

### **Eph. 2:11-22 Reunited Through Blood**

Imagine coming up to one of your dear friends, your spouse, or your child, and you catch them doing something wrong. You catch them red-handed 现行犯 in sin. And the first thing you say, “I love you.” Well that it is a great way to begin in graciousness, but imagine if their response without any hesitation was: “As you should, because I deserve to be Loved.”

What arrogance and narcissism 自大和自恋. To think of people who are so self-conflated and puffed up 自高自大 with their own self-worth, is repulsive 丑恶. And I am sure we can all think of people like that. But before we start bashing 抨击 others .... Don't you realize that we are all like that.

Everyone in this room is a sinner against the most high majesty of God. All of us have fallen short of perfection, and yet we act like others loving us and treating us nicely is what we deserve. It might be hard to admit to ourselves, but we DESERVE eternal 永恒的 death, and we Deserve for the world to treat us as the sinners we are. And yet we still whine 发牢骚 and complain when we don't get the respect we think we deserve and when we don't receive what we want.

We come to this powerful text to teach us something radical about others, the Church, and ourselves. The Work of Christ radically changes everything about our lives.

- 1) The Blood-Shedder Destroys
- 2) The Blood-Shedder Reconciles
- 3) The Blood-Shedder Rebuilds

#### **Blood-Shedder Destroys**

We covered vv.11-12 a while ago displaying the painful estrangement 隔阂 of all people. By our sin nature we are separated from God: Gentiles are separated from God because of gross ignorance 无知; b) AND the Jews for their spiritual immaturity of boasting in things of the flesh. Remember the imagery behind a *circumcision made in the flesh with hands* is actually referring to idolatry.

a. Paul calls the Jews idolaters for boasting in their traditions

By our sin nature: V12 we are w/o Christ, alienated from citizenship, ignorant of the Covenant benefits, & HOPELESS—lost drifting 漂流 about in this world

- notice V11, ‘therefore remember.’ Paul wants us to pause and reflect on what kills the Pride in all of us. No-One is better than anyone else. The Heidelberg Catechism lays it out clearly: we are all born in sin and by nature hate God and our neighbors.

This is the Plight 困境 of Humans. It's not tricky to explain:

**We come into this world as sinners who sin.**

It's that simple and that deadly 致命.

But the story doesn't end there. That is just the description of the Plight. The Solution is more complicated and more beautiful than we deserve. Everything we hear of our sins, we should not respond, ‘Yeah, but I deserve to be saved. I deserved for Christ to die for me.’

We Deserve Death ... BUT V13 “BUT NOW IN CHRIST” – we are ‘brought near’

In order to be brought near, Christ had to destroy a couple of things.

- a) He had to pay the penalty for our sins.
- b) He had to fulfill the Law to tear down the division

First, Christ had to pay the mountain of Debt against us. Our Sins against God are numerous and heinous 滔天. The debt simply could not be brushed under the cosmic carpet and forgotten about. God is Just God and so the penalty for Sin had to be paid for.

V13-B READ this explains the restoration of our VERTICAL relationship; the one between God and us. Through the Blood of Christ our sins are paid for.

You have no greater need in life: not food, not clothing, not a new car, not friends: you need reconciliation with God. All of our law breaking needed remedy to be Restored to God.

As Hebrews says it, ‘without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.’

In the Blood of Christ your Sins are Forgiven. This is received by Faith.

Second: Christ had to fulfill the Law. V14: READ As Peacemaker he tore down all obstacles

But what exactly is it Christ destroyed? ‘dividing wall of hostility’-- Some have thought it to be a real wall; reference being to the short wall surrounding the temple court in Jerusalem. This wall barred 禁止 Gentiles from entering into the Temple. But Paul is not *merely* teaching that Christ tears down the nationalistic separation of Jews & Gentiles. Meaning there is now no dietary laws. This is what Pastor Rand was teaching last week about the Abrogation 废除 of the Ceremonial Law 礼仪法.

