

# Reconciled to God in One Body

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Preacher: Bill Story

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning.

Take out your Bibles with me please and turn to Ephesians chapter 2. Our second look at the second half of chapter 2.

So where's Jimmy? Where's Gene? Where do you go? Spiritual supplements. I've never thought of that before. I like that. Spiritual supplements.

Supplement your faith with virtue and God. I love that. Never thought of it like supplements. Spiritual supplements. Adds another flavor to it, doesn't it?

All right. We're going to read Ephesians 2, 11 to 22. But we will be focusing on verses 14 through 18.

[ 1 : 13 ] The heart of that passage. So if you're able, please stand as I read from Ephesians 2. Beginning at verse 11. Therefore, remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by the so-called circumcision, which is performed in the flesh by human hands.

Remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now, in Christ Jesus, you, who were formerly far off, have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

For he himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall by abolishing in his flesh the enmity, which is the law of commandments contained in ordinances.

Excuse me. Excuse me. That in himself he might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross.

[ 2 : 48 ] By it, having put to death the enmity. And he came and preached peace to you who are far away and peace to those who were near.

For through him, we both have our access in one spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and are of God's household. Having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone. In whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord.

In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the spirit. So reads the word. Let's pray. Father, help us with this word today. Help us to grasp the depths to which Paul goes. The measure to which he shows the purpose of Christ's death.

[ 4 : 02 ] That the cross is more than simply our forgiveness. The cross is a brand new beginning. The cross establishes peace with you.

And it establishes a new people. A body. That we are part of. So help us to grasp these things. We pray in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen. Please be seated. Please be seated. We have a preacher back there. We do. I know. That's great. Love it. Yeah. All right. So last week we looked at the beginning of this passage which talks about the separation of Jew and Gentile.

The alienation of the Gentiles who are outside, who are separate, who are excluded. Right? And then as Gentiles were coming into the church and being saved, there were Jews who wanted to make those Gentiles Jewish.

[ 5 : 07 ] They wanted the Gentiles to do the law like they did the law. Right? If you're going to be a part, you've got to do the same thing. So that created problems. But the problem actually goes back much further.

The hostility and the enmity and the separation goes back much further. It began shortly after creation. We read of it in Genesis 3 where the serpent comes and tempts Adam and Eve and they are deceived and they sin.

Right? They broke fellowship with God. Remember, after they took of the tree and they ate, remember they hid. Right? They hid from God. There was a separation from God and they knew that.

Then you read on in Genesis 4. Then the children of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel. Right? Where Cain takes them a little further and he kills his brother out of anger.

Enmity. Hostility. What's the cause of the enmity, hostility that still exists among Christians?

[ 6 : 15 ] What is that? What is that? It's sin. It's wanting our own way. James talks about it as, you know, the source of your quarrels, the source of our fighting, source of our differences is sin.

We want what we want. Instead of serving one another through love. Even in the New Testament, we see it still growing. Acts chapter 6.

When the church is growing and all these people are coming to Christ. And then we see this problem develop where some of the widows aren't being fed. Right? They aren't being taken care of.

And so the church had to develop a system to answer those problems. But there was problems again. Brewing. And then if you read the letter to the Corinthians, you recognize there's all kinds of problems in that church.

They had divisions. They divided over leaders. They, you know, they had lawsuits. Even over spiritual gifts, they're struggling over spiritual gifts.

[ 7 : 23 ] So, problems within churches is not new. It's all the way back. It's just part of human nature where we are saved, but there's still that old part of us that, you know, we let take over sometimes and cause problems.

So, why is there still hostility in the church, especially after all that Christ has done? I think it's because we don't truly understand what Christ has done.

And Paul is going to kind of bring out that there's much more that Jesus did at the cross than simply save us from sin. Much more.

And so he's going to bring out some of those great purposes. The church is a new creation. And Colossians talks about, let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts with one another.

The peace of Christ rule. Let the peace of Christ rule you. That's a different standard, isn't it? So, just want you to note the structure off the bat of the passage from 11 to the end of chapter 2.

[ 8 : 36 ] Notice there's a little chiasm going on here. In verses 11 to 13, he talks about the problem. The alienation for those who are without Christ.

