

EXEGETICAL GUIDE



Ephesians 2:11-22



BE UNITED
IN CHRIST

Be United in Christ

Exegetical Guide

Ephesians 2:11-22

BE UNITED IN CHRIST EXEGETICAL GUIDE

This exegetical guide was developed and distributed by the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry for use in your personal life and ministry. It is our desire for you to use, reproduce, and distribute this material free of charge. Our only restrictions are that you do not alter the exegetical guide content in any way, that you do not sell the exegetical guide content for profit, and that you attribute the work to the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry.

Exegetical Guide Ephesians 2:11-22
Copyright © 2016 by Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry

Scripture quotations marked NKJV are taken from the New King James Version®.
Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked KJV are taken from the King James Version, public domain.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are taken from the New American Standard Bible®.
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by
The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)

Scripture quotations marked ESV are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®). Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.
Used by permission. All rights reserved. ESV Text Edition: 2011.

Scripture quotations marked NRSV are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Bible.
Copyright © 1989, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the
United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®.
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan.
All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com. The “NIV” and “New International Version”
are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation.
Copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007, 2013 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of
Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Greek Bible text from: Novum Testamentum Graece, 28th revised edition,
Edited by Barbara Aland and others, © 2012 Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart.

Please visit BeUnitedinChrist.com for other Bible-based resources.

Be United in Christ

Exegetical Guide

Ephesians 2:11-22

God's New Community

The apostle Paul teaches that Christ unites believers into one new community. Although Gentiles were separate from God and the people of God, Jesus forms Jews and Gentiles into one new person, whom He reconciles to God. An individual redeemed by Christ becomes a citizen in the kingdom of God, a family member in the household of God, and a vital part of the temple of God.

Every individual who has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is part of God's people. God gathers people from every background into one new community in Christ. The unity Christians should exhibit and enjoy is not based merely upon common experiences or preferences but upon who they are in Christ. Realizing and embracing the community identity that Christ died to provide is essential for believers to Be United in Christ.

beunitedinchrist.com

HOW TO USE A BE UNITED IN CHRIST EXEGETICAL GUIDE

An exegetical guide models how to study a passage of Scripture. The Introduction provides the context, while **Connection to Be United in Christ** highlights the text's importance for Christian unity. The Passage presents the Biblical text being studied.

We begin by **Studying the Passage** because God's messengers must convey God's words accurately. The Passage Comparison presents the text in its original Greek or Hebrew alongside seven English translations. Comparing translations allows for a better understanding of the passage and provides insight into the intent of the original Biblical manuscripts. The Structural Layout divides the passage into its component parts, because to understand what God said we must understand how He said it. It is an essential step in Bible study, but do not be discouraged if this section seems unfamiliar or daunting. The Narrative Flow explains the Biblical author's flow of thought through the passage. The Passage Overview then presents a simple outline that will form the foundation of subsequent outlines and the sermon manuscript itself. The Passage Focus distills the text into a statement that will be the main idea of the sermon. We then identify several Resources to further your study.

Having studied the passage, we are ready to begin **Preparing the Sermon**. Good preaching feeds God's people on God's Word, so our messages must be both healthful and appetizing. This is why this section begins by laying out several Sermon Ingredients that will be used to prepare a nutritious and appealing message. We must present God's Word accurately and clearly so that God's people will understand it with their minds, embrace it in their hearts, and apply it to their lives. The Passage Outline presents the passage's structure and flow while the Passage Details provide the grammatical, historical, and theological information needed to understand and teach the passage. The message is then fortified with Applications and seasoned with Illustrations. These ingredients are combined to prepare a spiritual meal to feed God's children. The Sermon Outline rephrases the Passage Outline to make it more understandable to an audience. The Sermon Manuscript for Your Use then offers an example of how the passage might be preached. Then we identify several Sermon Examples that model good preaching on the text.

Thus, an exegetical guide presents both a comprehensive analysis of one particular Bible passage and a model for studying and preaching Scripture. We pray that God will use this guide to promote love for Him, fidelity to His Word, and unity in His church.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	6
Connection to Be United in Christ	7
Passage: Ephesians 2:11-22	7
The Church in Ephesians	8
 STUDYING THE PASSAGE	
Passage Comparison	10
Structural Layout	14
Narrative Flow	16
Passage Overview	16
Passage Focus	16
Resources	17
 PREPARING THE SERMON	
Sermon Ingredients	19
Passage Outline	19
Passage Details	19
Applications	26
Illustrations	27
Sermon Outline	27
Sermon Manuscript for Your Use	28
Sermon Examples	34

INTRODUCTION

Ephesus was a thriving port city located on the western coast of modern-day Turkey. It was a wealthy and influential trading center that was also the political capital of the province of Asia. In the first century AD, it had an estimated population of 250,000, which made it the third largest city in the Roman Empire after Rome and Alexandria. Its theater seated 24,000, its stadium was 250 yards long, and its Temple of Artemis was the largest building in the Greek world and one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Thus, Ephesus was a strategic city from which Christianity could spread to the surrounding regions.

Paul passed through Ephesus briefly on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:18-21), and when he returned on his third missionary journey, he stayed for more than three years (Acts 19:1-41). Rioting crowds forced him to move on to Macedonia, but he met with the elders of the Ephesian church on his way to Jerusalem in the spring of 57 (Acts 20:17-38). He also sent his disciple Timothy to Ephesus to minister in his absence (1 Timothy 1:3). So, when Paul wrote his letter to the church at Ephesus around 60–61 while a prisoner in Rome, he was writing to a community that he knew and that knew him well.

After a customary greeting (1:1-2), Paul blesses God the Father for the glorious salvation accomplished in Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit (1:3-14). He thanks God for the believers at Ephesus and prays that they will be able to understand the wondrous riches of the gospel made available in Christ (1:15-23). Paul reminds them that God's salvation is a work of sheer grace (2:1-10), which forms a new community in Christ (2:11-22). Paul's particular ministry was to announce God's inclusion of the Gentiles in His promises (3:1-13), and he prays that his readers will be rooted in and appreciative of Christ's love (3:14-21). So, the first half of Ephesians presents the glorious truths of God's saving work in Christ.

In the second half of his letter (Chapters 4–6), Paul urges and instructs recipients of the gospel to respond practically to the truths he has just presented (Chapters 1–3). He implores them to walk in a manner worthy of their calling, diligently preserving the unity of the Spirit amidst the diversity in the body of Christ (4:1-16). They are to walk, not according to their old ways (4:17-32), but in love and in light (5:1-14). They are to walk in wisdom, filled by the Holy Spirit, who transforms their church, family, and work relationships (5:15–6:9). Paul cautions them to arm themselves against the devil's schemes (6:10-20) and then closes with a final word of encouragement, blessing, and greeting (6:21-24).

Connection to Be United in Christ

Many view faith exclusively as an individual matter, but Ephesians 2:11-22 teaches that saving faith also places Christians in community. The gospel removes the separation between God and sinners as well as the separation between sinners themselves. God draws individuals from all backgrounds and makes them one in Christ. There is only one church, for Christ only has one body and one bride. “There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all” (Ephesians 4:4-6). Thus, the gospel has the power to destroy barriers, deflate egos, and heal the relational wounds of forgiven sinners. We must embrace the community that is part of our Christian identity if we are ever to Be United in Christ.

PASSAGE: EPHESIANS 2:11-22

¹¹ Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands—¹² remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, ¹⁵ by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. ¹⁷ AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; ¹⁸ for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.¹

¹ While there are many fine Bible translations, the New American Standard Bible (NASB) is used here for its consistent, word-for-word translation. Note that although modern dictionaries spell “cornerstone” as one word, the NASB (and some other translations) sometimes treat it as two words, as in verse 20. (For an explanation, see the comment on verse 20 on page 25). This exegetical guide will spell the term as one word unless the Bible translation being quoted uses two words.

THE CHURCH IN EPHESIANS

Paul's teaching on God's new community in Ephesians 2:11-22 is best understood in the broader context of his presentation of the church in Ephesians. Paul describes the church as the body of Christ as well as a new person, kingdom, family, temple, and bride. All of these images convey the centrality of Christ to the nature and function of the church. Christ is the head of the body, the creator of the new humanity, the Lord over the kingdom, the firstborn in the family, the cornerstone of the temple, and the loving husband of the bride. In response, the church is to be a healthy body, a holy humanity, a loyal subject, a loving sibling, an excellent building, and a faithful, beautiful bride.

And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the **church**, which is His **body**, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (1:22-23)

For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into **one** and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into **one new man**, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in **one body** to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. (2:14-16)

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are **fellow citizens** with the saints, and are of God's **household**, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole **building**, being fitted together, is growing into a holy **temple** in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a **dwelling** of God in the Spirit. (2:19-22)

To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the **church** to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. (3:8-10)

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the **church** and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen. (3:20-21)

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the **body** of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a **mature man**, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole **body**, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the **body** for the building up of itself in love. (4:11-16)

For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the **church**, He Himself being the Savior of the **body**. But as the **church** is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the **church** and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the **church** in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the **church**, because we are members of His **body**. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the **church**. (5:23-32)

STUDYING THE PASSAGE

Ephesians 2:11-22

God's New Community

PASSAGE COMPARISON

Ephesians 2:11-22

The Passage Comparison presents the original Greek text alongside seven English translations. Comparing translations allows for a better understanding of the passage and provides insight into the intent of the original Biblical manuscripts.

