

# Salvation to the Nations (Part 1)

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[ 0 : 00 ] Ephesians chapter 2, and we're going to be looking at verses 11 through 22, or at least we're going to get most of the way through that.

! In fact, I got to a certain point, I thought, well, there's just no way I'm going to get all this tonight, so we'll get what we can get.

So let me go ahead and read the passage, starting with verse 11, that will be our text. Chapter 2, verses 11 through 22. That brings us to the end of chapter 2.

So let me go ahead and read it, and then we'll be rereading it again as we go along, as we look at, kind of pick it apart, look at each portion of this passage. 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, 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 without God in the world. Difficult to think of a worse condition than that. We'll work our way through this, find out what he's talking about. But now, in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off, have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

[ 1 : 47 ] For he himself is our peace, who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, the hostility, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that he might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

And he came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through him we both have access by one spirit to the Father.

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Whew! Man, that's a lot. Not just a lot of words, a lot of truth. And some of it, well, really all of it, deep, deep truth.

But as I got to thinking about this passage, first started studying it again, you know, there is a Christmas connection. A Christmas connection in this portion of Paul's letter to the Ephesian churches, or the Ephesian church.

[ 3 : 31 ] And I think we find it in what the aged Simeon, this is part of the Christmas story, you know, the aged Simeon said as he held the infant Jesus in his hands.

You remember that part of the story? Well, I've given you that part of it there, I think, in your notes. And so I'm going to go ahead and read it. Luke 2.25, this is part of the Christmas story. And I love the Christmas story.

In fact, I can't hardly, you know, this time of the year, you can't hardly preach or teach without going to some part of it. The Christmas story, that is, as it's recorded in Luke, Luke chapter 2, which gives us probably the most comprehensive story of the birth of Christ.

But anyway, let me read it. Behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. So he came by the Spirit into the temple. The Holy Spirit is involved in all of this, including what Simeon is going to ultimately say.

[ 4 : 36 ] These are going to be God's words. So he came by the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace according to your word.

For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all peoples. And here's the part that connects with our text. A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.

That's the connection to this passage. And this is actually, of course, a reference to a prophecy, Isaiah's prophecy. In fact, you find it in a number of places, but specifically here in Isaiah 42.6, which is a Messianic prophecy.

I, the Lord, that's Yahweh, have called you in righteousness. And you is in a capital, with a capital Y, and there's a reason for that. This is a prophecy of the Messiah.

And this is Yahweh, or God the Father, per se, speaking to his Messiah, and will hold your hand. I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people as a light to the Gentiles.

[ 5 : 57 ] A light to the Gentiles. So this is what Simeon is talking about. And what the Holy Spirit has inspired him to say. It's a reference to this prophecy.

And also you have something similar in Isaiah 49.6, I will also give you as a light to the Gentiles.

Now, clearly the Jews were intended to bring the gospel to the Gentiles.

But he's speaking not to the nation of Israel at this point, in this prophecy, speaking of the Messiah. And you will be a light to the Gentiles.

Isaiah 63, verse 3. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. And the idea being, of course, the Gentile kings, the nations.

Alright, so clearly, God's eternal plan of redemption includes all nations. All nations on this earth.

[ 7 : 03 ] And really, in the Old and New Testament, the words nations and Gentiles, you'll find the nations referred to a number of times in the Old and New Testament.

And you certainly find the term Gentiles, and I'm talking in terms of the English text, the English translation, you'll find the word Gentiles, nations and Gentiles. In most places, in both Old and New Testament, these words are synonymous.

They're synonymous. In the Hebrew, Old Testament is the word goi, goi, actually, goi is the word. And it's translated nations, translated also Gentiles.

And you'll find it one way or the other, depending on which version of the Bible you're talking about. I think the more literal translations, like the New American Standard, and possibly ESV as well, though I haven't really checked it out, prefer the term nations rather than Gentiles.

But it's the same. Talk about the same group of people. In the Greek New Testament, it is the word ethnos. And we get our word ethnic from that word ethnos.

[ 8 : 17 ] Peoples would be a more literal way of putting it. But it is a reference to the nations or the Gentiles. And so, clearly, according to the Jewish kind of mindset or understanding, the words Gentile and nations denote all non-Jewish people groups in the world.