But there is far more to what Christ did for us. Remember that Christ said he did not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill 完成 it: in his Sermon on the Mount he declared clearly, - Matt. 5:17 ‘Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or Prophets; I have not come to abolish but fulfill them’

And he did fulfill it, when on the Cross he declares once for all: ‘it is Finished’ (Jn 19:30) So we live now in the age where Paul can say in Rom. 10:4 “Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes” So what was destroyed? V15 commandments and dogmas 教条? The Law's recording and holding our sins against us. This record of sin that separated us from God and us Vertically, and Us and Neighbors Horizontally.

Christ fulfilled the righteous requirements of the entire OT system by his active obedience, and he also bore the consequences of sin in his passive obedience in his Passion on the Cross.

So in the power of his blood he destroyed these things, which separated us from God.

Col 2:14 “by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.”

Rom 6:14b “you are not under law but under grace.”

Through the shedding of his blood Christ obtained forgiveness and Grants PEACE to all who come to drink at the fountain.

This is what we need in life, a Peace which surpasses understanding. A heart that can rest at night. As the Psalmist says: 4:8 “In Peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.”

This is what Christ is Offering: The price is Free, the entrance is Faith

SIDENOTE: Notice something very important: Peace is not something floating around in the world that you achieve. It is not some mystical thing you arrive at by meditating and eating the right foods.

### **The Blood-Shedder Himself is Our Peace**

Let that sink in brothers and sisters: let that wash over Mothers and Fathers. Only in the blood of Christ is there unlimited Peace for all: Peace for those far and near.

And let us be clear: when Christ destroys something, there is no bringing it back. When the Lord of Lords, the Divine Warrior from all Eternity declares that something is FINISHED and destroyed- it's gone for good. Your debt-of-sins is no more! They are not

hidden behind a bush to come back and haunt you 困扰你 some day. By Faith alone you have been brought near in the Blood of Christ, your sins are no more, they have been completely abolished forever. As far as the East from the West, they are gone (Ps 103:12)

### **Blood-Shedder Reconciles**

So Christ has brought us from Far & Near, reconciling us to God. Restoring our Vertical Relationship. But his glorious shed blood also restores our Horizontal Relationships with our neighbor. This latter part is often forgotten and not talked about enough. We are quick sometimes to say that our sins are forgiven, but we forget to say that we are *now able to love* one another.

We now have Peace with God, but we also we have Peace with one another.

**V16 READ:** The hostility that once should between neighbors is Removed. We no longer back-bite 回咬 and devour to get ahead. There is no hostility 敌意 between brothers and sisters in the Church. Everyone in the pew 座位 next to you claiming Christ as Savior is now joined to you.

All are brought together by the miraculous power of the Blood

There is no longer enmity 敌意 between the Circumcision Party & the Uncircumcised. There is no enmity between old-school traditionalists and new Christians. We are all united under one Lord.

Once we learn to take comfort and Joy in this wonderful thing the Lord has done we can appreciate the glorious gift offered in **V18:**

- Through Christ WE ... WE, AS ONE BODY- have access now to enter into the Very throne room of God.

We no longer worship from afar, we no longer are kept at a distance on account of our sins, but we now draw near, into the very presence of God.

You see people in the OT worshipped God from outside the Tabernacle & Temple. They were barred from entering into the chambers; the people were never allowed to enter into the Holy of Holies.

But when Christ was victorious on that Bloody hill, the Curtain was torn from top to bottom, now beckoning 招手 God's people to draw near together before him.

This is exactly what we are doing RIGHT NOW. We have gathered here as one diverse body, living in the freedoms united in the Blood of Christ: we are now enjoying and feasting on the presence of our God with Us.

Look at the last part of v18: you see that little phrase ‘to the Father.’ Oh, Beloved of the Lord, don't let those words be missed or passed by. They should make you cry with Joy.

We do not worship an impersonal God. We Worship and live with our *FATHER*.

The weight of knowing that the God of the Universe is your Father, and looks at you now as beloved Children, should humble us and uplift us at the same time.

### **Blood-Shedder Rebuilds**

v19 serves as the answer to the deadly problems brought up in vv11-13. Now that we have access to Our Father who is in heaven: we are not Strangers & Foreigners but we are Children and Citizens, fellow-Citizens, of the family of God. What a beautiful comfort this is.