GREEK	NASB	ESV	KJV
¹¹ Διὸ μνημονεύετε ὅτι ποτὲ ὑμεῖς τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί, οἱ λεγόμενοι ἀκροβυστία ὑπὸ τῆς λεγομένης περιτομῆς ἐν σαρκὶ χειροποιήτου,	¹¹ Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” <i>which is performed in the flesh by human hands—</i>	¹¹ Therefore 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—	¹¹ Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;
¹² ὅτι ἦτε τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ χωρὶς Χριστοῦ, ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, ἐλπίδα μὴ ἔχοντες καὶ ἄθεοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ.	¹² <i>remember</i> that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.	¹² remember 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.	¹² That at that time ye 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:
¹³ νυνὶ δὲ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ὑμεῖς οἱ ποτε ὄντες μακρὰν ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ.	¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.	¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.	¹³ But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.
¹⁴ Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν, ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφοτέρωθεν ἐν καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ,	¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who made both <i>groups into</i> one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,	¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility	¹⁴ For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;
¹⁵ τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας, ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἓνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιῶν εἰρήνην	¹⁵ by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, <i>which is</i> the Law of commandments <i>contained</i> in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, <i>thus</i> establishing peace,	¹⁵ by 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,	¹⁵ Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;
¹⁶ καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἐνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ.	¹⁶ and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.	¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.	¹⁶ And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

NKJV	NRSV	NIV	NLT
¹¹ 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—	¹¹ So then, remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called “the uncircumcision” by those who are called “the circumcision”—a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands—	¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)—	¹¹ Don’t forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders. You were called “uncircumcised heathens” by the Jews, who were proud of their circumcision, even though it affected only their bodies and not their hearts.
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.	¹² remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.	¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.	¹² In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope.
¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.	¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.	¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.	¹³ But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.
¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,	¹⁴ For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us.	¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,	¹⁴ For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us.
¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, <i>that is</i> , the law of commandments <i>contained</i> in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man <i>from</i> the two, <i>thus</i> making peace,	¹⁵ He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace,	¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace,	¹⁵ He did this by ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations. He made peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new people from the two groups.
¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.	¹⁶ and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it.	¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.	¹⁶ Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God by means of his death on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death.

GREEK	NASB	ESV	KJV
¹⁷ καὶ ἔλθὼν εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην ὑμῖν τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ εἰρήνην τοῖς ἐγγύς·	¹⁷ AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR;	¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.	¹⁷ And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.
¹⁸ ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμώτεροι ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα.	¹⁸ for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.	¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.	¹⁸ For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.
¹⁹ Ἄρα οὖν οὐκέτι ἐστὲ ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι ἀλλὰ ἐστὲ συμπολιταὶ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ,	¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,	¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,	¹⁹ Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;
²⁰ ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, ὃντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ,	²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,	²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,	²⁰ And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;
²¹ ἐν ᾧ πᾶσα οἰκοδομὴ συναρμολογουμένη αὖξει εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ,	²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,	²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.	²¹ In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:
²² ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς συνοικοδομεῖσθε εἰς κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πνεύματι.	²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.	²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.	²² In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

NKJV	NRSV	NIV	NLT
¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.	¹⁷ So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near;	¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.	¹⁷ He brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were far away from him, and peace to the Jews who were near.
¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.	¹⁸ for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father.	¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.	¹⁸ Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.
¹⁹ Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,	¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God,	¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household,	¹⁹ So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family.
²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief <i>cornerstone</i> ,	²⁰ built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.	²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.	²⁰ Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself.
²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,	²¹ In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord;	²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.	²¹ We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord.
²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.	²² in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.	²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.	²² Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.

STRUCTURAL LAYOUT

The Structural Layout shows how the passage fits together. The left column contains the Biblical text divided into its structural elements. Main clauses are aligned left, related elements are highlighted in color, and words added for clarification are placed in brackets. The right column explains how the various elements function in context.

- 11 Therefore..... This conjunction links vv. 1-10 with vv. 11-22.
- remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh,..... “Remember” is the main verbal idea in vv. 11-12.
- who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,”..... Gentiles were looked down upon for being outside
which is performed in the flesh by human hands— the Abrahamic covenant by Jews who bore its sign.
- 12 remember that you were at that time..... Paul lists five truths about the Gentile’s pre-
separate from Christ, conversion identity that he wants them to
excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and remember. The first three emphasize their
strangers to the covenants of promise, separation from God’s people, and the last two
having no hope and stress what they lacked as a result.
without God in the world.
- 13 But now in Christ Jesus..... Paul contrasts the present identity of Gentiles in
Christ with their old identity apart from Christ.
- you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ..... That Christ’s death brought “far off” Gentiles near
to God is the central assertion in vv. 13-18.
- 14 For He Himself is our peace,..... This explains why Christ could bring Gentiles near.
who made both groups into one and..... Christ is the embodiment of peace because He is
broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, the one who (1) united both groups and (2) broke
down the barrier separating them.
- 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity,..... The means by which Christ unified the two groups
which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, and broke down the barrier was by abolishing the
system of the Mosaic Law that had separated them.
- so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man,..... Christ abolished the Mosaic Law for two reasons:
thus establishing peace, and (1) First, so that He might make Jews and Gentiles
into one new man, thereby creating peace.
- 16 might reconcile them both in one body to God .. (2) Second, so that He might reconcile the new
through the cross, man to God through the cross.
by it having put to death the enmity. The reason the cross could reconcile the new man
to God is that it removed man’s enmity with God.

17	AND He CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND..... PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR;	Christ, who is our peace (v. 12) and who establishes peace (v. 15), preaches peace both to “far away” Gentiles and to Jews who are near.
18	for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.	The reason Jews and Gentiles receive the same offer of peace is that they both have access to the Father through the same Son in one Spirit.
19	So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and [you] are of God’s household ,	Verses 19-22 state the results of Christ’s peace-making work described in vv. 13-18. Paul contrasts his readers’ past with their new community identity in Christ: they are now fellow citizens and family members.
20	having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building , being fitted together, is growing..... into a holy temple in the Lord , in whom you also are being built together..... into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.	The basis for being fellow citizens and family members is having been built on the foundation of God’s New Testament revelation. Christ is the cornerstone of God’s new temple. In Christ, the church is growing into a holy temple as believers are fitted together in it. In Christ, believers are being built together into a dwelling of God in the person of the Spirit.
21		
22		

NARRATIVE FLOW

Paul tells the members of his mostly Gentile audience, who were scorned for being outside the Abrahamic covenant by the Jews (v. 11), to remember their pre-Christian status: that they had no part in God's Messiah, people, or covenants and therefore were without hope and without God (v. 12).

Now that they are in Christ, however, Gentile believers have been brought near to God through the death of Christ (v. 13). The reason for this is that Christ is the believer's peace, He who unified Jews and Gentiles and broke down the wall dividing them (v. 14). The way Christ did this was by removing through His crucified body the Mosaic Law containing rules separating Jews and Gentiles (v. 15a). Two reasons Christ did this were to make believing Jews and Gentiles into one new humanity and to reconcile both groups to God (vv. 15b-16). Christ's crucifixion brought peace between Jews and Gentiles and between sinners and God. Christ now preaches peace to Gentiles and Jews alike, for both groups now have access through Him in the one Spirit to the same Father (vv. 17-18).

As a result of verses 13-18, Gentiles in Christ are no longer outside God's promises and people, but they are now fellow citizens and members of God's family (v. 19). This is because they have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus being the cornerstone (v. 20). In Christ, individual believers are being fitted together into the whole building, which is growing into a holy temple (v. 21). In Christ, believers are being built into a dwelling place of God in the person of His Spirit (v. 22).

PASSAGE OVERVIEW

Ephesians 2:11-22 has three main sections:

- I. THE GENTILES WERE FAR FROM GOD WITHOUT CHRIST (2:11-12)**
- II. THE GENTILES ARE NOW NEAR TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST (2:13-18)**
- III. THE GENTILES ARE RELATED CLOSELY TO GOD IN CHRIST (2:19-22)**

PASSAGE FOCUS

Christ died to create a new community at peace with God and one another.

RESOURCES

Basic Resources

Liefeld, Walter L. *Ephesians*. IVP New Testament Commentary Series. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010.

MacArthur, John F., Jr. *Ephesians*. The MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986.

Snodgrass, Klyne. *Ephesians*. The NIV Application Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996.

Intermediate Resources

Arnold, Clinton E. *Ephesians*. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.

Boice, James Montgomery. *Ephesians: An Expositional Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006.

Bruce, F. F. *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984.

Advanced Resources

Hoehner, Harold W. *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.

Thielman, Frank. *Ephesians*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.

PREPARING THE SERMON

Ephesians 2:11-22

God's New Community

SERMON INGREDIENTS

Ephesians 2:11-22

PASSAGE OUTLINE

- I. THE GENTILES WERE FAR FROM GOD WITHOUT CHRIST (2:11-12)**
 - A. Gentiles were separate from God's people (2:11)
 - B. Gentiles were separate from God and His promises (2:12)
- II. THE GENTILES ARE NOW NEAR TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST (2:13-18)**
 - A. Christ brought Gentiles near to God's people and to God (2:13)
 - B. Christ reconciled Gentiles and Jews with each other and with God (2:14-16)
 - C. Christ gives Gentiles and Jews access to God in one Spirit (2:17-18)
- III. THE GENTILES ARE RELATED CLOSELY TO GOD IN CHRIST (2:19-22)**
 - A. In Christ, Gentiles are citizens in God's kingdom (2:19a-b)
 - B. In Christ, Gentiles are members of God's household (2:19c)
 - C. In Christ, Gentiles are part of God's temple (2:20-22)

PASSAGE DETAILS

Ephesians 2:11

Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh

“Therefore” links verses 11-22 closely with verses 1-10, and the two paragraphs share many parallels. Both emphasize the desperate condition of non-Christians (vv. 1-3, 11-12), God's gracious intervention in Christ on their behalf (vv. 4-8, 13-18), and the new identity that resulted (vv. 10, 19-22).

To “remember” is a command to call something to mind and keep it in mind. Paul tells the Gentile converts to recall their former, pre-Christian status in order to appreciate their current, Christian identity.

“Gentiles” refers to people from nations other than Israel. The Jews believed that all people were divided into two groups: those who belonged within the covenant community of God and those who did not. Our English words “ethnic” and “ethnicity” come from this Greek word, *ethnos*.

“In the flesh” describes the Gentiles ethnically. They were born outside the Jewish community and therefore lacked the physical sign that indicated membership among God's covenant people.

who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands

Circumcision was the sign of the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 17:9-14) and therefore viewed by Jews as a sign of their distinctiveness and superiority. However, what God ultimately desired was not circumcision of the flesh but of the heart (Leviticus 26:41; Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4; 9:25-26). It is this spiritual circumcision that indicates a true child of God (Romans 2:28-29; 4:9-12; Galatians 6:15), which is why Gentile converts to Christianity were not required to be circumcised the way converts to Judaism were (Acts 15:8-9; Galatians 5:2-12).

