

Studies in Ephesians

Lesson V

TEXT: Ephesians 2:11-22 (NIV)

¹¹Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)—

¹²remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

¹⁴For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

¹⁹Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²²And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Questions for Discussion

1. Who are the "Gentiles" and why was there an issue in the early church about having fellowship with the "uncircumcised" (vv.11-12; cf. Genesis 17:11; 1 Samuel 17:26)
2. How did Gentiles, who were "far away," come to be "brought near" to God? (vs. 13; cf. Colossians 2:11-12)
3. What did the crucifixion of Christ accomplish (vv.13-18)?
4. How is the church described in verses 19-21? What is God's vision for the church (vs. 22)?