



The Grand Theater in Ephesus
(ephesusbreeze.com)

God's New Humanity

Ephesians 2:11-22

God's New Humanity

Introduction

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- In the first part of **Ephesians 2**, Paul explained that we are saved **by grace through faith**.
- Now, he will show us how those who are saved come together to form **God's New Humanity**.

God's New Humanity Introduction

Four important topics in this letter:

1. What we need to know about Christ – our Savior and Redeemer.
2. What we need to know about our salvation – how we are made right with God, the forgiveness of our sins, etc.
3. What we need to know about spiritual warfare – an important topic in a city most famous for occult practices.
4. What we need to know about the Church – this new society that God is building in the midst of the world.

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A Story about Disunity

- Training at Eastern European Bible Mission
- The (Lack of) Difficulty in Crossing Borders
- The Real Problem of Unity on Our Teams

God's New Humanity Outline

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- I. What We Were 2:11-12
- II. What Christ Did 2:13-21
- III. Who We Are Now 2:19-22

I. What We Were 2:11-12

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- 2:11 “uncircumcision” ... circumcision
- Ever since the time of Abraham, circumcision was the outward sign of the covenant between God and his people.
- That was about 2000 years before Paul.
- The Gentiles were separated ethnically, culturally and religiously from the Jews ever since.

I. What We Were 2:11-12

- 2:11 “uncircumcision” ... circumcision
- All, however, needed the inward transformation brought by the Messiah.
- An outward sign was not enough.
- Romans 2:29 (ESV)

But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

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 4. **Having no hope** – In their religion or their philosophies.
 5. **Without God *atheoi*** The Gentiles had many gods, of course, but had no knowledge of the one real God!

II. What Christ Did 2:13-18

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- **2:13** The Gentiles of Ephesus – and all of us – are now brought near to God by the blood of Christ.
- There is no more separation because both Jew and Gentile are saved in the same way.

II. What Christ Did 2:13-18

- 2:14 the dividing wall of hostility
- At the Temple in Jerusalem there was a literal wall 4½ feet thick that marked off the Court of the Gentiles.
- Only Jewish people were allowed to pass beyond it, with warning signs placed at regular intervals.

II. What Christ Did 2:13-18



“No foreigner may enter within the barrier and enclosure round the temple. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death.”

II. What Christ Did 2:13-18

- 2:14 He himself is our peace
- 2:15 that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace
- 2:17 he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near

II. What Christ Did 2:13-18

- Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

II. What Christ Did 2:13-18

- 2:15 abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances
- There were numerous details that formed the basis of Jewish practice – things that Gentiles could never understand.
- None of these – from circumcision to dietary laws to the keeping of holy days – are required in the New Testament.

II. What Christ Did 2:13-18

- 2:15 that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace
- Also see 2:10 and 3:9.
- The Greek word Paul uses is the same one used to translate the “create” of the initial creation.
- It is only used of God in the NT, having the sense of “to call into being.”

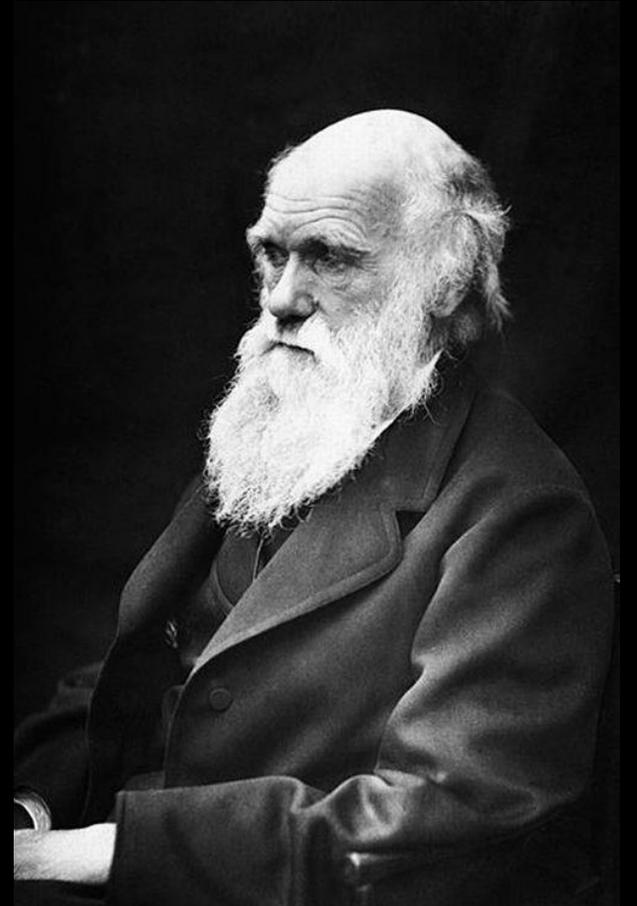
II. What Christ Did 2:13-18

- 2:15 that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace
- In other words, what God is doing is not modifying each of us a little bit so that we can get along.
- He is creating a new humanity in which the beauty of ethnicity and culture can find an overarching unity in Christ.

