

## PEACE AND UNITY IN CHRIST, PT. 4; EPH. 2:19 (Ed O'Leary)

### INTRODUCTION.

TODAY, ~ WE ARE DRAWING CLOSE TO CONCLUDING THIS CURRENT SECTION OF Ephesians, ~ 2:11-22.

▶▶ In [verses 11-18](#), ~ which we have already examined, ~ Paul first called us to continually remember five things about our unsaved condition.

▷▷ He then discussed how Jesus rectified that situation.

▷▷ Paul said that Jesus ~ brought believing Gentiles into a relationship with Himself, ~ has reconciled believing Jews and Gentiles to each other, ~ **reconciled both groups to Himself, ~ ¶¶**

↳↳ and created the church in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile.

→→ As we discussed, ~ those who have confessed with their mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in their heart that God raised Him from the dead ~ **are no longer Gentiles or Jews.**

↪↪ We are Christians, ~ individually new creations, ~ that corporately make up a new class of humanity, ~ the church, ~ created exclusively by Jesus.

▷▷ As a result of what Jesus has done, ~ Paul noted, ~ there is now peace between believing Jews and Gentiles, ~ peace with God is now available to humanity, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ and believers experience this peace ~ and have immediate and direct access to God the Father.

→→ As Paul writes in [Rom. 5:1](#), ~ "Therefore, ~ since we have been justified by faith, ~ we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

→→ And in [Heb. 4:16](#), ~ the author says, ~ "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, ~ that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

AND THAT BRINGS US TO VERSE 19, ~ WHICH WE'LL LOOK AT TODAY.

▶▶ In this verse, ~ Paul draws out three logical implications of all that he has said in [verses 11-18](#). ¶¶ 1/9

▷▷Paul writes, ~ <sup>19a</sup> So then ~ [this combination of conj. ~ is an expression Paul uses on a number of occasions to draw an inference from what he has previously said] ~ ¶¶

↳↳<sup>19a</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, ~ <sup>19b</sup> but you are fellow citizens with the saints ~ <sup>19c</sup> and members of the household of God."

IN VERSE 19a, ~ WE FIND THE FIRST LOGICAL IMPLICATION THAT PAUL DRAWS from what he has taught in verses 11-18.

PAUL WRITES, ~ "YOU ARE NO LONGER STRANGERS AND ALIENS."

▶▶Because believers have been reconciled to and brought into a relationship with God, ~ believing Jews and Gentiles have been reconciled to one another, ~ believers have been united into one new body, ~ the church, ~ ¶¶

▷▷and believers have peace with ~ and direct and immediate access to God, ~ ¶¶

↳↳we are "no longer strangers and aliens," ~ Paul writes.

▶▶The words "strangers" and "aliens" in the Greek text combine to express and emphasize one idea. ~~ And that is that we are no longer outsiders.

▷▷Believers are no longer outsiders. ~~ This is exciting. ~~ Something to be emphasized. ~~ Something to be celebrated.

▷▷When we were unsaved, ~ we were outside the kingdom of God. ~~ We were excluded from citizenship in heaven.

↳↳We were excluded from God's promises to Abraham. ~~ We were separated from Christ.

→→We did not have a relationship with the one true God. ~~ We lived in this world totally without Him. ~~ And we had no hope.

▷▷And Paul says that that is no longer true. ~~ This has all been reversed.

↳↳Believers are no longer outsiders. ~~ We are now insiders, ~ thanks to what Jesus has done.

→→And the next two logical implications illustrate just what we are inside of now.

IN VERSE 19b, ~ WE FIND THE SECOND LOGICAL IMPLICATION THAT PAUL DRAWS from what he has taught in verses 11-18. ¶¶ 2/9

## PAUL WRITES, ~ "BUT YOU ARE FELLOW CITIZENS WITH THE SAINTS."

▶▶ Because believers have been reconciled to and brought into a relationship with God, ~ believing Jews and Gentiles have been reconciled to one another, ~ **believers have been united into one new body, ~ the church, ~ ¶¶**

▷▷ and believers have peace with ~ and direct and immediate access to God, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ we are "are fellow citizens with the saints" ~ Paul says.

## THE WORD TRANSLATED AS "SAINTS" IS THE SAME WORD TRANSLATED AS "HOLY" IN other places.

▶▶ When Paul uses the term "saints," ~ or "holy ones," ~ he is not talking about some group of extremely holy people ~ or super spiritual Christians within the congregation.