Alright? There were Jews to the Jews. From their perspective, there are Jews and then there's everybody else. And everybody else lumped under the term nations.

The nations or we're more familiar with the Gentiles. The Gentiles. Now, God's purpose in redemption is to bring believing Jews and believing Gentiles together to form a new people.

A new people. Brand new people. A redeemed people. A redeemed society. We've been talking about that since we started our study of Ephesians. And chapter 1 has already introduced that purpose of God.

To create a brand new group of people. And now chapter 2 then, verses 11 through 22, are going to help us understand that this new people made up of Jews and Gentiles.

[ 9 : 35 ] Jews and Gentiles. And really, I think verses 22 or 11-22 address an inaccurate caricature on the part of Israel concerning God's purpose.

And that inaccurate caricature is that this is a new society of Jews. of Jews. In whatever way they might think that the Gentiles had to become a Jew.

So it's not, it's a new society but it's a Jewish society. And that's what, that was an erroneous thought in the day and really is still believed by many in our day.

So I think that's what Paul's trying to do here. Of course he's going to be doing a whole lot more than just that as we shall see. So, Paul's primary focus in this chapter, chapter, or these verses that

I read a moment ago, it is placed squarely on this new status that now belongs to believing Gentiles.

This new status. Because they're now part of a new people altogether. And not just Gentiles but Jews. Both Jews and Gentiles that are part of this new thing, this new people, this new society, this redeemed society.

[10:50] Though the emphasis is going to, in this passage, is more on the Gentiles than on the Jews. Alright? And its approach is similar to the approach of the previous section that we looked at.

Remember? So, it's very similar. First, what believing Gentiles once were. And then we're going to get to what believing Gentiles now are.

So that sounds familiar, doesn't it? Because that's kind of how he approached, in a more general sense, this new society of people without any reference to Jew or Gentile.

But now the focus is Jew and Gentile coming together and unification of these two into something brand new. But his focus is going to be on the Gentiles here.

And so he's going to have us look at what believing Gentiles once were and what they now are. So first of all, what believing Gentiles once were. Paul begins with the words, therefore remember, which is important.

[11:55] These are clues. We need to learn to read Scripture this way, to look for these grammatical clues and word clues to the emphasis of the passage and what his subject and meaning is in the passage.

So therefore, remember, clues us in on something very important to understand about Paul's intention here in the text. And I gave you, I think I gave you this quote by F.F. Bruce.

I'll read it to you even though you have it. It is salutary, and I defined that for us, healthy. All right. I had to look it up too.

I know what salutary means, but I wasn't sure what he meant. Anyway, it means healthy. It's healthy from time to time to be reminded of what we were apart from God's grace.

Wouldn't you agree with that? I think it's very healthy that we'd be reminded of that in order that we may the better appreciate the riches of his grace and be armed against the temptation of having high thoughts of ourselves.

[13:07] That's really a good statement. That's why I decided to include that for you. So, that's what is behind these words, therefore remember. He's speaking to a specific group of people, the Gentiles.

You need to remember something here. And so, Paul highlights two things that characterized Gentiles before salvation. first, Gentiles were objects of Jewish contempt.

Now, why he started there, I'm not really sure. It is interesting, and I think there are several things that he accomplishes, and I'll try to bring those out here, try to bring those out here in the notes.

The Gentiles, this is what they once were. They were objects of Jewish contempt, and we kind of know that, don't we? Verse 11 says, therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh, it just defines, you know, physically speaking, in the flesh speaking, you're Gentiles.

And I think, by the way, this kind of maybe goes ahead of myself here, but I want you to note that once Gentiles in the flesh, what he means by that is you're not Gentiles anymore, not in God's sight, because you become a new people, brand new people.

[14:31] So anyway, he says, therefore remember that once Gentiles in the flesh who are called uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision made in the flesh by hands.

This is just an interesting thing that Paul says here. The name, and it's really in the form of a name, you're called this, named. The name uncircumcision is a name of contempt on the part of who?

The circumcision. And it was always kind of thrown at them. We already know this from other places in Scripture. In fact, I will give you a couple of examples, and there are more.

