

Divisions

- What divides or separates people from each other?
- What harm does it do?
- What divides or separates Christians from each other?
- What harm does it do?
- What are we to do?

Out of Many, One

Ephesians 2:11-22

Brown/English: Page 1174
White/Spanish: Page 1490
Red/Chinese: Page 1896



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Lakeside Pottery

3" x 2-1/2"

The Letter to the Ephesian Church

- Letter to the church in Ephesus (modern Turkey)
- Most of the people were Gentile (not Jewish)
 - Perhaps they were thankful for their change of status
 - Perhaps they were “getting even” a bit
- God’s overall purpose
 - “to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.” *Ephesians 1:10*
- Implications for the church:
How do we fit into that purpose?

Ephesians 2:1-10

1-10: Every one of us was once separated from God: disobedient to God, and by nature His enemies
 “But God, being rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ!”

Entirely as a gift through faith (entrust self to God)

→ Not because of any work we have done

We are His creation as a result of His work,
 so that now we do the work He has designed for us

True for Jew and for Gentile

Ephesians 2:11-22

11-12: The broken world: Gentiles were separated from God and from God's people, without hope

13:

14-18:

19-22:

Ephesians 2:11-22

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- 14-18: Christ's death and new life created one new humanity
- Through Christ, in one Spirit, together Jew and Gentile have access to (the same) God the Father
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- 14-18: Christ's death and new life created one new humanity
- Through Christ, in one Spirit, together Jew and Gentile have access to (the same) God the Father
- 19-22: All who are **in Christ** are now fellow citizens, members of the same family, and together form one temple which is the dwelling place of the one God

The Big Idea

Christ's one sacrifice
makes one new people
out of many peoples,
together reconciled to God,
to be a single, united living temple
as the home of the single living God



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- Jesus said, “If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.” *Mark 3:24-25*
 - The same is true of each church, and of the global church
 - “You can’t win an argument with your spouse”

A new command I give you: **Love one another.** As I have loved you, so you **must** love one another. *John 13:34*

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, **if you love one another.** *John 13:35*

Be **devoted** to one another **in love.** *Romans 12:10*

Whoever loves has fulfilled the law. *Romans 13:8*

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but **do not have love, I am nothing.** *1 Corinthians 13:2*

Serve one another **humbly in love.**

Galatians 5:13

Love one another deeply from the heart

1 Peter 1:22

Be like-minded, be sympathetic, **love one another**

1 Peter 3:8

This is God's command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to **love one another** as he commanded us.

1 John 3:23

Dear friends, let us **love one another**, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. **Whoever does not love does not know God,** because God is love.

1 John 4:7-8

Application

- Join God's purpose: one new humanity
 - Saved individually
 - To be a community
 - In which God lives
 - And God is not divided



Application

- Join God's purpose: one new humanity
- So pursue unity passionately!
 - Ephesians 4:1-6

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be **completely humble and gentle**; be patient, bearing with one another in love. **Make every effort** to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4:1-6



Application

- Join God's purpose: one new humanity
- So pursue unity passionately!
 - Ephesians 4:1-6
 - Jesus: "My prayer is ... that they may be brought to complete unity." (John 17:20-23)
 - Like so many prayers: our requests must be expressed both in passionate words and in determined actions



Application

- Join God's purpose: one new humanity
- So pursue unity passionately!
- Be **good** debaters
 - Know when to be silent in speech and heart

The Significance of Silence
The Evangelical Free Church

- The concerted effort not to let secondary issues bring division
- “This expression does not mean that we will not discuss and debate these issues but simply that **we will not divide over them**”
- Things we choose not to divide over:
 - form of baptism, practice of Lord’s Supper, Calvinism versus Arminianism, understandings of the end times, whether to drink alcohol, form of church government, ...
- There must be no “second class members” of the church
- “Are you a believer? Are you born again? If so, then you are a member of the body of Christ! Thanks be to God!”

