

Thursday, May 21, 2020 ▫ Read Ephesians 2:11–13

Questions from the Scripture text: What is the initial/primary command at the beginning of v11? What does the apostle say that they were in the flesh (v11)? What are they called? In what and how were “the Circumcision” circumcised? When they were Gentiles in the flesh, Whom were they without (v12)? From what had they been aliens? What had been their relationship to the covenants of promise? What did they not have? What were they without in the world? What are they now in (v13, as opposed to when they were in the flesh in v11)? What has happened to them, in contrast to their being far off? By what had they been brought near?

Hopefulness in Christ obligates us to holiness in Christ. Christians have been brought into a citizenship with responsibilities: “Be holy, for I am holy.”

The Israelites knew this; the Lord had constituted them into a commonwealth (v12, the word means “a people held together by a common citizenship”), brought near not only to one another but especially to God in the covenants of promise.

Going back to v10 then, we are given three foundations of believers’ duty to holy living: creation, commonwealth, covenants. We are a people created for these good works. We are a commonwealth of people who have been separated from the rest of the world to be holy together. And we are a people who have been joined unto God by covenant, and must live as those who are bound unto Him and His holiness.

But despite this great obligation to live a life that is set apart unto God, according to the law of God, and for the glory of God, our passage will not allow us to think that we live this way in order to show our worthiness or earn anything from the Lord.

For, vv10–12a are bookended by grace. It was by grace that we were saved through faith that God gave us (v8–9), and it was the blood of Christ (v13) that has brought us into this position of holiness from a place of alienation from God and hopelessness (v12b).

Praise be to our God of grace! And how shall we thank Him? By this life of holiness for which He has created us new in Christ Jesus, and brought us into the commonwealth of His people, and covenanted us to Himself by His promises!

How do you spend most of your time? What does holiness look like in that?

Suggested songs: ARP32AB “What Blessedness” or TPH433 “Amazing Grace!”