

ONE - Study of Ephesians

Part 4 - We Are One

Where's the Peace?

All of us have faced a year where circumstances have shattered our internal tranquillity. Events this year have smashed into our lives uninvited. They incite fear and cause anxiety. Perhaps you're smack bang in the middle of one right now.

Yet despite all this, the message of hope found in today's passage is that you can have peace.

God's preferred state for the world and for everyone in it, is that His peace would prevail; that we live free from fear, experiencing His peace.

Therefore Remember - Ephesians 2:11-13

Saved by God's grace when you believed – nothing to do with you, God has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.

Therefore, remember you were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel (uncircumcised) and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to Israel. You lived in this world without God and without hope.

But now, in Christ, you have been brought near to Him through the blood of Christ.

All the benefits and more of the old covenant are now accessible through the new covenant of Jesus.

Real Peace – Ephesians 4:14-18

God is central to finding peace.

The peace God has for us is only available through the person of Jesus Christ. Christ removes the division and brings about peace.

If you have a relationship with Jesus Christ, a personal relationship, then you have the availability of peace because it is through Him, and only Him, that peace is available. Because we are “in Christ” we can be “in peace”.

Peace with God

The reason that the world is lacking peace is the problem that humanity suffers in general. It is the problem of sin.

Ever since the fruit of the tree was tasted in the Garden of Eden we have been at war with God.

The gospel message is a proclamation of peace – peace between God and fallen humanity. (Ephesians 3:12)

Peace within Ourselves

When we are at peace with God through Jesus Christ His Son, we no longer need to run around looking for the missing piece to our lives. The Bible says that when we allow His Spirit to fill us one of the results of that spiritual experience is peace. Jesus fills the vacuum in our lives.

Allow your thoughts to be ruled by God and He will bring you peace (Isaiah 26:3).

Peace with Others

Paul wants those who previously lived with hostility and discord towards one another to understand that being at one in Christ means that we are one with each other (Ephesians 2:15).

Peace with God then enables us through His empowering presence to have peace with one another.

Peace with others comes when we accept and abide in Christ and do His will in our lives.

From Foreigners to Family – Ephesians 2:19-22

Once considered foreigners we are now family with all the benefits along with all the other believers, citizens of God's heavenly kingdom (Philippians 3:20). We now have all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of children of God. We now have the assurance of protection and provision.

One Family

- + Jews and Gentiles are incorporated into one new family
- + Cleansed by the blood of Jesus - blood brothers and sisters

One Building where God Dwells

- + We believers are like living stones being built up into a spiritual house - connected, needing one another
- + With Christ as the chief cornerstone
- + There where His Spirit dwells

The radical implication of this passage is for us to find reconciliation between one another. Peace between one another in the church, peace towards others who are different to us but are joined because of their relationship we share with our Father in heaven.

Without making peace with God we have no hope of making peace with one another, however, peace with God demands that we seek to find reconciliation and peace with one another. That doesn't mean we will all like the same things or do things the same way. However, it leaves no room for anger, bitterness, discrimination, class differentiation or racism between members of the same family.

Discussion Questions

1. Where are you lacking peace in your life now?
2. Read the passage and discuss how Paul explains that God is central to finding peace.
3. Which area do you realise it hardest to find peace? With God, within yourself or with others? Why do you think that is the case? What steps does Paul outline to finding peace that you can apply to your life?
4. What does it mean to you that you are in the family of God? What responsibility does this bring in making peace with others? Is there anything you need to take action on to take care of family matters?