- Fanatic
 - someone who won’t change his or her mind
 - **and**
 - who won’t change the subject



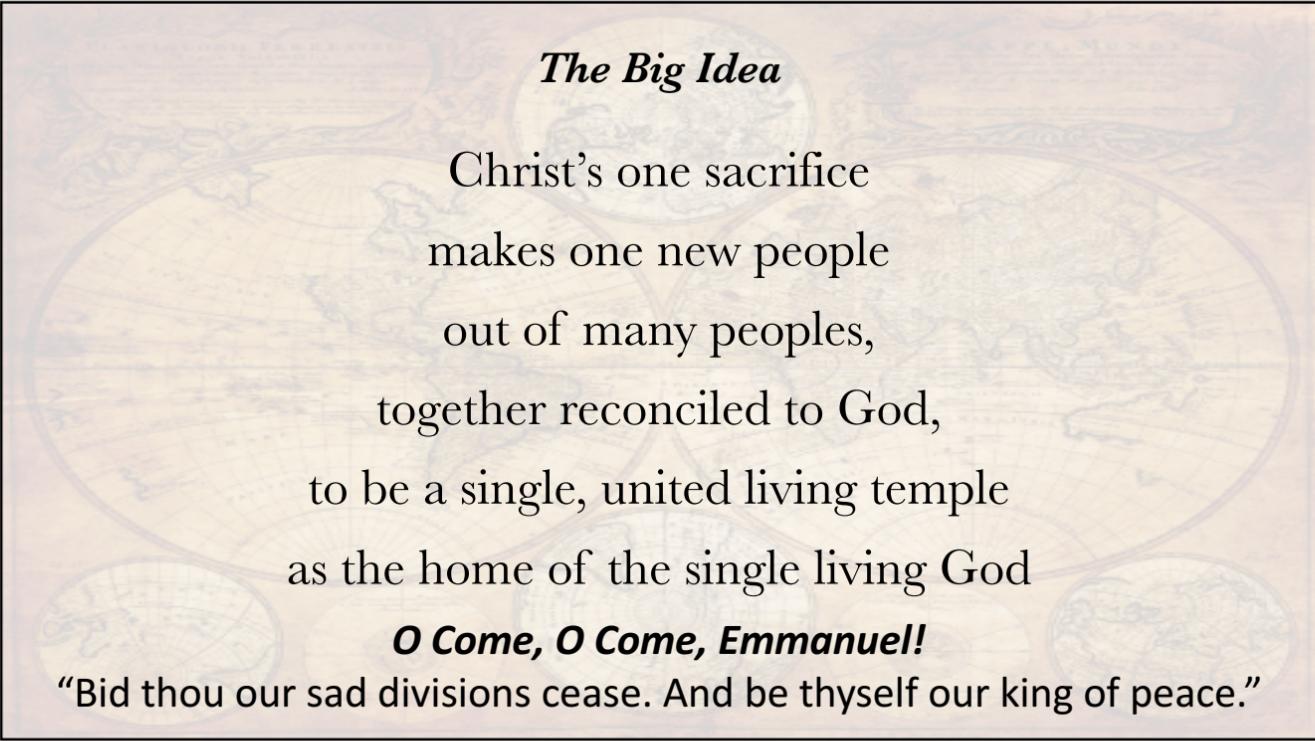
Application

- Join God's purpose: one new humanity
- So pursue unity passionately!
- Be **good** debaters
 - Know when to be silent in speech and heart
 - Relationships, evangelism, the church, ...
 - When you debate, debate well
 - Listen and learn
 - Expect to find more good than you expected
 - Be clear and passionate, yet never with wrong priority
 - Love people always



Application

- Join God's purpose: one new humanity
- So pursue unity passionately!
- Be **good** debaters



The Big Idea

Christ's one sacrifice
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to be a single, united living temple
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O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!

"Bid thou our sad divisions cease. And be thyself our king of peace."