

Bringing In the Gentiles

Ephesians 2:11-13

11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh — who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands — 12 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. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (NKJV)

The last couple of weeks we have seen that our spiritual condition prior to the change Christ made in our lives was about as bad as it could get. We were dead in trespasses and sins.

And that no matter if we were Jews or Gentiles we were in the same condition. But God stepped in and made the difference.

But Gentiles were in a worse condition than the Jews for the Jews had been given special privileges that the Gentiles were not.

So now Paul wants to remind us Gentiles the disadvantage that we had by being a Gentile.

I. Remember

A. First he calls them to remember.

1. Because we are accustomed to forget.
2. Because we tend to be unthankful.
3. Because we tend to feel entitled.

B. Remember you were once Gentiles.

1. Who were Gentiles.
 - a. Long ago God had selected a man by the name of Abraham to be the father of the Jewish race.
 - b. But not all of Abraham's children were Jews, only Isaac.
 - c. Isaac had two children, only one of which was the Jew.
 - d. Jacob has 13 children who became the Jewish race.
 - e. If you were not a descendant of Jacob then you were a Gentile.
2. The Gentiles were worshipers of idols.
3. They were totally immoral people.

C. Remember that you were without Christ

1. We see this reflected in Matthew 15: 21 ¶ Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. 22 And behold, a woman of

Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." 23 But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us." 24 But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 25 Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!" 26 But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." 27 And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." 28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

2. Matthew 10: 5 ¶ These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. 6 "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

D. Being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel

1. So there we were, aliens from citizenship in the nation of the Jews.
2. The Jews had quite an elaborate process to bring Gentiles into Judaism but still these converted Gentiles never had the same rights and privileges as the Jews.

E. And strangers from the covenants of promise

1. The promises made to Abraham are for the Jews and not for the Gentiles.
2. The special relationship between God and the Jews was not available to the Gentiles.
 - a. Amos 3:2 "You only have I known of all the families of the earth"
3. There are thousands of promises in the Old Testament that are only for the Jews.
4. And there are even future blessings that will be only for them.

F. Having no hope

1. As Gentiles then we had no hope.
2. We were excluded from the blessed relationship which God had made with the Jews.
3. Without doubt this is one of the reasons that there is still such animosity toward the Jews today.
4. They are the worlds most persecuted race of people in history.

G. And without God in the world

1. And sense God made no covenants with our forefathers, we are without God.
2. And the truth be know, according to Paul, that is just the way we as Gentiles wanted it.
3. Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man — and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.
4. And that is were we were.

II. But now in Christ Jesus

- A. There again are those wonderful words.
 1. Words that breathe grace and mercy into our situation.
 2. Our relationship has changed because our position has changed.
 3. We are now IN Christ Jesus.

- B. Have been brought near by the blood of Christ.
1. Here we see the agency of God.
 2. The blood of Christ.
 3. His sacrifice for our sins.
 4. His blood to make an atonement.
 5. His blood to to bring us from a far off to bring us near.

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