

Our Calling: Week 5

Ephesians 2:11-22

March 12, 2023

Recap of the last four weeks: Called, elected, predestined, justified, sealed with the Holy Spirit, “But God” and saved by grace.

Who we were. (vs. 11-12)

Therefore, remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Ephesians 2:11-12

Circumcision is the surgical removal of the foreskin, of a male. The word *circumcise* literally means “to cut around.” As a religious rite, circumcision was required of all of Abraham’s descendants as a sign of the covenant God made with him (Genesis 17:9–14; Acts 7:8). The Mosaic Law repeated the requirement (Leviticus 12:2–3), and Jews throughout the centuries have continued to practice circumcision (Joshua 5:2–3; Luke 1:59; Acts 16:3; Philippians 3:5).¹

Without Christ

Without citizenship

Without covenants

Without hope

Without God

What God did. (v. 13)

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:13

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

Who are we now in Christ?

God’s Church. (vs. 14-22)

¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:14-22

¹ www.gotquestions.org

Laws made a definite distinction between the Jew and Gentiles.

There was a wall in the Jewish temple that separate the court of Gentiles from the rest of the temple (Acts 21:28-31). The Jews and Gentiles needed to be and still need to be reconciled to God and to each other.

It wasn't so much a matter of Gentile becoming a Jew, to become a believer, but the Jew admitting he was a sinner like the Gentile.

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; ¹⁰who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. **1 Peter 2:9-10**

Since ancient times, builders have used cornerstones in their construction projects. A cornerstone was the principal stone, usually placed at the corner of an edifice, to guide the workers in their course. The cornerstone was usually one of the largest, the most solid, and the most carefully constructed of any in the edifice. The Bible describes Jesus as the cornerstone that His church would be built upon. He is foundational. Once the cornerstone was set, it became the basis for determining every measurement in the remaining construction; everything was aligned to it. As the cornerstone of the building of the church, Jesus is our standard of measure and alignment. The book of Isaiah has many references to the Messiah to come. In several places the Messiah is referred to as “the cornerstone,” such as in this prophecy: “So this is what the sovereign Lord says: ‘See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed. I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line’” (Isaiah 28:16–17). In context, God speaks to the scoffers and boasters of Judah, and He promises to send the cornerstone—His precious Son—who will provide the firm foundation for their lives, if they would but trust in Him. In the New Testament, the cornerstone metaphor is continued. The apostle Paul desires for the Ephesian Christians to know Christ better: “Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:19–21). Furthermore, in 1 Peter 2:6, what Isaiah said centuries before is affirmed in exactly the same words.²

Acts 2:40-47 – Why the Church and the Importance of God’s Church (video)

Prayer Focus:

- **Have I been made alive?**
- **If God has made me alive thank Him for His gift.**
- **Am I connected to and serving in God’s Church?**

² <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-Christ-cornerstone.html>