

A Practical Study of EPHESIANS

HEAVEN'S PLAN for Life on Earth

“What It’s Like Living According to God’s Plan”

Key verse 5:17 — *“On this account, do not be foolish but be understanding what the will of the Lord is.”*

Study Number Four – His Plan for Peace – Ephesians 2:11-22

We come to: His Plan for Peace—Ephesians 2:11-22.

If we were to take a verse of scripture that is the key, it would be verse 14 where we focus most of our attention:

For He is our peace, the One who has made us both one, and has broken down the barrier formed by the dividing wall between us,

This statement by Richard Nixon is great:

(Real Peace by Richard Nixon)

Really as far as the world is concerned, there will only be peace in two places: (1) at the typewriter and (2) in the grave.
(source unknown)

We will never know peace. We can cry for it, we can beg for it, but we will never know peace until Jesus Christ comes again.

Dennison wrote a book called *Shock It To Me Doctor!* and this is what he says:

(Shock It To Me Doctor! by A. D. Dennison)

As long as our individual morals remain at the law ebb, so will be the world until each of us stops hogging the road with his car, stops fighting over the seat on the bus, stops arguing over who's going to cut the grass, there will be no peace in the world. Man wishes peace again and if he does and wants it bad enough, he must return to the great commandment: Love your neighbor as yourself.

(source unknown)

In our generation, because we've seen something new happen that's not been present in prior generations, we see the strange enigma of a demonstration. But we also have a real excuse for doing what's right in our own eyes.

We've got that running rampant everywhere. The reason we're living in a day of terrorism, the reason we're shocked by what's happening is Judges 21:25 becoming true:

Judges 21:25

Everyone is doing that which is right in his own eyes.
Everybody's trying to be a law unto himself.

Because of that, we'll never have peace.

It's hard to describe the environment that this letter finds its recipients.

There was a horrendous riot in the city of Ephesus.

“Great is the goddess Diana!” They were idolaters.

Then Jesus Christ came in. These Gentile believers came to know Him. And then all of a sudden there's a conflict between the Jews and the Gentiles.

The Jews don't want anything to do with the Gentiles. They think they're inferior.

And for a long time in the early stages of the church, there was a real shaky movement that there would be two churches. There'd be a Jewish church and a Gentile church and so they fought and they fought.

There's a statement when Abraham and Lot were at the point of having to make a decision because his cowboys were fighting with Abraham's cowboys over land. The elderly Abraham stood before his nephew Lot and he says “You make your choice. And when you make yours, I'll take what's left over.”

And sure enough Lot turns his ole big eyes on the well-watered plains of Jordan. But God, as soon as the choice is made, says “Thanks Abe for letting Me choose for you. All the rest of it’s yours.”

Our rights are always safe with our Lord. And it’s pretty tough to fight with someone who is yielding rights in a relationship. And it is the responsibility of the believer to be the peacemaker. To be the one who does not have that flinty, sparky, resistance that causes conflict and fight! Much of what’s in the scripture we see because of the old nature running rampant and these things happen.

The very guy that wrote this letter, by the way, had a tremendous problem with a man by the name of Barnabas when he fought over John Mark and decided to go on his own.

So Paul knows what it is to know peace and not to know peace.

There are **THREE THINGS** in his plan for peace that we’re going to see in these verses:

1. We’re going to look at the **PAST**—what it was like before the change.
2. Then we’re going to see the **PERSON** behind the change.
3. And then we’re going to see the **RESULTS** of the change.

There's one word that stands out and that's the word REMEMBRANCE.

This is a CALL TO REMEMBRANCE in these verses.

We'll see what we WERE, what we ARE, and who's responsible for it. This follows well His plan for giving life. Why? One of the very first things we will note when we really know Jesus Christ in a personal way is there's no more conflict between us and God.

“Therefore having been made right with God, we are having [PRESENT TENSE] peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

The difference between the WICKED and the RIGHTEOUS is the little word PEACE.

When a person comes to know Christ, reconciliation takes place.

There's peace UPWARD, INWARD and OUTWARD that begins to manifest itself in the life of that person who's come to know Jesus Christ.

Now let's look at verse 11 because now we're going to focus on the PAST.

This is what we all were before Christ came into our lives—verse 11.

v. 11 Therefore remember, that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—

“Therefore remember, that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—”

The last verse that we had in our previous study was verse 10—the one that went before verse 11. Isn't that an amazing insight?

