

Reconciling Sinners to God in His Blood Was and Is the Purpose

Ephesians 2:11–22 Focused text(15-16)

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I. Historical Background and Biblical Context

Ephesians chapter two is one of the clearest passages in Scripture concerning reconciliation. Paul is not only explaining what Christ has done for individual sinners, but also what Christ has accomplished in bringing together people who were once separated from one another. The heart of this lesson is found in verses 15 and 16, where Paul explains that Christ came to create “one new humanity out of the two” and to reconcile both groups to God through the cross. The cross is more than a symbol of Christianity or simply the place where Jesus died. It is where God dealt with sin, hostility, separation, and the broken relationship between humanity and Himself. Reconciling sinners to God through His blood was the purpose of Christ's work, and that purpose continues today.

To understand Paul's message, we have to understand the historical background and biblical context. Paul is addressing believers that included Gentiles, people who had once been considered outsiders to the covenant community of Israel. The Jewish people had the law, the covenant, the promises, the prophets, and a long history of God's relationship with them. Gentiles, however, were generally viewed as being outside of that covenant relationship. Paul reminds them that they were once separated from Christ, foreigners to the covenants of promise, without hope, and without God in the world. These were deep religious, cultural, and historical divisions.

However, verse 13 gives us the turning point: **“But now in Christ Jesus.”** Those two words remind us that God can interrupt a person's story. They were once far away, but through Christ they were brought near. They were separated, but Christ made reconciliation possible. Their relationship with God was not restored because of their goodness or because they were able to fix themselves. They were brought near through the blood of Jesus Christ.

This idea of God bringing outsiders into His redemptive story is not something that suddenly appears in the New Testament. We see it throughout the Old Testament. Ruth was a Moabite woman and therefore an outsider to Israel, yet through Boaz she became part of the lineage of David and ultimately the lineage of Jesus Christ. Rahab was a Canaanite woman from Jericho with a complicated past, yet God brought her into Israel's story and eventually into the genealogy of Jesus. Even Abraham's story begins with a family that worshiped other gods. Joshua 24:2 reminds us that Abraham's ancestors served other gods before God called Abraham. God called him out and used him to become a blessing to

the nations. Joseph and Asenath also remind us that God's redemptive story was larger than the boundaries people expected. These stories point toward a consistent truth: God has always been able to bring people from far away to near.

II. **The Lesson: Reconciling Sinners to God in His Blood was/is the Purpose!**

1. **vv. 15.** That brings us to Ephesians 2:15.

Paul says Christ's purpose was **“to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace.”** This is one of the most important statements in the passage. Paul is speaking about Jews and Gentiles, two groups with different histories, cultures, religious backgrounds, and identities. These groups had real reasons for being separated, but Christ did something greater than simply asking them to tolerate one another. He created something new.

The phrase **“one new humanity”** is important because Paul is not saying that Jesus simply placed two groups beside each other. He is saying that Christ created a new identity in Himself. Jews did not have to become Gentiles, and Gentiles did not have to become Jews. Their unity was not based on becoming identical. Their unity was based on belonging to Christ. This is what makes the church unique. The church is not supposed to be a collection of people who all have the same background, personality, culture, age, or experience. The church is supposed to be one people because we belong to one Savior.

Paul also says this new humanity is created **“in himself.”** That phrase tells us where true unity comes from. Unity does not come simply because people agree with each other. It does not come because everyone has the same background or sees everything the same way. Our unity is found in Christ. We do not have to become identical to become one. We become one because we belong to the same Christ.

This is why verse 14 is important to understanding verse 15. Paul says that Christ Himself is our peace and that He has broken down the dividing wall between the two groups. A wall separates. A wall creates an “us” and a “them.” Jesus came to destroy that separation.

This has a practical meaning for the church today. Churches can have walls that are not made of bricks. Sometimes those walls are built out of pride, race, class, age, education, denomination, past mistakes, or personal preferences. Christ did not die to create a divided church. He died to create one new people. Therefore, we should be careful about rebuilding the walls that Christ died to tear down. This does not mean that differences no longer exist or that Christians should ignore truth, injustice, or appropriate boundaries. It means those differences cannot become the foundation of our identity. Christ must remain the foundation.

Paul then says that Christ created one new humanity, **“thus making peace.”** Biblical peace is more than simply the absence of an argument. It carries the idea of wholeness,

restoration, and the right relationship. Jesus did not simply tell people to stop fighting. He created the foundation for peace by reconciling them to God and bringing them together in one body. This is why Paul says Christ Himself is our peace. Jesus does not simply give us peace; He is our peace.

2. **vv. 16.** Ephesians 2:16 takes the message even deeper.

