

The Work of Christ on the Cross

Ephesians 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,

Ephesians 2:15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity hostility, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two one new man, thus establishing peace;

Ephesians 2:16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

Starting in verse 14

For. To grasp this simple ‘for’ let’s take it from verse 13, to be sure you grasp the context.

Verse 11 Therefore introduces the conflict between the Jews and the Gentiles.

In verse 13 but now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ...

In verse 14 **For He Himself.** This immediately sets off the Lord Jesus Christ as being unique and it emphasizes His work on the cross. Oh, people please understand there is so much more from the cross than just our salvation. Once you have *pressed on to maturity* you start grasping much more about Jesus Christ than just His paying for our salvation.

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Our peace misses the blessing from Christ. It has the definite article *the* preceding *peace*. The Peace, refers to something, peace that is well known by all the people. Christ and no other has solved the problem of the relationship of God and man. Christ has solved the problem of man with man.

Jesus Christ's work is making two different groups (Jew and Gentile) into *one*, that is the Church. Christ changes the distance of the Covenants of promise with the Gentiles who were *far* and now are *become near!* The former separation of Jew and Gentile is called *the barrier of the dividing wall*. The word *barrier* means fence, wall, hedge or railing. The word *dividing wall* is literally, *the middle wall*.

Josephus used this word as a *barrier* in the Temple at Jerusalem that divided the court of the Gentiles from the Temple proper. These words were inscribed on this wall of partition in 100 of BC: "*no foreigner may enter within the barricade which surrounds the sanctuary and enclosure. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death.*"

This death was upheld by the Roman authorities. Paul was accused of taking Trophimus, a Gentile, an Ephesian, beyond this side of the wall where this was inscribed in Acts 21:28-32.

Jesus was known before His birth as the Peacemaker:

Isaiah 9:6 For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

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**Isaiah 52:7 How delightful on the mountains
Are the feet of him who brings good news,
Who announces peace And brings good news
of happiness, Who announces salvation, And
says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”**

**Isaiah 53:5 But He was pierced for our
transgressions, He was crushed for our
iniquities; The chastening for our peace fell
upon Him, And by His scourging we are
healed.**

**Isaiah 57:19 Creating the praise of the lips.
Peace, peace to him who is far away and to
him who is near,” Says the Lord, “and I will
heal him.”**

The pronoun in Ephesians 2:14, which reads...*He Himself* is important because it is emphatic by position in this sentence.

What was so interesting in WWII was the manner the Jews were treated. Millions died but 75,000 Jews also went to Palestine before it became the nation of Israel. Well, take a look what we are studying in Ephesians 2:11ff. The world was divided between the Jews and Gentiles. But look at two events: first the work of Jesus Christ in taking two parts, and making them one! - Jews and Gentiles. But then, in AD 70, Rome ended the nation Israel.

Note in 2:14 *made both groups into one*; then in verse 15 *one new man* and finally in verse 16 *one body*. From *one* to *one new man* to *one body*.

Now look at what Jesus Christ did with the *one*.

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Ephesians 2:14 for He, Himself is our peace...

From the Greek word for peace we get the girls name Irene which means *harmony, welfare, tranquility, unity, blessing* and can mean *peace* but generally means *harmony*. It is talking about Jesus Christ who brought *harmony* between the Jews and the Gentiles. Jesus Christ is our *harmony, our tranquility, our peace*.

Ephesians 2:14 For He Himself is our peace who makes both groups (Jew and Gentile) into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall.

Jesus Christ is our tranquility, our blessing. Never forget that Jesus is our blessing. If He gives you anything it is blessing to you. If you are a man, He gives you a woman to marry or if you are a woman He gives you a man to marry. You are really going to enjoy it. God brought a woman into my life who is beyond my hopes.