“Performed ... by human hands” is a translation of a word, which, in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, referred to making idols (Leviticus 26:1, 30; Isaiah 2:18; 10:11; 19:1; Daniel 5:4, 23).² Paul contrasts man’s creation of idols with God’s creation of Christians and Christ’s creation of a new humanity (Ephesians 2:10, 15).

“In the flesh” is repeated to emphasize that the physical sign of the old covenant, so prioritized by the Jews, is no longer a valid distinction under the new covenant.

Ephesians 2:12

remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world

This verse states what Paul wants his predominately Gentile audience to remember. He indicates five dire realities that characterize Gentiles before they come to a saving knowledge of Christ. Contrast this with the spiritual benefits of being Jewish (Romans 3:1-2; 9:3-5).

1. *Separate from Christ.* “Christ” is the Greek term for the Hebrew “messiah,” which means “anointed one.” Jesus was God’s final anointed prophet, priest, and king, who came to reveal God, mediate salvation, and rule over God’s people. The Gentiles were, at that time, separate from the Jews’ promised Messiah and thus without hope of any future redemption and restoration as individuals or as a people.
2. *Excluded from the commonwealth of Israel.* The Gentiles were also excluded from God’s people, Israel. Lacking citizenship in the Jewish community, they lacked the privileges and blessings God had given His people, such as knowledge of and access to Himself.
3. *Strangers to the covenants of promise.* Because the Gentiles were excluded from God’s covenant people, they were strangers to God’s “covenants of promise.” This is one of only three times that the New Testament uses the plural “covenants” (Romans 9:4; Galatians 4:24). The plural likely includes the Abrahamic (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-27), Mosaic (Exodus 24:1-18), Davidic (2 Samuel 7:8-17), and new (Jeremiah 31) covenants. The singular “promise” may refer to God’s foundational promise to Abraham, or to the Messiah and/or the Holy Spirit, or it may simply mean that God’s covenants were characterized by promises.

²“Paul applies the term to the Jewish practice of circumcision in a way that implies the utter worthlessness of this practice now that the era of Christ has begun.... Paul’s radical new outlook on circumcision can only be explained by understanding the irrelevance of this rite from the vantage point of the new covenant and new life in Christ” (Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010], 154).

4. *Having no hope.* Because the Gentiles were separate from God's Messiah, people, and covenants, they had no hope.
5. *Without God in the world.* Although there were numerous gods to be worshiped in Ephesus, there is only one true God, and the Gentiles did not know Him (see 1 Corinthians 8:5-6; Galatians 4:8; 1 Thessalonians 4:5).

Ephesians 2:13

But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ

"But now" indicates a strong temporal contrast between the Gentiles' godless, hopeless condition before Christ and their current spiritual state now that Christ has come and made Himself known to them. This beautiful "before-after" difference that Christ makes is a recurring theme in the New Testament (Romans 3:21; 6:21-22; 7:5-6; Ephesians 2:4-7; 5:8; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:5-8; 1 Peter 2:10).

"Far off" was a term used by Jews for Gentiles before they became Jews. The terminology likely originated in Isaiah 57:19 where it referred to Jews who went into exile versus those who remained in Israel during the Babylonian captivity. For Paul, the phrase summarizes the desperate spiritual condition of Gentiles who were far off from God but now have been brought near by Christ.³

The "blood of Christ" refers to the bloody death of Christ on the cross. Blood sacrifices in the Old Testament were the means by which men could approach a holy God (Leviticus 16:2; Hebrews 9:7). In the New Testament, however, Jesus' sacrifice is the means by which sinners can draw near to God.

Ephesians 2:14

For He Himself is our peace

The word "peace" here refers to the removal of hostility between Gentiles and Jews (Ephesians 2:14-15) and between God and both groups (Ephesians 2:16-18). It occurs four times in this passage: Christ is our peace (2:14), establishes peace (2:15), and preaches peace to those far and near (2:17; see also "the gospel of peace" in 6:15).

"Christ not only brings peace and reconciliation (Colossians 1:20) but is the embodiment and personification of peace (Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:5). The focus here is the peace between Jewish and Gentile believers.... However, Ephesians 2:16-18 shows that the vertical peace that believers have with God is foundational for this horizontal peace. This horizontal peace is not just the absence of hostility; it involves mutual acceptance and love (4:16, 32)."⁴

who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall

Paul here mentions two specific actions that Jesus accomplished to bring about peace between Jews and Gentiles. Positively, He made the two groups into one. Negatively, He broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, which was a necessary precursor to unifying the two groups. Both of these constructive and destructive aspects of His peacemaking work are mentioned again in verses 15-16.

Jesus brought ethnic peace not by making Gentiles become Jews, nor by making Jews become Gentiles, but rather by making both groups into one new man.

³ "The pivotal assertion of this text is that the Gentiles have come near to God.... At the heart of this passage, then, is a theology of 'nearness'" (Arnold, 175).

⁴ D. A. Carson, ed., *NIV Zondervan Study* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 2402.

Scholars differ whether the dividing wall refers to: (1) the physical wall barring Gentiles from the inner courts of the temple in Jerusalem, (2) the specific laws ordering Jews to remain separate from Gentiles, (3) all the laws which collectively made Jews distinct from Gentiles, or, (4) the Mosaic Law as a system by which God governed His people between Sinai and Calvary. Paul probably refers here to the Mosaic Law as the covenant governing God's people until Christ replaced it with the new covenant (Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; Hebrews 8:8, 13; 9:15; 12:24). Christ fulfilled the Mosaic Law (Matthew 5:17), thereby removing the laws separating Gentiles and Jews.

Ephesians 2:15

by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances

“Abolishing.” This term means to “cause something to lose its power or effectiveness.”⁵ Paul here indicates that Christ has rendered the Mosaic Law inoperative as the legal system by which God governs His people. “For Paul, the work of Christ marked the end of the Mosaic covenant because Christ had inaugurated a new covenant. The best way to understand this remark is to recognize that Christ has abolished the law entirely, specifically with regard to its function of regulating the covenant relationship. The era of the law has come to an end; a new era has begun.”⁶ While the principles of the Mosaic Law are still applicable to Christian life, the Law as a covenant contract has been replaced by a new arrangement that permits Gentiles to be included in the people of God via their faith apart from the Law (Romans 3:21-26).⁷

“In His flesh” refers to Christ's body, which was crucified to reconcile men to God (v. 16).

“Enmity” refers to hostility between persons (Luke 23:12; Galatians 5:19-21), groups (Genesis 3:15), nations (Ezekiel 35:5), and between sinners and God (Romans 8:7; Ephesians 2:16; James 4:4). Here, it refers to the hostility between Gentiles and Jews. Paul equates “enmity” with the Mosaic Law since it had become the source of hostility between Jews and Gentiles.⁸

“The Law” is the covenant of the Mosaic Law made up of commandments and containing ordinances, which separated and created enmity between Gentiles and Jews. “Christ has destroyed the symptom, that is, the enmity between Jews and Gentiles, by making inoperative the root or cause, namely, the law of commandments in decrees.”⁹

⁵ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, rev. and ed. by Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 525.

⁶ Arnold, 162.

⁷ See David Dorsey, “The Law of Moses and the Christian: A Compromise,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 34:3 (September 1991): 321-334.

⁸ “The objective situation of hostility because of the law's exclusiveness engendered personal and social antagonisms. The laws which forbade eating or intermarrying with Gentiles often led Jews to have a contempt for Gentiles which could regard Gentiles as less than human. In response, Gentiles would often regard Jews with great suspicion, considering them inhospitable and hateful to non-Jews, and indulge in anti-Jewish prejudice.” (Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary [Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990], 142).

⁹ Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 377.

so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace

Christ's purpose ("so that") in nullifying the Law through His death on the cross was twofold: to make Jews and Gentiles into one new man (2:15b) and to reconcile this new man to God (2:16).

Jesus makes one new man out of two formerly hostile peoples, the Jews and Gentiles. He does this "in Himself," which is to say Jesus Christ alone is the means by which unity between "the two" is accomplished (see 2:13, 16, 21).¹⁰

"Peace" here refers to peace between Jews and Gentiles that is established by Christ as a result of His nullifying the Law and forming one new man.¹¹

Ephesians 2:16

and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity

The second purpose of Christ nullifying the Law was to reconcile Jews and Gentiles to God together as one new man. Whereas verses 13-15 addressed the horizontal reconciliation between Jews and Gentiles, verses 16-18 focus on the vertical reconciliation of united Jews and Gentiles to God.

"Reconcile" is a relational term indicating that interpersonal conflict has been resolved so that the persons or parties are once again at peace. When humans sinned, they created conflict with God. God sent His Son to end this conflict, to "put to death the enmity," and to restore man's relationship with his creator. The Greek term used here occurs in Colossians 1:20, 22, but Paul uses a related verb (Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18) and noun (Romans 5:11; 11:15; 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19) elsewhere to refer to the same beautiful concept of God's reconciling sinners to Himself.

"Enmity" refers here to the hostility between man and God that Christ "put to death" on the cross. The way that Jews and Gentiles were reconciled to God in one body is through Jesus' death on the cross, which paid sin's penalty, satisfied God's wrath, accomplished redemption, and did all that was necessary to righteously permit sinners to be restored in their relationship with the holy God.

¹⁰ "Christ's purpose went beyond creating a climate where Jews and Gentiles could get along. He exerted His divine creative power to form an entirely new class of humanity in which race means nothing.... Just as God once exercised His power to form humanity out of the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7), He now exerts His power to re-create humanity and shape it into a body of people redeemed from the power of sin and in union with Himself. This new humanity has been made by God as a classless society with no divisions and with a perfect unity. Only when a member succumbs to the influence of sin do factions and divisions develop. It will be up to the individual members of this society 'to keep the unity of the Spirit' (4:3)" (Arnold, 164).

