

Made Nigh

Ephesians 2:11-22

- What do we know about citizenship?
- What happens when we are a citizen of one country, then become a citizen of a different country?
- When it is approved by that other country...
 - We are official
 - We belong
 - We are recognized
 - We are part of something
 - We are awarded certain benefits
 - We have certain rights
 - A permanent change has occurred
 - Others recognize it too
 - Because we have something to show for it (some paperwork or a passport)
 - Therefore protections are afforded to us
- But...
 - We also have responsibilities
 - We represent something
 - We travel under a new banner
 - And new things are expected of us
- If Ephesians 2:8-10 are true in our lives
- Then we have a new citizenship
- If we have been saved by grace through faith
- We are citizens of His kingdom now
- We are "Made Nigh"
- Which is our theme, from Ephesians 2:11-22
- Let's read those verses leading up to our passage of the day...

Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

- This is how our citizenship changes
- By grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone
- What about the nature of this citizenship?
- Well, as with earthly citizenship, we bring a history with us
- We are still "from" somewhere

- There are certain carryovers
- Maybe we still have an accent
- Speaking spiritually...
 - We remain in sinful flesh
 - We remain in this sinful world
 - Our circumstances may remain
 - And the world isn't altered (that is, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life)
- But now...
 - A transformation has occurred
 - We are not what we used to be
 - This new citizenship affords us with new benefits
 - But also requires new things from us
- Into our text of the day...

Ephesians 2:11-12

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;

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:

- We were something
- But this is all in the past
- We were not physically or positionally recognized
- We were outside Gods family
- Aliens
- Foreigners
- Strangers
- Outside the covenants of promise
- With no hope (none)
- Because, we were without God in the world
- And this passage tells us to remember
- When others bore the physical evidence for their belonging to God
- We did not
- But we now bare spiritual evidence
- That is just as clear
- Those without God in the world now have a personal relationship with Him
- And have hope where there was none
- This is why we see our theme phrase in the next verse...

Ephesians 2:13-15

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14 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;

- Thank God, times have changed
- Before, we were without Christ
- We were far from Him
- But we have been "made nigh"
- That means we've been brought near to Him

- Before coming to know Him
- We were estranged
- We were shut out from fellowship and intimacy with Him
- We were drifting without God

- But now "in Christ Jesus"
- Our situation has altered radically
- This is not the cleaning up of one's life
- His blood made it possible
- And by faith, we are His
- It's not about us - or what we have done

- The division that was between us because of sin has been eliminated
- And the state of war that existed between us and God has been made peace

- Instead of foreigners, we are now family members...

Ephesians 2:16-18

16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17 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.

- Christ's sacrifice on the cross gave us access to the Father
- He is the only One that can provide this access
- Because we were outside His family
- Sin kept us outside God's family
- But His sacrifice paid for our sins, perfectly and permanently
- He was the spotless lamb, whose blood not only covered, but cleansed our sin
- This is why we can draw close to God

- Truly, our citizenship has changed...

Ephesians 2:19-22

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

- If we have faith in Him and Him alone for salvation
- We are official
- We belong
- We are recognized
- We are part of something
- And we've been awarded certain benefits
- And have certain rights
- Our paperwork is officially in order

- And that eternal kingdom, which God is building, is where we belong
- We walk this earth under a new banner
- And new things are expected of us
- But every one of them is worth it

- The fact is, you may be outside this family
- The family of God
- Know this - only Christ can bring you near
- Only His sacrifice can make you a citizen
- Your own work will never do it
- Belonging to a religious institution will never do it
- Repeating a series of words will never do it
- What needs to be done - He has already done
- We need only to believe, to have faith, to trust - with our whole lives

- Everything changes when we do
- But it changes for the very best

Christopher Harper, Take Note 2023