

“The Death Of Division”
Ephesians 2:11-22
Sermon Series: “Be Rich”

Introduction: We long for peace and unity but live in a world that is full of strife and division. There is racial division, gender division, division in families, division over religion, political/ideological division, and many other types of divisions. We are surrounded by violence and wars. Is there any hope for the peace and unity that we long for? The only hope for peace is the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ. Only He can bring us from a place of separation with God and each other to being reconciled and united with God and each other.

1. We are separated from God and each other by sin. The key phrase is “far off.”

A. There is social separation between Jews and Gentiles. Kent Hughes writes, “A study of the history of the ancient world tells us that none of today’s social distinctions—none of our racial barriers, our narrow nationalisms, our iron curtains—are more exclusive or unrelenting than the separation between Jews and Gentiles in Biblical times. The Jews believed the Gentiles were created to fuel the fires of Hell. A common motto was, ‘The best of the serpents crush... the best of the Gentiles kill.’ It was not lawful to aid a Gentile woman giving birth, for that would bring another heathen into the world’.” Warren Wiersbe writes, “In fact, there was a wall in the Jewish temple, separating the court of the Gentiles from the rest of the temple areas. Archeologists have discovered the inscription from Herod’s temple, and it reads like this: ‘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’.”

B. There is spiritual separation between God and us.

Paul told these Gentiles in Ephesus (and this applies to us as well) to remember that before they were saved by God’s grace they were:

-Christless

-Not a part of God’s people

-Without a covenant

-Hopeless

-Without God

2. We are reconciled to God and each other through the cross.

The key phrase is “have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” Reconciliation means to take two things that are separated and at odds with one another and bring them back together again. We are separated from God and each other by sin but brought back together through the cross. Here are characteristics of this reconciliation:

A. We are in union with Jesus.

B. We have peace with God and His people.

C. We have access to God.

D. We are one new people as Christians. This is our new identity in Christ.

3. We are united with God and each other as the church. The key phrase is “in one body.” If we are in Christ, spiritually we are no longer Gentiles or Jews but “one new man.” Whatever we are ethnically, in Christ we are children of God and brothers and sisters in Christ who are corporately the church. Verses 19-22 are the application of this unity as they picture us united together in the church as citizens of God’s kingdom, members of God’s family, building blocks of His temple, and the dwelling place of God.

Conclusion: Are you trusting Jesus? Have you been reconciled to God and become a part of His church through the cross?