

Calvary Chapel of El Cajon Women's Bible Studies

Ephesians 2:11-22

Lesson 4

Until Jesus, the blessings of God were only for the Jews. The Gentiles were not God's people. Here, in Ephesians 2:11-22, a mystery is revealed. Through Christ's death on the cross, all people, both Jews and Gentiles, have equal access to the Father. *For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him* (Romans 10:12). Through Jesus, we have been invited to the kingdom. Rejoice as you study this week and think about this wonderful mystery revealed.

DAYS ONE and TWO: Read Ephesians 2:11-22

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they were about?

a. Ephesians 2:11-22 has been divided into 3 sections. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

Verses 11-13

Verses 14-18

Verses 19-22

How would you title each section? Record your titles on the **Chapter & Paragraph Division Titles Chart** provided with your Observation Worksheet.

Now record a title for the second chapter of Ephesians.

2. At the right-hand side of the same chart are columns labeled **Key Word** and **Symbol**. They have been provided for you to record the key words and the symbol you have chosen to represent each one. Record the key words listed below and their symbols on the chart.

God, Jesus, Spirit, and were

New to this lesson: *were/once, you/we*

Term of conclusion: *therefore*

Contrast: *but*

Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in Ephesians 2:11-22. Remember, as you mark the words, *God* and *Jesus*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to Them. You do not need to mark every word that refers them - only those that you feel are significant.

3. This portion of Scripture continues the theme of "The Great Before and After", because it vividly contrasts our lives before and after we committed them to Jesus. Using the symbols you used to mark *were* and *once*, complete the first column. Now, look at the words *you* and *we*. Some of these indicate what we were like before Jesus, some after. Complete the second column using only the ones that indicate what God has now made us to be. Record the verse number in parenthesis to the right of each answer. We have recorded the first ones for you.

We Were	We Are
Gentiles in the flesh, called Uncircumcision (11) without Christ (12)	brought near (13)

4. It would be impossible for us to have any of the privileges of the second column without the work of the cross. Scan through Ephesians 2:11-22 and make a list of what they reveal that God has done.

5. What is your favorite thought revealed through making the lists above? Why?

DAY THREE: Read Ephesians 2:11-13

1. Much of this section of Ephesians was written to remind the Gentiles that they are entitled to all the privileges of believing Jews. Verse 11 begins with the term of conclusion *therefore*. What did the *Circumcision* (Jews) call Gentiles?

Note: The physical sign of God's covenant with the Jews was circumcision *in the flesh*, by removing the male foreskin. Since the Gentiles did not have the physical mark of circumcision to set them apart as God's people, many Jews considered them to be spiritually inferior and of no concern to God.

2. Read Romans 2:28-29. What type of *circumcision* does God desire?
 - a. What does Philippians 3:3 say about this?
 - b. Back to Romans 2:28-29. Whose seal of approval should we look to?
3. Using Colossians 2:11, describe the *circumcision* of the believer.
 - a. What are a few ways your heart has been *circumcised* (fleshly behavior changed) since you have been a believer?
4. Ephesians 2:12 describes us in our *before* state as *aliens* and *strangers*. We were not God's people, nor did we know the promises available to God's people. As the verse continues to say, *we had no hope and were without God in the world*. Think of a time that you were "left out, not included". What was it like?
 - a. How do you think you would feel if God excluded you from His people and His promises?
5. Define the word *hope*.
 - a. Contrast the *hope* of the believer to the *hope* of the unbeliever.
6. What does Romans 5:2-5 teach us about *hope*?

Challenge: Record some of your favorite verses about *hope*.

7. Since you, as a believer, are no longer without *hope*, what are some things that you *hope* for?
8. *We who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ* (Ephesians 2:13). Romans 15:8-12 describes the response of the Gentiles to the *hope* He has given us in bringing us *near*. Romans calls us to *rejoice*. What is your response? Write a short prayer of thanksgiving.