And in verse 10 we were told that we were created “unto good works.”

If we are believers, demonstrating good works in our lives, the manifestation of those good works are going to be peace among the brethren.

Isaiah 32:17 is a tough verse to get around for us that think it's contrary:

Isaiah 32:17

Therefore the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever.

We don't see the Spirit of God moving in mighty ways to bring

division, to bring strife, to bring conflict. we see Him rather, when He is present, melting believers into a oneness around the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The good works that will demonstrate themselves will resolve this conflict between the circumcision and the uncircumcision rather than precipitate it to greater degrees, is in essence what he's saying.

Therefore in light of the fact that as believers we demonstrate this, "remember, that one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision, which is made of flesh by hands."

What's all that mean? Well it just means this:

The devil's method is **DIVISION** and **SUBTRACTION**

And the Lord's method is **ADDITION** and **MULTIPLICATION**.

We can always mark it down in our little book. And there's a tremendous cleavage.

These Jews were saying to these Gentiles:

"You guys are the uncircumcision, we're the circumcision!"

What does that mean?

When we go back to Genesis chapter 12 God said when He instituted a covenant with Abraham that in that covenant, the mark of that covenant, they were His special children of promise. All the male descendants would be circumcised. That's the sign of the covenant. They're under the promise of the covenant by circumcision!

So the Jews have passed it on to these wayward Gentiles that are on the outside. They're "uncircumcision." They're less.

"Therefore remember,"—there's our KEY WORD to the whole study.

Now he calls to remembrance these things.

v. 12 because you were at that time separated from Christ, having been excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, not having hope, and without God in the world.

"because you were at that time separated from Christ, having been excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, not having hope, and without God in the world."

If we're not a Christian, that describes us in FIVE BOLD WAYS as far as God is concerned. That is someone in living color, if we know not Christ.

Now let's look at those FIVE THINGS. He describes their past this way, but that's our past before we became Christians.

First he says:

1. They were "separated from Christ."

That's the position when we're born into spiritual death, we're separated from Christ.

It's so easy in the Sunday School class to hear all these people running around saying "I believe in God! I believe in Jesus! And I'm doing all these good works to demonstrate that I do!"

And yet we feel in our spirit that they really don't know. That's just saying something with the head and it's not yet down into the heart.

We could sit here and say we believe in Jesus and still be separated from Christ, until by an act of our will we choose to believe in Jesus Christ to put ourselves into His hands, we are not a believer. We're still separated from Jesus Christ. We can believe a chair would hold us that we're sitting in. But until by an act of our will we choose to sit in that chair that chair is not going to be to us what that chair was designed to be.

We can say we believe in Jesus but until, by an act of our will, we choose to commit our life to Jesus Christ, our eternal destiny and all that involves our life to Him, we really don't

know anything about Him. We're still separated from Jesus Christ.

Every man and woman is born into the world, separated from Christ. Living in sin, separated from Christ.

Secondly:

2. "excluded from the commonwealth of Israel."

Now what's the significance of that?

The Israelites were God's chosen people and they had to be a part of that group. Gentiles were excluded from that. So because they were on the outside of the national blessing, they were outside of all of these things.

They were not a part of that. They were not a part of the family.

That's the same way with us.

Until we come to know Jesus Christ, we are not born of the Spirit into God's family. We do not become His children. We do not become His sons and daughters until the new birth takes place.

Thirdly:

3. They were "strangers from the covenants of promise."

What's that mean? Well they were living with no eternal inheritance.

The Jews had the promises of the Abrahamic covenant, that the seed was going to come through—whom the Messiah was going to come. They also had the promises of the land that was going to be theirs.

The Mosaic covenant was conditional. On the basis of obedience, there were promises.

The new covenant—another covenant with promises attached to the nation.

They were outside the confines of these promises.

Fourth— isn't that awful:

4. “not having hope.”

We are of all men most miserable if we're without hope beyond where we are right now.

They were without hope.

Somebody said:

“With Christ, life is an endless hope. Without Him, it's a hopeless end.”

(source unknown)

How true that is.

And the fifth:

5. “without God in the world.”

It’s awfully easy for these guys who are agnostics and who are atheists. “No I don’t believe in God! He can keep his grubby hands off me.” And they’re breathing the very breath that God had provided. They’re living in a world that He’s created and enjoyed all that He has.

