



Sermon – January 20, 2019
Chris Osborne

Verses Covered

Ephesians 2:19 - 22

Philippians 3:20

So we are in Ephesians chapter 2. We are going to start at 19 today. If you went back to the day when this book is written, the Jews and Gentiles hate each other. I mean they despised each other. There's, there's just, for example, when, now obviously after this letter is written the Romans come in and they destroy Herod's temple, they wipe out Jerusalem because they're sick of it. There's a little over 900 Jews who run 65 miles south and they go up in this place called Masada. As a matter of fact, it was kind of Herod's safe-house. He built it, huge hill, one way to get up to it. It's basically a little, almost a snake path. Can barely one person walk it, switchback up to the top. It's the only way up. So Herod built it in case Rome came after him. He was extremely paranoid. And he built it so they couldn't get to him because there's just no way to get up there. Huge place. Bunch of cisterns for water. Places to store grain. Palace. Large area. Perfect. Now you would think the Roman Gentiles would go, "Who cares about a few hundred Jews?" But they chased them 65 miles. And they take a long time. As a matter of fact, when you stand on top of Masada, you can actually see where the Romans garrisoned themselves. And so they take a long time and they build an earth ramp all the way to the top. So when the day comes that they get up in there, they step in, they break down the door, and they step in ready to fight, and it's dead quiet. They can't figure out and they begin to walk around and they discover body after body after body. They learnt the story from a young mom who hid out with her two children. But the night before the Romans are coming in and the Jews now know they can't stop them. The night before that occurs, the leader makes an impassioned speech and he says, "Look, we'd rather be dead than live under the rule of these Roman Gentiles." And so they select 10 men. As a matter of fact, if you go to Masada, you can actually see the lots that they used. They have Hebrew consonants on them. And those 10 men kill everybody on Masada. And then one man takes the life of the other nine, and then he takes his own life. Because they so despised the thought of being enslaved to a bunch of Roman Gentiles.

So when you come to the first century, and you have a Gentile who is in a synagogue on Saturday, he's not going to have the chief seat. He's going to be way in the back on the bucket. But he's willing to go there because he's so sure that what the Jews believe in is correct. He's given up on

all these goofy gods that they had and he believes that the Jews are right. That the Jehovah of the Bible is the true God. And so, but when he gets in there, if you're a Gentile in this day and you're sitting on that bucket in the back of the synagogue and you're not in the chief seats, you've got to kind of wonder, "OK, I believe this, but I wonder if I'm in." I wonder because everything that I read in the Bible we have which, of course, is Genesis through Malachi. Talks about God's chosen people and that's not me. And here I am in this synagogue and I'm in the back part. I mean I believe all this but I wonder if I'm really in. And then if you go in the temple, he goes into Jerusalem, of course the temple isn't destroyed yet, obviously. So he goes into the temple and he walks in, what does he find? This one room that he can go into. And there's a sign right here before he even heads into the rest of the temple that says, if you're a Gentile, you go past this door, we'll kill you. So if you're in the temple as a Gentile, now you're wondering, OK, I really do believe everything the Jews believe, but I can't even see the holy of holies. How in the world, even though I believe what they believe, am I in? You go back home to the synagogue and you're in the back and you wonder if you're in.

And that's why Paul wrote what he wrote. That's why last week we looked at the fact that he uses, he talks about the person of Jesus, the body of Jesus, the blood of Jesus from that body on the cross. He uses those four things. And he says, because of those four things, as a Gentile, when you look into this temple, all the walls are down. And when you walk up and you go into this holy of holies that the priest only went into one time a year, you can go in, and when you go in you discover that you don't have to make a sacrifice. It's already been made. And the person, and the body, and the blood, and the cross. And so now I can step into the holy of holies and what I discover is that God is sitting in there waiting for me to show up. And that according to last week, the Holy Spirit indwells me and as we walk in, He introduces me to the Father. So you have that first chapter, right. We have Jesus providing the removal of the walls and the opening into where God the Father is and the Holy Spirit introduces me. And so then he writes. Listen. Verse 19.

¹⁹So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners,

You're not a stranger. He knows you. And you're not a sojourner. That's somebody who didn't have a home. You just wander around. You're a nomad in the desert. He said, "I want you to understand. You're not a stranger to God now. He knows you. Knows your name. Knows who you are. You're in the deal. And you're not wandering around anymore. You're connected to something." Well what are you talking about? Look at what he says.

you're no longer strangers or sojourners, but you are fellow citizens of the saints and of the household of God.

