

STUDY GUIDE 4

EPHESIANS 2:11-22



Jews and Gentiles Reconciled: One in Christ

DAY 1

Read the passage 3 times.

“Therefore remember” refers to verses 1-10 that describe the state of those without Christ.

1. In verse 11, who are the two types of people referred to here? What are they called? Who do they represent?
2. Circumcision was done to all Jewish male babies – a physical mark of distinction between Jews and Gentiles. Jewish people took pride in this that they were God’s chose people. Can you see how this could be a source of spiritual pride? Write out your thoughts. What do we use today that could be or are used as spiritual pride?
3. From verse 12, list 5 things that were true of the Gentiles before they trusted in Christ.

FOR REFLECTION: Have you ever felt separate, excluded, hopeless? No one who believes in Christ is alienated from Christ’s love or his church. By the end of this week you will see how this is true.

DAY 2

1. In verse 13 “But now” indicates something is different. What is different for the Gentiles who are in Christ? How did Christ do this?
2. According to verse 14, who is the peace for Jews and Gentiles? (see also verses 15 and 17). What has Jesus done to both groups?
3. The use of the words “barrier” and “dividing wall” in verse 14 describe the total religious isolation the Jews and Gentiles experienced from each other. Can you think of barriers that isolate religious groups from each other in today’s world? Write them here.

TO DIG DEEPER: If you have access to a Bible Handbook or Bible Commentary, look up Ephesians 2:11-22 and write down what you learn about the division between Jews and Gentiles in the first century A.D.

DAY 3

In verses 15-16 Paul uses 3 verbs to describe how Christ broke down the barrier between Jews and Gentiles by his death on the cross.

1. In verse 15 – “abolish” or “abolishing” is used. What did Christ abolish?

(NIV footnote states “Since Matthew 5:17 and Romans 3:3 teach that God’s moral standard expressed in the Old Testament law is not changed by the coming of Christ, what is abolished here is probably the effect of the specific commandments and regulations in separating Jews and Gentiles, whose non-Observance of the Jewish law renders them ritually unclean”.)

2. In verse 15- “to create” is used. What did Christ create? Why?
3. In verse 16 “to reconcile” is used. Who did Christ reconcile? To whom were they reconciled? Through what did he reconcile?
4. In verse 16 what happened to the hostility between the Jews and Gentiles?

FOR REFLECTION: So, Christ made a single entity out of the two groups – the united body of believers in Christ, the church. You could say He creates a new race: Christians. Thus, Christ is the one who makes peace between believers – from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Do I function as one who is reconciled to other believers in Christ, or do I help keep up the barriers? What are some of the barriers that can divide Christians today?

DAY 4

1. To whom did Christ preach peace – see verse 17? What 2 groups do they represent? {Remember the context of who he is reconciling}.
2. In verse 18 – through Christ both groups have access to who? By whom?

3. In verse 19 – a connecting word – “Consequently” or “So then” or “Now therefore” –indicates the thoughts in verses 19-22 are based on what Christ has done as described in verses 14-18. So what is now the status of the Gentile believers?

TO DIG DEEPER: Note the use of “one” in verses 14, 15, 16, and 18. Write beside each reference what “one” is describing. This passage in Ephesians teaches the unity of all believers in Jesus Christ. Christian unity is a mutual headship – all have the same head. (see Ephesians 1:22-23). Who is the author of this unity? (see verses 13 and 15) What is the price of this unity? (see verses 13, 15 and 16) A quote from Dr. Frank Sells: Jesus purchased our right to unity!

DAY 5

1. In verse 20 what is the foundation upon which God’s household, the church, is built? What does the word “foundation” mean to you when you hear it? Look up the word in a dictionary.
2. Who is the chief cornerstone? (verse 20) Using a Bible Dictionary or Study Bible Footnotes, what is a cornerstone?
3. In verse 21 Paul states that God’s household, the church, is joined together in Christ and is to be a holy temple to the Lord. In verse 22 who is included in this process? What are they becoming?

DAY 6

A church building is often called God’s house. In reality, the church is a group of people who Christ lives in and shows Himself through to the world. It is to be a community in whom the Holy Spirit dwells. Think on these words: “God’s household”, “holy temple”, “dwelling in which God lives”. Now put the words “I am” before each phrase. Describe how this affects you.