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C0438 -- September 29, 2004 -- Ephesians 2:14-16 -- The New Man

Last week, we looked at Eph. 2:11-13. The preceding section 2:1-10 was about our New Position Individually. We were saved by grace through faith (2:8), but not only that God prepared good works for us to walk in (2:10). We found last week that our individual salvation and pre-prepared works are not all we have. We are not left alone, but we are united with other believers into an organic unity (organic meaning dependent relationship, e.g., parts of a human body). This is Paul's emphasis in 2:11-22, the second main division of chapter 2. And this section "forms the basis of the discussion for the rest of the epistle."ⁱ 2:11 begins with Paul giving us a history lesson. He wants us to remember the former hostility between Jew and Gentile. The major point of hostility in v. 11 was the Gentiles were *in the flesh*. This refers to the physical flesh, something about the Gentile flesh created hostility between the Jew and Gentile. Then Paul tells us it was the circumcision. Gentiles were not circumcised in their flesh and this caused animosity. Jews, on the other hand, were circumcised in their flesh and this was something they were very proud of. In v. 12 Paul wants us to remember five additional things, these are five privileges that the Gentiles lacked. *First*, Gentiles *were at that former time separate from Christ*. This means they were without Messianic expectation. They had no expectation of a Deliverer. Why did they lack this expectation? Because the Jews had the oracles of God. The Jews were the people from whom the prophets came and God spoke to these Hebrew prophets. So, the Jews had a great advantage over the Gentiles (Rom. 3:1-2). The Jews had Messianic expectation. This is why it was so desirable in ancient Israel to have male children. Perhaps your son would be the Deliverer or the Deliverer would come through the line of your son. Sons were highly desired in ancient Israel. *Second*, they were *excluded from the citizenship (politeia) of Israel*. The word here is not commonwealth but citizenship. There was no Jewish commonwealth at the time of Christ. Instead, the Gentiles did not have the privileges of being a citizen of Israel. Living in a state does not necessarily bring privileges but being a citizen does. *Third*, Gentiles *were strangers of the covenants of promise*. God made covenants with Israel. Since this is covenants plural and promise singular this points to the unconditional covenants of Israel; the Abrahamic being the root covenant from which

the other three unconditional covenants spring; namely, the Palestinian Covenant, the Davidic or Seed Covenant, and the New Covenant. Gentiles were excluded from these covenants and there is no salvation for anyone, Jew or Gentile, apart from these covenants. Salvation is grounded in history and these covenants form the framework for all of history. If a history class disregards these covenants then they cannot understand the flow and dynamics of history. Everything hinges on this basic framework and little bitty Israel. *Fourth*, Gentiles had **no hope**. Since we were uncircumcised, without expectation of a “Deliverer”, excluded from the citizenship of Israel and strangers of the covenants through which salvation comes it follows that we had **no hope**. *Fifth*, we were **without God**. This is the Greek word *atheos* from which we get the word “atheist”. We did not believe in the one true God, we believed in many gods. We were heathen. We must remember our history so that we will not have animosity toward the Jews. Having our present position in Christ we might turn against the Jewish people calling them “Christ-killers” and other racial slurs. Paul is writing this so we Gentiles do not get on our high horse and think that we are superior to the Jews, we were atheists and God grafted us into the place of blessing.

I hope you’ve realized from this section the importance of knowing the OT. It’s commonly thought that because we’re NT saints we don’t need to know the OT. As I study the New Testament more and more, I have come to realize that if you really want to understand the NT then you first have to understand the OT. The better grasp you have of the OT the clearer the NT becomes. I’ve also realized that there is very little new in the NT. There’s some elaboration but basically there’s not much new. Almost every doctrine is in the OT. And the good thing about the OT is that it’s communicated in a very concrete way. It deliberately ties doctrines to history. And that’s a very important principle. Buddhism isn’t grounded in history, Mormonism isn’t grounded in history, but the Bible grounds our faith in history. It’s not just some idea floating out there, it’s real history and the Bible attaches our faith to history deliberately. You can see now how important it is to learn the OT and see the faith of individuals lived out in OT history. If it’s not history then how can you live out your faith in history? If no one has walked the path before you then aren’t you all alone? Now, what do you notice is different about the style of the NT epistles in comparison to the OT? The OT is historical narrative for the most part. But how are the NT epistles written? They are not historical narratives; they are written abstractly. The authors did not surround these texts with loads of historical details. Why not? Because the NT authors presupposed that you knew the OT cold. They presupposed that you already knew all that history. Think about the day of Pentecost. Who was there in Acts 2? Was it Jews or Gentiles? It was Jews (Hellenistic and Native). The church started with all Jews. It remained that way for 5 years or so (they still met in the synagogue) until Acts 8 when believing Samaritans became a part of the church and after a couple more years, in Acts