We get the word politic from that Greek word, *sympolitai*, you are fellow citizens with Him. That is, you are now attached to a kingdom you were not attached to earlier. Now when I travel internationally, I'm going to Brazil in a couple of months to take a week and teach them how to, the Brazilian pastors, how to teach through text in the Bible. When I go international and I put my passport down, and American passport, I've got to tell you, there's some pride there. I'm proud to be an American. And it's great to put an American passport down where I know we can sit in this building and not a single government is going to come in here and try to stop us from meeting like they do right now in China. So I love being an American and I love putting that passport

down. But we have a better deal. We've been made citizens of a kingdom that's way better than America. Listen to this. Philippians 3:20.

²⁰Our citizenship is in the heavens from which we await our savior, our Lord, Jesus Christ.

We have a different citizenship. This country, as great as we think we are, and we are, we're going to fade. We're going to fail. We're going to die out. Already there are countries surpassing us economically. Already there are countries surpassing us militarily. We're going to end. Every county does. Every nation does. Every kingdom does. But the kingdom we've been made citizens of never ends. It stays intact; both quantitatively and qualitatively. I love, the best illustration I'd say, it's eternal. But the best illustration I've ever heard; if you take a seagull and he flies from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and he gets a drop of water in his beak, and he flies back across America to the Atlantic, drops it in and goes back. In the time it will take him to empty the Pacific Ocean, eternity will have just started. That's what we have. We have something that's never going to end. But the really cool part that I, got to be honest, I always wonder about. There's a great word in 1 Peter that says that His kingdom is unfading. You know what that means? When you and I, when He really does come back, I know we talk about this, but when He really does show up and everything in the Bible happens, there's a marriage supper of the Lamb. We worship Him. He puts us on thrones with Him. We're a pillar in the temple of the holy God. When all that occurs, we're going to be mind-blown. We're going to be stunned. We're going to be amazed. And 1 Peter says that His kingdom is unfading. Which means the amazement I go in with, I will keep for all eternity. There's never going to be a day when I'm bored or shocked or listless and wish I had something to do. So the kingdom that we've been put into is eternal and is never going to fade. Every person you meet in there, here's the shocker, you're going to like. So you might as well start now in here. You're just stuck with everybody for eternity. You're actually going to like them and never like them and never lose them. I mean the kingdom we've been made a citizen of is great! It's way better than being an American. And as proud as I am to put an American passport down, I'm a whole lot prouder to say I belong to Jesus Christ. So we have a tremendous kingdom we're fellow citizens, all of us, Gentile and Jew. So all of us in here. I don't think we've hardly any Jews in here. We're all Gentiles. We are citizens of an eternal kingdom. And then he says of the household of God. Not only that we're part of the family. I hate to admit this, but I like Downton Abbey. That's embarrassing. I almost had my man card taken from a couple people, but I like Downton Abbey. You have an upstairs and a downstairs, right. You've got the family upstairs and the losers downstairs. That's kind of the way it fell. They don't have any money. They don't have any future. Everything's running out. But the people upstairs still have money and a great life. They're part of the royal family. Here's the great thing. You've been adopted in this kingdom by the King. Not by some servant. You've been adopted by the King. You are His son. You are His daughter. We are in a family. We're upstairs. We're not downstairs. So when he writes and he says, look, you Gentiles that have spent your life thinking you're not in. The Jews have maligned you and they've made you in the back of the synagogue and you can't walk into any part of the temple and you just kind of think, "You know, I believe what the Jews believe. I can't possibly be in." He says, I want you to understand, you are way in. You're a citizen and you're part of the family.

But then he says, just in case we get cocky as Gentiles and look at the Jews and go, "Told you." So that we don't get cocky, look at what he writes.

you're no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, household of God. ²⁰founded on, built on, the foundation of the apostles and the profits with Jesus Christ being the chief stone, the cornerstone.