Jesus did something wonderful...*He broke down the barrier*

The Greek means to abolish, to annihilate, to destroy. *He has abolished the barrier of the dividing wall*. The Jews built one of the best distinctions or racial distinctions—*the barrier of the dividing wall*. It is actually a wall that the Jews built around the temple. The Gentiles could go in past one wall, and then there was another wall, and they could not go past this wall. Only Jews could be allowed to go there. Gentiles could be around the outer court, but never past the middle wall. This was the middle wall. Why do they call it the middle wall? Because the Temple had walls, and they had outer walls and then they had a wall in between called the middle wall because the middle wall was where the Jews could go but the Gentiles could not go past it. Now, here is the great racial wall; if any Gentile ever went past it, they killed him! Death was the penalty for any non-Jew or gentile. So this was a strong class distinction. And if you look at it from the Jewish viewpoint of worship they had a

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right to this. So what the Jews built was one of the most *honest* expressions in history. By the way everyone has a *middle wall* in your soul, know it, define it and be aware of it.

The Jews had this *middle wall* with something worthwhile behind this wall in the Temple. It was the place of worship only for them. What is so interesting is that part of that wall is still in existence today. Until the war of 1967 the Jews were not allowed even where they are today. So you can imagine how important this was to the Jews The Arabs have that in the upper area now and they won't let the Jews go by that wall today. The Jews come to that wall, the wailing wall and pray. Judith and I went to this wall, one side for men and next side the females. Jesus broke it down! When you believe in Jesus Christ as Savior, you are related by the baptism of the Holy Spirit and you enter positionally into union with Christ. At that moment in principle, in your soul, if you know the truth, the middle wall or partition is broken down.

**Ephesians 2:14 For He Himself is our peace,
our harmony, who made both groups (Jew and
Gentile) one and having abolished the divided
wall of the barrier.**

1. The distinction between Jew and Gentile emphasized by religious Jews and Judaizers is obliterated in the Church Age.
2. Circumcision has no spiritual advantage over uncircumcision.
3. Because of *reconciliation* (restoration of mankind and God the Father by the work of Jesus Christ) and *positional truth* (believers truly associated with Jesus Christ) all pseudo standards are removed and replaced by position in Christ. When you think of 'position in Christ,' remember this is the strategic or overall victory of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Angelic Conflict. To order to achieve this victory

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He had to become a member of the human race, (He is God) by means of a virgin birth, He had to live on this earth, free from personal sins. By birth, He was free from the imputation of Adam's sin and the sin nature, and through impeccability (flawless) and hypostatic union (God and perfect man) He was able to go to the cross and achieve the all inclusive (strategic) victory of the angelic conflict. So again, because of reconciliation and positional truth, all pseudo standards are removed and replaced by position in Christ. (An example of a pseudo standard would be like circumcision.)

4. Both Jew and Gentile have the same position in Christ. When we are born again there's equality for the first time. Our constitution says that all people are born equal. What Thomas Jefferson meant was that all colonist are born equal with the same rights of self-government. We are born unequal, but once you are born again in Christ you are truly spiritually born equal. God accomplishes in a second what the human race has never accomplished in all human history, and that is to provide equality for all members of the human race.
5. Jesus Christ makes two kinds of peace or harmony.
 - (1) Harmony that removes the wall between Jew and Gentile. This means all the distinctions that are false, and based upon the prejudice and the pattern of life and thinking when we were Gentiles.
 - (2) The harmony of peace that joins Jew and Gentile to God removing the enmity between God and the believer and a relationship between the believer and victory of Jesus Christ.
6. Reconciliation removes barriers between God and man as well as false barriers between man and man.

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2:14 For He Himself is our peace, our harmony, who made both groups (Jew and Gentile) one and having abolished the divided wall of the barrier.

Ephesians 2:15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity hostility, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two one new man, thus establishing peace;

Note in verse 15 *by abolishing* while in v 14 we translate *and broke down* with or by *by abolishing*. In v 14 we have *Aorist Active Participle* of the verb meaning *to loose, to untie, to destroy, breakup, abolish*. While in verse 15 we repeat *Aorist Active Participle* only now the verb means to make useless, waste, abolish, do away with, destroy.

In both cases it refers to the Lord Jesus Christ doing them and He does both on the cross. Both accomplish Reconciliation.