¹¹ "Because of the work of Christ ... the sources of enmity between Jew and Gentile have been destroyed and unity in love can now be achieved. This teaching has implications that extend far beyond Jews and Gentiles. For all who are in Christ, there are no fences, walls, or barriers that should prevent a unity that surpasses any form of cultural or ethnic distinctiveness" (Arnold, 165).

Ephesians 2:17

AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR

Paul here quotes Isaiah 57:19 and alludes to Isaiah 52:7. Ephesians 2:13-16 emphasized the hostility that existed between Jews and Gentiles and, even more tragically, between both Jews and Gentiles and God. Christ, who is our peace (v. 14), died on the cross to establish peace (v. 15)—peace between Jews and Gentiles (vv. 14-15) and peace between the one new man and God (v. 16).

This good news of peace, of horizontal and vertical reconciliation accomplished through Christ, is now preached both to Gentiles who are relatively “far away” from God and to Jews who are comparatively “near” to God. Christ preached peace during His earthly ministry and through His apostles and their disciples. God appoints evangelists to proclaim this good news (Ephesians 4:11), and all Christians are to fit their feet with “the gospel of peace” (Ephesians 6:15; see Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:15).

Ephesians 2:18

for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father

“For” introduces the result of Christ’s proclamation of peace in verse 17. Christ grants access to the Father in the Spirit, a reconciling work involving each member of the Trinity. The Trinitarian nature of redemption is a recurring theme in Ephesians (1:4-14, 17; 3:4-5, 14-17; 4:4-6; 5:18-20).

“Through Him.” It is only by means of Christ that anyone has access to the Father. Note the focus on Christ in this passage: “in Christ Jesus” (v. 13), “by the blood of Christ” (v. 13), “He Himself” (v. 14), “in His flesh” (v. 15), “in Himself” (v. 15), “He might make ... and might reconcile” (vv. 15, 16), “in one body” (v. 16), “He came and preached peace” (v. 17), “through Him we both have access” (v. 18), “Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone” (v. 20), “in whom ... in the Lord ... in whom” (vv. 21-22). Jesus Christ is God’s unique agent of reconciliation, and it is only in Him that there can be peace between men and with God.¹²

“The emphasis on ‘the one Spirit’ is parallel to that on ‘the one body’ in v. 16, and the two notions occur together again in 4:4, ‘There is one body and one Spirit.’ In the one body lives and works the one Spirit. This is a theme which Paul had developed in 1 Corinthians 12:4-13, especially in verse 13, ‘For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.’”¹³

¹² “It is important to clarify, as Paul does throughout this chapter and the entirety of Ephesians, that this does not happen universally for all Jews and Gentiles, but only for those who are ‘in Him’ (see 2:13, 15, 16, 21)” (Arnold, 158).

¹³ Lincoln, 149-150. Other relevant references to “one Spirit” include 1 Corinthians 12:9, 13 and Ephesians 4:4.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household

“So then” indicates a transition to the implications or consequences of verses 13-18.

“You are no longer ... but you are.” Because of Christ’s peacemaking work (2:13-18), the status of the Gentiles has fundamentally changed. As those outside God’s covenant community (2:11-12), Gentiles had no part in the Messiah or in Israel’s promises. They were without God and therefore without hope. But in Christ, this old identity has now been replaced by a close relationship with God’s people and an even closer relationship with God Himself. Paul uses political, family, and religious imagery to communicate the new, intimate relationships that God has created in Christ.

“Fellow citizens” uses political imagery to communicate the truth that in Christ Gentile believers now have equal status and standing with the Jews in God’s kingdom (see Philippians 3:20).

“God’s household” moves from political language to more intimate, family imagery. Gentile believers have been adopted into God’s family (Galatians 6:10) and are now children of God (John 1:12; 11:52; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 3:26-29; 1 John 3:1-2). The contrast between the hopeless condition described in verses 11-12 and the new condition of being full-fledged members of God’s family is dramatic and glorious.

Ephesians 2:20

having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets

“Having been built” states the cause behind the new identities described in verse 19. In Christ, Gentiles are fellow citizens and family members because they have been made part of the new temple of God. The passive verb implies that God Himself is the one doing the building.

“Built on the foundation” uses religious imagery to indicate that believing Gentiles and Jews are being built into the temple of God’s Holy Spirit on earth (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 6:16).

“Apostles” refers to Christ’s divinely commissioned witnesses (the Twelve plus Paul), who were given authority to proclaim the gospel and establish churches (1 Corinthians 15:7; Galatians 1:19; 2:7-9). “Prophets” refers to those through whom God revealed Himself while the New Testament documents were being composed, copied, and circulated (1 Corinthians 14:3, 6, 29-33; 1 John 4:1). Together, the apostles and prophets were the official communicators of God’s Word to God’s people to help establish God’s church (1 Corinthians 12:28-29; Ephesians 3:5; 4:11).

Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone

“Corner stone” translates the word for “corner,” which in the Greek translation of the Old Testament is used for the corner of an altar (Exodus 27:2), a house (Job 1:19), a wall (Nehemiah 3:24), a street (Proverbs 7:8), and a roof (Proverbs 21:9). The reason the word “stone” is added in the English translations is because Paul is clearly alluding to Isaiah 28:16: “Therefore thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone / A costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed / He who believes in it will not be disturbed.’” A cornerstone was the block placed at the base of a structure that determined the alignment of the walls and stabilized the entire building. Paul identifies Jesus as God’s promised cornerstone (1 Corinthians 3:10-11; see also Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:6), the first stone laid in the temple of the church that stabilizes and orients the entire structure.

in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord

“Being fitted together” is a construction term that “represents the whole of the elaborate process by which stones are fitted together: the preparation of the surfaces, including the cutting, rubbing, and testing; the preparation of the dowels and dowel holes, and finally the filling of the dowels with molten lead.”¹⁴ Paul uses it to indicate that as new converts are added to the church, they are shaped, polished, and placed where God the master builder wants them.

“Holy temple” refers to the “holy of holies,” the sacred dwelling place of God Himself (Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45). The church is now the dwelling place of God on earth (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 6:16), as are individual Christians who are personally indwelt by God the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19).

in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit

“In whom” refers to Christ, as in verse 21.

Paul adds “you also” to focus on individual believers, who are now part of the household of God. “Verse 21 speaks of the building process, whereas verse 22 speaks of the people who make up the building. These believing Gentiles, with believing Jews, were being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.”¹⁵

“Being built together.” This parallels “being fitted together” in verse 21 and once again implies that God is the builder. The idea in verse 22 is that believers are “being built together with other believers. In this way Jews and Gentiles are brought together in Christ as individual pieces of this structure and are being formed as one new building on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets.... Again, the image stresses unity.”¹⁶

“Dwelling” indicates that God resides in His church. Paul is emphasizing the personal quality of the church and the personal presence of the Father in His Spirit.

APPLICATIONS

- Unbelievers who do not know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior should repent and pray that God would become their Father through Jesus the Son. Anyone can join God’s family today.
- Those who have been attending church without getting involved should become active members in their local congregation. True community is created, not discovered.
- Christians must view each other as fellow citizens, fellow family members, and fellow parts of God’s temple. This shared identity in Christ is the basis for true and enduring Christian unity.
- Every Christian was once alienated from God. Therefore, no believer can look down on another.

¹⁴ Cleon L. Rogers Jr. and Cleon L. Rogers III, *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 438.

¹⁵ Hoehner, 412.

¹⁶ Hoehner, 412-413.

ILLUSTRATIONS

- In 1956, five missionaries, including Jim Elliot and Nate Saint, were speared to death on a jungle beach in Ecuador. Their widows later brought the gospel to the same tribe of Auca Indians, and many in the tribe converted—including some who had murdered the five missionaries. This powerfully illustrates the power of the gospel to bring about peace with God and between people.
- In 1987, President Ronald Reagan urged the Soviet President, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!” The Berlin Wall symbolized the separation between the Soviet Union and the free world, just as the dividing wall in the temple symbolized the separation between Jews and Gentiles.
- Family members should live life together and help one another, no matter what irritations and difficulties might occur between them. In the same way, Christians should live life together and help one another, no matter what frustrations and challenges arise between them.
- The Temple of Artemis was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Although it was four times the size of the Parthenon in Athens, today only one column remains. This provides a wonderful contrast to the fleeting nature of false religions versus the unstoppable expansion of Christ’s church.

SERMON OUTLINE

God’s New Community (Ephesians 2:11-22)

INTRODUCTION (Image, Relevance, Transition, Overview)

I. WHO WE WERE (2:11-12)

- A. We were separate from God’s people (2:11)
- B. We were separate from God and His promises (2:12)

II. WHAT CHRIST DID (2:13-18)

- A. Christ brought us near to God (2:13)
- B. Christ reconciled us with each other and with God (2:14-16)
- C. Christ gives us access to God (2:17-18)

III. WHO WE ARE (2:19-22)

- A. In Christ, we are fellow citizens in God’s kingdom (2:19a-b)
- B. In Christ, we are fellow members of God’s household (2:19c)
- C. In Christ, we are fellow parts of God’s temple (2:20-22)

CONCLUSION (Review, Applications, Prayer)

SERMON MANUSCRIPT FOR YOUR USE

God's New Community (Ephesians 2:11-22)

INTRODUCTION

Image: The Freedom House is a ministry which offers Jesus' liberation, transformation, and peace to those in bondage to addictions. When newcomers arrive, photos are taken of their faces, which have been ravaged by sin. Then, as God redeems and restores them, new pictures are taken and placed next to the first ones. The contrasts are stark. And as these individuals get right with God, they begin to get right with their families. They begin to reconcile with parents, spouses, and children as God restores the relationships that sin had ruptured. They become part of a church family that gives them a larger identity than before. Jesus brings peace with God and peace with others and makes them part of a new community.

