

Eph 2:19-20 Together With our Cornerstone

Jesus died, not only to save us from our sins, but to allow us to live a life of peace and unity with Him and with one another—to have life more abundantly. As we understand our place of lowliness and meekness before a Holy God, and practice humility, having the mind of Christ, and patience and develop endurance, then the kind of unity that Christ died to create will become real in us, in our church, and be obvious to everyone around us.

2:19 “So then you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of God’s household,”--As a result of all this, we Gentiles are no longer foreigners and aliens. Gentile believers have full rights in the family of God, a people chosen to be the Bride of Christ, adopted into God’s family, grafted in. We need to remember that, as far as Chosen People is concerned, Israel is still God’s special treasure, chosen from all people. And the Church is Christ’s Bride, chosen from all humanity to be believers in Him. The emphasis is not that God chose out of humanity, those who were special, but that God chose perfectly ordinary people so that He could show that His choice, His effect on a person or a people is to make them special and called.

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First, they are "fellow citizens." In the Roman Empire, Roman citizenship was very important. It defined how you could be treated, what rights you had, just as it does today. Citizens of a nation have rights and benefits which non-citizens do not enjoy. Through salvation in Jesus, these Gentiles were now citizens in the family of God, along with all other believers. As Christians, we must always remember that our citizenship, and our loyalty as Christians is always to heaven: **Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;** A citizen is a person who legally belongs to a country and has the rights and protection of that country. Citizens adopt the culture and practices of the nation or kingdom to which they belong. When we are born again by faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:3), we are born into the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 3:2). When God grants us citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven, we become “new creations” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

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We are now family members. John 1:12-13 says **“But to all who did not receive him, who believed in his name, he gave them the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor the will of the flesh nor the will of man, but of God”**. We, are adopted sons and daughters of the One True God. His plan all along was to make a way for us to run home to Him, and we do this through Christ. Family conveys a sense of belonging. To be in the family of God means to be accepted for who we are: loved, cherished, celebrated, and fully forgiven. **“Because HE had chosen before the foundation of the world to have a family for Himself (Eph 1:5), He acted in time and history to make our salvation a reality, 1 John 3:1-2 “See what kind of love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is”** We share a spiritual unity through our common Father, God! Paul wrote in Galatians 3:26 **it 26 For you are all sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ Jesus.** It is through our faith in Jesus that we are sons and daughters of God. We’re here, as the household of God to serve each other. Gal 6:10 **So then, while we have opportunity, let’s do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.** Before, we were strangers and foreigners, outside of the Country and Faith. But now, we have been brought near by Christ, and are Citizens of Heaven, and part of God’s Family in the Household of Faith. **2:20. “having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,”**

The saints are fellow citizens with the redeemed of all ages.² This view makes the most sense. Before Abraham, there were saints who were members of the household of God. After Abraham, the saints were those Jews who truly believed God, as did their father Abraham (Rom 4:12). These were fellow

saints of former generations who were members of the household of God. In the present time, those Jews and Gentiles redeemed by Christ's death have formed a new entity called the church. Those in the new entity are saints who are fellow citizens with all the saints of past generations, who are also members of God's household. None of the succeeding generation of saints replaces the former generation, but all join as members of God's household or family.

having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The reason we are fellow citizens with the saints and members of God's household is because we have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. We have been built by God into a long line of His family, not on the Law, but on those prophets who prophesied about Jesus—The Spirit of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy. And of the apostles, who brought Jesus Message. We are beneficiaries of the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets by showing us who God is, through His Word. This refers to doctrine preached by the apostles and prophets with Christ as the cornerstone of that doctrine. 1 Cor 3:10–11, **10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each person must be careful how he builds on it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.** where Paul, as a wise architect, laid the foundation which is Christ, and each person must be careful how he builds on the foundation of Christ. ; and Rom 15:20 **20 And in this way I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already known by name, so that I would not build on another person's foundation; 21 but just as it is written: "They who have not been told about Him will see, And they who have not heard will understand.** We see something similar in Rev 21:14 14 as the New Jerusalem on the New Earth is described: **And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.** The twelve apostles are the foundations of the new city of Jerusalem, and the gates are named after the 12 tribes of Israel. An apostle is one who is sent out on a mission with fully delegated authority by his master Jesus Christ, as the original disciples whom Jesus selected were sent out to minister (cf. also 4:11). The prophets could very well be referring to the Old Testament prophets who pointed to Jesus, our foundation. And prophets are also listed along with other gifts to the church. And a prophet is one who is endowed by the Holy Spirit with the gift of prophecy for edification, comfort, and encouragement, and especially telling the truth from God, as well as to understand and communicate the mysteries and revelation of God to the church. And, of course the cornerstone is the first stone laid in a building to be followed by the foundation. If this refers to OT prophets, it would imply that they were a part of the foundation before the cornerstone was laid.

"Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone." --Christ came into the world to be the final revelation to mankind, the Word made flesh, and God gave us all that we need for life and godliness in His written Word, the holy Scriptures. The Bible is the Word of truth and was written for our learning by God's appointed apostles and prophets. Their inspired teachings should be the only foundation upon which our Christian faith, our spiritual life, and our fundamental doctrine should stand, knowing that Jesus Christ is the Chief Cornerstone. The unquestionable foundation upon which our faith is grounded is the Bible. The Bible is the inerrant Word of God and must remain the foundation upon which our faith is fastened. 2 Tim 2:15 **Let us study to show ourselves approved unto God, as workman that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth. For we know that God's Word is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.** Let us remember that all Scripture is breathed out by God and must remain the foundation upon which our Christian faith is rooted and grounded: **"Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Cornerstone."**