▷▷ In the NT, ~ all Christians are referred to as "saints," ~ or "holy ones."

▷▷ The Greek word for these terms has in it ~ the idea of separation ~ and of difference.

↳↳ Basically, ~ for the Christian, ~ being "holy," ~ or a "saint," ~ means that we are now set apart from the world, ~ and set apart for ~ God and His service.

→→ We are also now different from, ~ the world.

↳↳ In but not of . . . . ~ ~ . . . . Jesus , ~ in Jn. 15:19, ~ says ~ "If you were of the world, ~ the world would love you as its own; ~ ~ but because you are not of the world, ~ but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

## WE "ARE FELLOW CITIZENS WITH THE SAINTS," ~ PAUL SAYS.

▶▶ Although, ~ Paul does not mention where this citizenship is, ~ the most logical conclusion, ~ with his mention of being citizens with all Christians, ~ **is that citizenship in heaven is in view.**

▶▶ The phrase "fellow citizens" points to equality among the citizens.

▷▷ There is no caste system in the kingdom of God. ~ ~ There are no second-class citizens in the kingdom of God.

▷▷ In Gal. 3:28, Paul writes, ~ "There is neither Jew nor Greek, ~ there is neither slave nor free, ~ there is no male and female, ~ for you are all one in Christ Jesus." ¶¶ 3/9

↪↪ Being citizens of heaven makes us all united and equal. ~ In God's kingdom there is no spiritual superiority or inferiority. ~ Absolutely no room for racism . . . .

→→ A man is not more accepted in Christ than a woman, ~ nor is the Jew more justified than the Gentile.

↪↪ All citizens of heaven share the same standing before God.

▶▶ In [Phil. 2:3](#), ~ Paul spells out the attitude we are to have toward our fellow citizens.

▷▷ "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, ~ but in humility count others ~ [i.e., ~ think of others as] ~ more significant than yourselves."

▶▶ And later in Ephesians, ~ Paul will go into great detail on how we're to treat fellow . . . .

MY . . . ~ WE WERE ONCE OUTSIDERS, ~ EXCLUDED FROM THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

▶▶ But now, ~ for everyone who has confessed with their mouth that Jesus is Lord ~ and believed in their heart that God raised Him from the dead, ~ a radical change has taken place.

▷▷ No longer outsiders, ~ we are now insiders, ~ inside the kingdom of God. ~ Believers are citizens.

▶▶ As Paul says in [Phil. 3:20a](#), ~ NASB ~ "For our citizenship is in heaven."

▷▷ Paul's use of the word for "citizenship" ~ emphasizes the membership of Christians in the heavenly kingdom governed by Christ.

↪↪ Our governing power, ~ our executive authority is in heaven.

→→ The implication of asserting our citizenship in heaven is that we are a colony of heavenly citizens here on earth.

↪↪ And like Paul, ~ all believers should emphasize that our citizenship is in heaven.

THIS MEANS THAT THIS WORLD IS NO LONGER OUR HOME.

▶▶ In [1 Pet. 1:1b](#), ~ Peter describes Christians as "those who reside as aliens." (NASB)

▷▷ The Greek word behind "reside as aliens" means persons who belong to some other land and people, ~ who are temporarily residing with a people to whom they do not belong.

↳↳ They are for the time being aliens, ~ foreigners, ~ strangers, ~ and not natives. ~~ They never expect to become natives.

▷▷ My fellow Christians, ~ we live in this world, ~ but we do not belong to this world. ~~ We belong to another land, ~ another people.

↳↳ We are temporarily residing with a people to whom we do not belong.

→→ We are merely passing through their territory, ~ with no intention of permanent residence or of becoming natives.

↳↳ As Heb. 13:14 says, ~ LEB ~ "For here we do not have a permanent city, ~ but we seek the city that is to come."

▷▷ An anonymous work dating from the second century called *The Epistle to Diognetus*, ~ sums up the Christian life.

↳↳ It reads, ~ Quote ~ Christians are not distinguished from the rest of mankind by either country, ~ speech, ~ or customs. ~~ They reside in their respective countries, ~ but only as aliens. ~~ ¶¶

→→ Every foreign land is their home, ~ and every home a foreign land. ~~ They find themselves in the flesh, ~ but do not live according to the flesh. ~~ ¶¶

↳↳ They spend their days on earth, ~ but hold citizenship in heaven ~ Unquote.