We already know this, but here's what Paul is saying, that the Jews were always throwing this out at the Gentiles. throw this out to them. The uncircumcised.

So this is always being thrown to them, or at them, by the Jews, the circumcision. And why? Well, they had good reason, at least they thought it was a good reason, and their reason was based on truth, but God never meant for this reality, the reality of who the Gentiles are, never intended for that to be some source of contempt, be used to hurl contempt at them.

[15:57] But the Gentiles had no participation in the Mosaic rite of circumcision. They weren't circumcised. And so they did not bear that external mark of the covenant.

That's what the circumcision was. It was an external mark of the covenant between God and Israel. And you probably have heard enough about that.

You don't need to go back through Israel's history with Abraham and then later again with Moses. And the circumcision is very important because it was an external mark of the covenant.

Gentiles were outside of God's covenant with his people. Because Israel was that nation was his people but not the Gentiles.

And so then consequently they were looked upon with contempt by the Jews. They were. And we get kind of a flavor of this even though I think this first example is probably not a good example but it kind of brings out the use of this name uncircumcised.

[17:12] And it's in 1 Samuel 17 26. Did I give that to you? You can jot that text down. It's going to be. When I start reading it you're going to remember it. It's when young David was referring to Goliath.

Remember? Alright. It's one of my favorite stories in all the Bible I guess because I read it so often to our boys. But 1 Samuel 17 26 Then David spoke to the man who stood by him saying what shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel?

For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God? Of course as little boys I had to kind of explain what that uncircumcised meant.

But you see the flavor that he's naming this was a term of contempt. Now he had contempt for Goliath not just because he was a Philistine or a Gentile or uncircumcised.

He had contempt for him because he was defying and blaspheming God, Yahweh God. So I think David used the term in a justifiable way here.

[18:26] But this gives you the idea. You know, he named him, he named him, this uncircumcised Philistine. Also, after Peter brought the gospel to Gentile Cornelius' household, remember that story, in Acts 11, the Jews, they were pretty upset with Peter.

And this is what they said, you went into uncircumcised men and ate with them. Now that gives you the way that they used that term or that name with contempt because of who the Gentiles were according to the view of the Jews.

The Jews had come to consider the Gentiles uncircumcised as the Gentiles, the uncircumcised they had come to consider them inferior. Inferior, a people God cared nothing about.

And really to most Jews Gentiles were lower than animals. They cared more for their animals than they did for Gentile people. And for the Jew to even associate, even casually, to associate with a Gentile would make them unclean.

And they had such contempt for the Gentiles and especially those living in the days in which Ephesians was written when Israel was under the dominion of the Romans, the Gentiles, they hated them for a number of reasons.

[20:03] And not just bigotry. Alright, but also notice how Paul refers to the Jews as this is one of those kind of peripheral lessons that we get from this. Even though I don't think this is Paul's primary intent, but notice how Paul refers to the Jews in this passage.

Paul referred to the Jews as those who were called circumcision. They're called that. And the idea being that they're the so-called circumcision.

That's what Paul's getting at. And really called that by themselves proudly were the circumcision. And so I think Paul is criticizing the Jews for making judgments upon the Gentiles, judgments based upon external realities.

In reality, I think Paul is saying your circumcision is only external. It's only external. And so the fact is circumcision by the way had never been a mark of a personal relationship with God.

Never had been. Never. Not for Jews and not for anyone else. Not then, not now, not ever. Paul wrote in Romans 2, 28, For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly.

[21:23] That's a reference to circumcision. Because circumcision is an external thing. You're not a Jew because of the external thing. Neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.

So he's talking about a different kind of circumcision, isn't it? In fact, the Bible speaks of the circumcision of the heart. And that's what he goes on to say. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly. And circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the spirit, not by the letter. That is the procedures, the ritual of circumcision.

And his praise is not for men. They were very proud of the fact that they were of the circumcision. And they enjoyed the praise of man.

God didn't praise them because they had been circumcised, had undergone this external, outward, superficial thing here.

[ 22 : 27 ] But he praised them for the circumcision of their heart. all right. So, the fact, and as Paul points out also, and I may have just, did I give you Romans 4, 9?