Relevance: The testimonies from Freedom House are the testimonies of every Christian. Every believer was once an unbeliever in bondage to sin, which separated him from God and others. But when we repent and receive Christ as our Savior and Lord, Jesus delivers us and transforms us. He begins restoring in us the image of God that was so savagely ravaged by sin. He brings peace with God and peace with others. Christ reconciles our relationships with God and with people and makes us part of a new community as part of our new identity in Him. In a sense, every true church is a Freedom House offering liberation, transformation, reconciliation, and peace.

Transition: This good news of the gospel's power to rescue sinners by restoring peace with God and others is powerfully presented in Paul's letter to the Ephesians. So I invite you to turn in your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 2 where we will be looking at verses 11-22.

Overview: In this passage, Paul explains how we who were far from God were brought near by Christ to live in a new community created by Christ. The apostle reminds us who we were (vv. 11-12), what Christ did (vv. 13-18), and who we now are in Christ (vv. 19-22).

I. WHO WE WERE (2:11-12)

¹¹ Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands—

The opening word "therefore" connects verses 11-22 closely with verses 1-10, and the two paragraphs parallel each other in many ways. Both begin by emphasizing the desperate spiritual condition of those without Christ. Then both present God's gracious intervention in Christ and the wonderful new identity that characterizes His new creation. It is this dramatic rescue from our hopeless and helpless condition that is the glorious good news of the gospel. And lest we forget it, Paul commands us to remember, to call to mind and keep in mind, who we were as Gentiles who lacked circumcision, the covenantal sign of the people of God. Specifically, Paul recalls five terrible truths that characterized our condition before we met Christ.

¹² remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

First, we were “at that time separate from Christ.” “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word “messiah,” a term meaning “anointed one.” In the Old Testament, there were three offices that involved an initial anointing—prophet, priest, and king—and Jesus the Messiah is the final fulfillment of all three offices. Jesus is the ultimate prophet whose revelation allows people to know God. Jesus is the last high priest whose perfect sacrifice permits sinners to approach God. And Jesus is the final king, whose sovereign reign brings people under God’s righteous rule. Yet, He was not our prophet, priest, or king, because as Gentiles we had no part in the Messiah. We were separate from Christ.

Second, we were “excluded from the commonwealth of Israel.” Gentiles were outside the nation of Israel, so we did not benefit from God’s Word, God’s temple, or God’s traditions. We were not part of God’s community and therefore had no rights as citizens.

Third, we were “strangers to the covenants of promise.” When God called Abram, He promised to make him a mighty nation that He would bless and make a blessing. Then, God made a covenant with Israel at Sinai, and later He made another covenant with David. Finally, the Lord promised to establish a new covenant, which would give His people a new heart. But none of God’s promises contained in these covenants applied to us as Gentiles.

Thus, because we Gentiles were separate from Christ, excluded from Israel, and strangers to God’s covenant promises, we were hopeless and godless, “having no hope and without God in the world.” This is the tragic condition of every person apart from Christ. These are the sad circumstances of every unbeliever. They have no God to guide or guard them, no Messiah to redeem or rule them, and no part in God’s people or God’s promises. They are hopeless, like we were hopeless. Yet God in His great love and mercy did not leave us sinners where we deserved to be. Look at verse 13.

II. WHAT CHRIST DID (2:13-18)

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

“But now.” Oh, blessed words! Oh, beautiful contrast! The depressing descriptions of verses 11-12 no longer apply to Christians, because “in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” When we were as far from God as Hell from Heaven, our Redeemer brought us near, brought us into the very presence of God. Verses 14-18 go on to explain how and why He did so—through the cross to bring peace.

¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, ¹⁵ by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,

The essence of these verses is stated in verse 14: “He Himself is our peace.” Isaiah 9:6 calls the Messiah the “Prince of Peace,” and the prophet Micah declared, “This One will be our peace” (Micah 5:5a). It is Christ who brings peace between Jews and Gentiles. It is Christ who brings peace between sinners and God. Through His death on the cross, Jesus reconciles men with one another and with their creator. In a beautiful irony, God used the violence of the cross to establish peace on earth and goodwill towards men. And this peace was no mere truce nor treaty but rather a new unity among men and with God.

The way that Jesus united Jews and Gentiles was by making “both groups into one,” but to do this He had to break “down the barrier of the dividing wall” (v. 14). God Himself had commanded Israel to remain separate from the nations in order to protect them from idolatry and immorality. And since God had established the barrier, God alone could remove it. And this is exactly what Jesus did. He fulfilled the demands of the Law through His perfect obedience. He paid the penalty of the Law through His death on the cross. Thus, He “broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances.” In other words, Jesus removed the barrier separating Jews and Gentiles by removing the Law that contained the commandments and ordinances ordering Jews to separate from Gentiles. Jesus fulfilled the Mosaic covenant as the system governing God’s people and replaced it with the new covenant in His blood.

The reason that Jesus did this was “so that in Himself, He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace” (v. 15b). Jesus died not only to reconcile men with God but also to reconcile men with each other. Unity is a central goal of the gospel. And note that Christ does not make Gentiles become Jews or Jews become Gentiles. He reconciles us not by making us renounce an important part of our identity but by giving us a new identity in Christ that takes priority over everything else.

The way that Christ unites us is by creating the church. Ephesians 2:10 states that Christians are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works. Ephesians 2:15 states that the church is Christ’s workmanship, created by Christ Jesus for peace and unity. Those aspects of our identity that distinguish us—race, socioeconomic status, and gender—no longer need divide us because we now share a new identity in Christ. The same God who assigns us our race, social standing, and gender gives us a new identity in Christ that unites us because it is the most important part about us. The church is God’s peace plan. We are the community of Christ who is our peace, and therefore we must be at peace.

¹⁶ and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. ¹⁷ AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; ¹⁸ for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

Verse 16 conveys a second reason that Christ died for us. Jesus bled and died not only to unite Jews and Gentiles but also to “reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.” Our sin made us God’s enemies, “but God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). The holy wrath of God fell on Jesus, not us, so that “there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1). Christ reconciles us to God and through His cross restores our relationship with our creator.

And now the church, this new community created by Christ, proclaims this good news far and wide. “AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father” (vv. 17-18). While He was on Earth, Jesus preached peace with God and with one another directly. And now that He has ascended to Heaven, He preaches indirectly through His disciples. Those who have found peace in Christ preach peace to those far away from God, like the Gentiles, and to those who seem near to God, like the Jews. And so, through the church, the gospel that began in Jerusalem and spread through Judea and Samaria, is now spreading to the outermost parts of the world. Christ who is our peace (v. 14), who established peace (v. 15), now proclaims peace (v. 17) until men of every nation, tribe, and tongue sing in heavenly harmony, “HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY” and “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain” (Revelation 4:8; 5:12).

III. WHO WE ARE (2:19-22)

Thus far we have looked at who we were without Christ (vv. 11-12) and what Christ did for us (vv. 13-18). Now we want to see who we are in Christ (vv. 19-22). Paul uses three different images to present our shared identity in Christ. Together they emphasize that Christians are God's new community, that everyone who has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ also has a relationship with His church.

¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints,

Paul's first image of our common identity as Christians is political. Gentiles who were "excluded from the commonwealth of Israel" (v. 12) are now "no longer strangers and aliens but . . . are fellow citizens with the saints" (v. 19a). Immigration is an issue facing many nations. Whom should a country accept and embrace as citizens? What does the path to citizenship look like? What rights and relationships are involved in transferring one's citizenship? Here in Ephesians 2:19 is God's immigration policy. Every person who accepts Jesus Christ as Savior becomes a fellow citizen with the saints, that is, with those who are already citizens of God's kingdom. Regardless of your nationality, when you accept Christ as your King then you become a citizen of Heaven with all the rights and privileges thereof.

But we also acquire the responsibilities of citizenship. We must be good subjects of our king, seeking first His kingdom and His righteousness and praying that His name will be hallowed and His will be done. We also share a common loyalty and allegiance with every other citizen in God's kingdom. We sing the same anthem, pledge the same allegiance, celebrate the same holidays, face the same enemies, and endure the same trials. If you have ever traveled abroad, you know the joy and relief of encountering someone from your country. You recognize their language and immediately connect with them, for you are fellow citizens. In the same way, we Christians should encounter one another with joy and relief, recognizing our common language and reaching out to one another. Fellow Christians are fellow citizens, and our king commands us that we treat each other as such.

and are of God's household,

Not only are we citizens of the same kingdom, but we are also members of the same family, for we are "of God's household." Christians are God's children. God is our Father, Christ is the firstborn Son, and you and I are siblings in the Lord. When we call each other brother and sister, we are not speaking figuratively. We truly are related, for God has made us one family.

When a child is born, he or she is born into an immediate and an extended family. Most times these family members are a blessing. Other times they are a challenge, or even a burden. But whatever the case, we do not get to decide whether we want to be in the family, nor do we get to choose our family members. We are obligated to live with and love our families simply because they are family.

In the same way, when Christians are born again, they are born into an immediate and extended church family. Most times these family members are a blessing. Other times they are a challenge, or even a burden. But whatever the case, we do not get to decide whether we want to be in the family, nor do we get to choose our family members. We are obligated to live with and love our spiritual families simply because they are family.

So every Christian is a fellow citizen in God's kingdom and a fellow member in God's household. Paul's third description of our community identity in Christ comes from a religious context. All believers are fellow parts of the same temple. Look at verses 20-22.

²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

A central theme throughout the Bible is the presence of God with His people. God was with Adam and Eve in the garden until their rejection of Him led to their eviction from His presence. Later, God placed His presence in the tabernacle and the temple, but once again, because of sin, God removed His presence from His people. Then, God returned in the person of His Son, who is Emmanuel, “God with us.” And now that Jesus has ascended to Heaven, God places His presence in two specific places. First, He indwells individual believers, which is why 1 Corinthians 6:19 refers to our bodies as “temples of the Holy Spirit.” Second, God places His presence among the community of believers, which is why 1 Corinthians 3:16 refers to the church as “a temple of God.” It is God’s presence among the community of Christ that is Paul’s focus here at the end of Ephesians 2. Paul describes the foundation of this temple (v. 20), the building of this temple (vv. 21-22a), and the purpose of this temple (v. 22b).

