

Ephesians 2:11-22

Reconciliation in Christ and the Mystery of Unity in Christ

1. How can Paul say in 2:12 that the Gentiles were “without God in the world” while in Romans 1:21 he says that the Gentiles “knew God”? (Matthew 13:34; 1 John 4:6)
2. What are “the covenants of the promise” in verse 12?
3. To what or whom have the Gentiles been “brought near”? (v.13)
What Old Testament institution does Paul have in mind here?
Were the Gentiles brought just as “near” as the Israelites of the Old Testament?
4. In verse 14 Paul speaks about a “barrier” or a “dividing wall of hostility” between the Jews and the Gentiles. What does he mean by that?
Illustrate from examples in the book of Acts just how entrenched this barrier was. (cf. Acts 10,11; Acts 15:1; Galatians 2:11-21; Acts 16:20)
5. What exactly does Paul mean in verse 15 when he says that Christ abolished “in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations”? (cf. Matthew 5:17)
6. In verse 15 Paul says that Christ’s purpose “was to create...one new man out of the two...” Why does he say “one new man” instead of “one new nation” or “one new people”?
7. What does it mean to “have access to the Father”? (v. 18)
8. In verse 19 Paul calls the church a “household.” How can this comparison be used to help someone understand what he is actually doing when he claims to remain a Christian but at the same time refuses to be a part of the church and her activities, i.e. the communion of saints?
How should we as congregation deal with such a person?
How should the office bearers deal with such a person? (Belgic Confession 28)
9. In verse 20 Paul speaks about the apostles and prophets being the foundation of the church. Does this not contradict 1 Corinthians 3:11 where he calls Jesus Christ the foundation? How can you reconcile the two passages?
10. In verse 20 Christ is called the chief cornerstone. What was the function of a cornerstone in a building of those days? (cf. Psalm 118:22)

11. Why does Paul, after calling the church a household, proceed to call it a temple in verse 21?

For further discussion:

12. In light of this passage what do you think of the idea that the United Reformed Churches and the Canadian Reformed Churches should just continue to exist side by side instead of come to full unity in due time?

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