

Contra Mundum
The Church's One Foundation
Ephesians 2:14-22
March 15, 2015

...built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone... **-Ephesians 2:20**

I. PEACE FOR THOSE FAR AND NEAR

- Peace from Christ leads to vertical and horizontal harmony: peace between God and his people, and peace between God's people (vss. 14-17; John 13:34-35; 2 Cor. 13:11; Eph. 4:2; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 John 2:9-11).
- First Jesus achieved peace, then he announced it (John 20:19-21).
 - *He broke the dividing wall in his flesh.
 - *He abolished the law of commandments.
 - *He created a new humanity.
- He destroyed the hostility between fellow believers and the hostility between believers and God (vs. 14; 16).
- Peace comes to those who were once near to God and to those who were once far away (Isa. 57:19; Acts 2:37-39).

II. TRINITARIAN ACCESS

- We have confident access to the Father, in the work of the Spirit, through the Son (vs. 18; Eph. 3:12).
- The Spirit completes every work of the Godhead (Matt. 1:18; Acts 1:2; Rom. 1:4).

III. SO THEN...

- Gentiles are no longer strangers (Gal. 3:28).
- God's house is built on a solid foundation (Isa. 28:16).
- The new temple is living, not dead stone (1 Peter 2:4-10).
- We are now the dwelling place of God (John 4:21; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Rev. 21:3).

KNOW: God has reconciled all things in Christ, vertically and horizontally. Peace is possible now, especially in the church, which is built on the cornerstone of the One who made that peace possible.

DO: Practice peace.

Suggested Reading:

The Church, by Edmund P. Clowney

The Mark of the Christian, by Francis Shaefter

Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places, by Eugene Peterson

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please read Ephesians 2:14-22

1. Paul says, "For he himself is our peace." How can he say this when there is so much strife in our world and in our lives? What kind of peace does he bring?
2. How are Jews and Gentiles (read as Christians from different ethnic/racial backgrounds) to relate to each other now?
3. We spoke Sunday about having access to the Father through the Son by the Spirit. What does that mean? What type of access are we talking about?
4. In what ways are the apostles and prophets foundational for the church? When we say in the Nicene Creed that "we believe in one holy, catholic, and apostolic church," what do we mean?
5. Christ Jesus is the "cornerstone" or "capstone" for the church. What does that mean for the church?
6. Christ dwells in all believers the same way—by the Spirit. Do we have any right, therefore, to look down on anyone because of their racial/ethnic/cultural differences?