The cornerstone of the temple is, of course, Christ Jesus Himself, “for no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11). The foundation is the authoritative teaching of Christ’s apostles along with the prophets, who were God’s spokesmen as the New Testament was being written. God’s Word is the solid foundation on which the church is built.

The church, then, grows as individual Christians are added to the structure, for every convert is a new stone in God’s temple. God, the architect, designates a particular place for every person. Christ, the master builder, then situates that person wherever God designates. The Holy Spirit sanctifies the rough pieces to make them useful and presentable in God’s holy temple. And in this way all of us together are being formed into the holy temple of God to represent, serve, and glorify Him. And this noble work will continue until the final soul is saved, the final citizen is nationalized, the final child is adopted, and the final piece of the temple is placed.

The great preacher Charles Spurgeon helps us to envision this glorious process.

Before my astonished gaze this morning there seems to me to rise up as from a great sea of confusion a wondrous building! I see the first stone sunk into the depths of that sea dyed with blood. I see the top of it just emerging above lofty waves of strife and confusion. Now I see other stones built on that, all of them dyed with blood—the first apostles—all of them martyrs. I see stone rising upon stone as age succeeds age. At first nearly all the foundations are laid in the bright red of martyrdom, but the structure rises! The stones are very different—they come from Asia, Africa, America, Europe—and are taken from among princes and from among peasants. These stones are very diverse. Perhaps while they were here they scarcely recognized that they belonged to the same building, but there they are. And for 1860 years [now 2016!] that building goes on, and on, and on—building—every stone being made ready! We know not how many more years that masterly edifice will take, but at the last, despite all the frowns of Hell and all the power of devils, that edifice will be completed—not a single stone being lost, not one elect child of God being absent—and not one of those stones having suffered any injury nor been put out of its place! And the whole so fair, so matchless, such a display of power and wisdom and love, that even the hateful ones whose hearts are hard as a stone against the Most High will be compelled to say God must have sent Christ! They cannot restrain that confession when all the church shall be one as the Father is one with Christ. Oh happy day!¹⁷

¹⁷ Charles Spurgeon, “Unity in Christ,” *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons* (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1885), 12:1-12. To read this sermon in its entirety, please visit www.beunitedinchristbooks.com to purchase our exegetical guide on John 17:20-26.

CONCLUSION

Review: In Ephesians 2:11-22, Paul has taught us who we were apart from Christ (vv. 11-12), what Christ did for us (vv. 13-18), and who we now are because of Christ (vv. 19-22). Formerly we were separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now, in Christ Jesus, we who were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ, for He Himself is our peace. Christ established peace between Jews and Gentiles by making them into one new man, and then He reconciled them to God, having put a righteous end to God's righteous hostility. This is the twofold peace that we preach far and near. Because of Christ, we are now fellow citizens with the saints, fellow members in God's household, and fellow parts of God's holy temple. This is God's new community, the church.

Applications: So what difference should this text make in our lives? How do we apply this passage?

If you are here today and do not know Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, would you please make God your heavenly Father today? Would you right now say, "Lord, I am a sinner. I have disobeyed You and am condemned to spend eternity away from You in Hell. I deserve this, and I can neither earn my forgiveness nor merit my salvation. I throw myself on Your mercy and accept Your Son as my Savior and Lord." I invite you, I encourage you, I plead with you to become a child of God today.

If you have been attending a church but have never gotten involved, then please commit to be an active, faithful member of a local church family. The church is God's intended context for our Christian life. It is God's greenhouse for Christian growth, the incubator, nursery, and school in which babes in Christ grow and mature. If you are not actively, consistently involved in a local church, then you cannot walk with Christ as you ought. So prayerfully seek where God wants you to belong and then commit yourselves to being a loving, serving, faithful member of that family.

And not only does every Christian need the church, but also the church needs every Christian. The church cannot shine as brightly as we should unless every Christian lends his candle to the flame. The body cannot be healthy unless all its parts are present and functioning healthily and harmoniously. A nation cannot be strong if its citizens are disengaged or fighting among themselves. A family cannot function fully if its family members are missing, inactive, or in conflict. A temple is incomplete if its materials are misplaced or misused. Every Christian must embrace his or her identity as an integral part of God's new community if the church is to be what God intends it to be.

Finally, it is critical that Christ's community live in unity. Jesus died so that God's people would live in peace. He created the church to be a place where love is universal and unconditional, where prejudices are abandoned, divisions healed, and conflicts resolved. Christ made one new man to be harmonious citizens in God's kingdom, loving members in God's family, and seamless parts in God's temple. It is essential that all who are in Christ Be United in Christ.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for our Savior Jesus Christ who is our peace. We praise You that He has established peace, and we proudly proclaim this peace to everyone far and near. We praise You for making us fellow citizens, fellow members of Your own family, fellow parts of Your temple. We thank You for the church, for our community identity in Christ. Please help us to embrace our identity as Your new community so that we may be less isolated and more committed. Enable us to be the loving, unified community Christ died to create so that people living in hate and conflict will be attracted to the Savior and find peace in Him. For Jesus' sake, amen.

SERMON EXAMPLES

Anyabwile, Thabiti. “Ephesians 2:11-22.” *First Baptist Church of Grand Cayman*. www.fbc.org.ky.

This Caribbean pastor preaches this passage through the lens of our alienation, our hostility, and our homelessness.

Begg, Alistair. “The Church—God’s Family” (Ephesians 2:19b). *Truth for Life*. www.truthforlife.org.

This Scottish preacher focuses on what it means to be a member of God’s household, that those in Christ who are adopted into God’s family are recognized by their humility, security, and holiness.

Brown, John. “The Family of God.” *Denton Bible Church*. www.dbcmedia.org.

A sermon that reminds Christians of their community identity as members of God’s family.

Carson, D. A. “Community and the Cross.” *The Gospel Coalition*. www.thegospelcoalition.org.

This is a verse-by-verse walk through the passage by a respected New Testament scholar.

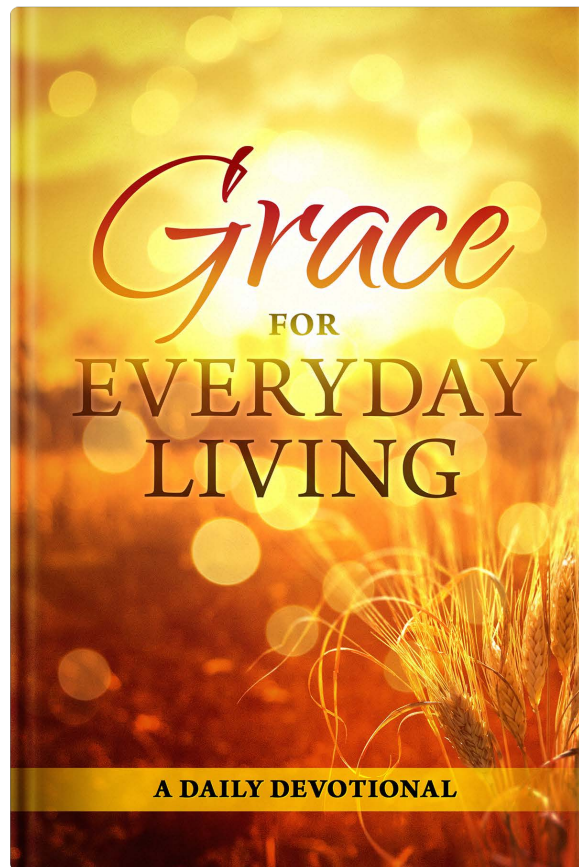
Piper, John. “Race and Cross.” *Desiring God*. www.desiringgod.org.

The implications of this passage for racial reconciliation is preached by this Baptist pastor on the eve of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH GOD'S GRACE?

God sees you. He loves you. And He wants you to experience a full and blessed life. In the 365-day devotional, *Grace for Everyday Living*, some of Christianity's most respected voices cast light on topics such as how to maintain a peaceful spirit, love others, and freely enjoy God's grace and mercy. Your life will be transformed as you discover the excitement of pleasing God and obeying His Word.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.



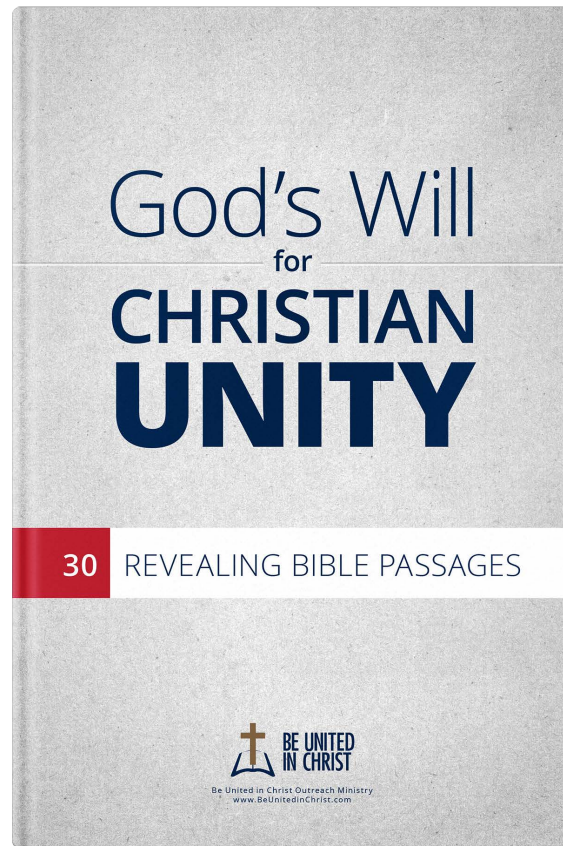
**BE UNITED
IN CHRIST**

www.beunitedinchrist.com

BELIEVE IN GOD? READY TO **DO** HIS WILL?

The theme of Christian unity is found throughout the Bible. *God's Will for Christian Unity* clearly reveals, in thirty Bible passages, our Lord's passion and instruction on the meaning, importance, and manifestation of Christian unity. Understanding this collection of Bible passages will help you to know how you should think, feel, and act in relation to other believers in accordance with God's will.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.



