

Sunday Service Sermons

24 October 2021

Jesus Makes the Difference

Text: "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ."

Eph. 2:13

Full text: *Ephesians 2:11-22*

The heading for this section of Scripture is: "One in Christ."

Paul is including the uncircumcised Gentiles into the family of God through faith in Jesus as The Christ, the Son of God.

Without Jesus we have no hope.

Then because of Jesus as The Christ, the Son of God Paul can say, "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ."

Jesus is our peace and he has made the two one.

The two being the children of Abraham who believe and the Gentiles who believe.

In Christ, and our belief in him, we are all the same.

And in this there is peace.

For Jesus created a new person through his suffering on the cross.

One Spirit brings all to God through Jesus.

All who believe in Christ are fellow citizens and members of God's household built on the foundations of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

For in him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a Holy Temple in the Lord.

And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling place in which God lives by His Spirit.

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord, we are one in the Spirit we are one in the Lord, and we pray that all unity will one day be restore, and the will know we are Christians by our love, by our love, Yes they'll know we are Christians by our love.

So many great truths are in song.

Are you a joiner?

Once a man sought to gain membership in a hunting club.

The members rejected him because of his reputation for not obeying the rules of sportsmanship.

One outstanding community leader, who was a member of the club, interceded on his behalf.

He promised the club that he would take full responsibility for the applicant.

The man was admitted on the character and strength of another man.

Paul reminded the Gentiles that they once sought admission into the kingdom of heaven.

The sole reason for their admission was the character and work of Jesus Christ.

He made the difference.

Outside of Jesus Christ people are alienated.

Paul reminded the Gentiles that they were alienated, regarded as outsiders before they learned of Christ.

The Gentiles were inferior to the Jews in religious privileges.

Their state was desperate and godless.

Paul described their past state: "You were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."

Paul gave five definite indications that the Gentiles were outsiders.

1. Separated from Christ.
2. Alienated from the commonwealth of Israel.
3. Strangers to the covenants of promise.
4. Having no hope.
5. Without God in the world.

Outside of Jesus Christ people suffer great consequences.

Paul graphically portrayed the reality of alienation.

Those who choose not to live life with God suffer from a life apart from God.

This choice makes them strangers to the Lord.

The real outsiders in our age are the nonbelievers.

There is no worse tragedy than being alienated from God.

This alienation stems from a rebellious heart.

Being a stranger does not mean that God arbitrarily cuts certain individuals off from himself.

And it certainly does not mean that God is stubborn and will not admit sinners.

Being a stranger simply means that simple human rebellion has separated a person from God in this life and in the life to come.

A picture shows a lonely boy looking in at a Christmas celebration.

By the look on his face you can tell that he feels forlorn and wants to join in the festivities.

If someone would notice him, go to the door, and invite him inside, he would no longer be a stranger.

Someone, Jesus Christ, has stepped out and invited us to come inside.

Through Jesus Christ people are reconciled.

From the distressing description of what Gentiles had been, Paul turned to describe what had been done for them by Christ.

Jesus came to outsiders and made it possible for them to become insiders.

Christ did a marvelous work of reconciliation.

"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ."

At one time the Gentiles were separated from Christ.

Now they live in vital union with God.

All of this has been accomplished for them "in the blood of Christ".

Christ's reconciliation brings great benefits.

It brings peace.

"For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility."

Jesus made possible a harmonious relationship between God and humankind and between fellow human beings.

Christ's reconciliation brings access, "For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father."

The new relation is pictured as an access or right of approach.

Christians have the privilege of access to God as children do to a loving father.

In Jesus Christ people are insiders.

Receivers of Christ's reconciliation become insiders.

Metaphorically speaking, strangers become citizens of God's country, children in God's family, and integral parts of a structure.

Jesus gave the Gentiles a sense of belonging.

"So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and

members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.”

Together with Jewish believers, Gentiles form the true Israel of God.

They are the seed of Abraham, Jesus Christ is the focal point for both Jewish believers and Gentile believers, “Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.”

Believers can learn to be insiders.

Once individuals come into the kingdom of heaven, they need to learn the privileges and obligations of kingdom people.

Several metaphors teach valuable lessons.

1. A political metaphor teaches that believers are citizens subject to municipal regulation.
2. A physiological metaphor teaches that believers are part of the body and take orders from the head, Jesus Christ.
3. An architectural metaphor teaches that a building is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

Do you want to be in the kingdom of God?

You have to come through Jesus Christ.

Apart from him you are an outsider.

Open your life to him and become an insider.

Jesus makes the difference.

As the great song states: Through Christ alone!

Standing on and in Christ provides all that we want and need!