

EPHESIANS 4

1. Why are all people born dead to God?

-Because we were all born into sin.

2. What does the Word of God mean when it says that we were dead?

-Even though our bodies were alive, we were dead to God or separated from God, unable to know Him.

3. What are the ways of the world?

-People do not care about sin.

-People do not care about God.

-People have no problem with sin.

-People have no time for God.

-People do whatever they want.

-People have no God except themselves.

-People are their own gods.

4. Who is the ruler of the kingdom of the air?

-Satan.

5. Why is God angry about sin?

-Because God created a world without sin, and now, the world is full of sin.

-Because God created people without sin, and now, people are full of sin.

6. Why are people by nature “children of wrath”?

-Because God must punish sin, or He will lose His holiness.

-Because God must punish sin so that we can finally live

in a world with no sin, no hurt, and no death.

7. If you believe in Christ, not only has God saved you, yet what also has He done for you?

-God has raised us up with Christ, and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms.

8. What would it be like if we were to remain under God's wrath?

-We would have an eternity of God against us and us against God.

-We would have an eternity of living in sin, and all of its hurt.

-We would have an eternity of not knowing the God who is love.

-We would have an eternity of hating ourselves and trying to destroy ourselves for having rejected God.

9. What is the meaning of "grace"?

-Grace is giving us life when we deserve death.

-Grace is giving us heaven when we deserve hell.

-Grace is giving us Christ when we deserve Satan.

10. Why are we called God's workmanship?

-Not only did God plan to save us and make us like His Son before the creation of the world, but God continues to make us like Christ every day of our lives.

-Having taught on what Christ has done for Christians and in Christians, God and Paul now teach us about what Christ has done among Christians.

Let's read Ephesians 2:11

11-Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands).

-In this letter to the Ephesians, to whom are God and Paul initially writing?

-To the Gentiles.

-As we have already learned, the Jews called themselves “the circumcision,” and they called the Gentiles the “uncircumcised.”

-The Jews called the Gentiles “uncircumcised” because they were proclaiming that they were better than the Gentiles.

-Why did God give circumcision to the Jews?

-To teach the Jews.

-With circumcision, what did God want to teach the Jews?

-That they belonged to God alone, and not to the gods that other people were worshipping.

-If we do not belong to God, then to whom do we belong?

-Satan.

-God wanted the Jews to belong to Him, and not to Satan.
-God wants all people to belong to Him, and not to Satan.

-How did the Jews not properly understand circumcision?

-They thought that being circumcised was part of their salvation.

-They thought that God accepted only them and not anyone else who was not circumcised.

-Some Jews thought that God hated all of the Gentiles.

-Some Jews thought that all of the Gentiles were going to the Lake of Eternal Fire.

-God chose the Jews so that He could save all people through the Jews.

-Instead of going to the Gentiles to teach them about God, what did the Jews do?

-The Jews condemned the Gentiles, and did not want to even talk to them, or come close to them.

Let's read Ephesians 2:12

12-Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

-What are Paul and God asking the Gentiles to remember?

-That they used to be separated from Christ.

-That they used to be excluded from God's people, Israel.

-That they used to be foreigners to the promises of God.

-That they used to be without hope and without God.

-Why were Gentiles initially separated from Christ, not included with Israel, foreigners to God, and without hope?

-Because it was God's plan to first save Israel, and then, to use Israel to save all people.

-We see this truth with Abraham.

-Abraham was living in Ur where no one believed in God, and everyone believed in demons.

-God separated Abraham from Ur, and began a new people in a new land.

-The new people were called Israel, and the new land was called Canaan.

-With Israel, God would then reach out to the Gentiles.

-The problem was that Israel did not want to reach out to the Gentiles.

-The problem was that Israel thought that they were better than the Gentiles.

-The problem was that Israel tried to change God according to their own sinful desires.

-Because Israel refused to go to the Gentiles and teach them, what did God do?

-God chose Paul, a Jew, and gave Paul and others the work of going to the Gentiles to teach them.

-Through the teaching of Paul and others, God has brought many Gentiles into the family of God.

Let's read Ephesians 2:13

13-But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

-How were the Gentiles far away from God?

-They thought only about themselves, and did not think about God.

-They thought that they could live their lives without God.

-How has the blood of Christ brought Gentiles near to God?

-The blood of Christ is God's payment for our sin which

had separated us from God.

