



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Divine Purpose in History and Prophecy

Ephesians 2:11-22

Eschatology Doctrinal Studies, Part X

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] We thank Thee for the truth that is contained within it. We thank Thee for the foundation of the body of Christ and the suffering and death and resurrection of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ and we thank Thee too for the gift of the Scriptures to guide us in our Christian life and to guide us in our Christian thinking. And again Lord we ask that Thou be with each one of us enable us to understand the things that we read and ponder and may the result be that we're drawn closer to Thee through our Lord and through that which he has done for us. We especially express our gratitude to Thee Lord for the goodness shown to us in Christ. And we ask for Thy presence with us now in this meeting.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] Well we are turning again to the Divine Purpose in History and Prophecy and this is number ten in our series and tonight I'm going to be pressed a little bit to finish right on time and I want to say simply this that we're going to stop here for two more times and deal with the subject that we are looking at tonight which is the present age. And so tonight we'll look at Ephesians 2:11-22. Next week, the Lord willing,

we'll look at 2 Ephesians 3 verses 1 through 13 and then on our third study we'll look at Acts, chapter 15. Each of these we will deal with in the way in which unfolds for us the characteristics of the present age. And so tonight we are turning to Ephesians 2, verse 11 through verse 22 for the first of these three subjects which are continuing studies into the Divine Purpose in History and Prophecy. Ephesians chapter 2 in verse 11,

“Therefore remember that you once Gentiles in the flesh were uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision made in the flesh by hands that at that time you were without Christ being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ for he Himself is our peace who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of separation having abolished in his flesh the enmity that is the law of the commandments contained in ordinances so as to create in himself one new man from the two thus making peace. And that he might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross thereby putting to death the enmity. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one spirit to the Father

You'll notice how often the Apostle Paul refers us to the doctrine of the Trinity and there is a very good illustration of it there through him the second person we have access by one spirit the third person to the Father, the first person of the eternal Trinity.

“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God having been build on the foundation of the apostles and prophets Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone

in whom the whole building being fitted together grows into a holy temple in the Lord in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”

The modern use of the term “alienation” John Stock points out in his little book on Ephesians comes from Ludwig Feuerbach, the Bavarian philosopher who lived in the nineteenth century through Karl Marx who was very much influenced by Feuerbach. And this alienation which came to be prominent in the thinking and in the speaking of the Communist and such came to be attached to all who were disillusioned with the system, the establishment. And we have lived through a generation or so in which this has been rather prominent and reading our papers and listening to the testimonies of some of the more radical and more liberal members of our society, we have heard them over and over again, alienation. The answer that was suggested a generation or two ago was that what we need to do really was to drop out of society. And the result was a preaching of the values of socialism and even communism. And so we are coming out of a period of time in which that was rather prominent.

Well we don't have time to talk about the political side of something like that. I only mention the term “alienation” because it is one of the terms that arises in this chapter. And to suggest to you that Paul has something a whole lot better than anything that has been suggested by the political, the sociological, the philosophical age in which we are living and which we have come through. What Paul suggests is that there is a new man, a new humanity that is entered by faith and one may enter it without class struggle and the doors are opened for any who hearing the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ are attracted by it and come to him in faith. As he puts it in verse 15, “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity that is the law of the commandments contained in ordinances so as to create in himself one new man from the two thus making peace.”

Francis Fawkes has a little book on Ephesians has some good ideas in it. He has written some other things that I've profited from, a British preacher of the word and also

an academician. If as he suggests Ephesians is really like a sermon on the eternal purpose of God then chapter 2, verse 11 though 22 is important because that is what we are talking about. We are talking about the eternal purpose of God. And what we may expect to find, if Mr. Fawkes is right, is that we are going to have insight on the relation of Jew and Gentile in the church.