And particularly non-Jews, Gentiles, who don't know Christ, also have all these other alienations. They're not circumcised. They're ridiculed as uncircumcised people.

They're strangers to the covenants. They're not provenance. Right? They're not part of all the Jewish history. They're kind of these outsiders. And the Jews of the first century particularly treated them that way.

You know, they even called them dogs. Right? They didn't want to touch them because they'd be defiled. So, there was this, if you're a Gentile, you're really an outsider.

So, he brings out the problem. And then, at the end of the text, verses 19 to 22, he talks about the other side of that. Right? So, there was alienation.

[ 9 : 37 ] Now, there's inclusion. So, because of what Christ has done, in verses 19 to 22, he says, you know, you're no longer strangers and aliens. Now, you're fellow citizens. Now, you're part of a body.

Now, in fact, not just a body, but a temple. Right? That God is building. And a holy temple. And we're both Jew and Gentile. Insiders and outsiders are all insiders now.

And then, in the middle of the text, the chiasm part, verses 13 to 18, is the reconciliation. How God changed us from outsiders to insiders.

How he changed us from strangers to now fellow citizens. Right? And part of the holy temple. Is what Christ did at the cross. That we're brought near by the blood of Christ.

We're reconciled through the cross. And so, how God makes a new creation in the church. So, I don't know if you thought of the church this way.

[ 10 : 35 ] I want to challenge us to not only recognize what Jesus did at the cross, but what we are. As a church. As a congregation. As an assembly of believers in Jesus.

What we are. We're a new creation. Now, we're individually like that. We're called that, right? When we come to Christ, we're a new creation. Right? Well, we are also a new creation as a body of Christ.

And so, it's fascinating the way that God brings people together. So, let's look at this. How does God bring us near? We were far away. And now, he brings us near.

Right? Near to God. So, reconciled in one body. So, how and why has God united two radically separated people into a new creation?

And the purpose is twofold. In verses 14 and 15, it is to create a new man. A new humanity.

[ 11 : 40 ] Right? Not a separated humanity, but a united humanity. Which we call the church. And then in verses 16 to 18, there's a secondary purpose.

And that is to reconcile us to God through the cross. So, one is horizontal. Right? So, to create a new man. To bring us together. To create two into one.

Gentiles and Jews into one person. One man. Right? One body. We call ourselves the body of Christ. Right? And then the other one in verse 16 is... That's horizontal.

That's that. Vertical. Is that right? Not diagonal. That's vertical. Right? So, it's between us and God. Now, we're all together reconciled to God. Right? So, he reconciles us together.

And then he reconciles us to God. That's the dual purpose of the cross that God has done. So, let's look at this. Amen. So, verses 13 and 15.

[ 12 : 39 ] His first purpose is to create one new humanity. One new man. That's the wording Paul uses in verse 15. That in himself he might make the two into one new man.

So, I'll call it humanity in Christ. Create one new humanity in Christ. In other words, which is what we call the church. Who are a gathering of people.

So, notice the basis of this in verse 13. Now, in Christ Jesus, you who are formerly far off have been brought near. How? By the blood of Christ.

So, the death of Christ is what has brought us near. That's how Jesus accomplished it. That he brings us near by his blood. By his substitutionary death.

For, verse 14. He is our peace. Who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall. So, by his death. There's two results. From one action.

[ 13 : 47 ] From one act of his giving his life by his blood on the cross. Two results. Right? He makes one. He makes both groups into one.

And he breaks down the barrier wall. Okay? So, we're going to explain that in a minute. So, what's the dividing wall? What's the dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles?

What's the dividing wall between God's people and not God's people? Right? So, the Jews call it circumcision.

They call them the uncircumcised. And Paul kind of makes fun of them a little bit. They uncircumcised by the so-called circumcision. As if they had something to do with it when they were eight years old.

Right? Oh, what makes you special? Well, I'm circumcised. Well, how'd you do that? I didn't have anything to do with it. Right? So, he's kind of making fun of them.

[ 14 : 50 ] It's just an outward thing. Right? And circumcision really doesn't mean anything if you don't have faith in Christ. So, just because you went through that act.

Just because you were raised in the church doesn't make you a Christian. Right? Just because you follow the moral law doesn't make you a Christian. A follower. A true follower of Jesus Christ.

