

One People Reconciled Ephesians 2:14-16

Introduction

NJFK—brick for building a wall; to keep people/animals out; to keep safe those inside; through His work on the cross, Christ has broken down the wall between people (Jew and Gentile, and all other distinctions) and has broken down the wall between us and God

14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility **15** by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, **16** and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

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For—explaining what he has just declared in Ephesians 2:13

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

Referring Gentile believers, such as were part of the church in Ephesus.

Separated from the Messiah; alienated from the commonwealth; strangers to the covenants of promise; having no hope; without God

Christ is our peace.

As our peace, Christ accomplished two things:

Made us both (Jew and Gentile) one

And

Has broken down the dividing wall of hostility (in His flesh)—referring to his death on the cross

How did He do this?

By abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances

Primarily referring to the ceremonial requirements of the law (circumcision, dietary laws, ritual cleanness and uncleanness, special days) that had the practical effect of keeping Jews separate from Gentiles (Cf Colossians 2:11, 16-21)

Beyond this were the moral laws. These were not abolished, but trying to keep them all to

win favor with God proved impossible for us. We needed a perfect Someone to take our place who could both completely fulfill the law and could completely pay for our violations of it. Jesus Christ, the God-man, did both.

Colossians 2:13-14

¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

So Christ abolished the regulations of the ceremonial law, and he abolished the condemnation of the moral law.

Why did He do this? What was His purpose?
that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace

One new man—the whole body of believers united to Christ the head who are to grow up into Christlike maturity (Ephesians 4) as the individual members of it build one another up in love

Colossians 3:11

Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Galatians 3:18 adds male and female.

It's not that people cease to be from these different ethnic and social backgrounds, but that their unity in Christ supersedes all these lesser distinctions. We stand on equal footing at the cross and are all joint-heirs with Christ.

A second purpose or goal—even greater

Ephesians 2:16

and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

The divide between Jew and Gentile was small compared to the divide between God and sinners, Jew or Gentile.

Both Jews and Gentiles needed to be brought back into fellowship with God Himself

Reconcile—to bring people at odds with one another back together

In one body—all human beings need the same thing; it is fitting they would be made one through the cross (earlier—in his flesh)

Thereby killing the hostility

A greater hostility than existed even between Jew and Gentile (and it was great)

Hostility between God and man—we were rebels against Him, His enemies, having

chosen to follow Satan's direction rather than God's; and God was hostile to us, in that we were objects of His wrath—His settled hostility to sin and those committed to it.

Christ our peace, created peace between us and God

We are no longer objects of His righteous wrath, but saints, children, heirs

Isaiah 52:7

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Christ is our peace—peace with one another, peace with God. As such, happiness is ours in the good and perfect kingdom of God.