They don’t have the slightest idea of what it would be like to live one moment without the presence of God!

Stop and think about it. What would it be like to spend one moment without any manifestation of the living presence of God around us? Out there in outer darkness there’s going to be no presence of God.

That’s the eternity prepared for those who choose to reject Jesus Christ. They’re “without God.” There’s no hope. They are totally helpless and hopeless. Kind of gets to you, doesn’t it?

Aren’t we thankful for verse 13? There’s another one of those neat CONTRASTS.

What was the one in our previous study?

“But God”—verse 4.

v. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near in the blood of Christ.

“But now”—this is what we were!

“But now”—for by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourself.

He hath made alive!—chapter 2, verse 1—we saw that earlier.

“But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near in the blood of Christ.”

That’s the only way we’re going to be brought near and that’s the only hope. It’s the blood of the Lamb of God, shed in our behalf. That precious blood that provides any opportunity for us to have access into the presence of God.

What’s behind this verse? The business of being “far away” and “brought near”?

That’s the picture of the Tabernacle. In the Tabernacle the outer court of the Tabernacle was the court of the Gentiles. That’s all the furthest the Gentiles could come. To the outer court.

Now the Jew could come and bring his little lamb, have it sacrificed on the burnt altar. And then the priest could go and get washed, go into the holy place, on the Day of Atonement go into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle the blood on the Mercy Seat. But now thank God, through the blood of Christ, we have a ready access into the presence of God the Father because Jesus Christ shed His blood in our behalf!

“But now” we who are described in these 5 horrible ways.

Like the Gentiles we were “far away”—this is what we were, this is what we are. We have been “brought near” because of a Person—the Lord Jesus Christ!

We who were “far away” now have “been brought near.”

v. 14 For He is our peace, the One who made us both one, and has broken down the barrier formed by the dividing wall between us,

“For He is our peace,”—there’s our KEY VERSE—“the One who made us both one, and has broken down the barrier formed by the dividing wall between us,”

What was God’s initial plan through the death of Jesus Christ?

It was not to have the Jews here and the Gentiles here. Or the Baptists here and the Presbyterians here and the Methodists

over there and somebody over there!

We want to hear the heart of God, we get on our knees and read John 17.

Jesus, less than 24 hours before He dies, says “Father, that they might be one, even as we are one.”

The cry of the Savior in the Garden was that all of us might be one—brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. Jews and Gentiles come by the precious blood of the Lamb of God, even Jesus Christ, into one body His church.

He Himself and no other is to be our peace!

The real reason we have so much division in the body of Christ today is we’ve gotten our focus off of the Lamb of God. We have it on institutions, organizations, programs, theological positions and a jillion other things! And that’s the reason we’re such a mess! Because we’re no longer focusing on the Person of Jesus Christ.

Looking back through church history and try to remember how many controversies actually centered on the Person of Christ! And the only major controversy on the Person of Christ is His deity or His humanity and the relationship of the two.

Almost all the other great arguments of the church in its history center on other extraneous issues rather than on the

Person of Jesus Christ.

We're living in the day of Laodicea when Jesus Christ is standing out on the front porch, knocking on the door, saying "I sure would like to get inside because I would sup and dine with you and fellowship with you. And once again we would come back to this oneness."

Revival will not come in the church of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. A revival will not come on the basis of the sovereignty of God. A revival will come when people fall in love with Jesus Christ and they're brought back to the centrality of the Cross of Christ! And He's put in the master plan, in the center of it all, and we're bound together in the love of Christ!

The more we focus on Him being the Lord of the church, we'll be brought back to that peace, that love, that unity that ought to be there.

Peace is only going to come through a Person. It's not going to come through treaties. It's not going to come through disarmament. It's not going to come through negotiations. It's not going to come through a greater defense program. Peace is only going to come when we return our focus to Jesus Christ.

Now in that verse it says "He is our peace, the One who made us both one, [He's] broken down the barrier formed by the dividing wall between us."

We don't understand that. What is the "barrier" that divided the Jew and the Gentile from each other?

It's the Berlin Wall. It's the Mosaic Law.

The Jews over here were saying, "You Gentiles, if you come here you're going to keep the Mosaic Law!"

The first major conflict in the church is recorded in Acts 15 at the Jerusalem council. The Jews said, "You guys got to keep the Law in order to be saved."