Now, we have brought our series of studies from the creation all the way up to in our last study we look at the nature of the church. We talked about the beginning of the church and so we are going to pause here for three studies in order to deal with the question of the present age, what really is characteristic of the present age. And what I hope to show is that what we have characteristic of this age is just to mention it is first of all the universal preaching of the Scriptures and secondly the building of a new society, the New Testament calls it the Church, and this involves its formation which we have already talked about in our last study. We will also look at the new character of the church dealing with the place of Gentiles and Jews within it, the equality that we have in worship and service yet with differing roles of the sexes, the universality of the priesthood and spiritual gifts, and also dealing with the simplicity of the corporate worship in its ordinances and meetings. And then, finally, we'll say something about the government of the church and conclude with a study that will deal with its climax in apostasy and ultimately the coming of the Lord.

But now, we want to look at Ephesians 2:11-22, what we have seen in the stages of the New Testament unfolding of the purpose of God at this stage that we've been talking about is that Gentiles may be saved. Now, that was something that in New Testament times was not accepted very easily. But the New Testament makes that plain and when we look at Acts chapter 10 and Peter's preaching to Cornelius in Cornelius' house that fact was established though there were some questions about it. Then secondly, the question arose well if Gentiles can be saved or they saved by the coming Jews or must they in being saved become Jews or maybe they will be saved as Gentiles

and not become Jews at all? Well that questions was settled at the conference in Jerusalem, and there it was made plain the apostles underlined it that the Gentiles may be saved as Gentiles; that is, they possess the blessings of God apart from entrance into Judaism.

And then another and final question is if the Gentiles are saved do they share equally in the covenantal blessings with Israel? Now, these are some of the things this latter particularly that the apostle will take up in this section beginning at chapter 2 in verse 11 and going on through chapter 3 inverse 13. Looking now, specifically, verse 11. “Therefore remember.” Well the first thing that he talks about is the alienation of the Gentiles in the past ages the therefore makes the connection. We tried to underline these things in the study of the Bible; I hope you get into the habit of looking particularly at the conjunctions that begin the sentences because if you do you will have some clues regarding the meaning. So here we have the therefore or wherefore which makes the connection with chapter 2, verse 1 through verse 7, for verses 8 through 10 are just a little bit of passage a kind of place in which the apostle bypasses for a moment the main topic and talks about divine grace. So the connection is made with verses 1 through 7 where he has outlined the work of the Lord in salvation and salvation by grace.

So first of all in verse 11 he says, “Remember that you once Gentiles in the flesh who are called un-circumcision by what is called the circumcision made in the flesh by hands.” So you can notice the first thing he does is call upon them to recollect, “Remember that you once Gentiles in the flesh,” that at that time you were without Christ, you were aliens, you were strangers from the covenants of promise, you had not hope, you were without God in the world. You know, it is never bad to shed a tear or two of remembrance of what we were before we came to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

One of the greatest stories in the Christian faith in the last few centuries is the story of John Newton. You’ve heard it before, I’ll repeat it again because it’s something that all of us may identify with. Newton was an Anglican clergyman and hymn writer.

He was the son of a merchant sea captain. He had a very unsettled childhood and turbulent youth and in the midst of it had a few periods of time in which there was a rather intense religious experience. But, nevertheless, he was forced to join the Royal Navy. He tried to escape. He was arrested in West Africa and, eventually, became virtually the slave of a white slave traders' black wife. In fact, when time came to eat she would throw him pieces of bread underneath the table so he would eat in that fashion. He had sunk that low. She humiliated him and he lived hungry and destitute for two years involved in the slave trade himself as the slave of a former slave.