-Sin has separated all people from God, and Christ's blood and death have brought near to God all who believe in Him.

Let's read Ephesians 2:14

14-For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.

-In Ephesians 2:14, who are the two who have been made one?

-Jews and Gentiles?

-Who destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility between the Jews and the Gentiles?

-Jesus.

-Who were the ones who constructed the barrier between the Jews and the Gentiles?

-People and their sin.

-Who were the ones who constructed the barrier between God and all people?

-People and their sin.

-While people have built and continue to build barriers between themselves and God, it is our God's desire to destroy these barriers.

-Satan wants all people to be separated from God, and from one another.

-God, however, wants all people to be one with Him and one with one another.

-During Paul's day, there was disunity in the churches between Jews and Gentiles.

-Disunity hurts God and hurts us.

-In John 17:20, Jesus prayed this:

-“That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.”

-In Christ's kingdom, there are no walls, there are no classes, there are no races, and there are no genders.

-We are all one in Christ.

-How can Jews and Gentiles and all Christians be one when they are so different?

-God and Paul teach of a spiritual unity, and not a physical unity.

-It is impossible for many different people who believe in Christ to have a physical unity.

-But it is possible for many different people who believe in Christ to have a spiritual unity.

-Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh to teach the Gentiles about God because he did not want God to save the people of Nineveh, and become a part of his life.

-Peter did not want to go to Cornelius' house to teach the Gentiles about God because he did not want the Gentiles to be a part of his life.

-This is why God gave Peter the vision of a blanket coming down from heaven filled with all different kinds of animals.

-What was God teaching Peter and us all with the vision of a blanket coming down from heaven?

-That in Christ, although we are all physically different, we are one spiritually.

-As we learned in the study of spiritual gifts in Romans 12, while we all have different spiritual gifts, we are all only one in Christ.

-People look at their physical differences, and think that they could never be one.

-But in spite of our physical differences, God has made all Christians spiritually one with the blood of Christ.

-What then did the Lord Jesus do to bring oneness to Jews and Gentiles and all who believe in Christ?

Let's read Ephesians 2:15-17

15-By setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new [man] out of the two, thus making peace,

16-and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.

17-He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.

-What does it mean that the Lord Jesus “[set] aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations”?

-Does it mean that the Lord Jesus abolished the laws of Moses?

-No.

-It means that the Lord Jesus fulfilled the laws of Moses.

-Who are those who were “far away”?

-The Gentiles.

-Who are those who “were near”?

-The Jews.

-Jesus came into the world and perfectly obeyed every law of God.

-For the ignorant Gentiles who did not have the laws of God, Jesus paid the punishment which the laws of God demanded.

-For the proud Jews who had the laws of God, but were not able to obey them, Jesus paid the punishment which the laws of God demanded.

-Now, are believing Jews and Gentiles still Jews and Gentiles?

-No.

-They are completely new in Christ and are “one new man.”

Let's read Ephesians 2:18

18-For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

-Because of Christ's death, both Jews and Gentiles who believe have access to the Father through the Holy Spirit.

-Before Jesus came and died, could uncircumcised Gentiles enter the inner section of the temple to worship God?

-No.

-Uncircumcised Gentiles could only go into the outer section of the temple.

-But when Jesus died, what did God do to the curtain that separated God and people?

-God ripped the curtain from top to bottom.

-This means that all people were welcome to worship God.

Let's read Ephesians 2:19-22

19-Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household,

20-built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

21-In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

22-And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

-When the Bible was written, many buildings were built using large stones.

-The temple in Jerusalem was also built with large stones.

-In these verses, God and Paul use stones as an example to teach us about the new temple which God is building.

-Is God's new temple made of physical stones?

-No. They are spiritual stones.

-Who are these spiritual stones in the new temple which God is building?

-All who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

-Like stones, all Christians are being fitted together by the Holy Spirit to form a new temple where God is worshiped.

-Who are the foundations of God's new temple?

-The apostles and prophets.

-Who trained the apostles and sent them out to begin building this new temple for God?

-The Lord Jesus.

-Paul was also an apostle called by the Lord Jesus to take the Gospel to the Gentiles.

-Why are the apostles and prophets called the foundations of the Lord's temple?

-Because God used the apostles and prophets to begin His new temple which is called the Church.

-Who is the chief cornerstone in God's new temple?

-The Lord Jesus Christ.

-Why is Jesus called the chief cornerstone?

-The chief cornerstone was the most important stone in the entire building.

