

EPHESIANS DAILY DEVOTION

WEEK FOUR EPH. 2:11-22

Monday: Separated

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: Ephesians 2:11-12

¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you who are **Gentiles** by birth and called “**uncircumcised**” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is **done in the body by human hands**)— ¹² remember 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.

UNDERSTAND: *get a deeper understanding of the key words*

- **Gentiles:** a title that describes all people that are not of Jewish descent.
 - There was a strong division between Jews and Gentiles.
 - The Jews struggled to believe that God loved and saved Gentiles.
 - Early Jewish Christians tried to force Gentiles to follow Jewish rituals (Acts 15).
- **Uncircumcised:** the literal meaning is quite obvious
 - Circumcision was a physical sign of being a Jew instituted in the Old Testament. Paul is pointing out that circumcision is merely a human ritual. This is why he points out that it is “**done in the body by human hands**”.
 - The Jews believed that this ritual somehow made them holy and acceptable to God. Paul’s point is that human rituals don’t have that kind of power.
- **Separate** (Greek: *chōris*): apart from, having no part in
- **Excluded** (Greek: *apallotrioō*): alienated, estranged, broken relationship
- **Covenants** (Greek: *diathēkē*): arrangement, promised agreement
 - God’s relationship with mankind is often described as a covenant.
 - There is an Old Covenant (Testament) and a New Covenant (Testament).
 - After the cross, we are now under the New Covenant.
- **Without Hope** (Greek: *echō mē elpis*): without anything to believe in
- **Without God** (Greek: *atheos*): without relationship to your Creator (John 15:5)

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

You may be wondering how in the world this passage could apply to your everyday life. The point of this passage is unity between Jewish believers and Gentile believers. Paul is telling the Ephesian believers that they are no longer separated from God. They are no longer without hope or without God in the world. They are no longer required to observe religious traditions and rituals. Traditions and rituals cannot save anyone.

In what ways have you trusted in religion for your salvation? What was the result?

What was your life like before Christ saved you?

In what ways were you without hope before you believed in Christ?

PRAY: Ask God to help you trust in Him rather than religion.

EPHESIANS DAILY DEVOTION

WEEK FOUR EPH. 2:11-22

Tuesday: Reconciled

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: Ephesians 2:13-16

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were **far away** have been **brought near** by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our **peace**, who has made the **two groups** one and has destroyed the **barrier**, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh **the law** with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself **one new humanity** out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to **reconcile** both of them to God through the cross, by which he **put to death** their hostility.

UNDERSTAND: *get a deeper understanding of the key words*

- **Far Away** (Greek: *makran*): a great distance
 - Before salvation we were far away, not slightly off course.
 - Our sin nature kept us bound a great distance from God.
- **Brought Near** (Greek: *ginomai eggys*): change of place or position
- **Peace** (Greek: *eirēnē*): harmony, secure, safe (Romans 5:1)
- **Two Groups** (Greek: *amphoteroi*): refers to Jews and Gentiles
- **Barrier** (Greek: *phragmos*): that which separates, prevents from unity
- **The Law** (Greek: *nomos*): referring to the Old Testament law system
 - The law was never intended to make us holy or righteous.
 - God's law shows us what sin is and how sinful we are (Romans 3:20; 7:7).
 - Jesus did not abolish the law, He fulfilled the law (Matthew 5:17).
- **One New Humanity** (Greek: *heis kainos anthrōpos*): a new kind of existence
 - Christians are not simply modified. We are made totally new (2 Cor. 5:17).
 - This means that our entire self and purpose has been made new.
- **Reconcile** (Greek: *apokatallassō*): to bring back completely (Colossians 1:19-22)
- **Put to Death** (Greek: *apokteinō*): to destroy, extinguish, to kill in every way
 - In context, this refers to the hostility between Jews and Gentiles.
 - On the cross, Christ totally destroyed this hostility. Not only between Jews and Gentiles, but also the hostility between God and mankind (Romans 8:5-13).