Well in seventeen hundred and forty-seven he boarded a ship for England. And as they made their way back they hit a violent storm in the North Atlantic that nearly sank them. It was March 10, 1748 when the hold was rapidly filling with water Newton hurried to his place by the pumps, for that was his job, and he said to the captain “If this will not do the Lord have mercy on us.” He was startled by his own words “mercy” because he hadn't thought about that for a long time. In fact he said later in astonishment I said “mercy, mercy” what mercy can there be for me? This was the first desire I had breathed for mercy for many years. Well about six in the evening the hold was free of water and their came a gleam of hope he said he saw the hand of God displayed in our favor and he began to pray. He said, “I couldn't utter the prayer of faith. I couldn't draw near to a reconciled God and call him Father. My prayer for mercy was like the cry of the ravens which yet Lord does not disdain to hear.” So on March 10 he sought mercy and found it.

And we know something of his influential life. He had great influence on Wilberforce, who was one of the moving forces behind the fight against slavery. Other men that he influenced greatly were William Cooper, who has written a number of our hymns. Thorton, Vin, in fact they Olney collection of hymns and poems with Cooper which resulted from the relationship the two had. Among John Newton's well know hymns are “How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds” we've sung that, “Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken,” “One there is above all others,” and, of course, the immortal “Amazing

Grace How Sweet the Sound.” When he left the sea he entered the ministry. He printed a text in bold letters and fastened it right over the wall of his study, mantelpiece. And there it was “Thou shalt remember that thou was a bondman in the land of Egypt and the Lord thy God redeemed thee.” And it stayed there. He said later on the things that he forgot were manifold. In fact, one of his favorite expressions was either “I forgot, I soon forgot, this I also I totally forgot.” Later on Richard Cecil who was his biographer noticing that Newton was beginning to show the signs of age urged him one day to stop preaching and to take life easily. “What” he replied “shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak at all?” One thing he couldn’t forget was the great salvation. He was forgetting everything else but he couldn’t forget that and he was determined that nobody else should.

Then there is a story near the end of his life he was in Bath, England and one day he met will William Jay on the streets of Bath and Newton complained that his powers were failing fast. “My memory” he said “is nearly gone but I can remember two things that I’m a great sinner and that Christ is a great savior.”

Well I say it’s never bad to shed a tear or two in remembrance. And so the apostle calls upon the Ephesians, remember, remember what you were, remember that you once were Gentiles in the flesh. Now, notice when he says “gentiles in the flesh” what he’s thinking about of course is that they didn’t have the mark of relationship to God. And the mark of relationship to God was circumcision. “You were Gentiles in the flesh, uncircumcised. He goes on to say “who are called un-circumcision by what is called the circumcision which is made in the flesh with hands.”

Now, in verse 11 and 12 and particular in now, verse 12 notice the disability of the Gentiles that Paul puts his fingers on. “That at that time you were without Christ no covenantal sign in the faith, you did not have the Messiah” this was before the Messiah period, before the coming of Christ. They were without the Messiah, “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, no citizenship among God’s people, strangers from the

covenants of promise” the foundational Abrahamic covenantal promises were not for them. They had not participated in them. They were strangers from the covenants of promise. We talked about them, we talked about those three unconditional covenants that God had cut in the Old Testament, the Abrahamic, the Davidic, and the New Covenant and the Gentiles were left out. Of course, there was a place for them but so far as the Law of Moses was concerned it was given wholly to Israel to prepare them for the coming of the Messiah. And so Israel was left out they were strangers from the covenants of promise that foundational Abrahamic promise given to Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob inclusive of the promises of the other covenants.

Then he goes on and adds having no hope without a sustaining covenantal promises what could they expect? And, furthermore, Israel had failed in its calling. In Isaiah, chapter 43, we are told that one of the reasons that God gave the law, gave the covenants to Abraham and his seed was that they would be a missionary people and reach out to the Gentiles. But in Isaiah, chapter 43 in verse 10, it's very evident that God regarded them, as having failed in their mission. So having no hope and without God in the world, in the world may incidentally qualify the whole verse but at least it qualifies the left without God in the world. So how could you sum up the Gentiles like Ephesians before the coming of our Lord, well someone has done it this way. An old commentator that they were churchless, they were hapless, they were hopeless, they were godless and they were homeless. John Eddy, the Scottish commentator, says “Their future was a night without a star.”