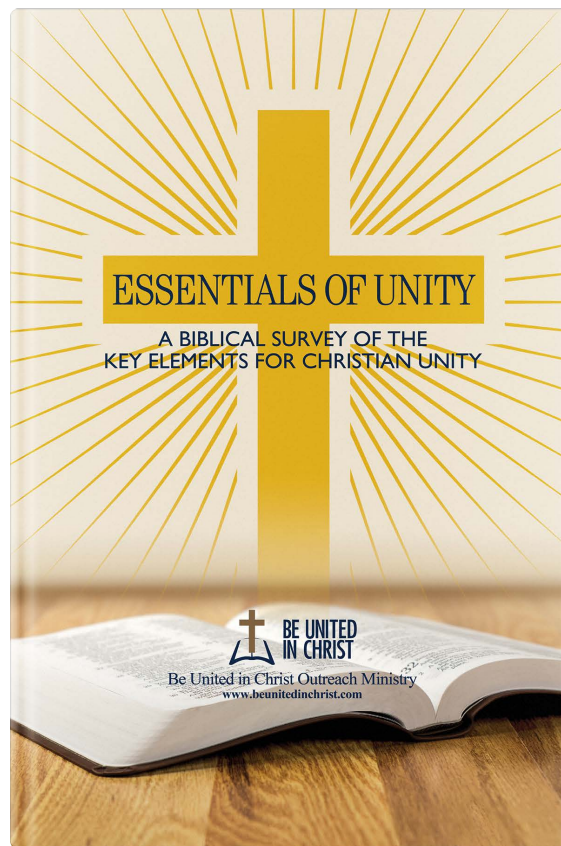
**BE UNITED
IN CHRIST**

www.beunitedinchrist.com

UNITY IS ESSENTIAL FOR GOD'S PEOPLE.

The Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry has written *Essentials of Unity* from a great sense of conviction ... to better understand God's will for the unity of His people, how He achieves it, and what He asks of each of us in preserving it. *Essentials of Unity* explains significant Biblical themes for understanding Christian unity and how these Biblical themes connect to one another in the storyline of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.



**BE UNITED
IN CHRIST**

www.beunitedinchrist.com

FEEL THE PASSION OF CHRIST FOR UNITY.

In John 17:20–23, Jesus prayed for His disciples to be one ... united with Him and each other. In His prayer, we hear the passion of Jesus Christ for the union of His people to God and to one another. *One: The Passion and Prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ* was written to help God's people understand the nature of this unity as well as how it is to be accomplished in the body of Christ.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.

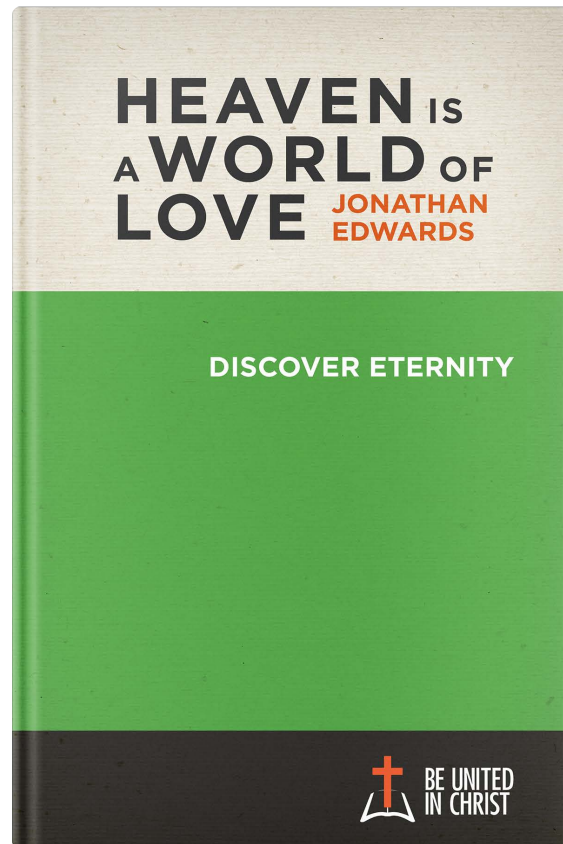


www.beunitedinchrist.com

HOW WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY?

In the history of Christianity, no one has written as vividly on the subjects of Heaven and Hell as Jonathan Edwards. *Heaven Is a World of Love* combines Edwards' most powerful sermons and presents them in modern-day language. Be encouraged with the hope of Heaven, sobered by the horrors of Hell, and assured that you can spend eternity enjoying God's love.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.

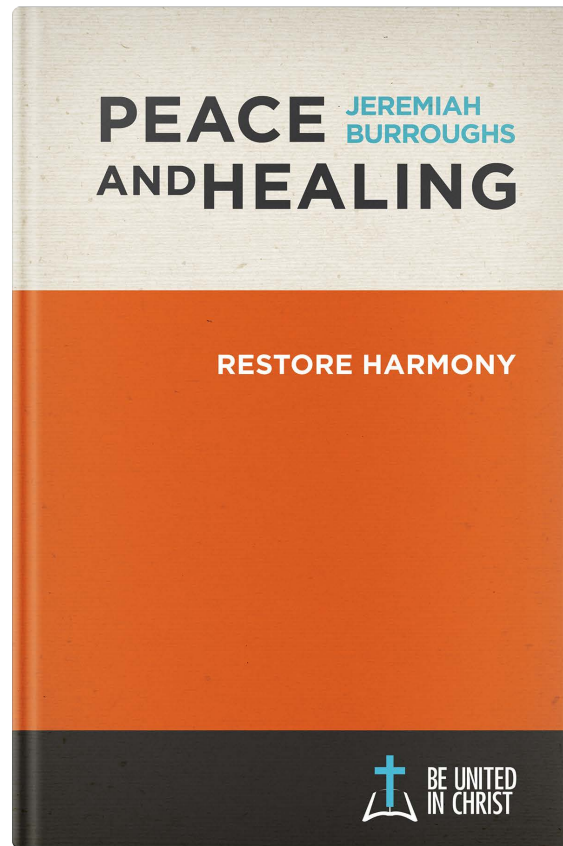


www.beunitedinchrist.com

BRING HARMONY TO YOUR CHRISTIAN FAMILY.

What if your church could be conflict-free? Drawn from the wisdom of respected Puritan preacher Jeremiah Burroughs, *Peace and Healing* reveals the sources and dangers of conflict within God's family and recommends God's solutions. Get to the root of disunity and bring love and harmony to the most important relationships in your life.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.

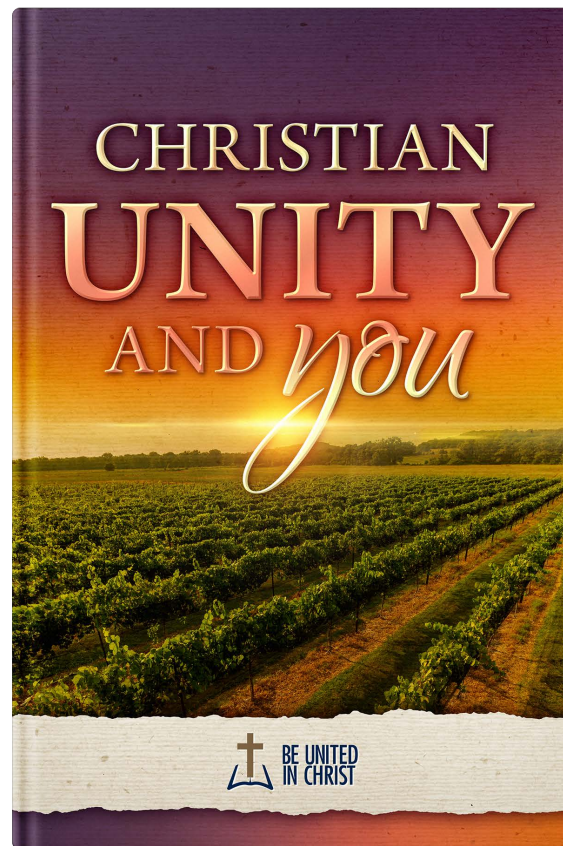


www.beunitedinchrist.com

YOU CAN LOVE LIKE JESUS.

Imagine how the world could be transformed if Christians loved each other the way Jesus asked them to. Jesus' life is the greatest example of love that the world has ever seen. He told His disciples to love one another as He loved them. When believers live in visible love and unity as Christ lived—unity based on Biblical truth—we will begin to experience a taste of what Heaven will be like.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.

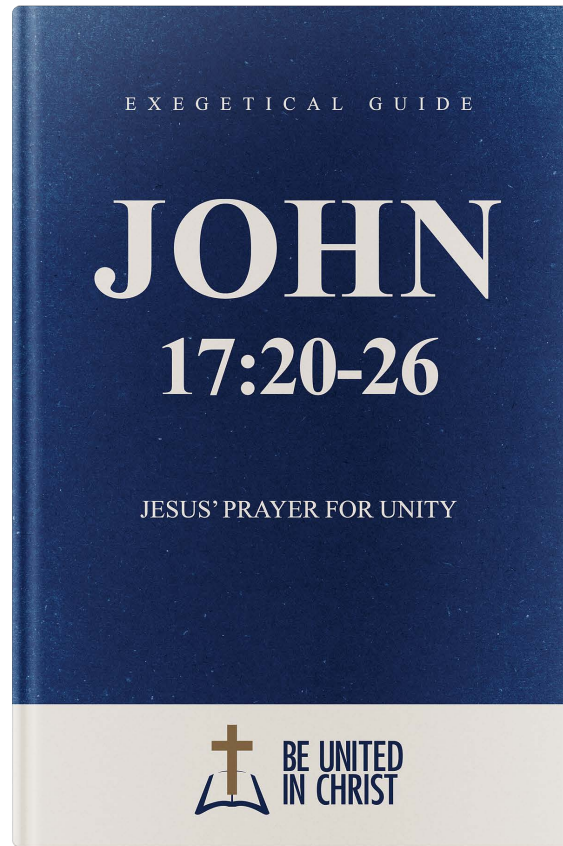


www.beunitedinchrist.com

LEARN WHAT JESUS PRAYED FOR YOU.