10, believing Gentiles entered the church. So, the church was originally composed of Jewish believers. They already knew the OT cold. Most had memorized the Torah and the doctors of the Law had memorized the entire OT (22 books in Hebrew Canon)! I remember Arnold Fruchtenbaum, a Jewish Christian, who told me about his father, who was a rabbi, could take a stake and drive it into the Hebrew Scriptures, and wherever that stake stopped, he could start quoting from that point on. These were the kinds of people who were reading the New Testament. So, we have to know the Old Testament Scriptures; and as you have noticed, all we have done last week and this week is spend time in the Old Testament so we can understand the New Testament. Otherwise, Christians just read right over this stuff never thinking twice about what it means. So, I'm going to make it a point in the coming years to teach a lot of the OT because I know that it's going to open our eyes a lot more to understanding the New Testament.

2. Explanation of the Organic Union (2:14-18)

In verses 14-18 of chapter 2 Paul begins with the word *for* (*gar*), indicating that he is giving an explanation for that which precedes in vv. 11-13. He wants to explain more about the former hostility between Jew and Gentile and how we who were formerly *far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ*. He wants to emphasize the former hostility and what God did to tear down this hostility and create one new man.

a. Assertion of Peace (2:14-16)

vv. 14-18 can be divided into two sections: vv. 14-16: Assertion of Peace which we'll cover tonight and vv. 17-18: Announcement of Peace which we'll look at next week. There is now peace between believing Jews and Gentiles. But, for this peace to come about the Mosaic Law could no longer be in operation because it set up a rift between Jews and Gentiles. Therefore, it had to be dismantled. Peace is the main assertion in v 14a, what follows in vv. 14b-16 are participles that support the main assertion.

(1) Destruction of the Wall (2:14a)

The first thing that had to happen was the destruction of the middle wall of partition that separated Jews and Gentiles outside of Christ.

Greek Text 2:14 Αυτο,j ga,r evstin h` eivrh,nh h`mw/n(o` poiη,saj ta. avmfo,tera e]n kai. to. meso,toicon tou/ fragmou/ lu,saj(th.n e;cqran evn th/| sarki. αυtu/(/

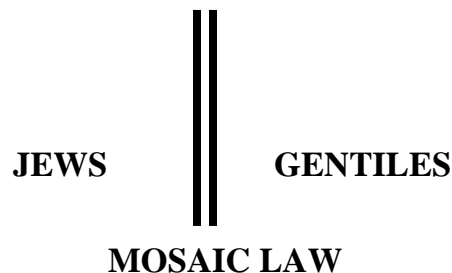
Translation 2:14 For He is our peace, who made both one and who destroyed the middle wall of partition, the enmity in His flesh,

Αυτο. j ga,r evstin h` eivrh,nh h`mw/n(“**For He is our peace,**”. Having stated the Jew-Gentile union in v. 13 he now proceeds to explain this union. **He** is emphatic emphasizing that it is Christ who is **our peace**. The grammar emphasizes that Christ = **peace**. Christ, in His own person, is **peace**. The Greek word for **peace** is *eirene* and means “to bind together”. The context here is the binding together of the believing Jew and Gentile in Christ. Therefore, in this context, **peace** is between Jew and Gentile not between humans and God. This **peace** is the result of a negative and a positive: negatively the hostility between believing Jew and Gentile was removed, positively believing Jews and Gentiles mutually accept one another. **our** refers to both Jews and Gentiles. Both groups had mounted up enmity toward the other. Now both believing groups find **peace** with one another in Christ who is **peace** Himself.