Now, having said what they were, the apostle talks about the reconciliation of the Gentiles in verse 13 through verse 18, “But now,” that's a temporal expression, “But now,” so he moves from the past to the present, “But now, in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” And this “but now,” marks the intervention of the Lord God. “But now, in Christ Jesus you have been brought near through the blood of Christ.” So instead of being simply in the world without hope, they

are in Christ. The spiritual alienation that they had experienced has now, become spiritual union because they are united to the Messiah these Gentiles who have believed.

I guess, if we were looking for the best example of all of this the best example would probably be the Apostle Paul's experience except that he was not a Gentile. But in chapter 4, verse 9 and following the apostle, in chapter 3 of Philippians, verse 4 through verse 9, he talks about his own experience. He says “Though I also might have confidence in the flesh, if anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more, circumcise thee today of the stock of Israel of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, concerning the law, a Pharisee, concerning zeal, persecuting the church, concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless, but what things were gained to me these I have counted laws for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things lost for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish that I may gain Christ and be found in Him not having my own righteousness which is from the law but that which is through faith in Christ the righteousness which is from God through faith.”

If you look in Paul's writings you'll probably find the “heart of hearts” of all of his writings the keynote, the one master chord which seems to vibrate, pulsate through the whole divine symphony of his writings, as someone has put it, is the watchword of the great Elijah, “Jehovah liveth now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

Now, first of all, the reconciliation of the Gentiles to Israel, he says, “For he himself is our peace who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of separation. In Christ Jesus you far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ and he himself is our peace who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of petition.” Now, notice that the reconciliation is the reconciliation of Gentiles to Israel, “For he himself is our peace who has made both” what both, both Jews and Gentiles one, “and who has broken down the middle wall of separation.” What middle wall of

separation? Well the middle wall of separation was the separation that was made by God between Jews and Gentiles. That's what he's talking about, not separation from God but at this point separation from the divine covenants and the Jewish people who possessed them. So he is talking about the reconciliation of Gentiles to Israel now with the wall having been broken down. What was the middle wall? Well it was the law. What produced the enmity between the Gentiles and Israel, the law? The law given by God to Israel and given to Israel only and Israel's affirmation of the fact that they were the chosen people of God was the enmity that was produced between the Jews and the Gentiles. Having been chosen, the Gentiles not having been chosen, you can understand, of course, how that would not be too popular with other people.

John Calvin in his commentary's framed a syllogism, this is what it is. I just read this today and I put it in my notes because I thought it was rather interesting. This is his syllogism that he framed. He calls it that. "If the Jews wish to have peace with God they must have Christ as their mediator. But Christ will not be their peace in any other way than by making out of them and the Gentiles one body. Therefore unless the Jews admit the Gentiles to fellowship they have no connection with God." That's rather interesting because it was the other way around for so long and now, of course, it is necessary for Israel to acknowledge by virtue of the coming of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, that a way has been opened for the Gentiles.

But Paul says, "The middle wall of partition has been broken down," this is a most vivid figure and it has to do with the situation in Jerusalem and requires, I think, a little explanation. You may know that the temple in Jerusalem was the place where Israel carried out its worship. The temple had a series of courts. The outer court of the temple was the court of the Gentiles. Gentiles could enter that court. But then there followed other courts. Secondly, there was the court of the women. The women could go into the court of the Gentiles and the women who were Jewish could go into the court of the women. But after that then the court of the priests and only the priests could go beyond

that. And then after that the holy place itself. So only into the first of these courts could a Gentile come, the court of the Gentiles.