And this just, I didn't really quote it there for you, but Paul pointed out, of course, to the Romans that Abraham, who they considered the Jews considered to be their father, father of the Jewish people, that he was saved before he was circumcised.

And so the circumcision, the external thing is not the important thing. you know, all right, so that's the point. Therefore, remember, Paul says, Gentiles were objects of Jewish contempt.

There's a second thing that they must remember about what the Gentiles once were, and second, Gentiles were bankrupt spiritually.

And so this is a duplication from some things that were given in chapter one, though we have something a little different here with regard to Gentiles.

[ 23 : 43 ] Verse 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.

all right, now, you know, based on what we've already said about Jewish contempt and kind of a peripheral thing that Paul points out there, we could say that the contempt of the Jews was superficial and unspiritual.

But God's evaluation of the Gentiles' true condition prior to their salvation, it's real and it's spiritual. And Paul uses five expressions to describe the Gentiles' actual spiritual condition before salvation. One, and first of all, without Christ. They were without Christ. And you say, well, that's, I know that. But this is something a little bit more than just the fact that they weren't saved. Talk about their history, talking about who they were as people.

They didn't have a Messiah. They didn't have Christ. Unlike the Jews. Jews, whether they rejected Him or believed Him, followed Him or, you know, crucified Him, they had the Messiah, but the Gentiles did not.

[ 25 : 02 ] They were without Christ. And this is their foundational condition before salvation. They had no messianic hope of a Savior. None whatsoever.

It wasn't given to them. No deliverer was in their view or in any purpose in history.

Nothing. Their history through the ages had no divine purpose or plan. That doesn't mean that God wasn't involved and that God didn't have a plan for them that would, of course, come about later, and that's what we're talking about here.

But their history had no divine purpose or plan. You read through the Bible, it's always God's purpose with Israel. Gentiles are mentioned, and God from time to time would use Gentiles like Rahab, but God's programs with the Jew.

And so, the Bible, the Old Testament in particular, is the history of redemption through God's chosen people, Israel. Ultimately, of course, coming through Christ, the Messiah, who would come out of Israel.

[ 26 : 19 ] Gentiles had none of that. They had no Christ. They were without Christ. And so, they had no divine purpose or plan other than ultimate judgment. The only thing they had, and they were totally ignorant of that, had no clue about that.

So, without Christ, that's kind of the foundational condition. Two, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, Paul says here. That is, you know, not to get real deep into the teachings of this from Scripture, but they were excluded from the theocracy.

There was only one theocracy, and it was Israel. A theocracy is where God is killed. And the Gentiles were excluded from that. And so, they were not given God's holy law, they were not, did not have God's presence, His protection, His provision, His guidance, the sacrifices, they weren't given the sacrifices that would deal with their sin.

All that was given to Israel. They were the theocracy, but the Gentiles were excluded from that. They were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.

They were not given any promises of forgiveness for sin. Psalm 140 47, verse 20, God has not dealt thus with any nation, any of the Gentile nations.

[ 27 : 47 ] Makes Israel unique. And as for His ordinances, they have not known them. Who has not known them? Gentiles did not know them. This is what they once were, bankrupt spiritually.

And three, third, strangers from the covenants of promise. And I think Paul is specifically referring to the covenant that was given, the promise given to Abraham.

Given to Israel through their father Abraham. Genesis 12, 2, and there are other places where it is repeated, I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. The Gentiles were not part of that covenant.

They're strangers of the covenant of promise, from the covenant of promise. And then number four, having no hope. It just keeps getting worse and worse. They have no hope. The Gentiles had diverse beliefs and hopes concerning the afterlife, concerning, you know, what would happen, you know, gods and purposes and eternity.

[ 29 : 14 ] They had different beliefs, diverse as they do today. But none were founded on truth. They had no hope. It doesn't mean that Gentile peoples were not religious, they were very religious.

Most of them in this day, of course, idolaters. But very religious, beliefs and they had all different paradigms of beliefs and religions and not a single one was founded on truth.

They had no hope. They had a false hope, as many do today. They have a false assurance, a false hope, and they say, well, I know I'm going to have them when I die, or some other different kind of view about eternity or the afterlife or so forth.

Even those who have a hope really in nothingness after they die. I mean, their hope is that when I die, it's just over. That's all there is to it.

