

“Genuine Reconciliation”

Ephesians 2:11-22

C.I.T.—Christ’s death removed the Spiritual barriers to salvation and opened salvation to all.

C.I.S.—Since salvation is for all, we should take salvation to all.

Purpose—If God doesn’t have physical barriers, neither should we.

Introduction—Our world is divided—racial, identity politics, national, religious, denominational

I. Legitimate Spiritual Divisions.

- a. Remember—bring to remembrance, don’t forget
- b. Social Separation
 - i. From Jewish perspective, there were two types of people—Jews and Gentiles
 - ii. Gentiles could become Jewish, submitting to the outward mark of circumcision.
 - iii. Circumcision, which Paul here writes is only an outward act, by hands, was the marker for one who had gone to Judaism.
 - iv. The kosher distinguished the Jews from the rest of the world.
 - v. He is writing to Greeks in Ephesus who had not become proselytes of Judaism.
- c. Spiritual Separation
 - i. Romans 9:4-5**
 - ii. Without Christ—messiah in general—the Messiah came through Judaism
 - iii. Alienated from citizenship—being part of the people of Israel was required for salvation
 - iv. Strangers to the covenant—Abrahamic Covenant that extended the blessings of God to Abraham’s descendants—The Jews
 - v. Not Having Hope—hope of resurrection found in genuine faith
 - vi. Without God—they worshipped many gods, but did not have the true God in their life.
- d. Illus.—Being a citizen has certain privileges.
- e. Application
 - i. It was certainly a privilege to being part of God’s people, the Israelites.
 - ii. He chose to bless them and through them to bless the whole world.
 - iii. They were to be a blessing by inviting the Gentiles to be a part of the family.
 - iv. However, what ended up was a distinction solidified, and those outside of the family were hopelessly lost.

II. Lifted Spiritual Divisions.

- a. Those far away (Gentiles) are now brought near—included in salvation
- b. Jesus Death demolished the barriers.
 - i. Blood of Christ, in His flesh
 - ii. His death brought peace—both groups became one and the division between the two was broken
 - iii. Abolished the Law
 1. The Law is what set the Jews apart.
 2. The Law is what taught that in order to be saved you must go through the door of Judaism.
 3. Once this law was fulfilled and abolished in Christ, now there is a new door to enter: Jesus.
 - iv. Reconciled the groups.
 1. Since both Jews and Gentiles must now enter the same door, they are now considered one group.
- c. Jesus invited all to enter the new door.
 - i. He came/went—personally, but also through His messengers—apostles, prophets and others

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- ii. Evangelized—shared the good news of peace
 - 1. This message is the message of Jesus death, burial, resurrection, and our subsequent belief.
 - 2. In doing so, we now have peace with God and with one another.
- iii. Those far away (Gentiles) and those near (Jews) all have to enter the same door.
- iv. All are invited to enter that door.
- d. We are no longer separated as we were before.
 - i. Strangers/aliens
 - ii. Fellow-Citizens with the saints
 - iii. Household of God
 - 1. Instead of the law, built upon the New Testament gospel
 - 2. Christ as the cornerstone
 - 3. Different bricks are all of those who have placed their faith in Christ.
 - 4. Growing in quality and quantity together.
- e. **Galatians 3:28**
- f. Illus.—Augusta National lifting barriers
- g. Application
 - i. Jesus made salvation available for all.
 - ii. We all have access to God through Jesus.
 - iii. In Christ, all of those “spiritual” divisions will be cast away, and we all become one.

Conclusion

- Genuine reconciliation does not come through legislation, education, or protests; but through the blood of Christ.
- Many times, those who name Christ still have prejudiced views against others.
 - There were Christian preachers that preached that the Gentiles must become Jews before they could be Christians.
 - The book of Galatians was written to combat this.
 - When we find ourselves operating out of prejudice, we must admit that we are walking in the flesh.
 - We must confess our sin and repent.
- As we walk in the spirit, our prejudice will become a thing of the past.
 - We will see people in two groups: saved and lost.
 - With one we rejoice, and with the other we share.
- The ground at the foot of the cross is flat.
- This means there is a place for you, regardless of your background—Jesus is for you.

Romans 9:4 They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the temple service, and the promises. ⁵ The ancestors are theirs, and from them, by physical descent, came the Christ, who is God over all, praised forever. Amen. (Rom. 9:4 CSB17)

Galatians 3:28 There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 3:28 CSB17)