

Ephesians 2:11-22

1. Review

2. Three different ways to break this reading up and each one brings to light a different aspect of it.

a. It is in a chiastic structure

b. 3 clear sections

i. The Gentile Christian' former status, alienated from God and his people

ii. The reconciling work of Christ on the cross

iii. The resulting new temple, Jews and Gentiles built on Christ

c. 3 major polarities

i. Then-now

ii. Pagan-baptized

iii. Gentiles-Israel

3. How does Paul describe the Gentiles before they were converted?

4. What is the dividing wall?

5. What is plaguing the church in Ephesus?

a. Could be the Jews wanted to make the Gentiles Jewish

i. We see this in Galatians, Acts 15, Colossians 2:16

b. There doesn't seem to be hostility within the church but between the two groups of people.

i. 2 historical events help shape this

1. First, the claim that the Gentiles were "godless" (Acts 19)

2. Second, why Paul got arrested the first time (Acts 21:28)

- ii. Thus, Paul is probably asking the question “how can Christians and Jews possibly be reconciled?” and “how is that Jew/Gentile hostilities do not divide the Christian church?”

6. What is the building God is creating?

7. How does that shape the view of our own bodies and what we do with it?

8. Why is their unity according to Paul here?

were brought by their baptismal information was worked upon

atus, the reconciliation Christ reversal in the fortunes of the il has nothing to say about the eaking only to the Gentiles in echoes his great conclusion to rly [ποτέ] were disobedient to [the Jews'] disobedience, thus respect to the mercy shown to own mercy" (Rom 11:30-31). o once [ποτέ] were 'not a peo ot shown mercy' but now [νῦν] ios 1:6, 9; 2:25 [ET 2:23]).¹⁴¹ formation corresponds to the

ns that form a clear progres

, alienated from God and

: cross
Gentiles built on Christ

Christological-Soteriological en" to "now." By the cross of ie Law. In the final emphasis ow Christ's work overcomes ymbolized so graphically by the distinctive provisions of

in-baptized, Gentiles-Israel) ure takes on a grand chias- cant parallels and contrasts

iche Theologie 13 (1953): 362-71. baptismal hymn lies behind both. significant common theme.

nism and Pentecost, 156-57, and Approach to the Parables in Luke with Thomson, Chiasmus in the olars had independently produced ctions from Lincoln, Ephesians, ption of what a chiasm must look and antitheses of both words and w clever he is, but because it is a ly poses the "then-now" schema

emerge as Paul walks from past to present, from problem to solution, from con- dition to result.

- A ¹¹Therefore, remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh,
- B called Uncircumcision by what is called Circumcision (made in the flesh, by hands),
- C ¹²that you were at that time separated from Christ,
- D alienated from the commonwealth of Israel
- E and strangers to the covenants of the promise,
- F having no hope and godless in the world.
- G ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who at one time were far off have become near by the blood of Christ.
- H ¹⁴For he himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has destroyed the dividing wall of partition, the hostility, in his flesh,
- I ¹⁵by nullifying the Law of commandments in decrees, that in him he might create the two into one new man, making peace,
- H' ¹⁶and might reconcile both in one body to God through the cross, by killing the hostility in him.
- G' ¹⁷And when he came he preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near;
- F' ¹⁸for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.
- E' ¹⁹So, then, you are no longer strangers and sojourners,
- D' but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of God's household,
- C' ²⁰having been built up upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the cornerstone being Christ Jesus himself,
- B' ²¹in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple, in the Lord,
- A' ²²in whom also you are built up together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

As in 2:1-10, such a chiasitic structure draws our attention not so much to the end as to the middle (2:15). There we find the central Gospel thought that Christ has triumphed over the Law with its power to create hostility, condemnation, and division. By removing that hostile power, Christ brought peace to all mankind through the cross.¹⁴¹ Indeed, the fourfold repetition of "peace" at the heart of the

and the chiasm as incompatible alternatives (Thomson, 91). Best admits to significant parallels and antitheses between the first and third sections, which is the real point.
¹⁴¹ Lincoln, who dismisses the chiasm, nevertheless notes: "The judgment that in Ephesians Christology has been swallowed up by ecclesiology surely misses the emphasis of this passage, where it is Christ's reconciling death on the cross on which the very existence of the Church depends" (Ephesians, 161).