

Made Nigh by the Blood

Ephesians 2: 11-18

As we consider the passing of another year, we often do so with mixed emotion. Surely for each of us there were disappointments and failures mixed with great joy and blessing. Likely we didn't achieve every goal we had set, but hopefully we all made significant progress within our lives. Today we look forward to the New Year with renewed resolve and anticipation.

Our passage today takes a look into the past while casting a wishful eye into the future. Paul contrasts the difficulties we endured while living apart from Christ with the hopeful assurance we have with Him in our future. Just as with our physical lives, there is much disappointment measured with renewed hope. We once lived without hope, but have been made nigh unto the Lord through His shed blood. I want to consider the [reflections](#) Paul shares as we think on the assurance we have by being: [Made Nigh by the Blood](#).

I. The Despair of our Past (11-12) – It is never good to live in the past, but it does us good to be reminded where we were and what we have been delivered from. Paul speaks of:

A. The Identification (11) – [Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands](#). The Jews enjoyed a covenant relationship with God evidenced by their physical circumcision. Many of the Jews looked down on fellow Gentile believers because they had not been circumcised. Paul used this to illustrate a greater spiritual truth. We are reminded of the time in life when we were not part of the family of God, being outside His covenant and blessings. Each of us lived outside of a relationship with Christ, not enjoying His benefits or being made part of the family.

- We are either in Christ or remain apart from Him, identified with the body of Christ or alienated from it. There is no in between. All are either saved or lost!

B. The Isolation (12) – [That at that time ye 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](#). Again there is a physical application concerning the Gentiles and Jews, but the spiritual application is Paul's focus. Prior to a spiritual circumcision within the heart (the new birth), they remained without Christ, alienated from the blessing of God and considered strangers concerning the covenants of promise. There was no way they could obtain the righteousness necessary to be acceptable to God. They could gaze upon the blessings enjoyed by those who knew the Lord, but they would never be partakers apart from Christ!

- I remember the isolation I felt being apart from Christ. I saw those who were born again in Christ, enjoying the blessings He offered and living for Him, but I knew nothing of it. All I could do was look on from the outside. I had no way to participate while in sin.

C. The Condemnation (12b) – [having no hope, and without God in the world](#). It may not have been evident for others to see, but those apart from Christ were without hope and without God. Literally they were condemned in their sin. They had no help when faced with difficulty in life and no hope or assurance for life eternal. They wandered aimlessly along apart from God, separated from Him and the marvelous grace He bestows.

- Our world is filled with those who appear happy and content on the outside, but deep within they are miserable and hurting. They live in a continual search for peace and contentment. They live in fear of death, having no hope of life beyond the grave. In fact, each of us was like that prior to Christ. Some may be in that dreadful condition today. There is no hope apart from Christ. He alone secured the means of salvation and He is the only way of acceptance to God and salvation.

II. The Deliverance from our Past (13) – Thankfully there is a remedy for being alienated from God and apart from Jesus Christ. The Lord is able to deliver from condemnation. Consider:

A. The Transition (13) – [But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ](#). Paul was speaking to those who were born outside the commonwealth of Israel. They did not know Christ as their Lord and Savior and were condemned in their sin. However, through Christ, those who were once far off have been made nigh. Those who once were unacceptable to God, in sin, have been brought into the beloved. Their sin has been forgiven and they are now partakers of the divine inheritance!

- We all were in this sad condition at some point and some remain there today. We were far away from God because we lacked a relationship with His Son. However, in Christ we too have been brought into fellowship with the Father!
- Prior to the cross, there was a veil of separation. Man could not enter the presence of the Lord, and the Gentiles were hindered from even being in the Holy place within the Temple. As Christ died upon the cross the veil was torn in two. The wall of separation was removed and we now are made nigh in Him!

