

Series: Church Matters

Message: The Foundation of the Church

Scripture: Ephesians 2:11-22 (ESV)

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Ephesians 2:11-22 (ESV)

¹¹ Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—

¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

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

¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace,

¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.

¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,

²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

“The Jew had an immense contempt for the Gentile. The Gentiles, said the Jews, were created by God to be fuel for the fires of hell. God, they said, loves only Israel of all the nations that he had made...It was not even lawful to render help to a Gentile mother in her hour of sorest need, for that would simply be to bring another Gentile into the world. Until Christ came, the Gentiles were an object of contempt to the Jews. The barrier between them was absolute. If a Jewish boy married a Gentile girl, or if a Jewish girl married a Gentile boy, the funeral of that Jewish boy or girl was carried out. Such contact with a Gentile was the equivalent of death.” – **William Barclay**

John Stott explains it this way:

The temple building itself was constructed on an elevated platform. Around it was the Court of the Priests. East of this was the Court of Israel, and further east the court of the women. These three courts – for the priests, the lay men and the lay women of Israel respectively – were all on the same elevation as the temple itself. From this level one descended five steps to a walled platform, and then on the other side of the wall fourteen more steps to another wall, beyond which was the outer court or the court of the Gentiles.”

- Warning notices in Greek and Latin would have been placed all along this wall warning the Gentiles not to enter or be killed
- One of these signs was found in 1871 (another in 1935) – it is a large white limestone slab – exact wording: “No foreigner may enter within the barrier and enclosure around the temple. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death.”
- The Jews had taken God’s choosing of them and *misunderstood, misconstrued, and misapplied* what they were to be (a light to the nations) ...In Leviticus 19:34 God gave them the following instruction: “The stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.”

I. Remember what you were(v. 11-12)

II. Remember what Jesus has done(v. 13-18)

3 typical applications of the gospel:

- 1) “My ticket to heaven”
- 2) “My faith is between me and God”
- 3) “Jesus changes everything”

III. Remember what you are now (v. 19)