DAY FOUR: Read Ephesians 2:14-18

1. This section explains Christ's great act of reconciling the Jews and Gentiles. Two peoples at enmity no longer need to be because of the *blood of Christ*. How is Jesus described in verse 14?
 - a. Often we think of *peace* being a result of circumstances going the way we want them to; a lack of turmoil or stress. Yet, this verse tells us that *peace* is not a feeling that results from outward circumstances, but that *peace* is in the person of Jesus Christ. Describe the *peace* that can be found in Jesus.

2. What did Christ *break down* (verse 14)?
 - a. A historian wrote the following inscription on the wall in the temple that separates the court of the Gentiles from the temple proper. On it was an inscription that read: "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." Refer back to Ephesians 2:12. What does it say we *were*?

3. In *breaking down the middle wall (partition) of separation*, verse 15 tells us, Jesus *abolished...the law of commandments contained in ordinances* (not necessarily the ten commandments, but the Jewish laws added to them). What does Hebrews 7:19 tell us?
 - a. Describe what your life would be like if you believed that you had to keep all of the religious laws to be able to draw near to God?

4. What does Ephesians 2:15 say *Jesus created in Himself*?
 - a. Galatians 6:15 helps to clarify what this means. What does it say?

5. According to Ephesians 2:16, *through* what are we both reconciled to one another and to God?
 - a. What should our response be to this *reconciliation*? See 2 Corinthians 5:18.

6. To whom did Christ *preach peace*? verse 17
 - a. To whom should our *ministry of reconciliation* be extended?

 - b. What do you think of when you think of *those who are afar off* and *those who are near*?
 - 1). How might you share differently with *those who are afar off* and *those who are near*?

7. *Now all of us, both Jews and Gentiles, may come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us* (Ephesians 2:18 NLT). Ephesians 3:12 and Hebrews 4:16 use a similar word to describe how we may approach God because of the access we now have. What is it?
- a. Describe this *boldness* in your own words.

DAY FIVE: Read Ephesians 2:19-22

1. Verse 19 begins *Now, therefore*. Because Jesus made a way for all believers, whether Jew or Gentile, to have *access to the Father*, what transition has occurred? verse 19.
- a. According to Philippians 3:20 where is our new *citizenship*?
- b. Many *foreigners* come to the United States as citizens of another country. They often seek to change their *citizenship* to officially become an American. How might a person's life change when their *citizenship* changes?
- 1). How should our lives change as we recognize we are *citizens* of heaven?
2. *We are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself* (Ephesians 2:20 NLT). What does Psalm 118:22 say about the *chief cornerstone*?
- a. How much of a building is dependent upon the *chief cornerstone*?
- b. This phrase is quoted six times in the New Testament, each time referring to Jesus as *the cornerstone*. The first instance occurs in Matthew 21:42. Jesus was warning the chief priests and elders. What did He tell them would happen? verse 43
3. Read Ephesians 2:21-22. This *building*, made up of believers and Jesus, grows into a *holy temple in the Lord*. For what purpose are we *being built together*?

- a. God does not dwell in the church as a physical building. Rather what do the following verses teach about God's *dwelling place*?

John 14:17

1 Corinthians 3:16

4. What does it mean to you that God dwells in you?

DAY SIX: Review Ephesians 2:11-22

1. How does the gospel break down religious and social barriers?

2. In Christ, what is every Christian's relationship to other Christians?

3. Describe the *access* a believer has to God.

- a. What is one of your favorite things about having *access* to God?

4. There are several Scriptures that teach us of the believer being indwelt by the Holy Spirit. When God repeats something, we would be wise to pay attention. Why do you think God wants us to know that we, as believers, have the Holy Spirit inside us?

5. Share something from this lesson that has impacted you.

This includes you who were once so far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions, yet now he has brought you back as his friends. He has done this through his death on the cross in his own human body. As a result, he has brought you into the very presence of God, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.

- Colossians 1:21-22 NLT