ο` poiη,saj ta. avmfo,tera e]n, “**who made both one**”. In this phrase Paul is saying that Christ **made** believing Jews and Gentiles **one**. The verb for **made** is in the aorist tense indicating a past completed action. Christ is not presently making **peace** between Jews and Gentiles, rather He already accomplished **peace** between Jews and Gentiles 2,000 years ago on the cross. At the crucifixion Christ destroyed the enmity and created acceptance between Jews and Gentiles. The former disunion has now become union between Jews and Gentiles who are in Christ. But Paul has still not told us how this was accomplished. How was the disunity annulled and unity accomplished?

kai. to. meso,toicon tou/ fragmou/ lu,saj(“**and who destroyed the middle wall of partition,**”. Something separated and created **enmity** between Jews and Gentiles. Here Paul describes how this **enmity** was removed and unity was accomplished (unity is a major theme of Ephesians, cf. 4:3; 4:13). Christ not only made both groups one 2,000 years ago but He also **destroyed the middle way of partition**. The Greek verb **destroyed** is also in the aorist, just like the verb **made** above. They are connected by *kai* meaning that these two things happened at the same time and that the means of making both groups one was by destroying the **middle wall of partition**. Christ did both by way of the cross. The word **middle wall** (*mesotoichon*) is only used here in the NT. The word **partition** or **barrier** is the Greek word *phragmos*. It refers to a wall designed to keep intruders out. In the New Testament, it is used of a fence or hedge to protect a vineyard or field from intruders (e.g., The Ghost and the Darkness). So, there was a middle wall creating a barrier between the Jews and Gentiles. What was this wall? Some have said that this wall was the physical veil between the holy place and the holy of holies. But this can't be because the text says it was

a **wall** and not a “veil”. Further, only the High Priest could go past the veil and he did this only once a year. Others say it was the physical wall that separated the court of the Gentiles from the court of the Jews in Herod’s Temple? This can’t be because that wall was not destroyed at the cross of Christ. It was still standing in Paul’s day (cf. Acts 21:26-29), though Paul may have been playing on this imagery. There may be a loose allusion to the idea that the physical **wall** in the Temple still existed for non-believing Jews and Gentiles but there was no barrier between Jew and Gentile believers because that was destroyed at the cross 40 years earlier (Ephesians was written in 62AD). Others say it was the Mosaic Law. This is clearly what Paul meant.



Later, rabbinics thought of the Law of Moses as a fence that protected Israel from the practices of the pagan nations that surrounded them. The main purpose of the Mosaic Law was to keep Israel a holy and distinct people. They were not to eat with Gentiles or intermarry with them or even to have the same diet. God, through Moses, established 613 laws that were to keep the people of Israel holy and distinct. “This often led to a hostility of Jews towards Gentiles and was a cause of Gentile hatred of the Jews.”ⁱⁱ For example, in the 2nd century BC in the *Letter of Aristeas* he writes: “For most of the rest of mankind defiles themselves by their promiscuous unions, working great unrighteousness, and whole countries and cities pride themselves on these vices. Not only do they have intercourse with males, but they even defile mothers and daughters. But we have been kept apart from such things.”ⁱⁱⁱ The **wall** here is therefore a metaphor for the Mosaic Law which created a **barrier** between Jews and Gentiles. This **middle wall of partition** was destroyed by Jesus Christ on the cross. What exactly was destroyed? We can’t say that Christ destroyed the Mosaic Law at the cross because this creates a contradiction with **Matt. 5:17** “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.” The Greek word for *abolish* here is the same word Paul used in Eph. 2:14 (Gk. *luo*) except it adds the intensifier *kata*. So, Christ did not come to destroy the Mosaic Law nor did He destroy the Mosaic Law. What He did was render the Mosaic Law inoperative by fulfilling the Mosaic Law. Here in the Sermon on the Mount (SOM) Jesus is giving the proper interpretation of the Mosaic Law in contrast with the rabbis of His day (you have heard it said that X, but I say Y...). This contrast between the proper interpretation of the Mosaic

Law and the rabbinic interpretation of the Mosaic Law will be important when we discuss the enmity that resulted between Jew and Gentile. Jesus fulfilled and therefore rendered inoperative the Mosaic Law, but He did not destroy it. If it wasn't the Mosaic Law that was destroyed then what was destroyed?