-The chief cornerstone was also the first stone that was laid as part of the foundation, the starting point for constructing a building.

-The chief cornerstone was the first stone placed at the

junction of two primary walls, helping to join them together.

-In God's new temple, the Lord Jesus is the first stone that was laid down, and we are all built around Him.

Let's read 1 Peter 2:5-7

5-You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

6-For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

7-Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone."

-When did people become a part of the new temple of God?

-When we are born again through the power of the Holy Spirit.

-Is God's new temple now complete?

-No.

-Every day, more people are hearing and believing the Word of God and being added to God's new temple.

-Will God's new temple ever be completed?

-Yes.

-It will be completed one day, and then the Lord Jesus will return and take us all to be with Him in heaven.

-From Ephesians 3:1-13, Paul explained his responsibilities as an apostle to the Gentiles, and asked the Ephesians not to be discouraged because of his suffering for them.

-Starting with Ephesians 3:14, Paul continues with his second prayer for the Ephesian believers:

Let's read Ephesians 3:14-16

14-For this reason I kneel before the Father,
15-from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.

16-I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.

-What is the reason that Paul kneels before the Father?

-Because of that which Christ has done for us and in us.

-Because God is our Father, we do not come to Him being afraid that He will reject us.

-When a child has been disobedient, if he goes to his father to apologize, his father will receive him.

-Because our Father in heaven is perfect, He will always receive us and never reject us.

-As Jesus said in John 6:37, “All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.”

-To whom was Paul referring when he wrote of the “whole family in heaven and on earth?”

-All Christians who are now with God in heaven as well as those who are still on earth.

-In Ephesians 3:16, Paul is not praying that God would give Christians the glorious riches of God.

-This is because God has already given all Christians His glorious riches.

-What is Paul praying in Ephesians 3:16?

-That out of God’s glorious riches, He would strengthen us with power through his Spirit in our inner being.

-God and Paul both want all Christians to live our lives according to God’s glorious riches that He has already given us.

-While most people are concerned about riches for their outer being, that is, their physical lives, God and Paul want us to use God’s riches for our inner being.

-What is our inner being?

-Our soul, that is, our spiritual lives.

-The older we become, the more and more our physical bodies become weaker and weaker.

-God, however, wants our inner being, that is, our souls, to become stronger and stronger.

-For life on earth, we do not want to live this life with a weak soul.

-When we arrive in heaven, we do not want to arrive with a weak soul.

-Rather, we want to live life on earth with a strong soul.

-Rather, we want to arrive in heaven with a strong soul.

-How does our soul become stronger and stronger?

-By allowing God the Holy Spirit to control our souls and to make our souls stronger.

-Only God the Holy Spirit can make our souls stronger and stronger.

Let's read Ephesians 3:17a

17-So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

-What did Paul mean when he prayed, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith?"

-Paul was praying that Christians would understand that

Jesus is not just a visitor in our lives, but rather someone who lives with us at all times.

-Here is an illustration:

-When you are in your own home, do you act as a visitor?

-No.

-Because the Lord Jesus bought us with His own blood, He is the rightful owner of our lives, and should not be just a visitor, but rather should be “at home” in our lives.

-As we allow the Lord Jesus to make our bodies His home, His love will control our thoughts, our words, and our actions.

Let's read Ephesians 3:17b-19

17-And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,

18-may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,

19-and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

-How can our lives be rooted and established in Christ's love?

-When we allow Jesus to live in us and be “at home” in

our lives, Christ will bring forth His own love in our lives.

-Then, the love that we show to the world will be truly Christ's perfect love in us, and not our own imperfect love.

-When Christians bring forth their own love to the world, it will be imperfect and not complete.

-When Christians, however, allow Christ in us to bring forth His love, it will be perfect and complete.

-In these verses, God and Paul are praying that all Christians would understand how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.

-The more that we can understand the love of Christ, the more that we will allow Christ's love in us to take over our lives.

-What is God's goal in our lives?

-To bring us to Himself.

-To fill us up with Himself.

-To fill us up with all that God is and has for us.

-When we are empty of ourselves, we can be full of God.

Let's read Ephesians 3:20-21

20-Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

21-to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever!
Amen.

-How much is God able to do for us?

-Far more than we could ever ask Him.

-Far more than we could ever think that He could do.

-By what power is the Lord able to do this for us?

-By the same power which raised the Lord Jesus from the dead.