



EPHESIANS

BLESSED • ACCEPTED • BELONG

*“So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son.”
Ephesians 1:6 (NLT)*

LESSON 6: BREAKING DOWN THE WALLS

Most of us have at some point received a Christmas card that boldly declared, “Peace on Earth!” The only problem with that message is that peace is not possible apart from Jesus Christ. All the well wishes and sentiment in the world can never accomplish peace or unity on earth. Jesus had to die on the cross and shed His own blood to break down the walls that separated us and kept us from peace. Because of what Jesus did, all barriers to peace and unity are removed and believers can dwell together despite their differences. How awesome is that! Before starting your homework, take a moment to reflect on your thinking and attitude towards others who are different from you. If necessary, ask God to forgive you and remove all barriers to loving them.

Open your Bible and begin with a word of prayer.

This Week’s Scripture: Ephesians 2:11-18 (NLT)

¹¹Don’t forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders. You were called “uncircumcised heathens” by the Jews, who were proud of their circumcision, even though it affected only their bodies and not their hearts. ¹²In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope. ¹³But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us. ¹⁵He did this by ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations. He made peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new people from the two groups. ¹⁶Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God by means of his death on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death. ¹⁷He brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were far away from him, and peace to the Jews who were near. ¹⁸Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.

This Week's Memory Verse:

*But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God,
but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.
Ephesians 2:13 (NLT)*

1. Once again we see the contrast between what we once were and what we have become in Christ. Look at verses 12-13 and fill in the blanks.
 - a. Verse 12: In those days you were _____. You were _____ among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world _____.
 - b. Verse 13a: But now you have been _____.
 - c. Verse 13b: Once you were _____.
 - d. Verse 13c: But now you have been _____.

United: characterized by unity; being or joined into a single entity.

2. This week's scripture centers on how we have been united in Christ. It is amazing to think that because Jesus died on the cross that we are now joined with Him in purpose. According to the following verses, what is that purpose?
 - a. Matthew 28:19-20: _____

 - b. John 14:15-17 : _____

 - c. Romans 12:1: _____

 - d. Summarize if you will, how you see your purpose as you are united with Jesus Christ. _____

3. Now that we are united with Jesus Christ, this week's scripture continues on to unite the body of Christ as a whole. Read verses 14-16 and answer the following questions.

a. Who united the Jews and Gentiles and how? _____

b. What did He do to the law? _____

c. How did He bring unity to the body? _____

Discussion question: In your experience, what causes disunity within the body of Christ? _____

Reflect – Respond – Result

This week's scripture gives us a lot to reflect on. In a nutshell, if we have unity with Jesus Christ we have unity with others. However, there are times when that unity eludes the body of Christ. We looked at what can cause disunity, but what can bring that unity back? Philippians 2:3 tells us, "Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves." Write out some practical ways you can apply this truth to your life - remember that you have the Holy Spirit to help you.

Don't be selfish: _____

Don't try to impress others: _____

Be humble: _____