Right? So, they're kind of clinging to that. And, you know, we're God's people. Right? We're chosen. Well, what do you have to do with that? Well, nothing. It's born into it. So, it's like, you know, so.

Yeah. So, he's trying to help the Gentiles see the false barriers and what are real barriers. So, he calls it the dividing wall in verse 14.

He broke down the barrier of the dividing wall by abolishing in his flesh the enmity. So, the dividing wall is some kind of barrier, a hedge that separates Israel from the God's people from not God's people.

[ 15 : 57 ] And, it created a hostility. It created animosity of Jews toward Gentiles.

Because they thought they were better. Because they had the law. They had the covenants. And, they had the temple. And, they had the sacrifices. And, they had all these things that made them

better.

And, the Gentiles are dirty. Right? It led to enmity between Jews and Gentiles.

And, that was full in Jesus' ministry. We saw Jesus accepting Gentiles. And, even dealing with Gentiles. And, being gracious to Gentiles.

Right? That they came to him. The centurion and the Syrophenician woman. Right? Coming to him. And, he's graciously dealing with them.

[16:57] And, the Jewish leaders had a real hard time with that. Who are, you know, you're getting defiled here. So, we can see that that's real. I don't know that, I don't really see that today.

I don't really know Orthodox Jews. Right? I don't. But, I think where Orthodox Jews exist, I think that's still true. But, I don't know.

I don't see it. But, we see it in the Bible. But, we can see it if we extend the picture from just, not to Jews, but to just church people. And, outside people.

I think you can still see that. You can see church people who think they're all that. Because, you know, they're all that. Whatever that means.

Right? And, looking down on others. Looking down on either, even weaker believers. Right?

Judging them in that way. Well, I want you to get a picture.

[17:56] So, picture the temple. Okay? Remember the temple. Is a series of dividing walls. So, if we say that's the holy place right there.

The holy of holies. If we say inside there. That's. It's not big enough. But, it's close. The ark is in there. Right? The mercy seat is in there.

And, the priest goes in there once a year. Right? The high priest goes in there. Right? And, then as you further go out. So, you have. Only the high priest goes in the holy of holies once a year. Right?

And, after he really prepares himself.

And, they tie a rope around him. Just in case he goes in and dies. And, they can drag him out. So, you have to go. So, anyway. So, you got that. And, then outside the holy of holies is the holy place.

So, there's the curtain. And, then a little further out. You have the. Right? The table of show bread. You have the candelabra over here. And, you have the incense.

[18:57] Right? So, you got. So, the priest goes in regularly. Twice a day. To light. Make sure the candles are lit. Keep the candles burning. And, once a week they change the bread.

And, so on. Then, outside of the physical holy place. Right? Is the courtyard. So, then you have the court of the priests.

Then you have. Which only priests can go into there. And, then you have a wall. And, then you have. What? The court of Israel. So, the Israelite men can go into this court. And, then there's another wall.

And, then there's a court of. Women. Israelite women. They can go this far. But, no further. And, then way over here.

There's a big wall. And, it has a warning on it. Right? Stay out. Stay alive. Well, I don't say that. But, basically that. Gentiles.

[19:56] Court of the Gentiles. And, that's where they sold stuff. You know, the Jews didn't really care about that court. That's not really holy. Because, the Gentiles are out there. And, that's the place where Jesus cleansed.

Right? That's where Jesus overturned the temples. And, the Jews were treating even that outer court. Of the Gentiles. As unholy. And, Jesus. No. Uh-uh. This is all God's holy.

So, think of that barrier. So, if you're a Gentile. You're way. If God's in there. You're way out here. You're far off.

Even in that picture. Right? So, at least if you're Jewish. If you're a Jewish woman. You can come closer. And, if you happen to be born a male. You can go a little closer.

And, then if you're of the tribe of Levi. You can go a little closer. You're. Then, if you're of the chosen. Chosen. A few of the priests. And, you have the.

[20:51] You're. You're. You're. Uh. John the Baptist dad. He was. Right? He's the one that went. Zechariah went in. Remember? Because, it was his turn.

They rotate. That's our practice. The rotation. Right? And, if you're high priest. You get to go all the way in. Once a year. Once a year. Wow. And, you got to do.