Between it and the court of the women politically correct language “wimmin” “wimmin” the plural of “woffem” we don’t say woman anymore we say “woffem” you didn’t know that. A woman is a “woffem” you’ve got to avoid that word “man” so put “fem” instead “woffem” and the plural of it is “women” that’s they way they pronounce in some parts of the South anyway. But that’s “wimmin” and that way you avoid “men.” So I’m trying to do this I have a book on politically correct language I’m trying to get used to it. You know, chronologically enhanced is what I am. [Laughter] That’s better than saying I’m old. I’ve been saying that for twenty years in Believers Chapel and now I say chronologically enhanced. That has class, I think, chronologically enhanced. I wish I was enhanced in some other ways but, nevertheless, I’m not I like that at least. I may be poor but I’m chronologically enhanced.

Anyway, coming back to the topic in the court the Gentiles could only come into the court of the Gentiles. They could not go in to the court of the Israelites, the court of the women, the court of the priests. They certainly could not go into the holy place which only the high priests could go in once a year. So between the court of the Gentiles and court of the women there were barriers built up all away around and signs were placed on stone monuments or memorials all around the barrier and the signs were designed to keep out the Gentiles warning them that if they went it they were going to be subject to death. Josephus talks about all of this and he says that those stones had descriptions like this was the stone wall which had the petition which had the inscription which forbade any foreigners to go in under the pain of death. Josephus had said other things about that. I had in my notes some of the things that he said but can’t seem to find them right now. But at any rate there were signs about, engraved stones, that said if the Gentiles attempted to go in they would be worthy of death.

One of the most interesting archeological discoveries was made in 1871 during excavations that were carried on by the Palestine Exploration Fund on the temple area. And there Mr. Clermont-Ganneau found one of the very pillars which Josephus describes having been set up on the barrier to which Paul here refers. It is now preserved in the museum at Constantinople and bears the following inscription in Greek letters "No man of another nation to enter within the fence an enclosure around the temple and whoever is caught will have himself to blame that his death ensues." It's very interesting that that's been found and that was one of the stones that were on the temple barrier when the Apostle Paul wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians. It's very interesting.

At any rate, I think, you can see that what he is talking about is the barrier that existed between Israel and the Gentiles and he says, "Now, he himself is our peace who has made both one, has broken down the middle wall of partition having abolished in his flesh the enmity that is the Law of Commandments that is contained in ordinances so as to create in himself one new man from the two thus making peace," one new man from the two.

Now, circumcision, sacrifices, washings, abstaining from certain kinds of food were symbols of the things that were used by God to remind the Jews that their lot was different from that of the rest. And just as today peoples are known by various things that may characterize them. The Red Cross, the White Cross distinguishes the French from the Red Cross of the Burgundians, just like the Blue Cross of the Cowboy's helmets distinguish them from the horse cowboys, and so the thing that distinguished the Jews from the Gentiles was the fact that they could not come into the temple area. God had established that and had given them the law and they had the law and the Gentiles did not have.

John Chrysostom has something to say regarding this. He talks about it. He's one of the early preachers. He says this, "He does not mean that he has elevated us to the high dignity of theirs but he has raised both us and them one to one still higher." I will

give you an illustration,” he says. “Let us imagine there are two statues one of silver and the other of lead and then shall be then both shall be melted down and the two shall come out gold.” So, thus, he made the two one. So what Chrysostom says then is that we have here the Gentiles, we have here the Jews and as a result of the coming of Christ, as a result of the work on the cross, as the result of the formation of the one new man, what we have is not simply a union of Jew and Gentile but we have the two made into something better. They are in Christ, Jew and Gentile in Christ. So there is what he calls “one fresh or new man.” The people of God have entered a further stage of their existence.

I imagine that this was something that this was rather startling for the people of the day. The people of that day have the same kind of attitude that we have toward people who are different from us. One of the things that I learned in taking classical Greek a long time before I ever knew anything, really much about the Bible, although I had grown up in a Presbyterian Sunday school, was the fact that the Greeks spoke of themselves as Greeks and everyone who was not a Greek was a barbarian. That’s the way they talked about it. That’s the way a lot of people really think. They don’t say it but they really think that way. We’re the people and the others are the barbarians. That was the way the Greeks thought about them.

