



Ephesians

Part 17

Ephesians 2:11-23
Week of June 27, 2021

Before Connect Group

- Read Ephesians 2:11-22
 - Watch the sermon by going to <http://switzerlandcommunitychurch.org>
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Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 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, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.’

Ephesians 2:11-22, ESV

Sermon Notes

It is only when we are building upon Christ that our deeds carry with them the true glory of those redeemed.

We have often asked children "What do you want to be when you grow up?" While we desire for our children to have a plan for their future, it is also a question we continue to ask ourselves. But there has to be more. More than our earthly wants. More than our material desires. More than the wisdom or the respect that we compile. This driving sense of greater purpose is at its foundation a built in desire for the presence of Glory.

We are ever on the hunt for greater Glory. Within the context of sin in death, or maybe also understood within our own self and flesh, we will find that there is no success, fame, fortune, or pleasure that will scratch the itch that we feel deep within our soul. We will consistently be left feeling empty or hungry for more within this world.

The Christian however, knows to whom all Glory belongs. Our Father who is in heaven... The one and only Father who sent His Son Jesus Christ to die upon the Cross in our place. It is to Him and Him alone that we give praise for every good thing to fall upon us. It is to Him we turn when we find ourselves in despair, or struggling to navigate suffering. By the grace of God, our eyes have been opened and our hearts have been brought to life. We carry with us this Gospel of hope in the midst of a world who has none (vs. 12b). We have the redemption and forgiveness that comes from the all sufficient blood of Jesus Christ. It is within this Gospel that we are firmly held by our Lord and Savior.

If this is all true, having preached this Gospel and seeking in every aspect of my call to elevate the Glory of Christ, I continue to see so many in church today struggle to find the contentment they desire - the final destination of their search for Glory in the present work and Glory of Jesus Christ?

The question I have posed to us today is a larger question than any one sermon can sufficiently navigate.

This morning however, may I suggest that one of the main answers to this question lies within the meditation of our Ephesians 2 text. Specifically here towards the end of the chapter.

Ephesians 2:18-22 is a conclusion to the argument that Paul has presented thus far. You can see the language move that direction in verse 19 "so then." And as we will talk about a bit today, he recounts some of the major claims that he has made in both chapter 1 and chapter 2. Specifically though, it brings us to a conclusion of this "immeasurable great power" that Paul has been describing ever since 1:19. In the midst of our search for greater glory, there are a few things I present to you this morning that should both remind us of the power of the Gospel in which we have been and are now being shown and elevated to greater Glory than we could ever pursue here in our flesh.

Access to the Father

- Ephesians 2:18
- I think that many who read this verse will haphazardly accept the statement and not spend any time pondering its centrality and importance.

This is the Greatest of All the Blessing Poured Out Upon Us in Christ.

- This is where we began our journey, it is only appropriate that we now take some time

to talk about the source of all of these blessings... Access to the Father.

- The reason we struggle to stop here and meditate on the glory of this gift we have in Christ, is because our flesh has perverted our pursuit of Glory to be some product of our actions or intent.
- In marriage it is the husband and the wife's greatest desire that the other find complete satisfaction in just being with him/her, but in the same breath, find it difficult to offer that very contentment to the other.
- David's heart calls out for us to see the truth of this glory in simply being in the presence of the Father.
- *Psalm 65:4 Blessed is the one you choose and bring near, to dwell in your courts! We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, the holiness of your temple!*
- *Psalms 84:10 For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.*

Access to the Father, We Find the Full Peace of Christ

- In the presence of the Father, true relationship has been restored because brokenness cannot exist.
- Vertical: vs. 19
- Horizontal: vs. 19
- In this restoration, there can be no resistance to glory.
- *1John 5:1-5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*

Access to the Father, We Are Being Built Back Up... Together.

- Ephesians 2:20-22
- No one can enter the presence of the father upon any other foundation than the work of Jesus Christ. So here we enter the metaphor of building a temple. A temple that does not represent the brokenness of this world, but one that represents the full access to the presence of the Father in the righteousness and justification we have in Jesus through faith.
- Centrality of the victory and provision of Christ. He is the foundation. Christ being the cornerstone.
- *Isaiah 28:16 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: 'Whoever believes will not be in haste.'*
- *Psalms 118:22 The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.*
- *1 Corinthians 3:10-11 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*
- Consider that what once was the structure of your life has been torn down. Look back at 14-16. You are being built into a new Temple. This reaches back and touches on verse 10 of our text.
- You are not entering the Father's presence with a foundation that has been laid in this

world. Holding up some structure of merit you have sought to build for yourself.

- The best framework and roof of any house will only be as valuable as the foundation upon which it rests.
- *Matthew 7:24-28* "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."
- Rather, that entire structure has been torn down and the foundation ripped up... not to your detriment, but fully in grace for your pursuit of Glory.
- Now what is built is not futile upon the foundation of destruction, but upon the foundation of full salvation.
- It is only when we begin to grasp the full work of Christ, through grace and in the Spirit that has granted us access to the Father can we begin to talk of the Glory to be displayed through this new Holy Temple being built in the Lord.

Access to the Father, We Become A Temple for Glory

- *1 Peter 2:1-5* So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- It is only when we are building upon Christ that our deeds carry with them the true glory of those redeemed.
- Obedience is not a repayment, it is an outflow of all sufficient glory in the presence of God.
- In other words. Your works of obedience do not gain you access to God's Glory, they are a product of the full joy of your access to the father through Jesus Christ.
- *2 Corinthians 9:8* And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.
- So what is the drive in you for good works in obedience to the Father?
- First and foremost, the all sufficient Joy of being in the presence of the Father... The joyful outflow of the Grace given freely. Not as a repayment, for this is the greatest fallacy of religion, but in full pursuit of more of the Glory of God in his blessing poured out upon us.
- Does this mean that my obedience unlocks more Glory? No, but every moment you spend in His presence is more glory revealed to you. There is never a moment that you will not be expanding the blessing of glory revealed for all eternity. I believe this is Jesus' intent in the exhortation he gave His disciples.
- *John 15:5-11* I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

Connect Group Discussion Questions

- What would happen if our access to the Father was merited by our works? Why is it essentially that our access is by the grace of God who purchases the access for us through the works of Jesus Christ?
- How do we often act as if obedience is a repayment plan for the works of Christ? What sustains us in our faith in the day to day, our works or the grace of God?
- What role do our works play in relationship to our faith? How does access to the Father impact our works?
- What do you need to lay down in your life? What pursuit has you distracted from simply being in the Father? How i

Challenge For The Week

Access to the Father comes from our relationship with Jesus Christ who established our salvation and is our peace.

- Everyone wrestles with distractions to our faith that seek to establish our relationship with God on our works. Where are you distracted? How can you lay down these distractions to the Lord today?
- Who do you know who needs to know and understand that access to the Father that Jesus Christ brings? Pray for this person regularly that God would use you to speak to them,