That is still a sense of hope about a future, even though it's a non-future. That's certainly a much better thing than spending eternity in hell, would you agree?

[ 30 : 25 ] And so people, Gentiles have devised all kinds of various views about religion and about afterlife, but they're all false, which again is still true today.

And then number five kind of caps it off, without God in the world. This complements the having no hope. I mean, they go together. I mean, it complements it and makes it better.

It means they go together. Because Gentiles, you see, Gentiles had no true hope for the future life. They had all kinds of beliefs about it, but no true hope concerning the future life.

And they had no true God for the present life. No true God for the present. And, you know, think about it. There are today, literally, I would think it would be safe to say millions of gods.

That had been created. Millions of gods believed and worshipped by various groups of people in the Gentile nations, Gentile worlds.

[ 31 : 31 ] And more gods are being created every single day. You take the Hindus, they have a god for everything. And when they need a god, they just make a new one. And it's incredible.

Chinese, very much the same. But the problem is none of them are true. They might find some kind of false assurance that they are worshipping their god and trusting their god and praying to their god and this god and that god for this thing and for that thing.

And they have perhaps a false assurance and feel good about it, but it's all false. None of it's true. And so they have no god without god in this world.

That's what the believing Gentile once was before being saved. So total bankruptcy. Let me move on here real quick.

Second, what believing Gentiles now are. So here's the contrast. And we have a couple of clues in the passage. The phrase is remember that you once, that's verse 11, and then but now, verse 13, both of those things are meant to contrast the present condition of believing Gentiles with their past condition, which we've already seen was very hopeless.

[ 32 : 52 ] And so three statements summarize the believing Gentiles new position. First of all, in Christ, Gentiles and Jews are united to form a new people of God.

Gentiles, who once were far off, and is far off from God, separated from God, have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

For he himself is our peace, who has made both one, both Jew and Gentile one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in his flesh, that is in his death, the enmity, the hostility, hostility, hostility between who?

Well, we could say between God and man, and he certainly did that, but in the context it's hostility between Jew and Gentile. That is the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in himself one new man, or people, from the two, Jew and Gentile, thus making peace, thus

making peace.

Let me just point out a few things about this passage. The unification of Jews and Gentiles into one new people of God is stressed by the phrases, has made both one, and to create in himself one new man from the two.

[ 34 : 50 ] Both those phrases are helping us understand that Paul's subject is the unification of Jews and Gentiles into something brand new. So you see, it's not the two are brought together with the Jew remaining a Jew and the Gentile remaining a Gentile.

And it's not the Gentile becomes a Jew, or the Jew becomes a Gentile. See, there's various views in history concerning this unification.

It's not those things, and it's also not the two coming together to make a new people group. That we just bring Jews and Gentiles together, and now we have some new group, you know, that is just the coming together of Jew and Gentile.

Huh? Yeah, I guess it would be similar to that. But the idea is this, and this is what we need to understand. The creation, it's the creation out of the two of something entirely new.

is not just simply bringing them together, and either defining it as Jewish Christian or Christian Jews, or Christian Gentiles, or Jewish Gentiles, or Gentilish Jews, or, you know, it's not that.

[ 36 : 13 ] Both are brand new. When they come together, it's a new thing, a brand new thing, a new humanity, a brand new people of God. And, you know, this, I think, poses a real problem with the popular movement today among Jewish Christians.

And I've met some over the years. In fact, I had lunch with one several years ago. He was a Jew, but he was a believer, and he was part of a church that was kind of a messianic conversation, messianic Jewish church.

So, what could be wrong with that? Well, Jewish Christians, what really represents it is Jewish Christians who want to hold on to their Jewishness.

Now, you know, it seems, you know, maybe harmless enough. But the problem is it goes against what Paul is talking about.

He's not talking about, you know, a Jewish Christian church and a Gentile Christian church. And, you know, the Jewish Christian church, they still maybe deserve Passover and worship it by connecting it with, you know, Christ now.

[ 37 : 36 ] But they still want to kind of go through some. I think what Paul is saying is we're abolishing this wall between. and we're bringing them together not as a combination of two different ethnics, but we're bringing them together as something absolutely different, absolutely brand new, unique, and it's the unique people of God and this was his purpose.