He says this, he says, you may be in the building, you've been adopted by the King, you're part of the citizenship. You're part of the family. But don't you ever forget that what you're built on is completely Jewish. The prophets are Jewish. The apostles, even if they have a Greek name like Philip, are Jewish. Jesus is Jewish. The chief stone, the cornerstone the entire building is built on, is Jewish. So don't you dare think you're better than they are. You're the same. You're in the kingdom, but you're built on them. And he's right. The prophets talked about the Messiah coming. The apostles explained how He's come. But right in between, right in the middle, is John the Baptist. When the last prophet dies, God doesn't speak to Israel for 400 years. And then He sends a brand new prophet, John. Now you're living in the Old Testament, you do two things. There was a law and a sacrifice. You knew you broke the law. You knew you and God weren't OK. You knew it was broken. But you knew that there was a blood sacrifice once a year that would pay for your sins. But then after a while, you were smart. You would begin to ask the High Priest, "Hey I got a little question here. If this really gets rid of our sin, why do we have to do it every year?" And the High Priest is going to go, "Well, because it really doesn't work long. Works for about a year and then we got to redo it." Where do you get the lamb? Well, just different people. We get the best lamb we can. We get it from somebody's place and we kill it and we sprinkle. We do it once a year because it doesn't work long. So if you're a Jew, you're kind of wondering, if I've broken the law and God and I are not OK and this thing doesn't work, what's my hope? And then after 400 years a guy appears. John. Preaches. Gets the entire country to come hear him. And then he looks up one day, standing in the middle of the crowd is Jesus. And this is what he said. He said, "Behold, look at Him, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." Not of Israel; of the world. He's God's lamb. He's not our lamb. He's God's sacrifice for our sin. And sure enough when Jesus dies on the cross, as Paul said in the last few verses, the person whose body bled on the cross, when that happened, God instituted a sacrifice that's never been reinstated because His blood works. So now we're OK. And so now the prophets who looked forward to the Messiah, John the Baptist explained what they were preaching, and now the apostles put it all together. And now those of us in this room that are Gentiles, look back to who we are in Jesus Christ. We're fellow citizens. We're part of the household of God because of what God's Son, His Lamb, did for us. And we're based on a Jewish heritage so we don't ever think we're better. We're equal.

Why did He do that? Look at this.

²¹in whom all the building is being joined, being fitted together, increases into a holy temple in the Lord, ²²in whom also you yourselves are being built into a habitation of God in the Spirit.

He says, "Here's the deal." Now listen. That both Jew and Gentile, both of us, possess the same Spirit. This temple that we couldn't walk in is gone. But it doesn't matter because if you're Jew or Gentile, if you accept God's lamb sacrifice, then you become the temple. Now the Holy Spirit indwells you. Whether you're Jew or Gentile. The Holy Spirit indwells you. So now we're

indwelled with a Spirit so that what? We can experience Him and reflect Him. Show off His glory. All of us; Jew or Gentile. Doesn't matter inside the church. So the galvanizing point of unity for us is that we're all part of the temple whether we're black, white, brown. Whether we come from the Middle East or we come from North America. Whether we have a large bank account or a small bank account. Whether we dress in a coat and tie or whether we wear sandals and flip flops. Doesn't matter. Every single one of us is a part of the temple. And our unity in a church is rooted in the temple. Not in skin color or anything else. I don't know why we struggle with that.

I'm an Aggie fan except one day a year. But I love Aggies. Somebody said, "Are you an Aggie?" When I go out of town to speak. They'll say, "Are you an Aggie?" And I'll say, "No, but I bought two." And really for what it cost me, I think I should have the rings personally. But, but I love A&M. And I like A&M football, except one day a year. So when we played LSU this year, right. What a great game. And to beat them is just glorious. So what'd we have? 7 overtimes? Score was 197 to 195, something like that? I mean, I lost track after a while. My computer was blowing up on the math part. So but we're in those overtimes, right. Kyle Field's rocking, except for some of you 10 percenters who left early and then went, "Oh my." Kyle Field's rocking, right. It's overtime. Going back and forth. I bet you. Oh, I can't do that as a Baptist. Let me find a better phraseology. I think that if you're at the game and you're a Republican, staunch Republican, and there's a Democrat two seats down, two rows down. And you're both rooting for A&M to score in overtime, I doubt a single Republican looked down there and went, "Don't be cheering you stupid Democrat." I don't think any Republican did that. I don't think any Democrat looked up and said, "Hey! Republican. Back off." I don't think anybody looked at anybody and said, "You know, you're black. I don't want you cheering for the Aggies. You're white." You're so caught up in the game that there's absolute unity inside Kyle Field for 6 hours over a game that doesn't matter. I know we live in a day, and I get it, there are black churches and white churches. We somehow just struggle getting together. Most of our churches are predominantly one race, one color, one culture. And the reason for that is we don't do that in Kyle Field, but we do it in the church because we've forgotten who we really are. All of us have the Holy Spirit, we're all a temple for the Holy Spirit, and nothing should be more unifying than that. And if Kyle Field unifies us better than the arrival and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of Almighty God, then it's time to rethink who we are.

Father, thank You. As we sit in this room as Gentiles, we're Your temple. And Father we're going to be until we die. So remind us in this room that You are what really matters. Not football. Not basketball. Not baseball. Not sports. Not Republican. Not Democrat. Not Independent. Father no matter what we are in here politically, no matter what we are in any way, remind us today that every one of us in this room that has embraced Your Son is a temple of Your Holy Spirit until the day we see You personally. Remind us of that truth. In Jesus name.