

Ephesians 2:11-22

EXEGETICAL IDEA (What it says)

We Gentiles used to be far off from God, but we have been brought near by the blood of Christ. The work of Christ on the cross was a work of peacemaking: between us and God and between Jews and Gentiles. He has not blended the two, nor subsumed one into another, but has created a new man – the saints, God’s household. Together, we are the dwelling place for God.

HERMENEUTICAL IDEA (What it means)

God deserves our worship for being our hope – for including us in his household of faith. In his house, we are now at peace with Him and each other, including people that we might be estranged from. God is about the business of reconciliation. As God’s dwelling place, how then should we live?

Paul has already told us that we are God’s workmanship, created for good works. It seems that the first good work is to restore broken relationships. In God’s house, we love one another. Paul will expound on this in Ch. 4.

Clearly, this was a vital issue of the day that Paul was addressing. As such, it is not directly applicable to us; however, we can identify with the core issues of race relations, and spiritual pride & prejudice, and reconciliation.

APPLICATION

Do we who are “in Christ” look down upon those outside Christ, just as Jews used to look down on gentiles? We too were once “far off” and have only been saved by his grace, not by our works.

Verse 2:12

Luke 15 – Prodigal Son & Older Brother

PERSON PREJUDICE AND WITNESSING

Who are you estranged from? Seek reconciliation. Mt. 5:23-26; 43-48; 18:15-17.

PRINCIPLES OF RECONCILIATION

Do you have racial prejudices? John 3:16. Acts 6:1-7

RACE RELATIONS AND GLOBAL EVANGELISM

Who seems strange to you? Who is different? Do you love them?

What does this mean for a Chinese church?

Also, what does it mean the he “abolished the law?”

Nullify, abolish, destroy

Matt. 5:17 Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

Romans 3:31 Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

Romans 7:2 For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage.

Romans 7:6 But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

Galatians 5:4 You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.

Romans 10:4 (ESV) For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Chrysostom: "Oh, what love of humanity! He gave us a law that we might keep it, but when we failed to keep it and deserved punishment he dissolved the law." I would add that he paid the penalty and then dissolved it.

What is the place of Israel then?

2 Cor 1:20 For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.

Hebrews 7:22 This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

The new covenant replaces the old, and the old is fulfilled in Christ.

We are new creations in Christ, created in the image of the 2nd Adam and we are to be conformed to his image (Rom. 8:29).

What kind of peace has Jesus given us? Contextually, it seems the answer is right relationships with God and men.