Now, the Jews when it came to salvation thought of themselves as the elect of God and everyone else a spiritual barbarian. What Paul is saying is that as a result of Christ coming the enmity, the Law of Commandments contained in the ordinances, only Israel’s, that has been abolished so that now one new man is created from the two thus making peace.

Over in 1st Corinthians chapter 10, verse 32, Paul says something that is apropos, I think, he says “Give no offense either to the Jews or the Greeks or to the church of God, Jews, Greeks but then Jews and Greeks who are converted the church of God, the one new man, in fact, the new order of mankind. So Paul says then that there has been a

reconciliation of the Gentiles. But there is reconciliation also of Gentile and Jew to God and he talks about then in verses 16 through 18, “That he might reconcile them both to God in one body through the Cross” notice, both of them, “thereby putting to death the enmity.” The Gentiles who had no access because they were not the elect people of God they didn’t even have the law, they weren’t even able to worship God. They had to become Jews if they were going to part of the people of God. But now, the people of God are in unbelief largely Israel having been set aside so he says “In that he might reconcile them both to God in one body through the Cross thereby putting to death the enmity. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and to those who were near” probably a reference to the ministry of the Lord after the Resurrection. When he came in, for example, in the gathering of the apostles and the first word that he said to them was “Peace” and peace is preached, the peace with God, the peace between Jew and Gentile. “And he came and preached peace to you,” and then verse 18, “for through Him we both have access, we both Jew and Gentile by one Spirit to the Father.”

Now, notice these verses, they’re rather important. He says that both of these have come from enmity to amity. That is unbelieving elect people from enmity to amity and then those who were not the elect people of God they too from the natural enmity in which they were born have now, if they have believed, come to friendship with God. And included among this story of reconciliation are these things, peace through nullification of the law, verse 14 and 15, “He himself is our peace, he has made both one, he has broken down the middle wall of separation, he’s abolished in his flesh the enmity the Law of Commandments contained in the ordinances.” And then he mentions the preaching of peace and the post Resurrection experiences.

And then he says, “Through him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.” I like this word access, *prosagoge* this Greek word is a word that was used in many ways and there are some marvelous little pictures if one takes the usages of it and apply them to spiritual things. It was the word used to bringing a sacrifice to God so that an

individual made an approach with his animal sacrifice. That’s really what we do when we believe in Christ. We really in essence what we are saying is Lord this is my sacrifice, the Lord Jesus, and I come to you in power in the power of the sacrifice and your word which tells me just how significant it is. It was also used of the bringing of men into the presence of God that they may be consecrated to his service. And it was the word used for introducing a speaker or an ambassador into the national assembly. An above all, it was the word used for introducing a person into the presence of a king. I don’t know whether that is the figure that he had in mind or not. It could be simply the bringing of the sacrifice to the priest. But it may be used in the sense of the introduction of a person into the presence of the king.

Well, of course, that is true isn’t it spiritually for through Him we both have access and introduction by one Spirit to the Father? And if that’s the sense of it, it is certainly true. We have access to the Father; we have been brought near through Jesus Christ. Look back at verse 13, “But now, in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” And then in verse 19 through verse 22, the apostle sums up things. “Now, therefore, or consequently then, introduces the conclusion, *quae cum ita sint*, we used to read in Latin all the time “since these things are so.” “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.”

Now, this is very important. What this says is that the Church is made up of Jew and Gentile. We talked about the beginning of the Church on the Day of Pentecost. We talked about the fact that it was a kind of modification of the character of the people of God; the things that took place by virtue by the baptismal work of the Holy Spirit in which we were united together through faith in Christ. And what we have come to is one people of God, whether Jew or Gentile, sharing equally in the blessings of the covenantal program.