Paul says that Christ came **“in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross.”** The word **reconcile** is central to understanding this passage. Reconciliation means restoring a broken relationship. Something that was separated is brought back together. Paul makes it clear that Jesus did not simply reconcile Jews and Gentiles to each other. He reconciled both groups to God.

That distinction is important because our greatest problem is not simply that people do not get along. Our greatest problem is sin. Sin separated humanity from God. Sin created the need for reconciliation. Therefore, Christ came to deal with the root of the problem, and He did this through the cross.

The cross was not an accident or an unfortunate ending to Jesus' life. The cross was central to His purpose. Jesus came knowing that He would give His life and shed His blood. He came to deal with sin and restore what sin had broken. The cross demonstrates the seriousness of sin, but it also demonstrates the greatness of God's grace. Through the cross, Christ dealt with what stood between sinful humanity and a Holy God.

This is why the blood of Christ is so important. Earlier in the passage, Paul says that those who were once far away were brought near through the blood of Christ. The blood represents the sacrificial death of Jesus that makes reconciliation possible. Because of Christ, sinners can come near to God. Our sin does not have to keep us separated. Our past does not have the final word. Our failures do not have to determine our future. God has made a way for sinners to come home.

Paul concludes verse 16 by saying that through the cross Christ **“put to death their hostility.”** The word hostility refers to opposition, hatred, and enmity. Jesus did not simply manage the hostility between these groups. He put it to death through the cross. The cross is therefore much more than a symbol. It is where sin was dealt with, separation was dealt with, hostility was dealt with, and reconciliation became possible.

When we put verses 15 and 16 together, we see the movement of Paul's argument clearly: two become one, division becomes peace, strangers become family, sinners become reconciled, and separation becomes relationship. The cross makes it possible. This is why the cross must remain at the center of Christian teaching. If we remove the cross, we remove the place where reconciliation was accomplished.

There is also a vertical and horizontal dimension to this reconciliation. Vertically, Christ reconciles sinners to God. Horizontally, Christ brings people together who were once divided. These two realities cannot be separated. If Christ has reconciled us to God, then that reconciliation should change how we relate to other people. This does not mean everyone will become our best friend or that Christians will never disagree. It means hatred and division cannot become the defining characteristics of the people of God.

The humbling truth is that the same blood that saved me is the blood that can save somebody else. I did not earn my place at God's table, and neither did anyone else. We all come through Christ. We all need grace. We all stand in need of reconciliation.

Paul closes this section by explaining that those who were once strangers and foreigners are now fellow citizens and members of God's household. That is where reconciliation ultimately leads. The stranger becomes family. The outsider becomes a member of the household. The person who was once far away is brought near.

Paul then reminds the believers that this household is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ Himself as the cornerstone. Everything comes back to Jesus. Jesus is the foundation. Jesus is our peace. Jesus is the reconciler. Jesus is the cornerstone. If Jesus is the cornerstone, then our relationships and our understanding of the church must be shaped around Him.

III. Conclusion

Ephesians 2:11–22 reminds us that God's purpose was never simply to create religious people. His purpose was to reconcile sinners to Himself and create a people who are reconciled to one another. The Gospel begins with people who are far away, but through Christ they are brought near. The Gospel takes people who were separated and creates one new humanity. The Gospel takes strangers and makes them family.

This is why the statement, **“Reconciling sinners to God in His blood was and is the purpose,”** is so important. It was the purpose then, and it is still the purpose now. People are still far away from God. People are still carrying guilt, shame, brokenness, and the consequences of sin. People still need to hear that there is a way to come near to God through Jesus Christ.

The church must therefore continue to proclaim the message of reconciliation. We cannot replace the Gospel with simply telling people to behave better or try harder. The Gospel tells sinners that Christ has already made a way. The blood still matters. The cross still matters. Jesus still matters.

If Christ broke down the wall, we should not rebuild it. If Christ made us one, we should not live as though we are still divided. If Christ is our peace, then we should carry that peace into our homes, our churches, our families, and our communities.

At the end of the day, it is not about who started near. It is about who came near through Christ. Some of us grew up knowing about God, while others came to Him later in life. Some were raised in church, while others came through difficult circumstances. Some have clean-looking testimonies, while others have stories filled with mistakes and failures. But the ground is level at the cross. We all need the same Savior. Paul's message is simple but profound: we were far away, but Christ brought us near. We were separated, but Christ reconciled us. We were divided, but Christ made us one. We were strangers, but Christ made us family. The purpose has not changed.

Reconciling sinners to God through His blood was and is the purpose.

And if the blood brought us near to God, then we ought to stop standing so far away from one another. If Christ broke down the wall, we should not rebuild it. If Christ made us one, we should not live like we are still two.

The Gospel is still calling the far-off near. The cross is still the place of reconciliation. And Jesus Christ is still the cornerstone upon which this new humanity is being built. This will always be the purpose until Christ returns!