

Our Mission

Race and The Gospel

Sunday, February 1, 2015

Ephesians 2:11-22

I. Introduction

v.11 – ‘Therefore’

The entire 2nd chapter of Ephesians is about alienation. Verses 1-10 shows that we ‘were’ alienated from God. Verses 11-22 shows that we are alienated from each other. **The solution for this alienation is the same: Jesus Christ!**

Being ‘in Christ’ has first and foremost reconciled us back with God. We are no longer is enemy, but now his child. Since we are God’s child we are to take on his character and be reconciled to each other through the gospel.

“The division seemed absolute, and any talk about reconciliation seemed monstrous and impossible. Jew and Gentile! Jews and ‘dogs’! But on the other hand the Gentiles had their classification, and particularly the Greeks. The whole world, for them, was divided up into Greeks and Barbarians—the knowledgeable people, the philosophers, the Greeks on the one hand; the ignoramuses, the illiterate, the Barbarians on the other. That was the position, and it seemed utterly impossible that these two sections, these warring sections who despised each other so heartily, could ever be brought together and reconciled, still less that they should ever be found on bended knee together worshipping and adoring the same God and the same Lord. But it has happened, says Paul. The astounding thing is that it is true. These Ephesians have been brought in, and are likewise in the membership. This is the astounding thing that nothing less than ‘the exceeding greatness of God’s power’ could ever have brought to pass.” Jones

II. The Racial Dilemma (v.11,12)

The Gentiles had 5 dilemmas according to the apostle Paul:

- A. Separated from Christ
- B. Alienated from the commonwealth of Israel
- C. Strangers to the covenants of promise
- D. Having no hope
- E. Without God in the world

III. The Racial Solution (v.13)

“But now in Christ Jesus...” – here is the solution to their dilemma.

“you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

The Apostle Paul tells us that Jesus’ vicarious death as payment for humanity’s sin is God’s only solution to racial hostility and his only provision for racial reconciliation.

IV. The New Normal (v.14-16)

v.14 – *“For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility...”*

v.15 – *“by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances that he might create in himself **one new man** in place of two so making peace...”*

One - (heis) is the cardinal numeral one and in this verse defines that which is united as one in contrast to being divided or consisting of separate parts. Heis speaks of oneness, unity and identity, Jew and Gentile united in position and privilege.

New - (kainos) means new in kind or quality, unprecedented, unheard of, new in sense that it brings into the world a new quality of thing which did not exist before.

Kainos – the new normal!

Man - Corporately not individually. In other words, this truth in this context refers to Christ's body, the church, which is in turn composed of individual new creations in Christ. Note that God is not making a new world, but a new man.

What is this new normal?

80:20 ratio of diversity in multi-ethnic church; 7.5% of the worshipping communities are multi-ethnic; 2.5% Christian Churches in America are multi-ethnic.

“Many churches are more committed to their ethnic heritage than to the gospel.”
Jarvis Williams

v.16 – *“...and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.”*

‘Killing’ means to kill outright or to put to death in any manner. To kill someone results in a state of separation. The aorist tense speaks of an effective, completed action in the past.

V. The New Family (v.17-22)

This new family has now become a new temple that is to reflect our glorious Savior. We, both Jew and Gentile are that temple. We are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.