

Theme: The possibility of true community with God and one another is restored in Christ and may be experienced in His people, the Church.

## I. Intro – Mosque in Casablanca

- A. On trip to Niger stopped in Casablanca, Morocco
- B. Wild mix of fundamentalist and secular Muslims
- C. Picture of mosque in Casablanca - 7th largest in world
- D. Holds 105,000 for prayer - 25,000 inside, 80,000 in court
- E. But they would not let us inside during prayers!
- F. We were “unclean” and “unworthy”
- G. Reminds me of ancient Temple in Jerusalem
- H. Paul writes about this - and how Jesus changes it

## II. Alienated - From God and One Another

- A. We were alienated from God, His people, His covenants  
Therefore, **remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth** and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (that done in the body by the hands of men) — <sup>12</sup> **remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise**, without hope and without God in the world. Ephesians 2:11–12
  - 1. Paul is speaking to the Gentiles in the church
  - 2. We were separate from Christ - alienated from God
  - 3. We were excluded from citizenship in His people
  - 4. We were foreigners to the covenants

- 5. The summary - without God and without hope  
Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (that done in the body by the hands of men) — <sup>12</sup> remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, **without hope and without God in the world**. Eph. 2:11–12
  - a. They had a ton of ‘gods’ - but not the real God
    - 1. In fact Ephesus world famous for Temple of Diana
    - 2. But they did not know the True God
  - b. This is a hopeless situation!

- 6. This was true of all of us - aliens from God & hope
- B. We were alienated from others - hostile to each other  
Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and **called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision”** (that done in the body by the hands of men)... <sup>14</sup> For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed **the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility**, <sup>15</sup> by abolishing in his flesh **the law with its commandments and regulations**. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, Ephesians 2:11, 14–15
  - 1. “Uncircumcised” - initial note of hostility
  - 2. The barrier, dividing wall of hostility
  - 3. Based on ceremonial law (ordinances/regulations)
  - 4. All this alludes to dividing wall in Temple
    - a. Massive Jerusalem Temple - 80 years to build

- b. One foundation stone - 55'x11'x14' - 570 tons!
  - c. Huge outer court area - 3/4 of a mile perimeter
  - d. Four a half foot wall surrounded inner courts
  - e. Thirteen huge stone plaques (photo)
  - f. "No foreigner is to enter within the forecourt and the balustrade around the sanctuary. Whoever is caught will have himself to blame for his subsequent death."
  - g. Paul imprisoned because they thought he had violated this law (See Acts 21:28-29)
  - h. Talk about dividing wall of hostility!
5. This speaks specifically of Jew and Gentile
  6. But all humans are alienated from one another
  7. We segregate by race, status, wealth, etc.

### III. Christ - The Restoration of Community

- A. Jesus is the One Who restores community with God  
But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.  
Ephesians 2:13

and in this one body **to reconcile both of them to God through the cross**, by which he **put to death their hostility**.<sup>17</sup> He came and preached **peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near**.  
Ephesians 2:16–17

1. We were far away from God; Jews were nearer
2. Christ has worked reconciliation for Jew & Gentile
3. This peace comes through the cross of Christ

4. Reconciliation, hostility, peace are relational terms
5. Jesus has restored us into community with God

#### B. Jesus restores community between humans

For he himself is our **peace**, who has **made the two one** and has **destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility**,<sup>15</sup> by abolishing in his flesh **the law with its commandments and regulations**. His purpose was to create in himself **one new man out of the two, thus making peace** .... Ephesians 2:14–15

1. Made two one, one man out of two - community restored
2. Destroyed barrier, dividing wall of hostility between people
3. Law, regulations - Ceremonial law that separated Jew and Gentile in view
4. Peace, hostility, dividing wall are relational terms
5. Jesus has restored our community with one another

### IV. The Church - Community Restored

- A. Restored to community by the Trinity, Divine community  
For **through him** we both have access to **the Father** by **one Spirit**. Ephesians 2:18

1. Trinitarian work of salvation - access to Father, through Son, by Spirit
2. Justification is by the Trinity, the Divine Community  
Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have **peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ**,<sup>2</sup> **through whom we have gained access** by faith into this grace in which we now

stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> perseverance, character; and character, hope. <sup>5</sup> And hope does not disappoint us, because **God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit**, whom he has given us. Romans 5:1–5

- a. Through the Son we have access to the Father, by the Spirit - same as Ephesians 2:18

## B. Restored by the Trinity to community - the Church

1. Work of Trinity, Divine Community still in view  
And in **him** you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which **God** lives by his **Spirit**. Ephesians 2:22

- a. Paul is relentlessly Trinitarian in this passage
- b. Because salvation is communal, not individualistic
- c. Individuals are saved into community

2. When we are restored to God, we become part of Church

Consequently, **you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household**, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. <sup>21</sup> In him the whole **building is joined together** and rises to become a holy **temple** in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> And in him you too are being **built together** to become a **dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit**. Ephesians 2:19–22

- a. Three metaphors - **fellow citizens**, **family**, **Temple**
- b. These are communal (not individualistic) metaphors

- c. One kingdom, one family, one Temple - of which we are members/parts
- d. Individuals are saved into community by the Trinity, the Divine Community

## C. A community of diversity and unity

1. This one Church is comprised of Jew & Gentile
2. One Church comprised of every type individual  
There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28

Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. Colossians 3:11

3. The Church community is to reflect the Trinity
4. There is to be a unity in diversity, diversity in unity
5. Because of sin, this takes work
6. Do not settle for anything less than this!

## V. Applying the Word

### A. Are you living in community?

1. The Trinity, the Divine Community, is the Ultimate Reality in the Universe
2. You were created by Trinity for community
3. Sin disintegrates community - us, Trinity, others
4. You were saved by the Trinity for community
5. Scripture moves from Adam in Garden to City -

Eternity is communal!

6. Are you living in light of this reality?
  7. Are you intentionally building into community?
  8. Do you come early, stay late for community worship?
  9. Are you part of a small group?
  10. How often do you eat meals with others?
  11. How often do you recreate with others?
  12. A life well lived is rich in community
- B. Prayer for community

### The Restoration of Community

Ephesians 2:11-22  
May 26, 2013  
Prayer  
Romans 15:5-6

Romans 15:5–6 May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus,<sup>6</sup> so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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<sup>14</sup> For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, <sup>15</sup> by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, <sup>16</sup> and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. <sup>17</sup> He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

<sup>19</sup> Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. <sup>21</sup> In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.  
Ephesians 2:11–22

Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call