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

In Christ, all people are on equal ground at the foot of the cross. All kinds of people will be saved. Therefore, Jewish believers should no longer look down on Gentile believers. The point is unity in the church. Since God brings all kinds of people to salvation, we should be excited and thankful for that truth. There should never be a dividing wall of hostility between believers. God has reconciled us and we should seek reconciliation with others.

In what ways have you seen the church be divided?

In what ways have you been guilty of causing or contributing to division?

PRAY: Ask God to keep you from division and help you contribute to reconciliation.

EPHESIANS DAILY DEVOTION

WEEK FOUR EPH. 2:11-22

Wednesday: Access to the Father

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: Ephesians 2:17-18

¹⁷ He came and **preached peace** to you **who were far away** and peace to those **who were near**. ¹⁸ For **through him** we both have **access** to the Father by one Spirit.

UNDERSTAND: *get a deeper understanding of the key words*

- **Preached** (Greek: *euaggelizō*): to proclaim good news, joyful news
 - See Matthew 11:1-6 (Jesus sending good news to John the Baptist)
 - Christ brought the good news and we follow that example (2 Cor. 5:11-21).
- **Who Were Far Away** (Greek: *makran*): refers to Gentiles without God's law
 - Gentiles were considered far away because they had no scripture.
 - They had no concept of the true God. They worshiped pagan idols.
- **Who Were Near** (Greek: *eggys*): refers to Jews with God's law
 - The Jews had the Old Testament revelation of the true God.
 - Therefore, in a sense, they were nearer to God than the Gentiles.
 - However, this does not mean the Jews were right with God.
 - "Near" in this verse does not mean they were saved.
- **Through Him** (Greek: *dia autos*): by means of Christ, with Christ
 - Grace came to us through Christ (Romans 1:5).
 - Righteousness came to us through Christ (Romans 3:22).
- **Access** (Greek: *prosagōgē*): permission to approach God and be acceptable to Him
 - Our sin kept us separated and without access to God (Romans 3:23).
 - We have gained access to God's grace (Romans 5:1-2).
 - We can now approach God with confidence (Ephesians 3:12).
 - When we approach God we find mercy and grace (Hebrews 4:16).

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

Many people who grew up going to church have been "near" to God because they heard the gospel and the name of Jesus. Others who have not heard may be considered "far away" from God. However, both groups can now have access to God through faith in Christ. This access is granted by grace through faith alone. It is not based on our past or present condition. All who believe have complete access to our Creator!

How often do you approach God in prayer?

What keeps you from approaching God more often?

PRAY: Ask God to help you prioritize prayer.

EPHESIANS DAILY DEVOTION

WEEK FOUR EPH. 2:11-22

Thursday: The Cornerstone

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: Ephesians 2:19-20

¹⁹ Consequently, you are **no longer foreigners** and **strangers**, but **fellow citizens** with God's people and also members of his **household**, ²⁰ built on the **foundation** of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the **chief cornerstone**.

UNDERSTAND: *get a deeper understanding of the key words*

- **No Longer** (Greek: *ouketi*): no more, no further
- **Foreigners** (Greek: *paroikos*): aliens, without citizenship
- **Strangers** (Greek: *xenos*): without knowledge of, unheard of, without share in
- **Fellow Citizens** (Greek: *sympolitēs*): having privileges and duties in God's family
 - Before Christ, Jews and Gentiles were considered totally separate.
 - In Christ, both Jews and Gentiles now share the same kingdom.
- **Household** (Greek: *oikeios*): belonging and devotion as a family (Galatians 6:10)
 - We are fellow citizens and also members of the same family.
 - God sees and treats us exactly as He sees and treats Christ (Romans 8:14-17).
- **Foundation** (Greek: *themelios*): the beginning, the groundwork
 - Our ultimate foundation is Christ (1 Cor. 3:11).
 - The message and writings of the apostles forms our doctrine (1 Cor. 3:10)
- **Chief Cornerstone** (Greek: *akrogōniaios*): the corner foundation stone (1 Peter 2:6)
 - The is a word picture that illustrates how Christ holds everything together.
 - A cornerstone would be placed at the extreme cornerstone of the foundation of a building. It set the foundation and squared the building. Everything else in the structure was set and aligned to the cornerstone. It also had to be the strongest part of the building.

