

Series: "Guest Speaker"
Enmity with God
Ephesians 2:12 – 16
September 4, 2024

Ephesians 2:12–16 (NASB95)

I. Reading God's word is more enlightening when you understand God's plan and purpose.

A. God's plan and purpose for man is veiled to most but is plain to the believer once he becomes proficient in studying the Scriptures.

II. Enmity with God starts early on with Eve falling for Satan's scheme by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam followed immediately, thus creating the curse that plagues us all – the sin nature.

A. Adam and Eve were created without a fallen nature; they were created naïve, but that changed as soon as they disobeyed God.

1. Here's what the Lord said, **Genesis 3:15–19 (NASB95)**

2. Here's what changed: Adam and Eve had a personal, visible relationship with the Lord. Their daily walks with the Lord in the evening were ended. That indicates a loss of relationship. It's not that God hated them, but their relationship had undergone a fundamental change.

3. Not only that, but their job had been as "caretakers" of the Garden of Eden. Now, they were barred from that place and had to work up a sweat just to survive. (They had weeds, but no Roundup).

B. What had changed?: Now there was sin.

1. Since Adam and Eve, nothing has changed except that righteousness in God's sight was based on faith.

2. Was there a remedy? From the perspective of man, no. From God's perspective, yes.

3. The remedy would have to wait, though. There were a few exceptions. We'll talk about those later.

III.The Flood.

A. Without going into a great deal of detail, the time of the flood was certainly without precedent.

1. The entire population, with the exception of Noah and his family, were the enemies of God. (**Genesis 6:5–8, NKJV**)

2. For most of us, the narrative of a worldwide flood and then the repopulating of the earth by mankind, not to mention all the birds and the kinds of animals.

IV. The Lord's program continued on. We see some remarkable exceptions,

- A.** Job, God said Job was blameless, and though he was very wealthy, it was all taken from him, yet as v. 1:22 says, **Job 1:22 (NKJV)**
- B.** Then there was Abraham. He wasn't the most truthful. Abraham was called "The Friend of God." One more thing: **Genesis 15:6 (NKJV)**
- C.** However, like the writer of the Book of Hebrews, we could go on and on recounting the accomplishments of the most faithful, even some that might surprise us (like Jephthah and Samson).

1. For example, the Book of Judges is filled with people who, like us, were amazingly flawed and yet accomplished great things.

- a.** But like many of us, had failures and sins in their lives and pasts that would shock all but the most understanding of us. Yet, the writer of Hebrews says this, **Hebrews 11:39-40 (NKJV) V.**

V. In 1 Samuel 9, we are introduced to one of the most conflicted men in Scripture – Saul.

- D.** Tall, dark, and handsome, the perfect person to choose to be king. Saul even prophesied!

1. Saul's flaw was that he was a politician. He wasn't a Democrat or a Republican. He was of his own party. It was all about Saul.
2. Ultimately, it was his undoing. In the end, he became the enemy of God by disobeying the Lord time after time. It cost him his life and, even before that, His kingdom.

VI. Following Saul came one of the greatest men of the Old Testament, King David. With all his flaws and his list of sins, God declared him to be the "Apple of His eye."

- A.** Short list of his accomplishments:

1. He established the Kingly Line that the Lord promised.
2. He killed Goliath
3. He fathered Saul

- B.** List of his sins:

1. An adulteress relationship
2. Murder
3. Deceit

- C.** Why was David the Apple of God's Eye?

1. One word: Faith.

2. David trusted the Lord regardless of his circumstances.

VII. I'll mention one last Old Testament person, an unrepentant enemy of God, King Zedekiah, a king appointed by Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah was the uncle of Jehoiachin (the previous bad king).

A. Zedekiah's legacy is summed up in two verses: **2 Kings 24:18-19**

B. The Lord's dealing with Zedekiah was particularly harsh. He used King Nebuchadnezzar to levy the punishment (2 Kings 25:6-7, NKJV)

1. The last thing Zedekiah saw was his family being killed.

VIII. A Pause:

A. So, what have we been taught from God's Word so far? Eph 2:12-13

IX. So, what is the biblical understanding of what it means to be an enemy of God?

A. We were "without Christ."

B. We were alienated from God.

C. You were separated from the promise.

D. Without hope and

E. Without God.

X. How we got here:

A. We were separated from Christ by original sin – inherited as part of our makeup from Adam and Eve's fall in the Garden of Eden. They were shortly expelled, and their close relationship with God was severed.

1. It doesn't seem fair to us, but the way the Bible explains it, we were "in Adam" when He sinned and inherited his relationship with God. That is, no relationship.

2. Thus, anyone outside of Christ is without hope,

3. And because we are without Christ, we cannot have eternal life in the sense of going to heaven and truly being at rest.

B. Is there a remedy to fix this issue? There is, but we have to grasp the way the Lord thinks about this.

1. Most of us have the sense that we have to be "good" to be saved. The problem comes when we are faced with a choice between doing the right thing or doing the wrong thing. We cannot consistently do the right thing. Paul puts it this way (**Romans 7:18-20, NKJV**)

2. My favorite writer puts it this way,

Paul's experience convinced him that "the Law is good" (v.16). But he also concluded, **I know that nothing good lives in me**. Then he hastened to explain that by the phrase "in me," he meant **in my sinful nature**

(*sarki*, "flesh"; cf. vv. 5, 25). This is not literal physical or material flesh but the principle of sin that expresses itself through one's mind and body. As support for this conclusion, Paul explained, **For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out**. (Walvoord, 1985)

XI. Right now, many of us are feeling uneasy about our families, the education of our children, the direction our nation, and the world for that matter, is going.

A. There was a time when many of us here were without hope and without Christ. The way I was raised, there seemed to be no real answers. I had just returned from a combat tour in Vietnam, and spiritually, I was dead. But,

(2 Peter 3:9, NKJV)

A. Some friends (who had been as I was) kept after me, explaining that being a Christian and (using a churchy term) "saved" wasn't by being good. It was by our having come to the realization that being "saved" wasn't by being good but by placing trust for that new life in what Jesus did when he died on the cross.

B. In fact, the Greek word for "faith" in the New Testament embodies the idea of not just believing in something but actually relying upon and coming to the understanding that you are not good enough to be saved, but God has made a way.

XII. I would like to close with a quote from Paul in Romans chapter 10 "For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." **(Romans 10:11-13, NKJV)**

If you feel you're without hope, there is no better time to decide. No one is promised tomorrow.