

God's New Society

Message 5

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Ephesians 2:11-22

Introduction

ever since Cain fought Abel over who had the best sacrifice, men have sought greatness
the great society – ancient version: conquer and enslave others without any qualms
each considered other cultures barbarians

the great society – modern version: re-engineer others and society

Civil War and Reconstruction

“New man” of Neitze and Marx”

Freud and psychotherapy

U.N.

racial integration

Johnson's Great Society

George H. W. Bush's New World Order

thought police

all these fail because they do not address the problem

man is enslaved to sin

man is dead in sin

men must be made alive

society must also be made alive – reborn

the second half of chapter 2 is about corporate salvation – grace at work in the whooe society

Hostility between Jew and Gentile

circumcision vs. uncircumcision

derogatory names both

focus on the flesh – Paul scorns both

Stott p. 91

separation in the temple

“Tresspassers shall be executed”

Josephus (Stott p. 92)

separation from Christ = separation from Israel = separation from the covenant

hostility between God and man is the really serious hostility

from Christ – didn't know to look for a Messiah

from Israel – lacked the grace present there

conclusion – hopeless and Godless

no salvation without Christ

future of futility and death

Unity in Christ

not tolerance, not “peaceful coexistence”, not integration, not friendship
– but oneness

brought near

Deuteronomy 4:7 For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him?

Isaiah 49:1 Listen, O coastlands, to Me, And take heed, you peoples from afar! The LORD has called Me from the womb; From the matrix of My mother He has made mention of My name.

accomplished by Jesus – redeemed us (1:7)

Jesus Himself made peace

abolished in His flesh the law

not the moral law – cf. Mt. 5

the ceremonial ordinances which point to Christ

the tearing of the veil symbolized this

the destruction of the temple wall in A.D. 70 completed it

reconciled Jew and Greek

if this can happen, then all races can be reconciled

this is the foundation of all true reconciliation

made a new man

new mankind – race

as united as though they were one being

The New Israel

citizens of the kingdom of God

kingdom is where God rules

in OT was Israel

in NT spans nations

citizenship rights – free and secure

children in the household of God

all are adopted by the one Father

all have family intimacy

stones in the new temple

foundation of apostles and prophets – NT teaching

Christ anchors and defines the new temple

house of God’s spirit

the new society is the new Israel

1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people,

that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Exodus 19:5-6 'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. ⁶ 'And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

Ephesians 1:9-10 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰ that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth -- in Him.

Ephesians 1:22-23 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

God used the nation of Israel in Old Covenant times. Now His people are the church – the new Israel. The church has inherited the names and blessings Israel had before Christ came.

Application

The final solution to racism is the church – God's new society – where people of all races are equal. The church does not always live up to her identity, but her calling is to embrace all peoples in Christ.

Society is only as strong as the church within her
we must *be* the people of God
we must be a royal priesthood
we must be a holy nation without society

Don't neglect the earth and our proper citizenship in it, but...

Keep your primary allegiance to Christ and His Kingdom
then you will be salt and light in this world

C. David Green
Lehigh University
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