

## Sermon Discussion – 18 February 2024

Read Ephesians 2:11-22

### **Getting Started** *Sharing from personal experience*

What is your biggest pet peeve? What if someone with that pet peeve became a huge part of your life? How would you get past your differences?

### **Observation** *Discovering the context*

Can two at opposition really become one? Judging by the world around us, this is still a problem today. People often do not trust those who don't look, act, or think like them. The previous section of Scripture dealt with how we can move from spiritually dead to spiritually alive through the grace of God. Paul continues his thought to instruct his audience that we have been reconciled to others through the blood of Christ; even though his audience includes those who have been hostile towards one another since Genesis 15.

- Read v. 11. Why do you think Paul points out to his audience that they are “*Gentiles in the flesh*”? What implications does this have for us today?
- Paul uses circumcision to draw up imagery that would take his audience back to Genesis 17. What are the four ways he describes the “uncircumcised” in verse 12?

### **Interpretation** *Discovering the meaning*

1. Read Ephesians 2:4 and 2:13. In Scripture, the word “but” is often followed with a message of hope. In verses 4 and 13, what is the reality of someone who has put their faith in Jesus?
2. Read v. 14-17. How does Jesus' flesh break down the “dividing wall of hostility”? Hint: Look at Matthew 27:51.
3. Are “Peace” and “One” connected? How should this reflect in the way that Christ-followers engage with one another? How can you seek after peace with someone who doesn't think or act like you?
4. Look again at v. 18-22. In verse 18, who is the “him” and what did He give? How does this verse instruct our understanding of the Holy Spirit's role? What is our contribution to the truth found here?
5. We see v. 21-22 talk about a structure that is being built. As the structure is being crafted “together”, what should it begin to look like?

**Application** *Putting knowledge into practice*

Paul directs his audience to recognise that the community of God is available through Jesus' death on the cross. As disciples of Jesus, we are being built into a community and joined together through the Holy Spirit.

When the community of God focuses on the one thing that unites us, the things that divide ought to become less significant. No physical appearance, attribute, skill, no like-minded thinking, or socio-economic status will ever completely bring unity. Peace and unity can only be found in the Holy Spirit offered through the blood of Jesus.

- Where have you been looking for unity in God's family?
- In what ways are your words and actions contributing towards the peace that can be found in God's family?
- In what way are your words and actions detracting from the peace that can be found in God's family?