And then also notice the unification of Jews and Gentiles is accomplished, of course, by the cross. in this passage that I read, re-read again a moment ago.

The blood of Christ, he mentions the blood of Christ, that refers to the sacrificial death and it points us to the infinite cost of the reconciliation. What reconciliation?

You see, we've got to understand the terms here because words change their meaning based upon context. And so here at this point, reconciliation is not a reference to our reconciliation with God.

Now the blood of Jesus, the cross, does accomplish that. We'll get to that next, but the reconciliation he's talking about here is between Jew and Gentile, bringing them together.

[ 38 : 59 ] Christ's sacrificial death provides the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles because it removes the barrier which separated them.

and Paul mentions two, he refers to two here, describes kind of a barrier in two senses. One, a literal barrier.

When he says in verse 14, the middle wall of separation, he's not talking about some spiritual thing here. He's not in spiritual terms. We're not talking about the veil between the holy of holies and the holy place.

he's talking about a literal wall that was erected. And it's a reference to the stone wall that separated the temple proper. Temple proper would include the holy place and well, it would include a number of other places, but specifically the holy place and the holy of holies.

But there would be a wall separating the temple proper from what was called the court of the Gentiles, where the Gentiles could come. And the wall even had signs on it.

[ 40 : 13 ] I mean, you could not pass through that wall if you did, under penalty of death. Literally. And so the Gentiles could not pass through that wall.

It was a physical wall, a literal barrier. And he's saying that it was the cross, the blood of Christ, forming this new people, brand new people, that has torn down that wall of separation, that middle wall of separation.

But there's also a spiritual barrier. Verse 15, the law of commandments contained in ordinances. And this refers to something more than just simply the mosaic laws we have recorded in scripture. It refers to all the ordinances and all of the traditions that have been added over the years by the Jews. Because the law itself, as well as all that was added, became a source of Jewish pride in this day.

And it effectively made it next to impossible for the Gentiles. And it represented an insurmountable barrier. And the blood of Christ brought that down.

[ 41 : 28 ] Alright, then second, and I'll wrap this up. In Christ, both Jews and Gentiles are reconciled to God. Now we're going to talk about reconciliation in the sense that we're more familiar with.

In verse 16 to 18, and that he might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

And he came and preached peace to you who were afar off, that would be the Gentiles, and to those who were near, that would be the Jews, for through him we both have access by one spirit to the Father.

Alright, so here Paul's focus is again on reconciliation, but it's the reconciliation of man to God. It's the reconciliation of both the Jews to God and the Gentiles to God.

Both Jews and Gentiles are estranged from God because of sin. Both are. There's no difference. Jew or Gentile, both separated from God because of sin and need to be reconciled.

[ 42 : 30 ] Both enemies of God because of sin and need to be reconciled. So both Jews and Gentiles need reconciling, and the cross of Christ reconciles both Jews and Gentiles.

And you know, this has, I think, also an implication for today in regard to evangelism. It wasn't too many years ago, and I know there are still those within our own convention, the SBC, who think that we ought not to evangelize Jews.

that there's somehow, you know, some different kind of arrangement with them. They're God's holy people, and there are different branches of views concerning that, but you know, there was quite a bit of criticism at a Southern Baptist convention a number of years ago now from certain ones there at the convention who were totally against evangelizing the Jews.

Well, Paul says that both Jews and Gentiles need reconciliation with God, and it can only happen through Christ, and the only way that can happen is through the gospel. And, of course, through the right response to the gospel, repentance and faith.

And there's no difference between Jew or Gentile. And then Jews and Gentiles have the same Savior, have the same Spirit, same Father. That's what verse 18 is really all about.

[ 43 : 52 ] For through Him, that's through Christ, we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Both Son, God the Son, God the Spirit, God the Holy, God the Father, usually in different order, but this is a reverse order, and both are mentioned in this passage.

And He says both. Both who? Both. Jew and Gentile have access by one Spirit to the Father. And then the third one, I'll just name it, and this is what we'll spend some time on, these verses.

In Christ, both Jews and Gentiles mutually share in the blessings and privileges of God's new people. And there's a whole lot in those verses, 19 through 22, and we'll spend some time on that next time.

Thank you.