Let us be honest for a minute though: all too often the church does not always function like a loving family. We are not as welcoming and forgiving as we ought: we divide and fight over frivolous 轻浮 things. We hold grudges 恩怨, and we are haughty 傲慢, and we are grumblers 爱发牢骚.

For that I apologize to those who have been hurt by the family of God. I truly know what it feels like to be rejected, abandoned, and abused 滥用, by those within the church.

I bear those scars 背负那些伤疤 with you and we can weep together- until he Returns

When he Returns there will be no more weeping: Isa 25:8 "He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces"

But until then, take comfort today in what God says in **v19**. It teaches us Even if **your siblings aren't perfect and nice to you, the Father of the house is Perfect.**

He will always be there comforting you, healing you, until the day we will all live in perfect peace together. Oh, Lord usher in that day quickly.

Notice vv.20-22 gives a magnificent imagery of a FamilyHouse-hold of the church today:

A house where Christ is the foundation and the people of Christ are all joined and united together as a holy temple to the Lord.

Let me explain the significance of imagery.

Back in Genesis 11, there was the Tower of Babel. A time when the people falsely *united* in pride and arrogance. So the Lord punished us for trying to climb into heaven by the sweat of our brow and callouses of our hands 手茧. We tried to **make a name for ourselves**. So God cursed our tongues and separated us from one another resulting in a world full of war and strife.

**BABEL REPRESENTS THE ULTIMATE DISUNITY:**

**SEPARATION FROM GOD and ONE ANOTHER**

But Now in Christ this strife is over. But Now Christ himself rescues us. Christ is our Peace and rebuilds that Vertical relationship with our Father; he reconciles us to one another in our Horizontal relationships and makes us One in Christ.

**THE CHURCH IS NOT BABEL .... Sin shall No longer separate us from one another.**

Let us realize this morning that the church of Christ is a multi-ethnic body: a kaleidoscope 万花筒 of beautiful flowers, each with our own uniqueness before the Lord.

We are not related by biological family: but the Blood transfusion we have been received from Christ.

The church is comprised not of those who are related through biology, or cultural preferences.

a) We don't all vote the same we don't all drive the same cars and drink the same kind of Lattes 一种咖啡.

b) We don't all wear the same Physical clothes:

Instead we all wear the robes of Christ's Righteousness.

a. Today the Church is a people gathered under our Lord: Jews, Gentiles, Dutch, Canadians, Caribbean, Africans, .... It makes no difference, we are all One in Christ

21b: slowly Growing into a Holy Temple to God.

V22: The Church today is to be functioning as a rich dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. A place carrying out the Mission of God and not the preferences of men.

The ramifications 后果 of this are clear:

At Babel people tried to falsely unite themselves and it failed. But Today Christ Unites us in his Blood and it is successful. Whatever Christ has joined together, let none of us work to separate. When we try to separate ourselves into distinct groups we are working against what Christ has accomplished. When we create a hierarchy of who has power and who is special and who is not ... we are actually working against the Supreme work of the Lord and the Gospel  
Bonhoeffer:26 "Christian brotherhood is not an ideal, but a divine reality"

I am a brother to you because of what Jesus Christ has done in me. And you are a Sister to me because of what Jesus Christ has accomplished in you.

Together we Confess with our lips these Truths. Together we gather to Sing to our great Father and our Prince of Peace, we speak and confess our sins, we speak and Confess our faith.

Christ himself came preaching Peace: V17- he calls to you who are Far, he calls to you who are Near, he proclaims peace to you by the Power of his Blood.

If you have not Trusted Christ to be your Lord, and believed in Him to forgive your sins: I beg you to consider the work of the Cross & Resurrection.

For today citizenship in the household of God awaits: By Faith in Christ you are no longer Foreigners & Strangers, we are all united in one family.

As Isaiah long prophesied about the work that Christ would do, 57:18-19 "I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and his mourners,<sup>19</sup> creating the fruit of the lips. Peace, peace, to the far and to the near," says the LORD, "and I will heal him"

So take comfort Beloved today that the powerful Blood of your Savior offers you peace and reconciliation through faith in Christ.