

Death to Hostility

Ephesians 2:11-22

June 14, 2020

For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility...

- Ephesians 2:14

I. AN ALIENATED HUMANITY

- Racial, ethnic, socio-economic, sexual, and elitist prejudices were baked into Paul's world. They are baked into our world as well (Matt. 26:11; Luke 17:11-13; Acts 21:28-30).
- The hostility between Jews and Gentiles was complete and immense in its implications (Matt. 15:26, 18:17; Acts 10:28; Phil. 3:2)
- To be separated from Christ is to be alienated from God. It is to have "no hope and without God in the world" (Vs. 12).
- We are all, irrespective of race, gender or ethnicity, naturally alienated from God (Eph. 2:1-3).

II. A PEACE-MAKING SAVIOR

- Jesus Christ does not merely offer peace, he is our peace (Vs. 14; Is. 9:6-7, 53:5; Micah 5:5; Hag. 2:9; Zech. 9:10).
- Jesus' offer of peace is to those who are both near and far from God by human reckoning. It is an offer of peace in a peace-less world, and peace with a holy God (John 14:15-27).
- There existed a dividing wall of hostility between Jews and Gentiles both literally and spiritually (*Josephus' Antiquities of the Jews XV.11.5 & The Wars of the Jews V.5.2; VI.2.4*).
- In Christ we all have access via the one Spirit of God to the Father (Vs. 18).

III. GOD'S NEW SOCIETY

- In the kingdom of God there are no racial, ethnic, socio-economic, or sexual differences. We are one body — one household (Vs. 19; Gal. 3:28).

KNOW: God (in Christ) creates a new humanity. The "two" are now "one." Dividing walls of hostility are created by humans, but they are destroyed by God.

DO: Ask God to destroy the hostility in your life. Be part of the body of Christ.

Suggested Reading:

The Radical Disciple by John R.W. Stott

City on a Hill: Reclaiming the Biblical Pattern for the Church in the 21st Century by Philip Graham Ryken

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please Read Ephesians 2:11-22

1. What is Paul's overall point in this passage?
2. Who were we outside of Christ?
3. Who are we in Christ?
4. What does it mean, do you think, to have peace?
5. If we have been reconciled to God by the cross, how should we now live as reconciled people toward God? Toward others?
6. What is the church? (see verses 19-22)
7. What can change in your life, with God's help, to help you to be at peace with God and people?