Now, we have made the point in this series that the blessings that we inherit are the blessings of the unconditional covenants, that is, the Abrahamic covenant, the Davidic covenant, and also the New Covenant. The New Covenant, of course, the redemptive foundation, the Abrahamic covenant having to do with our son-ship, our relationship to the Lord God by virtue of our faith which is the ground of our or the means by which we come to be in Christ, the Davidic covenant having to do with the everlasting throne and the everlasting kingdom in which also share. We share in the promises that God made to Abraham, that he made to David, that he made to Israel with the New Covenant. Those covenantal promises Gentile believers share in the present day. That's made very plain in the New Testament. If you just look at some of these things here now. Here we have Gentiles who were without Christ, without the Messiah, but now, in verse 13 we read they're in Christ. In verse 15 we read “having abolished in his flesh the enmity that is the Law of Commandments contained in ordinances so as to create in Himself one new man, the whole church, in Him.” And verse 21 “In whom, in who, in Christ, the whole building being fitted together grows into a holy temple in the Lord.” So those who were without the Messiah are now in the Messiah.

Further in verse 19 we read, “Now, therefore you are no longer strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.” They were aliens, and now, they are fellow citizens. We are told in verse 19, they are strangers, that's what they were, but now, they are members of the household of God. We were told in verse 17, that they had no hope but now, they have come to peace. And we were told they were without God that maybe the worse of all, without God in the world, verse 12. But now, we read, we have received an introduction by one Spirit to the Father.

I would say that what Paul is saying is that in the Church of Jesus Christ, Jews and Gentiles possess all of the covenantal blessings promised through the covenants of the Old Testament, Abrahamic, Davidic, and New. They now, have those promises. They are

no longer strangers, they are no longer foreigners, and they are fellow citizens with the saints, members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. The foundation of apostles and prophets, the word of God built on that foundation, the word of God, sufficiency of Holy Scripture for our salvation. Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. This entire building, the household of God, is like a temple. In fact, he goes on to say in whom the whole building being fitted together grows into a holy temple in the Lord. He is the chief cornerstone. You know, a cornerstone is that part of a building which if it's lost the walls collapse and the building collapses. Our Lord is the chief cornerstone according to the figure here, and this is a holy temple in the Lord in whom you are also being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. Notice that the one new man is being built not being rebuilt, not rebuilt but being built.

National return for the nation of Israel lies in the future. What Paul is talking about here is the fact that the covenantal blessings belong to Gentiles and Jews. There is one body of believing people and they have inherited them and the believers in Christ are united in that. So far as the future of National Israel is concerned, well a lot passages deal with that question. Here, of course, he simply acknowledges the oneness of the two in Christ.

I thought I had something that I wanted to say to you but I don't guess that I do have. What I'd like to do, we have a few minutes, and perhaps we can open it up for a question or so. So if you'd like to give me your question, I'll try to answer if I can, providing you speak loud enough. Would you speak a little louder? [Person asking question] What does it say? So, no not that I know of. [Person asking question] She's asking if there is a chief cornerstone. Well, I'll have to look at the original text but I'm not sure I can even answer it them because we may have some differences of viewpoints in the variant readings. So we may have differences that we just have to live with. Let's see, chapter 2, here it is. This is the word that means the chief cornerstone, *akrogoniaios*

[person asking question] a little louder, usually. But this is the word that means a chief cornerstone. In fact, I have a little simple lexicon in the back of this book. Let's see what they say cornerstone or keystone. So chief cornerstone would be essentially the same thing.

What does your text have? [Person responding] [Person asking question] That's what I said when I said their future is something else. The national difference between Jews and Gentiles is not done away with. A Jew is still a Jew, a Gentile is still a Gentile, and there is a future for ethnic Israel, believing ethnic Israel. So they have the promises with reference to their future, in fact, the Abrahamic promises, the Davidic promises specifically speak of the future of national Israel and that lies in the future. One of our three studies we are going to devote to that in the present age. So when we are talking about what we are talking we are not seeking to do away with the ethnic difference between Jews and Gentiles, we're talking about position and privilege here not about national origins. Does that help or clarify?