B. The Transaction (13b) – *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.* Paul reminds them of the price that was paid in order to secure their redemption and reconcile them to God. In order for condemned sinners to be reconciled to God, a price had to be paid. There had to be a sacrifice offered to fully appease the righteousness of God. Jesus fulfilled that demand as He offered Himself the sacrificial atonement for sin. He bore our sin in His body and suffered the righteous judgment of God on our behalf. He shed His precious blood in order to atone for our sin! *1 Pet.1:18-19 – Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; ^[19] But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

C. The Timing (13) – *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.* The Gentiles were worried about circumcision and other works being done. Paul reveals there is nothing else that needs to take place. They were not saved by their works or their merit, but in Christ alone. There was no need to wonder any longer. Once faith had been expressed in Christ, grace was extended and salvation was complete. Their salvation was an immediate and eternal event!

- I rejoice in my salvation today! I am thankful that it doesn't require jumping several hurdles or working through an arduous process. Simple, childlike faith is all that the Lord requires and He offers immediate salvation. I am as secure in Christ today as I was the moment I was saved and that will never change! I am resting in the fulfilled, satisfying work of Christ!

III. The Delight in our Provision (14-18) – Here Paul focuses on what we have received in Christ. He speaks of:

A. The Barrier Abolished (14-15) – *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; ^[15] Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.* Again Paul refers back to the Temple. The Gentiles were not allowed within the Holy Place. There was a court for the Gentiles and wall of separation, warning the Gentiles to remain outside.

- As Christ offered Himself on the cross, He removed the wall of separation. The Gentiles were no longer outcasts and strangers. They enjoyed equal access through salvation. Paul reminded them their salvation was not based on Jewish law or ordinances, but by faith in Christ alone. The ground is level at the foot of the cross; salvation is available for all men regardless of their heritage or social status.

- We too ought to rejoice that Christ has removed the barrier between God and men. We now have access to the throne of grace through Christ our Lord. We are no longer on the outside looking in, having to wonder how it must feel to be accepted of God. This access is available to whosoever will come to Christ by faith! We are not required to keep the Jewish law or adhere to certain ordinances. Salvation is of the Lord and His finished work!

B. The Body Established (16) – [And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.](#) For centuries there had been tension and fighting between Jews and Gentiles. The Jews felt they alone were worthy to approach the Lord, but most never realized their need for salvation as well. Regardless of whether one is Jew or Gentile, all stand in need of salvation. Christ provided the means of salvation and all who are born again in Him become part of the body of Christ. The body is not divided. All believers, regardless of heritage, are placed within the same body. It is not divided by race or ethnicity. The body is not segregated and heaven won't be either!

C. The Bridge Furnished (17-18) – [And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.](#) ^[18] [For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.](#) Jew and Gentile alike needed a means of salvation and reconciliation to God. The Jews had the law, but were incapable of keeping it and securing the righteousness God demanded. The Gentiles needed to be delivered from their sin as well. Jesus became that sacrifice for all: Jew and Gentile alike. He bridged the great divide sin had caused.

- Through Christ we have access to the Father by the Spirit that abides in us. Although the Jews had access to the Holy Place, only the high priest could go within the Holy of Holies, behind the veil, where the presence of God dwelt. We all needed a means of access and Christ provided that for us. Every believer is placed within the priesthood. We all have equal, unhindered access to the throne of grace. Christ provided the means of communication with the Father through the Holy Spirit. We can go to Him at any time, with any need, fully assured that He is aware of our needs. [Heb.4:16 – Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.](#)

Conclusion: I hope you have taken the time to reflect upon your life as we have considered the text today. We have discovered the dread and fear of life without Christ. It is a dead-end, with no hope of life or acceptance to God. I am thankful that I have been made nigh by the blood of Christ. Have you been delivered from the condemnation of sin? Are you within the body of Christ? If not, there is but one way: through Christ. If you remain in sin, I have good news for you. Christ died that you might be saved. Will you respond to Him by faith and receive salvation?