

**THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS**  
**“COMMUNITY OF GRACE”**  
**(EPHESIANS 2:14-18)**  
**FEBRUARY 25, 2007**

**MEMORY VERSE:**

*Ephesians 2:18, “For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.”*

**INTRODUCTION**

Because of our sinful nature, we often reflect judgmental attitudes that result in the creation of barriers between us and our fellow man. Unfortunately, these walls can even exist amongst other Christians. Some of the things that create these barriers are: age, appearance, economic status, race, political persuasion, intelligence or theological perspective. The great news that Paul reminds us in Ephesians 2:14-18 is that Christ came to destroy these man made barriers. When one places his/her faith in Jesus Christ, they are not only brought into the body of believers, but they are also placed in equal standing with anyone before God. Because these walls have been removed, we can have real unity with people who are not like us. Christ has knocked down all the walls and has unified all believers into one family. This is true reconciliation. As a result of Christ’s death on the cross, we are all one (2:14); our hostility against one another has been put to death (2:16); and we all have access to the Father through the Holy Spirit (2:18).

**UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT**

1. According to Ephesians 2:14, we have been granted peace through Christ. What is this peace and why did we need it? (see Isaiah 59:2 and Galatians 5:19-21).
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Read Colossians 1:21-22 and Matthew 5:17. What do you think it means by the statement, “Christ abolished the law”? What is the distinction between abolishing the law in Ephesians 2:15 and Matthew 5:17?

3. According to Ephesians 2:15, how did Christ bring about peace between the Jew and the Gentile?
  
4. Christ reconciled both Jew and Gentile to Himself through His substitutionary death on the cross. Read Isaiah 53:5-6 and 2 Corinthians 5:18-19. Why did this reconciliation need to take place?
  
5. What result of Christ's work does Ephesians 2:18 describe?

### **OUR WALK WITH GOD**

1. Even though we have been reconciled in Christ and He is our peace (verses 14-18), there still exists divisions among Christians even today. Why do you think those who are united in Christ are still divided? Given God's willingness to accept all believers into His family, how should this affect our relationships with those who profess the same faith as we do?
  
2. Are you experiencing a division with a fellow Christian today? How have these verses helped you to reconcile that division in your heart? What steps do you need to take today in order to deal with this situation?

3. What rules, written or otherwise, and requirements does the church enforce that might hinder people from coming into the kingdom? How do you think the Lord views these man-made standards?
  
4. What groups of people might find it difficult to be accepted in our church? How could we change so they might feel more loved and accepted?

### **GOING DEEPER**

Read 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:28 and Colossians 3:11. What further insights do these verses provide concerning those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ? How should these truths impact our attitude toward other believers in the body of Christ?

### **ADDITIONAL THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK**

God originally made a distinction by separating the Jew from all other peoples on earth. However, the Jewish people eventually developed a spiritual pride that led to the ultimate hatred between Jew and Gentile. It is not true that the Gentile has been elevated or the Jew devalued, but rather both have been brought to the same higher plane. Consider the following illustration:

*Let us imagine there are two small statues, one made of silver and one made of lead. When melted down together, the two shall become like gold. So it has been done with the Jew and Gentile, or for that matter, between you and your fellow Christians.*