In the hours just before He was crucified, Jesus prayed for you. But what did He pray? And why does it matter? With the *John 17:20–26* Exegetical Guide, you will see through Jesus' eyes and be moved by what He prayed for you at this critical time. You will find where you belong. And your desire to draw closer to God and to other believers will grow as you read this inspiring guide.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.

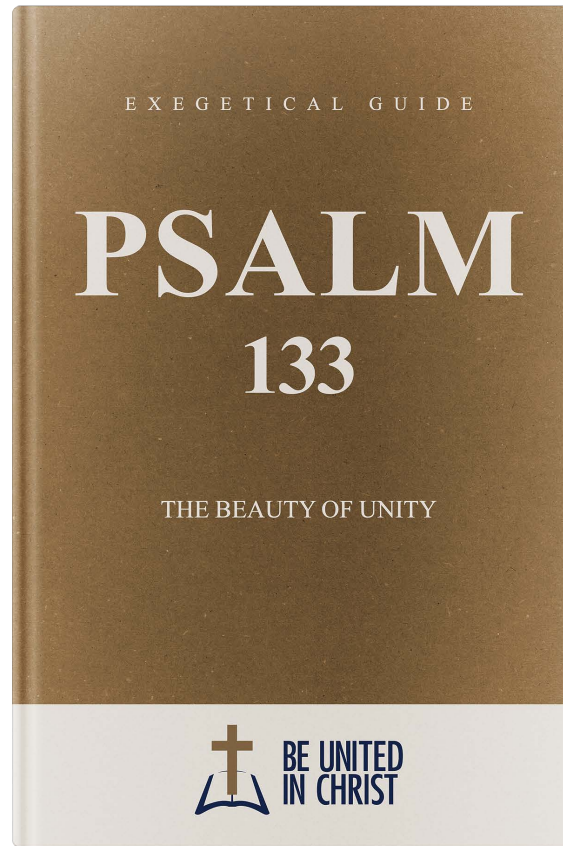


www.beunitedinchrist.com

DEVELOP A RICH CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

Blessing. Peace. Eternal life. How can you experience them for yourself? Explore *Psalm 133* and learn King David's song of the goodness and pleasantness of God's children living in harmony. You will discover that unity is not only God's desire but also His design to lead you into the satisfying life He desires for you to experience.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.

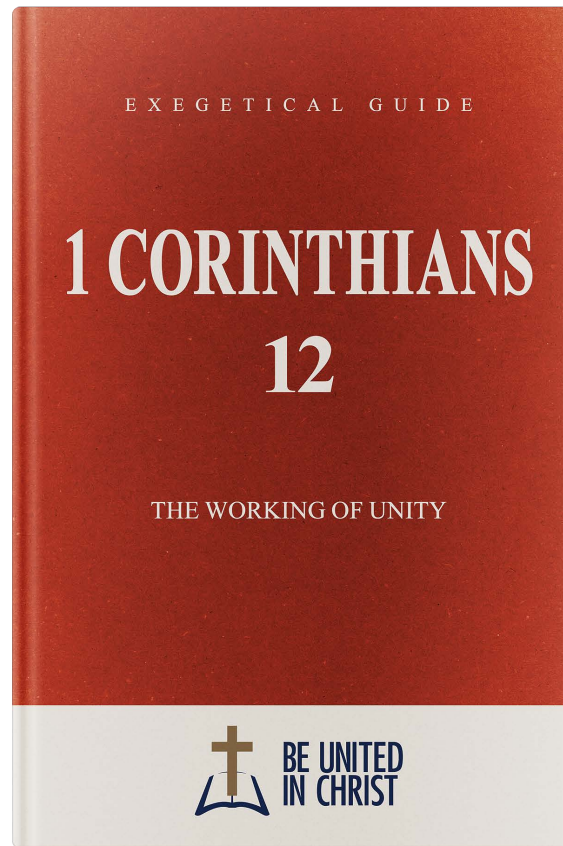


www.beunitedinchrist.com

UNCOVER YOUR PURPOSE IN GOD'S PLAN.

All of us want to belong, to feel connected, to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. For the Christian, these desires find their fulfillment in Christ and in the life He has designed for His church. The *1 Corinthians 12* Exegetical Guide will show you how God intends to fulfill your deep need to belong. You have a reserved position in His plan. You have a unique place, and you have a vital role.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.

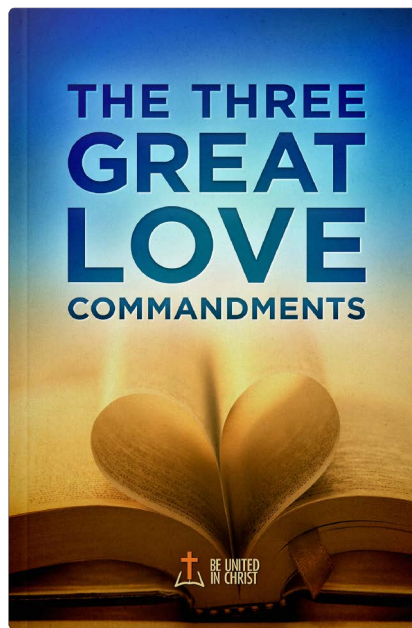


www.beunitedinchrist.com

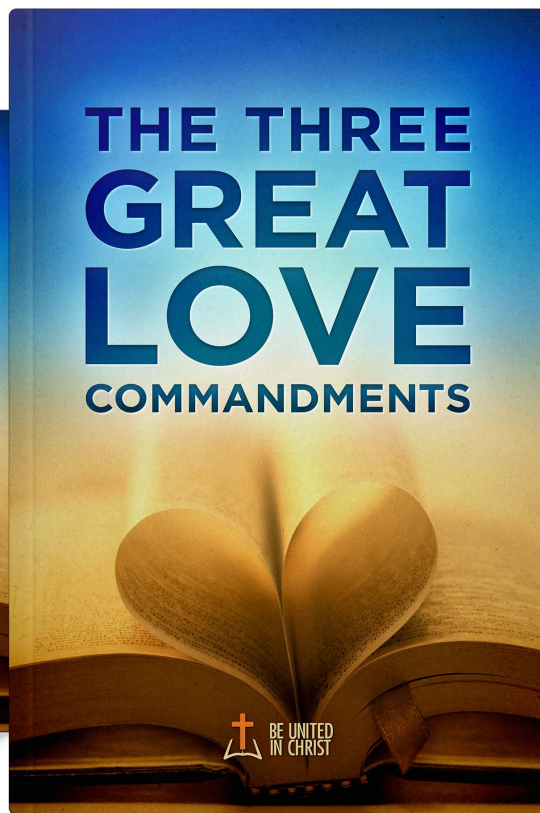
A **THIRD** GREAT LOVE COMMANDMENT.

Within every human heart is the desire to be loved and to show love. It is the mark of God on our lives—a God who embodies love, who IS love, according to the Bible. In His Word, God gives us three great commandments, rules for operating in love with Him, with others, and with our Christian family. These commands should provide the foundation for everything we say and do.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.



Basic Edition



Deluxe Edition



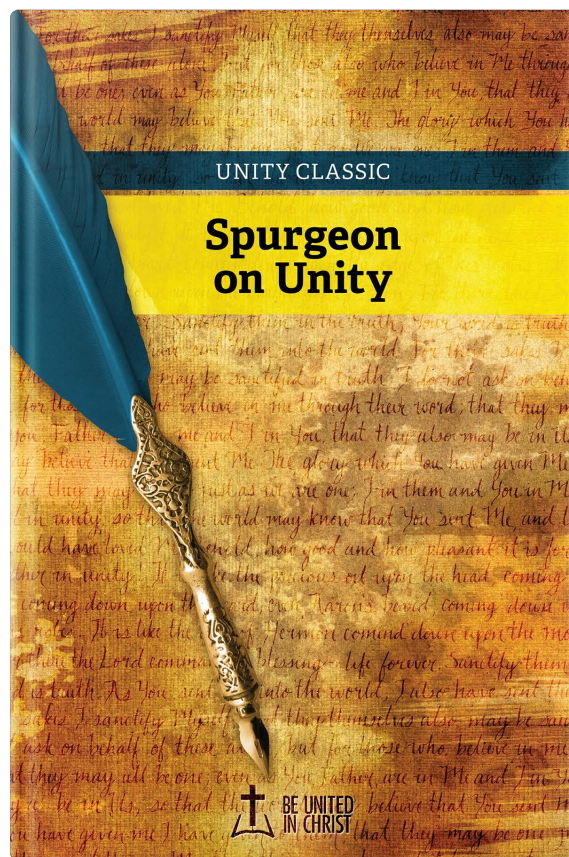
**BE UNITED
IN CHRIST**

www.beunitedinchrist.com

ENJOY THE LIFE CHRIST INTENDS FOR YOU.

The most prominent preacher of the 19th century, Charles Spurgeon pastored the world's largest mega-church and spoke to millions. Considered one of the greatest preachers in church history, his messages are as inspiring today as when they were first preached. *Spurgeon On Unity* lets you slip into the pew of this "Prince of Preachers" as he applies God's Word to one of your greatest needs.

Our Premium Collection of books may be purchased from the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry at www.beunitedinchrist.com.



**BE UNITED
IN CHRIST**

www.beunitedinchrist.com

JOIN THE BE UNITED IN CHRIST OUTREACH MINISTRY

We encourage you to reproduce, distribute, and share the materials of the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry and to unite with other brothers and sisters in Christ in the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry.

This exegetical guide was developed and distributed by the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry for use in your personal life and ministry. It is our desire for you to use, reproduce, and distribute this material free of charge. Our only restrictions are that you do not alter the exegetical guide content in any way, that you do not sell the exegetical guide content for profit, and that you attribute the work to the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry.

The desire of the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry is to glorify our Lord by helping our brothers and sisters in Christ to have a better understanding of our Lord's passion and prayer for His people to "Be United in Christ."

Please join us in the Be United in Christ Outreach Ministry as we await the glorious return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



www.beunitedinchrist.com