II. What Christ Did 2:13-18

The more civilised so-called Caucasian races have beaten the Turkish hollow in the struggle for existence. Looking to the world at no very distant date, what an endless number of the lower races will have been eliminated by the higher civilised races throughout the world.

*– Charles Darwin (1809 – 1882),
in a letter to William Graham, 3 July 1881*



II. What Christ Did 2:13-18

Whenever Aryans have mingled their blood with that of an inferior race the result has been the downfall of the people who were the standard-bearers of a higher culture.

*– Adolf Hitler (1889 – 1945),
in Mein Kampf, 1925*



II. What Christ Did 2:13-18

- 2:16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.
- The cross unites us first to God and then to one another.

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- Psalm 133 (ESV)

Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity!

² It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down on the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down on the collar of his robes!

³ It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion!

For there the LORD has commanded the blessing,
life forevermore.

II. What Christ Did 2:13-18

- **2:18** All three Persons of the Trinity are present here.
- Through **Christ** we have access to the **Father** in the **Spirit**.
- The unity of the Triune God is a model for our own unity.

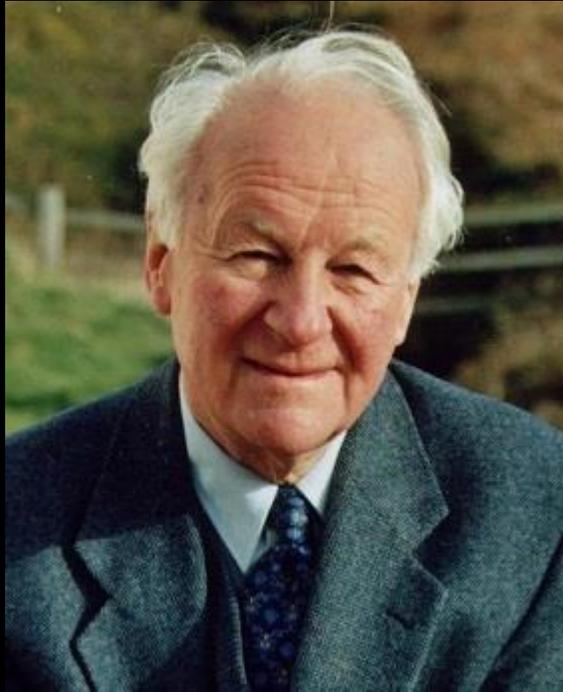
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- John 17:20-23 (ESV)

²⁰ “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

III. Who We Are Now 2:19-22

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It would be hard to exaggerate the grandeur of this vision. The new society God has brought into being is nothing short of a new creation, a new human race, whose characteristic is no longer alienation but reconciliation, no longer division and hostility but unity and peace.

*– John Stott (1921 – 2011),
All Souls, Langham Place, London*

III. Who We Are Now 2:19-22

- 2:19 fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God
- Philippians 3:20 (ESV)
- But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. Who We Are Now 2:19-22

- 2:20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets
- In the middle of the 2nd Century a teacher named Marcion rejected the Hebrew Scriptures – the Old Testament.
- For Marcion, the prophets belonged to one God and the apostles to another.
- Marcion was excommunicated.

III. Who We Are Now 2:19-22

- 2:20 Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone
- Two different cornerstone passages from the Old Testament are cited in the New.

- Psalm 118:22 (ESV)

The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.

III. Who We Are Now 2:19-22

- 2:20 Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone
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- Isaiah 28:16 (ESV)

therefore thus says the Lord GOD,
“Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion,
a stone, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation ...

III. Who We Are Now 2:19-22

- 2:21-22 Jesus is building a temple and each of us has a place in it.
- We are stronger – in fact, invincible – when we let Christ put us together.

- Matthew 16:18b (ESV)

I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

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6. The church is a new humanity, created by God in Christ.
7. Together, with Christ as our Cornerstone, we are being built up into a temple in which God himself, by his Spirit, dwells.

A Closing Passage

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- Ephesians 4:1-3 (ESV)

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.