Verse 15 *by abolishing in His flesh*. Just stop and think about this for about an hour. There is so much involved here. He became a member of the human race. At the time of Creation, that the human race was created, it was known by God that He was to become a member of the human race to resolve the angelic conflict. It was also known by God that the first Adam would fail necessitating the Second Adam coming into the world without a sin nature, and without an act of personal sin and without the imputation of Adam's sin so that He might actually resolve the angelic conflict. Now what we are seeing is the number of things that had to take place on the cross. He had to supply us with salvation, but there was so many other things that had to take place. He had to defeat Satan at the cross. He also *broke the barrier and He also abolished the Law* and

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...and...He made two (Jew and Gentile) into one (Church). Few believers are taught of the strategic victory of Jesus, and yet it is so important to us. Every believer is in union with Christ at the right hand of God, the place of ultimate victory. And, as in Hebrews, Jesus is superior to all angels.

Colossians 3:1 therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, (and you have if you have believed in Jesus as your Savior) keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Colossians 3:3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

This is also taught in

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

So that our position in Christ at salvation means we are with Him in the strategic victory.

Ephesians 2:15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity which means the total alienation; the hostility between God and man.

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This hostility is made up first of all, of *sin*; ‘for all have sinned and *fail of the glory of God*. But this is only personal sin. We are sinners first of all by birth, we are born with a sin nature, and we are born with the imputation (to reckon over to ones account) of Adam’s sin.

Secondly: the penalty of sin is death.

Thirdly: Minus Righteousness, a Righteous God cannot have fellowship with us, unrighteous mankind. The enmity or the hostility is a barrier between man and God. A barrier that we cannot move around, or move over it, we cannot handle this enmity. Therefore a barrier which God Himself must handle. In the handling of this barrier, notice that Christ came in the *flesh*.

From Unger’s Bible Dictionary there are three major imputations in the Bible.

1. Of Adam’s sin to the Race. Romans 5:12-21.
2. Of the Sin of the Human Race imputed to Christ. This involves a judicial imputation. Judicial from God the Father because Jesus Christ was not associated with any sin related to Himself. This means that since Jesus was not associated to personal sins, He volunteered to take the judgment of every member of the human race. He Himself bore the judgment of our sins, and “*made Him who knew no sin to be sin.*” Isaiah 53:5-6; 1 Peter 2:24; 2 Corinthians 5:21.
3. Of the Righteousness of God imputed to the Believer. Taking the sins of mankind does not save anyone. This is the negative of the Gospel. There is the positive side of the Gospel. The positive that is required is *righteousness*. It is required of every believer. How does anyone get the righteousness of God? The grace of God imputes it to everyone who believes by faith in Jesus Christ. God is *righteous!*

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And God requires righteousness for salvation. So the only righteousness by which one is saved is the perfect Righteousness of God Himself which He gives to everyone who believes in Jesus as their Savior. There is no way that a person can produce their own righteousness by good deeds.

Romans 3:10 as it is written, “there is none righteous, not even one.”

When this righteousness is imputed by God to the believer, it becomes his forever by a judicial act.” Romans 1:17; 3:22; 10:3; Philippians 3:9 and Colossians 1:12.

There is so much to understand about Jesus and His work on the cross. Every believer must understand the *Hypostatic Union*.

Hypostatic Union

1. Definition. It may be difficult but it is important.

In the person of Jesus Christ are two natures, inseparably united without mixture or loss of separate identity, without loss or transfer of properties or attributes, the union being personal and eternal.

The Greek word is used 3 times in Hebrews.

In 1:3 *and the exact representation*;

In 3:14 *of our assurance*; and

In 11:1 *is the assurance*.

So the word is translated two different ways: *exact representation and our assurance*.

The two natures involve first of all the deity of Christ.

Jesus Christ is sovereignty, absolute Righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, immutability and

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veracity. He is therefore coequal with the Father and coequal with the Holy Spirit, both of which have identical characteristics. When the Bible says God is one, it is always referring to essence. They have the same amount of sovereignty, the same amount of righteousness, justice, etc. All three persons in the Trinity are coequal and coterminous and therefore they are said to be one from the standpoint of essence or character. Jesus Christ is also different from the other members of the Trinity in that He is a man, having a body, having a soul and having a human spirit, so that He has two natures, God and man in one person forever, different from man in that He is God, and different from God in that He is man, and therefore is the God-man totally unique.

The Scripture passages dealing with this subject are generally three passages in Hebrews 1:3; 2:14; and 3:14; John 1:1-14; Romans 1:2-5; 9:5; Philippians 2:5-11; 1 Timothy 3:16.

We will continue our study of Hypostatic Union next week.