

Laying Foundation of the New Testament Church

Ephesians 2

Picture of Fallen Humanity

- That you were at that time **apart** from Christ, **alienated** from the commonwealth of Israel, and **strangers** of the promise of the covenant, having **no hope** and without God.
- But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once **far off** have become near in the blood of Christ.

Christ's Solution:

- Makes us **members of God's household**
- And **fellow citizens** with the saints (19)
- Being **built** and **fitted together** on the foundation...Christ Jesus Himself being the **cornerstone**... into a dwelling place of God **in spirit** (20-22)

Abolition of Divisive Enmity



Issue of Offenses (1)

- Starting arguments.
- Spreading gossip.
- Creating cliques.
- Carrying grudges.
- Backstabbing.
- Deliberately undermining those in authority.
- Pitting one person off against another.
- Lying.

Issue of Offenses (2)

- Setting up rules in order to create social barriers.
- Being a racist or sexist or elitist.
- Giving orders and demanding obedience.
- Using principles (or even 'righteous' anger) as an excuse to cut off contact.
- Personalizing a political dispute.
- Raising the stakes in disputes.
- Having an 'I win, you lose' attitude.
- Acting without concern about how it affects others.

Man's Solution - End Results

- Avoidance
- Accommodation
- Competition
- Compromise

God's Solution

- Collaboration & Reconciliation
 - Lord's admonishing (Matt 5:22-24)
 - Paul's example (I Cor 3 : 5-9)
- "To reconcile is to restore to friendship or harmony, to settle or resolve differences."



Two Natures

- Our Evil Nature

- Starting arguments
- Spreading gossip
- Creating cliques
- Carrying grudges
- Backstabbing
- ...

- Our Aspiration to Do Good

- Politics
- Religious zeal
- Insistence on practices
- Division
- Hatred
- ...

But We Have Died...

- Our Evil Nature
 - Starting arguments
 - Spreading gossip
 - Creating cliques
 - Carrying
 - Backstabbing
 - ...

Our Aspiration to Do Good

- Politics
- Religious zeal
- Disrespect on practices
- Disrespect
- Hatred
- ...

Moses Went UP

- Moses was called into God's presence on Mt. Sinai
 - “Moses... and the seventy elders of Israel **went up** and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of **sapphire**, clear as the sky itself. ...**they saw God, and they ate and drank.**”
 - “Moses... **stayed on the mountain** forty days and forty nights.”

Blueprint Given on Mt. Sinai

- Moses received **blueprint** for building tabernacle on mountain top.
 - Lord to Moses: “Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings **exactly** like the pattern **I will show you.**”

Stephen Looked UP

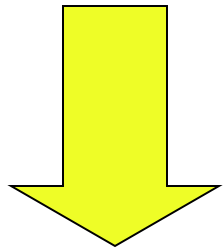
- “The Grecian Jews...complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.”
- 7 were chosen for food service
- No record of what Stephen did, but...
- Stephen was “full of the **Spirit** and **wisdom**...full of **grace** & **power**”

Stephen Looked UP

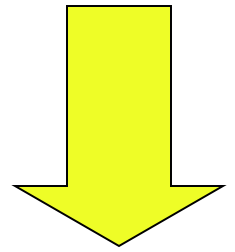
- “...being full of the Holy Spirit, he **looked intently into heaven** and **saw** the glory of God and **Jesus standing** at the right hand of God.”

We Need to Grow UP

- “Out from whom all the body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.” (Eph 4:16)
- “But holding to truth in love, we may **grow up into Him** in all things, who is the Head, Christ.” (4:15)



But to Go UP



We Must First Go DOWN

- “If we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him.” (Rom 6:8)
- When was the last time I **knelt down** to pray?
- When was the last time I **laid down** my soul life according to the inner-anointing:
 - opinions,
 - “my-way-or-the-highway” insistence, and
 - evil as well as good intentions?

Know Christ & Know Ourselves

- To build the church, **our old man must die.**
- “And might reconcile both in one Body to God **through the cross**, having slain enmity by it.” (Eph 2:16)
- **“In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.”** (Eph 2:22)