

Ephesians 2:11–22 (NKJV)

Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

¹⁹ Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,²¹ in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Interpretation: Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.

1. What is the significant point Paul is making about the past experience of his readers in verses 11–12?

2. Why is it significant that the Ephesians had once been “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel” and “strangers from the covenants of promise” (v. 12)?

3. According to the text, how were the Ephesians “brought near” (v. 13)?

4. What does Paul mean when he says that Christ “made both one” (v. 14) and that He “created in Himself one new man from the two” (v. 15)?

5. In verse 16, Paul says that through the cross Christ *reconciled* both Jew and Gentile to God. Look up *reconciliation* in a study Bible or commentary and explain what it means. Can you find any helpful cross-references?

6. Contrast v. 19 with v. 12, and explain what this means about the identity of the church.

7. Paul uses a variety of metaphors to describe the New Testament church in vv. 19–22. Explain what these metaphors mean and how are appropriate.

Application: Take time to reflect on the implications of Ephesians 2:11–22 for your own life today.

8. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?

9. How does this passage challenge the way you think about situations in daily life? What should you do about that?