then e;cran, "the enmity". *the enmity* or *hostility* was destroyed. The Mosaic Law was not destroyed. It was the *enmity* that was destroyed. *Enmity* is the opposite of that which was established, *peace*. Christ did away with *the enmity* and established *peace*. The *enmity* that is being destroyed is *enmity* between two people groups, not between God and human beings. How did Christ destroy this *enmity*? Paul will amplify this in v. 15 but in short, He destroyed the hostility by making the Mosaic Law inoperative as a way of life for those who are in Christ. This is consistent with Paul's other writings. For example, turn to **Romans 10:4** "*For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*" For the believer in Christ, *Christ is the end of the law*. The believer is not under the Mosaic Law as a way of life. What caused the *enmity*? Paul tells us that the Law was good, when used lawfully. Turn to **1 Timothy 1:8** "*But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully,*" Remember what I told you about the SOM in Matt. 5-7? The rabbis did not use the law lawfully. They twisted the interpretation of the Mosaic Law. So, Jesus came to set the interpretive debates straight. He was the Lawgiver Himself on Mt. Sinai. He should know what it means. Because the Mosaic Law was used unlawfully it caused enmity between Jews and Gentiles. To destroy this *enmity* Christ fulfilled the Mosaic Law rendering it inoperative.

"In brief, as stated earlier, there was hostility between Jews and Gentiles. This came about because many Jews misused the law. The stipulations of the law were to protect the Jew from the practices of the world. Israel was to be a kingdom of priests (Exod. 19:6) as a testimony to God. They were to keep the law which provided opportunity to witness to their Gentile neighbors of God's wonderful deliverance and care. Rather than using the law as a witness, it became the tool that enabled them to look down on the Gentiles whom they considered sinners. Hence, this caused hostility between Jews and Gentiles. Due to this and the tenacity with which they practiced their law, they were considered by the Gentiles as prideful and stubborn. Their observance of regulations was well known, and even Julius Caesar exempted the Jews from Roman military service because they would not work on the Sabbath nor eat the normal rations of the soldiers. Hence, it was not the law that was hostile but the wrong conception and use of the law, which resulted in hostility on both sides. To solve the problem, the law was rendered inoperative in Christ's flesh and therefore, Jews and Gentiles in Christ would not have the law as the modus operandi, thus destroying the hostility which existed between them."^{iv} Where was this hostility destroyed?

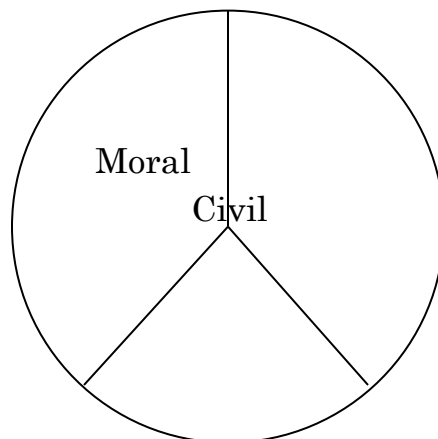
evn th/| sarki. aurtou/(“*in His flesh*,”. This locates the destruction of the enmity in Christ’s *flesh*. This is a metaphor for Christ’s sacrificial death just like the phrase *by the blood of Christ* in v. 13.

(2) Disengagement of the Law (2:15 - 16)

(a) The Fact of the Disengagement (2:15a)

Greek Text 2:15 to.n no,mon tw/n evtolw/n evn do,gmasin katargh,saj(i[na tou,j du,o kti,sh| evn aurtw/| eivj e[na kaino.n a;nqrwpon poiw/n eivrh,nhn
Translation 2:15 by having rendered inoperative the law of commandments in dogma, in order that He may create in Him the two into one new man, making peace

to.n no,mon tw/n evtolw/n evn do,gmasin katargh,saj(“*by having rendered inoperative the law of commandments in dogma*,”. As I said earlier, Paul wants to tell us how Christ destroyed the hostility in v. 15. He did so by *abolishing the law of commandments in dogma*. Not only did Christ *make both one*, not only did Christ *destroy the hostility*, but the means by which Christ destroyed this enmity was by *abolishing the law of commandments in dogma*. The word *abolish* (NASB) would better be translated as *rendered inoperative* (because some might think this contradicts Matt. 5:17 which is a different Greek word *kataluo* vs. *katargeo*). The law has been *rendered inoperative* for the believer. The Mosaic Law was rendered inoperative at His death because Christ fulfilled the Mosaic Law in His life. *the law* (*o nomos*) must refer to the whole Mosaic Law and not just the civil and ceremonial laws. Many schools of theology try to separate the Mosaic Law into three components: moral law, civil law, and ceremonial law.