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

According to this passage, we are citizens of God's kingdom. A citizen enjoys the privileges and protection of the kingdom in which they live. A citizen also has duties and responsibilities that come with those privileges and protections. While it is a wonderful truth that believers are citizens of God's kingdom, the passage doesn't stop there. We are also members of God's household. We are not only citizens in God's kingdom, we are members of God's family! Why is this important? Because the children of the King have a much higher place of privilege and protection than a mere citizen. Children also have a higher sense of duties and responsibilities as well.

What privileges and protections are included in the kingdom and family of God?

What duties and responsibilities do we have in the kingdom and family of God?

PRAY: Ask God to help you live out your calling as His child.

EPHESIANS DAILY DEVOTION

WEEK FOUR EPH. 2:11-22

Friday: Where the Spirit Lives

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: Ephesians 2:21-22

²¹ In him the **whole building** is **joined together** and **rises** to become a **holy temple** in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being **built together** to become a **dwelling** in which God **lives by his Spirit**.

UNDERSTAND: *get a deeper understanding of the key words*

- **Whole Building** (Greek: *pas oikodomē*): the whole church (body of Christ)
 - We are Christ's body and God's building (1 Corinthians 3:9).
 - God is building us and we are to build each other up (Romans 14:19; 15:2).
- **Joined Together** (Greek: *synarmologeō*): to fit or frame together closely (Eph. 4:16)
- **Rises** (Greek: *auxanō*): to grow up, increase, become greater
 - A better translation than "rises" would be "grows up" in this instance.
 - We are growing to become the mature body of Christ (Ephesians 4:15).
- **Holy Temple** (Greek: *hagios naos*): believers are the spiritual temple of God
 - God's temple is to be holy, set apart, and pure (1 Peter 1:15-16).
 - God does not live in physical buildings (Acts 17:24).
- **Built Together** (Greek: *synoikodomeō*): put together, built up for a purpose
- **Dwelling** (Greek: *katoikētērion*):
 - God dwells in us as His temple (1 Corinthians 3:16).
 - This is why we should honor God with our bodies (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
- **Lives by his Spirit** (Greek: *en pneuma*): refers to how God lives in us
 - John the Baptist taught this concept in Matthew 3:11.
 - God gives us the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5).
 - The Holy Spirit in us is evidence of our salvation (Romans 8:9).
 - The Holy Spirit is our source of spiritual life (Romans 8:11).

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

For those of us who believe, God is building us together to be His temple. This means that God dwells and lives in us. The result of that truth is that God is growing us to become a new creation that is more like Christ. This is why we're commanded to be holy and pure. What we do with our bodies is important because God has chosen to make us His dwelling. The longer God dwells in us the more change we should experience.

If God dwells in us, how should this change the way we live?

What kind of changes have you seen in your life since you became a believer?

PRAY: Ask God to help you continue to grow in your faith.

EPHESIANS DAILY DEVOTION

WEEK FOUR EPH. 2:11-22

Saturday: Prepare for Sunday

REVIEW: Take a few minutes to make a list of what you've learned this week.

PRAY: Ask God to use this time to help you get familiar with Sunday's scripture passage.

READ: Ephesians 3:1-13

¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles ² Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. ⁴ In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. ⁶ This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. ⁷ I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. ⁸ Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹ and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰ His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹ according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. ¹³ I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.

THINK: *Go ahead and underline key words and phrases.*

Start thinking about what this passage is saying.

- What stands out to you in this passage?
- What do you think is the main idea?
- What parts are confusing or hard to understand?
- How might this passage help you to follow Jesus better?

PRAY: Ask God to prepare you for tomorrow's worship service.