

Ephesians 2:15-16 Jesus, Prince of Peace Pt. 1

Now that we've talked about the destruction of the wall of separation between Jews and Gentiles, the wall of hostility that was formally built up by legalism, pharisee-ism, and spiritual elitism, a spiritual "In Crowd" and "Out Crowd", Paul tells us that it has been abolished through the blood of Jesus. There is now no separation. A Paul puts it in Gal 3:27-28 **27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** We are to share the good news of the Gospel to everyone. Jesus died for the whole world, so we should not pick and choose. For what purpose Jesus destroyed the separating wall. How did He do it?

in his flesh--Jesus abolished the law, not in sinful flesh, for He had no sin, but in the death of His flesh on the cross, and as verse 13 says "by the blood of Christ" and "through the cross" in verse 16, Jesus has fulfilled the law, and therefore "having rendered it inoperative.

by having rendered inoperative the law of commandments in decrees,--This phrase, to render inoperative, to invalidate" means that the law has not been destroyed, remember Jesus in Matthew 5:18 **For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.** Jesus wanted to make sure that everyone knew that He wasn't against, or violating any portion of God's law.

Christ is the culmination of the law. Jesus came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets but to fulfill them. In fact, the ceremonies, sacrifices, and other elements of the Old Covenant were "**only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves**" (Heb 10:1). In His fulfillment of the Law and Prophets, Jesus obtained our eternal salvation. No more were priests required to offer sacrifices and enter the holy place (Heb 10:8–14). Jesus has done that for us, once and for all. By grace through faith, we are made right with God: "**He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross**" (Col 2:14).

There are some who argue that, since Jesus did not "abolish" the Law, then the Law is still in effect—and still binding on New Testament Christians. But Paul is clear that the believer in Christ is no longer under the Law Gal 3:23-26 **23 But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the Law, being confined for the faith that was destined to be revealed. 24 Therefore the Law has become our guardian to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. 26 For you are all sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ Jesus.** Thank God, Jesus fulfilled the whole Law and now grants us His righteousness as a free gift. "**Know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified**" (Gal 2:16). So the law had been abolished on the cross, and any reason for hostility destroyed. Since the whole Mosaic law has been rendered inoperative for Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ, He is the end of the whole law for believers Rom 10:4 **4 For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes.** We obey out of love for Jesus, and appreciation of what He has done for us, not out of an obligation to obey a set of rules. We are under the new covenant, and the old covenant has been done away. Why did God do this?

"in order that he might create in himself the two into one new person, so making peace"

In order that he might create in himself the two into one new person. The first purpose of rendering inoperative the law of commandments, consisting in decrees, namely, to create "one new person" in Christ. As individual believers we are New Creations in Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit—a brand new type of person was created that had not existed before Jesus came. Never forget that as a member of Christ's Body, the Church, your position and responsibility are very special! Both Jews and Gentiles become "one new person" or "one new humanity," a new type of person, a New Creation in Christ.

That means that Christ's body must act like Christ! We need to live as He lived; in obedience to God, walk as He walked, in grace and peace. The fact that we're a new type of person means that right now there are not two groups in terms of standing before God, but three. That's why Paul in his admonition to believers not to offend people lists three groups in 1 Cor 10:31-32 **31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all things for the glory of God. 32 Do not offend Jews or Greeks, or the church of God;** Paul tells us not to offend three groups of people: the Jews, the Greeks/Gentiles, and the church of God. The Jews and the Greeks/Gentiles are two groups of unsaved people, and the Church is composed of Jewish and Gentile believers. They are not Jews or Gentiles but a body of Christians who make up the church. This creates unity among the believers in the church, for we are all in Christ. Gal 3:27-28 **27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** It is this community to which Jesus made reference when he said to Peter, "I will build my church" in Matt 16:18. The removal of the law is like preparing the ground to build, leveling it so that the foundation can be laid down, which is Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross.

so making peace "so making peace" explains "he is our peace". Christ's death brought about a reconciliation and peace for those who believe, whether Jew or Gentile. It doesn't mean that Jesus brought about a universal redemption so that all Jews and Gentiles are reconciled, but that they have the opportunity of reconciliation, through Christ. Gentiles at large have not been accepted into the people of God, namely, Israel. But, both Gentiles and Jews have been accepted together, in one Body the Church, reconciled together With Christ. It also doesn't mean that Jewish people have been reconciled to God apart from Christ! They are still in need of salvation. In John 14:6 Jesus said... **"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.** That's why Paul, everywhere He went, preached salvation through faith in Jesus to the Jews at the synagogues first. The Jews needed saving. Then, when he was rejected by most, he would go to the Gentiles in the community.

and that he might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by which the hostility has been killed.

"and that he might reconcile." So that Christ might create in Himself the reconciliation. Christ made the law inoperative in order that he might create in himself one new person and also might reconcile the two entities, Jew and Gentile believers who are now one, to God.

"them both in one body," This body is the incorporated body of Jewish and Gentiles believers in Christ, the Church (cf. Col 3:15; 1 Cor 10:17; Eph 4:4). And both are reconciled to God. 1 Cor 12-13 **12 For just as the body is one and yet has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.** So, it doesn't matter whether believers are Jews or Gentiles, whether slaves or free, we're all one body in Christ, reconciled **"to God through the cross."** Reconciliation exacted a heavy price, the death of God's Son.

by which the hostility has been killed. The Church, as a body of both Jews and Gentiles has been reconciled to each other. Great! But, if that was the end of the story, then all would fail when God judged them. But, through Jesus we have all been reconciled to God! The war is over, there is no longer war between us and God, because the righteous requirements of the law have been fulfilled, in Christ, and God's wrath was poured out on Him, and is satisfied, and justly propitiated, paid for, for those who believe, whether Jews or Gentile. So, Jesus' atoning sacrifice has paid the debt, and the hostility between God and man, the enmity has been appeased, and peace has been made.