Yes Larry? [Larry asks question] Well, I think, they are just two different figures, foundation is of course Christ and his work, that's the foundation of the church. The figure that the apostle uses here is related to a temple because he's talking about that. But I don't think there is any significant difference in them in the sense of a conflict but two different illustrations.

[Person ask question] Of course, there is a way in which we may harmonize that, a way in which many have done it is what the apostles and prophets talk about. Well they talk about Jesus Christ and they talk about Him as the supreme Savior of the Lord God and so thus in that sense we say he is the foundation, we're just looking at the same truth in a slightly different figurative way because the foundation of the apostles and prophets is what they said about the Messiah that was to come. I'm taking the term prophets as being Old Testament prophets and in another place or two it may taken with reference to New Testament prophets but at least the apostles and prophets had one primary message

and that was the son of God and his saving work. And so what they taught is the foundation, the reality in other words of the message.

Yes ma'am! [Person asks question] Is there a name given to them? Well, Marilyn, I'll tell you the reason I'm hesitating I'm thinking I wanted to think of something cute to say but I couldn't think of anything on the spur of the moment to be cute and because I'm comically underprivileged at the moment or something. Yeah, there is something that is usually said of them. They are usually said to be pre-millennists; that is they believe the Lords coming before the millennium and usually what goes with that is that Israel will enter into a promised blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, the Davidic covenant, the New Covenant at that time. The passages that speak specifically about that are the passages about the Abrahamic covenant in the Old Testament, the Davidic Covenant in the Old Testament, the New Covenant and the chapters in Jeremiah associated with there are about 33, 31, 32, 33, 34 in Jeremiah and then the New Testament Romans chapters, well really primarily chapter 11, and Acts chapter 15, for example and some of the passages in the gospels. So does that answer?

[Person asks question]. Well as you know there are three kinds of Jewish synagogues, the Orthodox, there are Conservative, and there are Liberals. Those are three distinct groups. The Orthodox would not take kindly to that comment by his Jewish friend. But many of the Jewish friends of the second two persuasions are very liberal; do not really make much over the Jewishness at all and nothing over their Jewishness in the spiritual sense. It's mainly in a sociological sense of rather, what's the word, or a family sense, since they belong to that body of people and that's about it.

[Person asks questions] Elect of God, those that have believed in Christ as the Scriptures say are elect. Not just Israel, but Israel is the elect nation. “You only have I known of all the families on the earth,” God said through the prophet Amos, “You only have I know of all the families on the earth.” The law as we said remember when we had the lesson on the law, the law was given only to Israel. The promises were given to

Abraham confirmed to Isaac and Jacob to David and through Jeremiah the prophet to the people of Israel. [Person asks question] The nation only them. There is no hope for us except that Scripture right from the beginning made a way, an opening for Gentiles; God said to Abram “Indeed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” So when the seed of Abraham became there was a place for Gentiles. As a matter of fact, the Old Testament, Gentiles could be saved they just had to become Jews. It was open to them but if they were males they had to be circumcised. It’s the sign of the covenant and so on.

[Person asks question] That’s pretty well what this passage we’ve been talking about says. They formed “one new man” but the differences, the ethnic differences still pertain. [Person asks question] Yeah, right. Israel has a future. We’ll talk about that. We’ve got to stop now, it is eight thirty-one. But next week we’ll look at chapter 3, verse 1 through 13 and it has fuller information on this and then the following time we’ll be on Acts chapter 15, and some of these questions will I hope will become much clearer.

Let’s close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we are grateful to Thee for the opportunity to study the word of God together. We thank Thee for the apostle and for his faithfulness and for the preservation of the word of God which we are able to study in nineteen hundred and ninety-two and through it come to the conviction that our sins have been paid for by the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Enable us to be faithful representatives of him in our day to our friends and family.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.