

EPHESIANS – Session 4.

Jesus breaks the barriers

Read Eph. 2. 11-22.

What modern-day situations do you think this passage might apply to?

What are the two sets of people here referred to? (v.11)

How did Jesus change all this? (v.13)

By his use of the words 'two' and 'one', what is Paul pointing out here? (v.14-18)

How has our status as Gentiles changed because of Jesus? (v.19-22)

What are the 3 picture phrases used to describe the Church? (v.19-22)

What difference does the spirit of this passage make in the way we look at other people? (See Acts 10.34-5 and Galatians 6.15-16)

In chapter 1 Jesus is referred to as the Head of the Body. How is He referred to here?

(The word 'peace' occurs twice in this reading. Remember 'peace' in Scripture means harmony, wholeness and health as well as absence of hostility)

Some Notes:

1. Before Jesus came Jew was Jew and Gentile was Gentile and 'never the twain should meet'. The first disciples were Jews and in the early days they were not even on completely happy terms with Jews who lived in the Gentile world and spoke Greek. (Cf. Acts 6.1)

Then real Gentiles were converted and this caused a major crisis in the early Church. God had forced the issue (Acts 10) and the Council of Jerusalem decided it (Acts 15). Gentiles were to be included in the Church. Trust in Jesus was the decisive factor and not nationality.

2. What is the position of the Jews today and who today are 'God's chosen people'?

See: Mark 12.1-9 and Matt. 21.43.

Romans 11.13-21. (All of Rom. 9-11 is about this)

I Peter 2.9-10.

etc.

3. 'The dividing wall of hostility' in 2.14. was actually visible. There was a balustrade in the Temple in Jerusalem beyond which Gentiles were not allowed to pass and which kept even 'God-fearing' Gentiles (i.e. Gentiles who had become Jews by religion) in the outer court, so denying them 'access'.

It is worth asking where we are mentally putting up dividing walls today consciously or unconsciously.

Where do we think of 'us' and 'them'?

People from other denominations and us? Members and non-members?

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