They walked out of that council believing that the blood of Jesus Christ was totally adequate for man's sin. And through faith in the Lord Jesus, salvation was provided for BOTH Jew and Gentile. They solved it.

Jesus Christ came! He fulfilled the Law! All the Law can do is kill, and we're all guilty.

The wages of sin is death. We break the Law, it can't give life. It can only kill. It can only execute.

And that Law was the dividing barrier between the Jew and the Gentile believers. Paul's coming along and he says, "Christ broke down that wall!"

The horrendous division in the church of Jesus Christ for 2,000 years is because an awful lot of Christians, who are untaught in the Word, have re-erected that wall. After we

become a Christian, we're supposed to live by that Mosaic Law. Because of that, it's totally distorted the relationship. It keeps us living by the P's and the Q's of the Mosaic Law! The Law can't MAKE us a believer! The Law can only bring us as a schoolmaster to Christ and point us to the fact that we're guilty!

At Frontier Ranch many years ago Jim Rayburn would get up the first night and speak on sin. He would wail on their tails telling them about cheating and cussing and swearing and all that. Then the next morning he'd speak on the Law. He would say, "I'm going to tell you guys, God doesn't grade on the curve man. You're living by the 10 commandments, you broke all of them, you're going to die."

Then they'd take them up on Silver Cliff and hang them over the cliff and they'd be scared to death. And they were ready that night to hear that Jesus Christ died on the cross to bring an end to that Law, to free them from that Law and from condemnation and death to bring them into the family of God.

v. 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the Law of the commandments in ordinances, in order that of the two He might create in Himself one new man, making peace,

"having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the Law of the commandments in ordinances, in order that of the two He might create in Himself one new man, making peace,"

It was His intention that there would be ONE BODY made up of all blood-bought believers in Jesus Christ.

That helps us come out from under the woodwork, doesn't it? It helps us realize those old labels that we have erected as so sacred really are not that important.

There's our relationship with Christ.

What happens, as far as the walls that are broken down in our life? There's a big wall between us and God that's broken down. When we receive Christ we're reconciled to Him.

There's a wall that's broken down between the inner man and the outer man. We can be a real person now. We don't have to be hypocritical and phony anymore.

And there's another wall that's between us and our fellow man. That's been broken down and we love our brother, we love our sister in the body of Christ.

All those walls come tumbling down when we come to know Christ as Savior.

He "abolished [those] in His flesh" when He died.

Look at verse 16.

v. 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, having put to death the enmity by it.

“and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, having put to death the enmity by it.”

What does the word “reconcile” mean?

Does reconciliation ever refer to God toward man? Does God ever have to be reconciled to man?

It’s interesting in the Scripture, it’s always the other way.

It’s MAN being reconciled to GOD.

God never changed from the Garden of Eden! It was man who made the choice!

The history of mankind has been to do our own thing. He is the one who needs to be reconciled! All God can do is provide the basis for reconciliation! The framework wherein it MIGHT take place when man chooses by faith to receive the instrument of reconciliation who is the Person of Jesus Christ.

Campus Crusade for Christ has a teacher’s manual on its steps to maturity. There’s this statement about reconciliation:

(Ten Basic Steps Toward Christian Maturity by Bill Bright)

Because God in His eternal knowledge has always known as the Divine certainty that Christ would die in man's place and provide reconciliation, He has always had an attitude of love and acceptance toward men who would come to Him by faith. The story of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32 illustrates reconciliation well. Note, first of all, the father's attitude of love and acceptance never changed throughout. He didn't have to be reconciled when his son returned home. Secondly, the son deliberately chose to go his own way. For some time his guilt and pride kept him from being reconciled to his father and he chose to eat husks with the hogs. When he did go to his father, he was accepted immediately because there were no barriers against him, in his father's heart.
(source unknown)

The barriers have been removed!

And we come to reconciliation through the blood of Jesus Christ!

v. 17 And having come, He proclaimed peace to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near;

“And having come, He proclaimed peace to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near;”

What's that tell us? He came with ONE MESSAGE to the Gentiles that were way out there and the SAME MESSAGE to the guys that are in here close that are God's chosen few—the Jews.

And so Paul says there's no reason for two churches! There's no reason for enmity! There's no reason for all of these man-made divisions!

