

Contra Mundum

I Once Was Lost
Ephesians 2:11-13
March 1, 2015

...having no hope and without God in the world.
-Ephesians 2:13

I. FIVE DEGREES OF SEPARATION

- Paul exhorts the Ephesians to remember negative memories, but for a positive purpose (vs. 11; Gal. 4:8; Col. 1:21-22; 1 Tim. 1:13; Heb. 3:15).
- Gentiles were ostracized from faith in five ways:
 1. Separated from Christ
 2. Alienated from the nation of Israel
 3. Strangers to the covenants “cut” by God
 4. Without hope
 5. Without God
- Those outside of Israel under the Old Covenant and those outside Christ under the New Covenant are without hope. The proclamation of the gospel is necessary to bring hope to the lost (Eph. 1:13; Rom. 10:12-17).

II. NOTHING BUT THE BLOOD

- To be “in” Jesus means to be covered by the blood of Jesus (Eph. 1:7; Rom. 3:24-25, 5:9; 1 Peter 1:2; Rev. 1:5).
- “Far off” means nothing to God. Those far off can always be brought near by the work of Christ (Luke 15:11-32).
- The paradox: Jesus came for his sheep, but there is hope for everyone in Christ (John 6:37; 10:14-16; Rom. 10:13).

KNOW: The work of Christ not only brings redemption, but it opens up the way for all people to know hope in Christ - in this life and beyond. The blood of Jesus brings both redemption and reconciliation.

DO: Praise God for the hope you have been given.

Suggested Reading:

The Heart of the Gospel, by Robert E. Coleman
All of Grace, by C.H. Spurgeon

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please read Ephesians 2:11-13

1. Paul clearly understands that there is a major rift between Jews and Gentiles. Based on what you know about Paul, why is he so familiar with this part of the culture of his day (see Phil. 3:1-6)?
2. Paul is clear that good news follows bad news. In other words, we must see how bad things are before we can rejoice in how God has made possible the change to good. How bad off are Gentiles (those outside of Christ)?
3. Being called “uncircumcised” was a word of derision by the Jews, and yet Gentiles also had their own pride and antipathy toward Jews. How did Paul propose to overcome that, and how do we overcome racial/ethnic pride today?
4. How do we explain the importance of the blood of Jesus, or the nature and necessity of his sacrifice, to non-believers? Why was the sacrifice of Christ “bloody”?
5. In vs. 13 Paul begins the transition to the good news. In what way does hope begin in this transition?
6. How were you, personally, brought near to God?