



Ephesians 5 Peace at Last



TEXT: EPHESIANS 2:11-22

Two peace treaties:

1. GOD & MAN 2. JEWS & GENTILES → Outcome = one body/family/temple, i.e. Church
You cannot HAVE peace until there's peace TO BE HAD.

The blood of Jesus purchased peace by

- a) CONQUEST: He OVERCAME the ENEMY.
- b) RECONCILIATION: Removing blockages of SIN, SHAME, SEPARATION.
- c) INDWELLING: Our CONSTANT SOURCE of peace.

THE HISTORY

- * At the Fall, when Adam & Eve sinned, they were SEPARATED from God (see 2:1-3)
 - * Soon the earth was filled with WICKEDNESS, VIOLENCE and every form of EVIL ... Hence, the FLOOD.
 - * In Genesis 12, God called ABRAM (Abraham), father of the nation of ISRAEL and launched the RESCUE MISSION.
 - * The CROSS was God's PEACE PLAN.
 - * When God chose Abraham, he wasn't ABANDONING the rest of humanity, his family was intended to be the tool for BLESSING and EVANGELISING the whole world ... But, unfortunately, that's NOT what happened.
 - * God began to foreshadow the MESSIAH through the LAW, the TABERNACLE and CIRCUMCISION.
 - * But the Jews became PROUD and developed a deep CONTEMPT for the Gentiles.
 - * The Gentiles were 'WITHOUT' → CHRIST, CITIZENSHIP, COVENANT, HOPE, GOD (v12-13)
- *Why did the schism of animosity develop between Jew and Gentile? Was it inevitable? What were the consequences? How could it have been different?*
- *What was it like for the Jew pre-Christ? Why was there no peace for them?*
- *What was it like for the Gentile pre-Christ? Why was there no peace for them?*

'BUT NOW' (v13)

For the GENTILE = No longer an ALIEN, STRANGER without GOD and without HOPE.

For the JEW = All that BURDEN of LAW lifted, fulfilled.

For ALL = The SEPARATION between God and man removed, bridged, healed. (v13-18)

→ *What are the consequences of this peace / this 'but now' for us today? What about the Jews and Gentiles? What are we now free from? What do we long for peace from? Do we live in the reality of that?*

→ *Why is peace so elusive, both internationally and personally? What does this passage contribute to that debate? What advice would you give our Prime Minister? What advice would you give the Jews and Palestinians?*

JEW v GENTILE (Gal 3:26-29)

- * The New Covenant brought Jew and Gentile onto EQUAL FOOTING.
 - * The human race is no longer CLASSIFIED Jew and Gentile.
 - * Only one thing matters to God = Whether we're in COVENANT RELATIONSHIP with Him or not.
 - * God sees only two categories of people: SAVED and UNSAVED, BELIEVERS and UNBELIEVERS.
- *"We're all saved the same way and under same covenant (John 14:6). We all have identical access to God, inheritance in Christ and status in Kingdom." Is there any difference now between the way Jews and Gentiles relate to God? Should we treat Jews differently? Do they still have a special place in God's economy / future?*
- * In Christ, there are no RACIAL, CULTURAL, LITURGICAL, GEOGRAPHIC, POLITICAL, GENDER or STATUS distinctions.
- *How should this reality affect how we see church and do church? Does human nature tend to gravitate into those distinctive groups anyway? Is that a bad thing? What does it mean for a Christian to be 'inclusive?' (These are big questions!!!)*

UNITY

- * The Church becomes a place of unprecedented, glorious, supernatural ONENESS.
 - * Unity doesn't come from ORGANISATION, TRADITION or DOCTRINE, it comes from CHRIST the CORNERSTONE.
 - * Unity is God's PLAN (Psalm 133), Jesus' PRAYER (John 17) and the Holy Spirit's WORK (Eph 4:1-6).
 - * TOGETHER WE BECOME: 1. Fellow CITIZENS 2. Members of God's FAMILY 3. His living TEMPLE.
- *What does unity look like? What is that unity based on? Why is that unity so important? (See Psalm 133, Eph 4:1-6)*
- *"There were tensions in Ephesus clearly ... Historically church has been prejudiced, misogynistic + elitist ... Internet is cesspool of division" Why does the church struggle so much with unity? Are there divisions and distinctions that are right and justified? What would Jesus think if He looked at the modern-day church in this regard? In the light of John 17, what might He say? What roles do denominations play in all this?*
- *"The church will realise her unity only when she realises that she does not exist to propagate point of view of any body of men, but to provide a home for the spirit of Christ to dwell and where were men who love Christ can meet in that spirit." Discuss!*

RESPONSE

- a) **Blessed are peacemakers** → Jesus said the Gospel would divide, but He called us to pursue peace ... Could you be called a peacemaker? What does that look like in your world?
- b) **Are you at peace?** "You cannot have peace until there's peace to be had" ... Are you at peace with God? Are you at peace with your brothers + sisters?