Lots of prep. Before you go in. Because, that is the. Presence. Of God. For Israel. I mean. That's where Moses.

Went in regularly. And, Moses was unique. Because, he wasn't. A priest. But, he went before the. Before the presence of God. Every. Day.

Right? And, he. The space came out. And, it came out. Shining. Right? Remember that? They didn't even have a veil. Because, the shining. With the. Fade. And, he didn't want to look. You know. Like he's losing his glory.

[ 21 : 47 ] So, that's the picture. So, even in the temple. There's separation. And, I think when Paul is talking about that dividing wall.

I think he's talking about that wall. That was in the Israelite temple. At the time of Christ. Before the temple was destroyed. You can't see it now. If you go to Israel.

If you go to Israel though. You can see the Holy Polys. I mean. It's not the built one. But, you can see where it was. And, you can see the carving and the rock. If you're allowed into the dome of the rock. If they'll let you in.

I got to go in. And, you go in. And, there's a. They consider that same place holy. Because, that's where Muhammad did something. And, you go in there. and it's really uneven ground except for one rectangular spot that's smooth.

What do you think that was? It's where the ark's at. And it's the exact measure of the ark. The odd thing was that it was sitting instead of sitting like this, you know, where you see the seraphim, it was sitting this way.

[ 22 : 58 ] And the archaeologists are going, how come it was turned that way? You always think it's in all the pictures, you know, it's the other way. But in reality, it was that way. Do you know why? The poles.

Take the poles out. You put it in the other way, the poles hit the wall. And so did the wings. But you put it in that way, you take the poles out. Just an oddity.

But you can see that. I mean, you can see where it sat. Me and my brother saw the hair standing up on the back of my head. I was kind of like, this is the holy of holies.

Cool. Real. So, there I go again. Not sticking to my nose. But it is interesting. So, there's this whole divide wall.

And it says now in verse 14, he broke down the barrier wall. Right? How did he do that? By abolishing in his flesh the enmity. So, on the cross, he's not only paying our debt, he's destroying a kind of enmity that will bring unity between Jews and Gentiles.

[ 24 : 17 ] So, he made both groups into one, broke down the barrier of the dividing wall. Verse 15, By abolishing in his flesh the enmity, which is what?

What's the enmity? The law. The law. The law of commandments contained in ordinances.

That's what he abolished in his flesh. How could he make one from two separate people? How could he overcome the barrier between God's people and Gentiles?

How could he overcome the hostility, literally, the hostility of the law? The enmity that the law creates. Why is the law hostile?

Why is Paul saying the law is our enemy? The law is against us. How? How? Huh? Like it holds us tight, it doesn't allow us to see the eyes of the Lord.

[ 25 : 23 ] Yeah, and what does it accuse us of? That we've broken the law. See, the law, there's nothing, the law is holy, righteous, and good.

Nothing wrong with the law. Right? The law is perfect, and it's God's standard. Problem is, we can't keep it. Right. So therefore, the law becomes hostile.

Hello. Whoa. The law becomes hostile. The law says you are a sinner. The law says you are cursed. The law says you shall die. I call that enmity.

Hostility. So it's not, the law's not intentional, you know, doing that, but it's just the law's the law. I make myself an enemy of the law because I break it.

That's what Paul's getting at. He abolishes the law. So what does that mean? Abolish the law.

Remember what Jesus said? It can't conflict with what Jesus said in Matthew 5, 17.

[ 26 : 22 ] He said, I have not come to abolish the law. But he uses a different word than in Ephesians 2. I have not come to throw down the law, but to fulfill the law, to complete the law, which is what he did.

He completed the law. He kept the law for us. Only one to keep the law. So, what does it mean in Ephesians 2?

What is the term for abolish there? Doesn't mean, doesn't mean, throw it down, to throw it out with the trash. It means to render it idle.

Interesting. To render it idle, to make it inoperative toward us. It's still God's holy standard. Right. But, the Old Testament law ceases to stand as the immediate authoritative law as it is in the Old Covenant.

We're not in the Old Covenant. We're not under that law. The law still, nine of ten commandments are all repeated in the New Testament. We're still to do those things.