For those “who were far,” for those “who are near”—He comes to bring and to proclaim “peace.”

First He obtained it by breaking down the barrier through His blood.

Now He comes to proclaim it, having procured it.

“To those who were near” and to those “who were far off.”

Now look at the TRINITY in verse 18.

v. 18 because through Him we are both having access by one Spirit to the Father.

“because through Him”—WHO? Christ—“we are both having access by one Spirit to the Father.”

The Trinity again is all involved in it. That takes us back to the MASTER PLAN.

It's “because through [Christ]”—because He paid for it—“we are both having”—what's “access”?

“Access” is a word which means, because of relationship we

have the right and privilege of coming into.

For instance, we could say we have access into the home of a friend. And if we showed up over there at 3:00 in the morning we'd probably get shot even though I'm his friend, because he wouldn't know who we were unless we told him in a hurry. Why?

Unless he invites us to come into his house. And he will get shot in our front yard, too, unless he announces that he's coming because he doesn't have access to our house!

Now do we have access to our own house?

Do our kids have access to our house? Well sure. They can come and go as they please. They even know where the key's hidden.

By **RELATIONSHIP** we have access.

We are **OUTSIDE** until we have this relationship.

Through Jesus Christ and His shed blood we now have access by the Spirit of God into the presence of God the Father.

What's significant about that?

Only the priests on the Day of Atonement had access in the presence of God. To go around that curtain one day of the year and sprinkle the blood on the Mercy Seat! He's the only one!

Nobody else had access!

“But now there’s one go-between between God the Father and God the man. One Mediator—the Person Jesus Christ!” (ref. 1 Timothy 2:5)

Alright here are some verses.

Hebrews 10:21, 22

And since this great High Priest of ours [Christ] rules over God’s household, let us go right in, to God himself, with true hearts fully trusting him to receive us, because we have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and because our bodies have been washed with pure water.

Then in Hebrews 9 he says we come by a new and living way—the precious blood of Christ!

Why did that unseen hand reach down from heaven and rip that veil from top to bottom that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies when Christ died on the Cross? That’s to tell us “Look! Come on in sinner! The salvation’s happened on the hill! The sacrifice has been paid! You come by a new and living way! The precious blood of Christ!”

And that same word that’s in Acts is in Romans 5.

Not only do we have peace with God, but by Him also we have access into the very presence of God through our Lord Jesus

Christ—Romans 5:2.

They're there together. PEACE and ACCESS next to each other.

Our introduction to God the Father is through the Lord Jesus Christ and BY the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Now, that's what WE WERE, here's what WE ARE, here are the RESULTS.

Whenever WE see “So then” he's getting close to the end.

That's kind of like FINALLY!

v. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and members of God's household,

“So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and members of God's household,”

All because of His plan for peace and the ministry of the Person of Christ!

“These are the things that are true of you!”

There are two things NEGATIVE and two things POSITIVE here. Listen to them:

“you are no longer strangers.”

That goes back to the previous verse of what we were. Doesn't it?

“You are members of His family. You're sons through a relationship.”

“You are no longer foreigners! You're not strangers like Gentiles outside. You're a citizen now!”

“you are fellow-citizens with the saints”—Old and New Testament saints—“members of God's household.”

Wonderful, wonderful truth.

v. 20 having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone,

“having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone,”

How's he likening this piece? TWO WAYS:

1. we're part of a FAMILY

BUT

2. we're also part of a BUILDING.

And we all are part of just one building. That building is the CHURCH—the Body of Christ.

Now watch this unfold in these last verses.

“The foundation” of it—this building—is “the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone” of that building.

Now Peter says the same thing in:

1 Peter 2:5

you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house into a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ.

Christ is the “chief cornerstone.”

v. 21 in whom the whole building is joined together and is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,

“in whom the whole building is joined together”

Who's the building? Jews and Gentiles, both who've been brought together into this building through the blood of Christ.

“in whom”—CHRIST—“the whole building is joined together and is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,”

Every time somebody becomes a Christian, God puts a new rock in the temple. And this big, gigantic living organism one of these days is going to be finished! The last rock’s going to be put in place and the Lord is going to descend from heaven with a shout! And the dead in Christ are going to rise first. And we who are alive and remain are going to be caught up! And the building’s going home to be with Him.