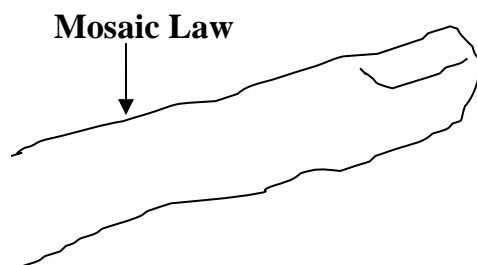
They then try to render inoperative the civil and ceremonial laws and carry over the moral laws. This separation is never made in the Bible. Further, Paul said that whoever keeps the

whole law and yet stumbles in one has become guilty of all (Jas. 2:10). The Ten Commandments *are not* still in force today. The 7th Day Adventists try to follow the Mosaic Law. But the whole of the Mosaic Law has been ***rendered inoperative*** for the believer (Rom. 10:4). Believers are no longer under that tutor (Gal. 3:24-25). Paul tells us in Romans 7:1-6 that we have died to the law (7:1-6). Question: does that mean that there are no laws in the Mosaic Law that we do not obey today? No. The Mosaic laws that are repeated in the NT epistles are to be obeyed (dispensational distinctions). However, no aspect of the Mosaic Law was carried over past the death of Christ. Christ ***rendered inoperative*** the whole Mosaic Law for believers in Christ! However, Paul was not an *antinomian* (against law) for he also states that he himself was under the Law of Christ (1 Cor. 9:21) and he was to fulfill the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2). So, Christ set aside an entire Legal System and developed a wholly new Legal System. The Mosaic Law was an entire Legal System and the Law of Christ is an entirely distinct Legal System. The reason some laws are the same is because both Legal Systems find their source in the same God. The Mosaic Law was an expression of God's will for the nation of Israel. Christ's Law is an expression of God's will for the Church. If you want to know God's will for your life it is to follow the Law of Christ.

Salvation by Grace Through Faith						
Innocence	Conscience	Government	Promise	Law	Grace	Kingdom
Gentiles			Israel		Church	
PROGRESSIVE REVELATION						

In summary, Paul has told us that Christ has destroyed the enmity that existed between Jew and Gentile by making the Mosaic Law inoperative^v.

We might use an illustration from the area of Chiropractic care to make this clear. A common illustration of how Chiropractic care works is that of a rubber band tightly wrapped around the finger. What happens to the finger when you leave the rubber band tightly around it for some time? It stops the blood flow and the finger begins to turn red and pain results. How are we to treat such a problem? We can give you Tylenol to relieve the pain or we can remove the rubber band. This is the Medical vs. Chiropractic approach. The Medical approach is to give you Tylenol to relieve the pain. The Chiropractic approach is to remove the rubber band.





Hostility

In Paul's argument the redness and pain might be likened to the enmity between Jew and Gentile. Christ came to destroy that enmity. He did so by rendering inoperative the rubber band which corresponds to the Mosaic Law. The enmity was the symptom, the misuse of the Mosaic Law the cause. Chiropractic care seeks to find the cause of the problem and fix it. This is the way Christ dealt with the enmity; He removed the root cause of the enmity. Why did Christ destroy the enmity?

(b) The Purpose of the Disengagement (2:15b-16)

(i) To Create One New Person (2:15b)

