

Grace Builds Bridges

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A Study in Ephesians 2:11-22

We go from *dead to alive*; from *grace to a throne*; from *condemnation to forgiven forever*.

Now we continually praise God for the Gift of His Spirit who works *within us* to *bring us* to glory!

The *miracle of grace* makes us a part of the *gallery of grace*—where every believer in Christ will be an eternal *witness* of what only **God** could accomplish.

I. Remember How Far We Were

NKJV Ephesians 2:11 “*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—*

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.*”

Gentiles in the flesh are all non-Jews—and called unclean in comparison to Jews who followed the ritual of cleansing.

Romans 2:29 says a person “*is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter.*”

Everyone is *unclean* by **trespasses** and **sins**—everyone is *separated* from the life of Christ—but **God** because of His deep *love* and *mercy*, made us alive through Jesus.

We remember where we *were* and what we were delivered **from**—“*remember that you were without Christ*” and had *no hope* because we were *without God*.”

The *change* God’s grace brings within is not to be taken for granted, but to be much appreciated for how *far* it brought us.

Before we were adopted, we were *separated* from Christ; *Alienated* from Israel; *Strangers* from covenant promises—having no hope without God.

Covenant promises—God promised *Noah* He would not destroy all life with a flood again; He promised *Abraham* that all nations would be blessed through him; God promised *David* that his family line would rule an eternal kingdom; and Jesus forgives all who believe in Him.

Outside the covenant relationship with God, Israel would not receive the promises nor expect a Messiah—“*having no hope and without God in the world.*”

We are all separated from God with no hope without Christ. We strive for money, possessions, and fame—but without God there is no hope for the future. We cannot forget what we *were*—or we can forget what we *are*!

II. What Brought Us Near

13 “*But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by 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,*”

The contrast—“*Once far off—Now brought near.*” The cross of Christ makes the difference.

We are forgiven of yesterday’s sins and accepted into His family. What we *were* to what we *can be*; What we *had been* to what we *are now*! Faith in Jesus changes everything.

15 “*Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,*

16 *and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.*”

The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross removes the *enmity*, the *hostility*, and the *animosity* we had for a godly life in Christ.

Jesus was willing to give *His life* to make *our life* what it can be—*new* in thoughts; *different* in actions; and *changed* in desires. We are *one with Him* and at *peace* with the world.

III. Remember Who Our Peace Is

17 “*And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.*”

18 *For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.*”

Peace is a Person—Jesus reconciled us to God through His Spirit. It is the Three in One—***through Christ by the Spirit to the Father.***

For generations there had been a serious separation between the two, but Jesus destroyed the barrier—He “*has broken down the middle wall of separation*” Ephesians 2:14.

What humans could **not** do through politics, programs, or legislation, Christ accomplished through the cross.

It is not just tolerating each other, but that Jesus 16 “*might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.*”

The world needs to see a **changed life** in us by accepting a **living Savior**.

IV. Remember What Christ Removed

Jesus abolished “*the enmity*” and broke down “*the middle wall of separation.*”

A wall separates—giving the message: “*You stay there; I’ll stay here,*” but the cross says “***Come near; I love you.***”

The cross doesn't just *forgive* our sins—it also *destroys barriers* that sin creates.

It doesn't mean we will never disagree on something or every difference disappears—but it means our *identity in Christ now* is greater than what separated us *then*.

We are no longer thought of as a Gentile or Jew; rich or poor; young or old; white or black—we are all one ***in Christ—He*** is our new identity.

Ephesians 2:19 “*Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,*

20 *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,*”

Grace changes our status—we are not a *stranger* or *foreigner*—we are *fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.*” We should therefore act and talk and treat people as if we were.

Yesterday, grace made us alive; today, grace makes us different.

Ephesians 2:21 “*in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,*

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

We are *built together*—the song saying ***Jesus and me***, is now *Jesus and me and everyone* of every culture, country, and color who accepts Jesus as their Lord, Master, and Redeemer.

V. Grace Builds Bridges

The ***Miracle of Grace*** took us from spiritually ***dead*** to spiritually ***alive*** in Christ.

And now another miracle—God’s Grace taking people who *were* separated by prejudice and intolerance and making us ***all one*** in Christ Jesus.

1 *Far away*—brought near; 2 *Strangers*—family; 3 *Separated*—reconciled; 4 *Enemies*—friends; 5 *Without hope*—given hope; 6 *Without God*—near to Him.

All this is possible because Jesus 17 “*came and preached peace to you who were afar off.*”

Jesus told us Luke 17:21 “*the kingdom of God is within you.*” 1 Corinthians 6:19 “*Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God.*

20 *For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.*”

Grace doesn’t just change where we *stand with God*—it changes where we *stand with others!*

Now we are to see them as eternal souls who are lost and need a Savior. Jesus died to for all, to *save everyone* and *bring them* into His family.

Grace Builds Bridges!



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