[ 27 : 41 ] Still don't, you know, still don't covet, still don't murder, there's still no, that's all, and how we treat God, same way, no other God's before you, don't take my name in vain, right, those things, those all apply.

Nine out of ten, what's the one that's not repeated in the New Testament? Sabbath. Sabbath. In terms of the law. Sabbath, that doesn't make the, you can have, Paul says, you can do Sabbath every day if you want.

You can do Sabbath, that's, that's your individual choice. But the Sabbath, Christ fulfilled. He's our rest. Right? Now come to me for rest. Right?

Take a Sabbath any day you want, if you want. that's not a moral issue, that's a covenant issue. So, Christ has fulfilled the law, he's kept the law for us.

So, Romans 6 says, we are not under law. Romans 7 says, we've died to the law. Romans 8 says, we've been set free from the law. Romans 10 says, Christ is the end of the law, for us, and for righteousness.

[ 28 : 54 ] He's the end of the law. It's not, it's not what we have to do to be right before God. To be right before God, we have faith in Christ. Christ has made, he has fulfilled righteousness for us.

So, if you're under the old covenant, what do you have to do? You have to keep the law. Right? If you keep this covenant, I will bless you. Health, wealth, and prosperity, the whole thing.

But if you break this law, even one part, I'll kill you. That was the agreement. I mean, that's it. It was an agreed covenant.

That's it. To put it blunt. Right? If you, if you keep it, I'll bless you beyond measure. If you, if you disobey, if you break a part of it, I will curse you.

So, all the ways I would bless you, I will take away from you. And that's what Israel did, didn't they?

They kept breaking, it kept breaking, it kept breaking. And God was gracious. He kept, kept, okay, okay, well, I won't kill you yet.

[ 29 : 59 ] I mean, he was so gracious. But that's finally how they got exiled from the land. They even come back to the land, still not their land. Somebody else had the land. So, and then, and then as Israel rejects Jesus, Jesus says, I'm going to take your temple out.

I'm going to take the city out. In 40 years. 70 AD, he did. Through Titus, the Roman. Even, smashing the temple, the Holy Polies, setting up his Roman standard eagle, in the Holy Polies. Abomination of desolation. All in 70 AD. And hasn't been repaired in 2,000 years.

Still stands. There's no way for the Jew to draw near to God. There's no way. No sacrifices. Well, there is one way they could draw near.

Because they rejected him, there's no way to draw near. So, that's the situation that's got set up. So, let me read.

[ 31 : 12 ] 2 Corinthians talks about this contrast between the Old and New Covenant. When we think about, he's going to talk about the letters on stone, right? The Ten Commandments. So, 2 Corinthians 3, 7 says, Now, if the ministry of death, he's calling the Old Covenant, the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory, that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face, because of its glory, which, that Old Covenant, which was being brought to an end.

Same, same word we have in Ephesians 2. Abolished, or rendered idle. being brought to an end. Will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory?

For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the law condemns us, the ministry of righteousness, the gospel, must far exceed it in glory. Indeed, in this case, what once had glory, the Old Covenant, has come to have no glory at all, because the glory that surpasses it.

For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will that which is permanent, the gospel, have glory. Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face, so that the Israelites might not gaze, on the outcome, of what was being brought to an end.

So the shining glory, on his face, that's fading, just like the Old Covenant, was fading, even in Moses' time, because they couldn't keep it.

[ 32 : 56 ] But their minds were hardened, for to this day, when they read the Old Covenant, that same veil remains unlifted. Now he's speaking metaphorically, because only through Christ is it taken away.

In other words, the veil, they couldn't see the glory of Christ. They couldn't see the glory of the cross. But in Christ, it's lifted. So why does Christ, through the cross, bring an end to the law, in terms of defining our relationship with God?

So that Christ might create one new man. The end of verse 15. That in himself, he might make the two into one.

The only way to bring Gentiles and Jews together, was to make the law ineffective, in defining relationship, because the Gentile had no chance.

Gentile had no chance. The Jew had no chance. Of keeping that law. So he had to, to define a new way of relationship with God.

[ 34 : 13 ] So if Christ has removed the hostility, of the law, why do we still experience hostility? Because we make superficial differences, into barriers, instead of living by peace.

