spiritually distinct from any other person who belongs to God.

We all have been reconciled to God by the peace that has come through Christ, so that men of all nations might be one people.

In **Ephesians 2:16**, Paul focuses on the cross, for it is here that supreme reconciliation is accomplished. Jesus Christ not only put to death the hostility between Jew and Gentile, but that between all humans and God.

Colossians 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."

Jesus came (**Ephesians 2:17**) providing God's peace, forgiveness for sin through Christ's death; being offered first to the Jews (who were near), and then to the Gentiles (who were far off).

Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

Everyone on earth has access to God's peace through Christ, and we, His children,, are to proclaim salvation and promote reconciliation to all those who will listen (**2Corinthians 5:14-21**).

It is through Jesus Christ (**Ephesians 2:18**) that both the Jew and the Gentile (all people) have been granted access to the Father, by God's Son, through God's Spirit.

John 14:6, "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me'."

John 14:15-17 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you."

1John 4:13, "By this we know that we abide [live] in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit."

The only way to enter God's presence, is through Jesus Christ. He alone has provided eternal peace, having reconciled sinful men with the Holy God of Creation; and only those who believe in Him, trusting in what He accomplished through the cross and the resurrection, will receive eternal life in heaven.

Romans 10:9-10, "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."

We all have peace with God, through Christ.

God's greatest gift to the world is His Son, Who, at His birth was given the name Jesus [Greek] *Yeshua* [Hebrew], meaning, *God's Salvation*, and He was called [**Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23**, *Immanuel*, which means, *God with us*].

Our greatest purpose, joy, and responsibility is to share the Message of God's Salvation with all who will listen, so that, (**John 20:31**) "[they] may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing [they] may have [eternal] life in His name."

(**Acts 4:12**), "there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

At the moment of genuine salvation you are granted Peace with God the Father, through the sacrifice of God the Son, affirmed and made eternally effectual by the indwelling presence of God the Spirit living in you.

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

And not only forgiveness for sin and eternal life, but the very Peace of God that is only granted to those who have peace with God, through Christ.

Pastor Mike

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