▶▶ And, ~ as citizens of heaven, ~ temporarily dwelling in this world to which we do not belong, ~ we have a responsibility to live differently than the people who do belong to this world.

▷▷ I.e., ~ Since we are not natives of this world, ~ we are not to act like natives. ~~ It is not, ~ "when in Rome, ~ do as the Romans do."

▷▷ Peter points this out very clearly throughout his first epistle.

↳↳ E.g., ~ in 1:15-16, ~ he says, ~ "but as he who called you is holy, ~ you also be holy in all your conduct, ~ since it is written, ~ 'You shall be holy, ~ for I am holy.'"

↳↳ And in 2:11-12, ~ Peter writes, ~ LEB, ~ "Dear friends, ~ I urge you as foreigners and temporary residents to abstain from fleshly desires which wage war against your soul, ~ maintaining your good conduct among the Gentiles, ~ so that in the things in which they slander you as evildoers, ~ by seeing your good deeds they may glorify God on the day of visitation." ¶¶ 5/9

BEFORE WE LEAVE THIS IMPLICATION OF BEING CITIZENS OF HEAVEN, ~ LET'S briefly consider some of the wonderful and greatly encouraging truths about our homeland.

▶▶ The author of *Hebrews*, ~ in 11:16, ~ describes our homeland as "better."

▷▷ Those of us Christians who find ourselves temporarily residing in the US, ~ live in possibly the greatest nation on earth.

↳↳ Yet, ~ it cannot compare with our heavenly country. ~~ Our homeland is far superior in every way.

▶▶ And think about this. ~~ Countries rise and fall. ~~ Empires come and go.

▷▷ In contrast, ~ *Dan. 7:14*, ~ speaking of Jesus and His kingdom, ~ says, ~ "And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, ~ that all peoples, ~ nations, ~ and languages should serve him; ~ ~ ¶¶

↳↳ his dominion is an everlasting dominion, ~ which shall not pass away ~ [i.e., ~ His rule is eternal, ~ it will never end], ~ and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

▶▶ There are three wonderful and greatly encouraging truths here.

▷▷ Believers belong to a better kingdom. ~~ We belong to a kingdom that will never "be destroyed." ~~ And we have a King that will reign forever.

↳↳ *Heb. 12:28* applies these truths to our lives. ~~ "Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, ~ and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, ~ with reverence and awe."

*IN VERSE 19c, ~ WE FIND THE THIRD LOGICAL IMPLICATION THAT PAUL DRAWS from what he has taught in verses 11-18.*

PAUL WRITES THAT WE ARE NOW "MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD."

▶▶ The word translated as "members of the household" means a "member of a family, ~ relative." ~~ So we could paraphrase this as "members of God's family."

▶▶ I.e., ~ because believers have been reconciled to and brought into a relationship with God, ~ believing Jews and Gentiles have been reconciled to one another, ~ believers have been united into one new body, ~ the church, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ and believers have peace with ~ and direct and immediate access to God, ~ because of all of this that Jesus alone has accomplished, ~ we are "members of God's family." ¶¶ 6/9

▶▶ We were outsiders, ~ excluded from the kingdom of heaven. ~~ Then through Christ, ~ God made us citizens of His kingdom.

▷▷ But God did not stop with just that radical change. ~~ He also made us part of His family.

↪↪ No longer outsiders, ~ believers are now insiders, ~ inside the family of God. ~~ We are full-fledged members of God's family.

▶▶ As the old gospel song says, ~ "From the door of an orphanage to the house of the King, ~ No longer an outcast, ~ a new song I sing; ~~ ¶¶

▷▷ From rags unto riches, ~ from the weak to the strong, ~ I'm not worthy to be here, ~ but praise God I belong! ~~ ¶¶

↪↪ I'm so glad I'm a part of the Family of God, ~ I've been washed in the fountain, ~ cleansed by His blood! ~~ ¶¶

→→ Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod, ~ For I'm part of the family, ~ The Family of God."

IF YOU'LL RECALL, ~ WE'VE DISCUSSED BEING PART OF GOD'S FAMILY BEFORE, ~ in 1:4b-5.

▶▶ Paul wrote, ~ "In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, ~ according to the purpose of his will."