[na tou.j du,o kti,sh| evn auvtw/| eivj e[na kaino.n a;nqrwpon poiw/n eivrh,nhn, “in order that He may create in Him the two into one new man, making peace”. A *hina* clause can introduce the purpose or the result. Here it introduces the purpose. The purpose of Christ destroying the enmity by rendering the Mosaic Law inoperative was ***that He may create in Him the two into one new man, making peace***. The two persons become one new person. The verb for ***create*** is the same verb used in v. 10 *ktizo*. Whenever the NT uses this term for ***create*** it always denotes something God creates in the physical or spiritual realm. Here the subject is Christ, the 2nd person of the Trinity. Therefore, Christ creates in Himself the two (masculine) groups ***into one new man***. This is an entirely new entity. It is not that Gentiles become Jews or Jews become Gentiles, but that Jews and Gentiles who believe in Christ become one new humanity. There are therefore three major people groups mentioned in the NT: Jews, Gentiles/Greeks, and the Church.^{vi} This is in line with Paul's distinctions mentioned in **1 Cor. 10:32**. The Jews and the Gentiles/Greeks are all unbelievers and the Church is all the Jewish and Gentile/Greek believers united in Christ. The Church is not Jews or Gentiles but a new race of Christians. If there is only one new race then there should be no enmity. It is important that Paul did not say that the church was “spiritual Israel” or a “new Israel” as Covenant Theology teaches. If Paul wanted to make that designation, he had the perfect opportunity right here, but he did not. The very fact that Christ destroyed the enmity between Jews and Gentiles by making the entire Mosaic Law inoperative is indicative that the Church is neither Jew or Gentile but ***one new man***. Christ started over with an entirely new set of laws.^{vii} Those who believe in Christ,

whether Jew or Gentile, become a part of this one new humanity. The one new man is called “one body” in v. 16. And the “body” is identified as the church in Eph. 1:22-23; Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18, 24. The church is a new race that has been formed. “It is a new race that is raceless!”^{viii}

When did this new man begin? We know from this context it could not have begun before the cross of Christ as Covenant Theology teaches for it was “by His blood” and “in His flesh” that the enmity was destroyed. And the enmity had to be destroyed before the two could be united into one new man, the Church. Well, here’s the argument for proving that the Church began on the day of Pentecost, 50 days after the Crucifixion. First, you go to Matthew 16:18 *“I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”* What you point out here is that the church of Christ is yet future, He says “I will build My church”, not that I am in the process of building My church. It is still a future entity. Second, you go to Acts 1:5-8 *“for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”*⁶ *So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?”*⁷ *He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;”*⁸ *but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”* And here you point out that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was yet future. Notice also that the Lord makes the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the kingdom distinct. After you see the end of this proof you will see that this means that the Church is not the Kingdom as all Amillennial and Postmillennial theologies teach (e.g., Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Episcopal, etc.). Third, you want to go to Acts 11:15-16 *“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning.”*¹⁶ *“And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’”* This text shows that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is in the past. But we have still not proven that the baptism of the Spirit is what puts one in the body of Christ. So, *fourth*, turn to 1 Corinthians 12:13 *“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”* Here Paul shows that Spirit baptism is into the *body*. But we still haven’t shown that the body is the Church. *Fifth*, to do this turn to back to our context in Ephesians 1:22-23 *“And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,”*²³ *which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all”* (also cf. Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18, 24). Finally, the church is identified as His body. So, the church, the body of Christ, had to be initially formed sometime after Acts 1:5 and before Acts 10. The only logical place is Acts 2. So, the church is not “Israel” and the church is

not a “new Israel” or “spiritual Israel.” The church is Christ’s body, the one *new man* formed by Christ after He destroyed the enmity by making the Mosaic Law inoperative at His death. Spirit baptism is therefore UNIQUE to the Church Age. OT saints were NOT baptized by the Spirit (as all forms of Covenant Theology teach and Progressive Dispensationalism teaches).

poiw/n eivrh,nhn, “making peace”. This is the result of the creation of one new man from the two. This explains how Christ is our peace (v. 14). Christ made peace by making the two one, by rendering inoperative the Mosaic Law. The unity of believing Jews and Gentiles is stressed. Unity is one of the major themes of Ephesians (Eph. 4:3, 13).

To close this section, it is important to note that this is not a unity between all Jews and Gentiles but only believing Jews and Gentiles. Markus Barth and his father Karl Barth used this passage to teach that all Jews and Gentiles were united into one new man and that there is therefore no need to preach the gospel message. This was of course, one of the passages these Neo-Orthodox Theologians used to promote Universalism, the idea that all men are saved. The context supports no such thing. The constant witness throughout is that believing Jews and Gentiles alone constitute the one new man. Not only is it clear from the context that this is believing Jews and Gentiles but world history shows that there is still much hostility between unbelieving Jews and Gentiles. The world is at war with Israel and this condition will continue to escalate until the end of the Tribulation (Zechariah 13:8-9).

