



THE WORLD GOD IS MAKING | HOW DO WE FIT TOGETHER? (7)

October 25, 2026

Ephesians 2:11-16

PURPOSE

To discover and experience Jesus Christ in our midst
To cultivate mutually encouraging relationships
To participate in God's mission to the world

WORSHIP

PLEASE OPEN IN PRAYER

RESPONSIVE PRAYER — Isaiah 57

How beautiful upon the mountains

Are the feet of him who brings good news,

Who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,

Who publishes salvation,

Who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Break forth together into singing,

For the LORD has comforted his people;

The LORD has bared his holy arm

Before the eyes of all the nations,

And all the ends of the earth shall see

The salvation of our God.

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 2:11-16

READING

¹¹Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— ¹²remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

BIBLE STUDY

Commentary

We are continuing our sermon series through Ephesians called *The World God Is Making*, and this week we turn to the second half of chapter 2. The major theme of the whole chapter is alienation. In verses 1-10, which we looked at over the past couple weeks, we saw a description of humanity as dead in trespasses and sins, by nature children of wrath, and therefore entirely alienated from God. Now, in the second half of the chapter, we will see a second kind of alienation — alienation from one another, and particularly the alienation of

Gentiles from the people of God. “Therefore remember,” Paul tells his Gentile readers, perhaps because they were apt to forget what they had been rescued from. At one time they were separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world (verse 12; cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:13). This list is not an attempt to mock the Gentiles but a simple recounting of the truth about where they stood so that they could grasp what has changed in their lives.

Sometimes it’s hard for us in the 21st century to understand how deep the alienation between Jew and Gentile ran. The temple in Jerusalem had a stone barrier separating the outer Court of the Gentiles from the inner courts, with inscriptions warning that any foreigner who passed it would have himself to blame for the death that followed. Paul was intimately familiar with the details of this division, as he was nearly killed by a mob in Jerusalem based on the rumor that he had brought a Gentile past that barrier (the Gentile in question was himself an Ephesian; see Acts 21:27-31). It was into that world that, as our passage says, “now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ” (verse 13). Christ himself is our peace, and he has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility (verse 14). And while the Romans would eventually tear down the temple’s wall in AD 70, Paul had already seen it dismantled in Christ.

But the wall was more than a physical barrier in Jerusalem. It also symbolized “the law of commandments expressed in ordinances,” which Christ abolished (verse 15). This does not mean that God’s moral law is cancelled; we see it upheld elsewhere in the New Testament (Romans 3:31; 7:12). But it does mean that the ceremonial and civil ordinances which separated Israel from the Gentile nations have been fulfilled and set aside in Christ Jesus (Colossians 2:14-17; Westminster Confession of Faith 19.3). The wall that kept Gentiles away from God’s people no longer stands, and what is created in its place is not Gentiles turned into Jews or Jews turned into Gentiles, but “one new man in place of the two” (verse 15) — a new humanity. Christ reconciles us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility which previously existed. Peace with God and peace with one another are not two separate achievements, but are achieved in the same act. Jesus is the author, center, and substance of both. This united community then, as we have been saying throughout this sermon series, is a small working model of the new creation — the first installment of the day when God will unite all things in Christ (Ephesians 1:10).

1. Looking at the Bible

- Read verses 11-12. What does Paul say was true of the Gentiles “at that time”? Make a list.
 - What two words at the start of verse 13 change everything?
- Read verses 14-16. List everything Paul says Christ has done.

2. Looking at Jesus

At Central we believe that all of Scripture points to Jesus. In other words, Jesus is the theological center of the Bible. Not only does every passage point to Jesus, but the grand narrative of the Bible also finds its fulfillment in the person and work of Jesus.

- Verse 14 says that Christ “himself is our peace,” not just that he makes peace. What is the difference?
- What does it mean that Christ broke down the wall “in his flesh” (verse 14)?

3. Looking at our Hearts

- Paul tells his readers to “remember” what they once were. What do you need to remember about who you were/are without Christ? Why might forgetting be dangerous?
- What types of people in the church do you find it hardest to receive as one with you in Christ?

4. Looking at our World

- What individual Christians or groups of Christians are you separated from (perhaps because of political, theological, cultural, racial, or economic differences)? How might you apply the truths of this passage to those relationships?

PRAYER

- Share prayer requests with one another.
- Pray for the unity of Central and of Christ’s Church in New York, thanking God that Christ himself is our peace.