This is God’s original intention for His plan for peace, that Jew and Gentile both would come to know Jesus Christ, be brought together in one family, but also to be brought together in one building.

v. 22 in whom also you are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

“in whom”—the last verse—“also you are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”

He wants peace to be the result.

If we’re a believer and we don’t have much peace, He promised it in:

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Not as the

world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

The hymn writer said it well:

And now I have a Captain,
He'll guide I know He will,
I've given Jesus full command,
Since He said, "Peace be still,"
(source unknown)

These are the lessons that come out of our study.

Lesson #1: Remembrance of the past makes us appreciate more the blessings of the present.

Lesson #2: The present active imperative "remember" in verse 11 could be translated "keep on remembering."

Lesson #3: Psalm 18:16-17: "He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters. He rescued me from my powerful enemy, from my foes, who were too strong for me" (NIV).

Lesson #4: "But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near in the blood of Christ" (verse 13).

Lesson #5: For He Himself and none other is our peace.

Lesson #6: The Lord paid the price in full for the penalty of our sins.

Lesson #7: His plan for peace is in a person, Jesus Christ.

Lesson #8: He is our peace.

Lesson #9: Christ rendered inoperative the law in His death.

Lesson #10: Our access to the Father is through the Son, and by the Spirit.

Lesson #11: Jesus Christ Himself is the Chief Cornerstone and everything in the building is held together by Jesus Christ.

Lesson #12: Is your testimony that of Job? “I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:25-27 (NIV)).

Father, we realize that David said it so well in the Psalms. “Great peace have they which love Thy law and nothing shall offend them.” If there are some of Your children who really are not very peaceful, it’s an indication that they haven’t given it to You. They’re still fighting it. May they hear the words of the Christ who said: “Come unto Me all ye who are weary and

heavy-laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I'm meek and lowly of heart and you shall find rest for your souls." Lord if there are those who are still struggling with a relationship and have not come to know Christ, knowing that peace has already been provided through the blood of Christ, may they come to avail themselves of the blood of Christ. "Coming now to reason together," saith the Lord. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Or they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Thank You for this magnificent day. May Your Word continue to come alive to our hearts and our minds and our thoughts. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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HEAVEN'S PLAN for Life on Earth

“What It’s Like Living According to God’s Plan”

Key verse 5:17 — *“On this account, do not be foolish but be understanding what the will of the Lord is.”*

STUDY NUMBER FOUR – HIS PLAN FOR PEACE – EPHESIANS 2:11-22

KEY VERSE 2:14

v. 11 Therefore remember, that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called

uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—

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v. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near in the blood of Christ.

v. 14 For He is our peace, the One who made us both one, and has broken down the barrier formed by the dividing wall between us,

v. 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the Law of the commandments in ordinances, in order that of the two He might create in Himself one new man, making peace,

v. 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, having put to death the enmity by it.

v. 17 And having come, He proclaimed peace to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near;

v. 18 because through Him we are both having access by one Spirit to the Father.

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v. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and members of God's household,

v. 20 having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone, v. 21 in whom the whole building is joined together and is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,

v. 22 in whom also you are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Ephesians 2:11-22 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What four things describe our position before we became a Christian according, to verse 12?

3. What is our position now, according to verse 13?

4. Who is our peace, according to verse 14?

5. What did He proclaim, according to verse 17?

6. What is our position now as Christians, according to verse 19?

7. What “foundation” have we built upon?

8. Why are we “being built together for a dwelling place,” according to verse 22?

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Remembrance of the past makes us appreciate more the blessings of the present.

LESSON #2: The present active imperative “remember” in verse 11 could be translated “keep on remembering.”

LESSON #3: Psalm 18:16-17: “He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters. He rescued me from my powerful enemy, from my foes, who were too strong for me” (NIV).

LESSON #4: “But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near in the blood of Christ” (verse 13).

LESSON #5: For He Himself and none other is our peace.

LESSON #6: The Lord paid the price in full for the penalty of our sins.

LESSON #7: His plan for peace is in a person, Jesus Christ.

LESSON #8: He is our peace.

LESSON #9: Christ rendered inoperative the law in His death.

LESSON #10: Our access to the Father is through the Son, and by the Spirit.

LESSON #11: Jesus Christ Himself is the Chief Cornerstone and everything in the building is held together by Jesus Christ.

LESSON #12: Is your testimony that of Job? “I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:25-27 (NIV)).