(ii) To Reconcile Both to God (2:16)

This verse is here to demonstrate the second reason the law was rendered inoperative. Not only was it rendered inoperative so that a new man would be created but so that both groups would be reconciled to God.

Greek Text 2:16 kai. avpokatalla,xh| tou.j avmfote,rouj evn e`ni. sw,mati tw/| qew/| dia. tou/ staurou/(avpoktei,naj th.n e;cqran evn aurtw/|Å

Translation 2:16 and may reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, having killed the enmity in Him.

kai. avpokatalla,xh, “and may reconcile”. The *kai* links this to the prior purpose of creating one new man from the two. The Greek verb *apokatallaso* is a word coined by Paul (also cf. Col. 1:20, 22). The two prefixes *apo* (from) and *kata* (down) are meant to be intensifiers of the Greek verb *allasso*. In the NT God is never the object of *apokatallaso*, only men or things. God is the one who reconciles and human beings are the ones who are

being reconciled. God is never said to be reconciled to men, only men are said to be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:18ff). So, not only did Christ create in Himself one new man but He also reconciled the two entities to God.

tou.j avmfote,rouj evn e`ni. sw,mati, “*them both in one body*” describes the objects of God’s reconciliation. The *one body* is, of course, the body of Christ, the organic union of Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ, also known as the Church. To whom are they reconciled?

tw/| qew/| dia. tou/ staurou/ (“*to God through the cross,*”). The corporate body of believing Jews and Gentiles are reconciled to God. *Dia* with the genitive denotes the means through which believing Jews and Gentiles are reconciled to God. It is *through the cross*. No one gets into this body by any other means. This is the third phrase used to describe the sacrificial work of Christ. Paul used the phrase “by the blood of Christ” in v. 13, “in His flesh” in v. 15, and now “through the cross” in v. 16. But notice the order of Paul’s argument. Do you find it odd that Paul presented the creation of one new man from two hostile groups before mentioning their reconciliation to God? You would think that reconciliation to God (v. 16) would precede reconciliation to one another (vv. 14-15) but it doesn’t. It seems that the major purpose of Paul here is the unity of Jew and Gentile in one new man. He has already discussed in detail in 2:1-10 the individual’s salvation.

avpoktei,naj th.n e;cqran evn auvtw/| “*having killed the enmity in Him.*” The *enmity* spoken of here is not the same as in v. 14. In v. 14 the enmity was between Jew and Gentile. Here the *enmity* is between human beings and God. The aorist participle *having killed* indicates that the *enmity* between Jews and Gentiles and the *enmity* between God and human beings was destroyed at the same time, namely at the cross of Christ. Both acts were accomplished in the work of Christ on the cross.

ⁱ Hoehner, Harold W., *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 351.

ⁱⁱ Hoehner, Harold W., *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 370.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Letter of Aristeas*, 152.

^{iv} Hoehner, Harold W., *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 373-374.

^v If Christ rendered inoperative the Mosaic Law it may be rendered operative again in the Messianic Kingdom. This would explain the terms of the New Covenant in Jer. 31:31-34 where God says, “I will put *My law* within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” What “law” is YHWH talking about? The only ‘law’ that could have been understood by an OT Israelite would have been the Mosaic Law. Therefore, the Mosaic Law will be put within them and written in their heart so that they will follow it perfectly in the Messianic Kingdom. In the meantime, we follow the Law of Christ.

^{vi} Other minor groups are mentioned in the NT; *Proselytes of Righteousness* (these were Gentiles who feared God and were circumcised so that they were accepted by the Jews; Mt 23:15 Ac 2:10 6:5 13:43), *Proselytes of the Gate* or *God-fearers* (these were Gentiles who feared God but were not circumcised and therefore not fully accepted by the Jews (Acts 10:2, 22), and *Samaritans* (these were individuals who were a Jew-Gentile mix and therefore not accepted by the Jews) (Acts 8) (there are about 160 Samaritans living today).

^{vii} The reason there is hostility within the Church between various denominations, etc., is essentially because many of the people who are in these churches are either unbelievers or believers who have no doctrine or hold to false doctrine. Those who try to carry over the Mosaic Law (Covenant Theology) are consciously or unconsciously carrying over the hostility that Christ destroyed in His flesh 2,000 years ago.

^{viii} Hoehner, Harold W., *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 379.

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