▶▶ God did not just choose believers in order to save us from sin, ~ death, ~ hell, ~ and all the spiritual powers of evil ~ and then leave us on our own. ~~ He also adopted us as His own children.

▶▶ The word for ~ "predestined" ~ when Paul says that God has predestined believers to be His adopted children, ~ means previously ordained or appointed to some position.

▷▷ The word emphasizes more what believers have been predestined to ~ than who has been predestined.

↪↪ God has predestined believers to something ~~ Here, ~ it is namely adoption into His family.

→→ IOW, ~ a believer's destiny is determined beforehand ~~ And our predetermined destiny is our adoption as full-fledged children of God. ¶¶ 7/9

▶▶ Notice that Paul says it was "In love" ~ that God destined believers beforehand to be his adopted children.

▷▷ I.e., ~ Because of God's love for us, ~ He determined before time began to bring us into His family as His full-fledged children. ~~ "In love" He did this.

↪↪ IOW, ~ God did not do this out of some obligation. ~~ In no way was He obligated to adopt us after He saved us. ~~ Neither was this something He did reluctantly.

→→ No, ~ He did it because He loves us. ~~ It was because of God's infinite love for us that He gave us membership in His family.

▷▷ John, ~ in 1 Jn. 3:1, ~ talks about this as well. ~~ "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, ~ that we should be called children of God; ~~ and so we are."

↪↪ John is calling upon believers to take a heart-moving look at the glorious, ~ measureless love which gave us membership in God's family.

→→ John is telling us to take time to contemplate this love and allow its reality to really sink in. ~~ He does not want us to just pass over it and take it for granted.

↪↪ John says, ~ "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, ~ that we should be called children of God;" ~~ and then he adds, ~ "and so we are."

→→ IOW, ~ John is pointing out that we are not merely "called children of God;" ~~ Christians are in truth children of God.

↪↪ Not only is the title ours, ~ the reality is also ours.

▶▶ Back to Eph. 1:4b-5, ~ notice our adoption was, ~ of course, ~ through "Jesus Christ."

▶▶ And notice that it was "according to the purpose of his will" that He adopted us.

▷▷ Simply put, ~ this means that this is what God wanted to do, ~ i.e., ~ to adopt us, ~ and that it pleased Him to do it.

▷▷ God freely chose to adopt us, ~ He desired to adopt us, ~ and it gave Him great pleasure in doing so.

↪↪ And He did it because He loves us. ~~ And He was able to do it ~ because of the sacrifice His beloved Son made on the cross. **⇓⇓ 8/9**



## CONCLUSION.

WHEN WE WERE UNSAVED, ~ WE WERE OUTSIDE THE KINGDOM OF GOD. ~~ WE WERE excluded from citizenship in heaven ~ and were not "fellow citizens with the saints."

▶▶ We were excluded from God's promises to Abraham. ~~ We were separated from Christ.

▷▷ We did not have a relationship with the one true God. ~~ We lived in this world totally without Him. ~~ And we had no hope.

PAUL SAYS THAT'S NO LONGER TRUE. ~~ THANKS TO JESUS, ~ THIS HAS ALL BEEN reversed. ~~ Radical . . . .

▶▶ Because of what Jesus has done, ~ those who . . . are no longer outsiders. ~~ We are now insiders.

▶▶ We are now "fellow citizens with the saints" in the greatest and most awesome kingdom in the universe.

▷▷ "fellow citizens with the saints" in a kingdom that will never pass away.

↳↳ "fellow citizens with the saints" in a kingdom ruled by an all-merciful, ~ all-loving, ~ all-gracious, ~ and all-powerful King, ~ who will reign forever.

▶▶ But not only that, ~ we are also full-fledged children of God. ~~ "From the door of an orphanage to the house of the King, ~ No longer an outcast, ~ a new song I sing; ~~ 77

▷▷ From rags unto riches, ~ from the weak to the strong, ~ I'm not worthy to be here, ~ but praise God I belong! ~~ 77

↳↳ I'm so glad I'm a part of the Family of God, ~ I've been washed in the fountain, ~ cleansed by His blood! ~~ 77

→→ Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod, ~ For I'm part of the family, ~ The Family of God."

"WORTHY IS THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAIN, ~ TO RECEIVE POWER AND WEALTH AND WISDOM AND MIGHT AND HONOR AND GLORY AND BLESSING!" (Rev. 5:12b)

LET'S PRAY . . . . 9/9