So the first purpose of God's work on the cross, was to create a new humanity, in one body, making the two into one. The second one we see in verse 16, beginning of verse 16, and might, the second part of what he might, what he did by abolishing the law, that he might reconcile them both, in one body to God.

So here's the vertical part. So he, by, by taking out the law, as the definer of relationship, he created a new humanity, and now he also, creates a way for us, to have reconciliation with God.

Which we couldn't get through the law, because we can't keep the law. Which is why, remember Psalm 51, what did David pray? Did he say, accept the sacrifice for my sins?

No, because he said, there's no sacrifice I can bring for those kind of sins. When I break the, the five of the ten commandments, there's no sacrifice for that.

[ 35 : 35 ] So he asked for mercy, right? Mercy. Have mercy. Have mercy. Wash away my sins by your grace, by your mercy. That's all he could appeal to.

And that's all we can appeal to. So reconcile, what does this word reconcile mean? It's an unusual word. It's only, only here in Ephesians once, and two times we see it in Colossians 1.

It, it, it, it emphasizes a thorough change. You know, reconcile means to bring things together, but, but it's bigger than that. It's a, it's a, it's a thorough change to bring, to unite us back together.

Not just patching things up, but a, a complete restoration. The original fellowship was broken by Ed. Right? So that was the original break.

We all inherit his sin nature ever since then. And, and when Adam broke the law, when Adam, well, it wasn't the law then, it was just God saying, don't eat this one tree, right?

[ 36 : 36 ] When he broke that, it revealed that he distrusted God. He did not trust God's word. Because God said, the day you eat of it, you shall surely die.

And the serpent said, no, you're not going to die. So they ate. He rebelled in independence.

And up by that created the barrier of sin, which is what Christ is going to remove. How is he going to do that? Through the cross. He says, verse 16, he might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross.

Another second purpose of the cross, not just creating a church, but secondly, to reconcile us to God through the cross. So that's the whole, you know, forgiving our sins, making us new, right?

Now we can draw near to God. He satisfies the law because he kept the law. He pays the debt of our sin for both groups, for all who believe in him.

[ 37 : 43 ] He takes both to God in one body, a single humanity, one body. He might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross by having put to death the enmity again.

The result, verse 17, is he creates peace. He came and preached peace to you who are far away and peace to you who are near. Preaching peace, literally gospelizing peace, evangelizing Greek peace.

It's translated preaching peace, but it's actually gospelizing. Okay, forget the Greek. Evangelize.

It's the Greek word for evangelize, right? It's not the word for preaching. It's the word for evangelizing peace. Gospel, I like to say gospelize.

Peace. He brings peace. Now, what kind of peace? Not the kind of peace. Jesus said, I don't bring the peace like the world has. Not that external, superficial peace. External peace.

[ 38 : 49 ] I bring a peace that's inside. I bring a peace that's between you and God. I bring a peace that passes understanding. I bring a peace, right, that takes away all the enmity between you and God.

The peace that settles our conscience before God. A peace that cleanses our heart and our soul. That peace.

And the result, verse 18, then because he's removed the law, the enmity of the law against us, and he's brought us together, now because he's died on the cross, he's also reconciled us to God.

So now, look how he says in verse 18, for through him we both have our access in one spirit to the father. Now I have, so remember the original temple.

How do I get to the holy place? How do I get to the father? I can't. Now he's removed all of that. And now I can draw near to the father.

[ 39 : 53 ] In the spirit, through the son. Sounds like a trinity, doesn't it? Father, son, spirit. We're all involved in our relationship.

My relationship addresses the father. Jesus told us to pray our father. Right? He taught us to pray in his name. Right? So to come near to the father in the name of Christ.

Not in the name of Bill. Right? In the name of Christ. Christ has made the way. And with the help of the Holy Spirit. Right? Holy Spirit's involved in all that.

So the father is the one we go to. We go because of the work of Jesus Christ. And we go with the help of the Holy Spirit. Does he not help us pray? You know, Romans 8 talks about how he, when we even don't know what to say.

Right? He interprets for us. Sometimes all I can do is groan. Amen. Right? I learned that recently. Not that long ago. I'm just groan.

[ 40 : 56 ] And it's genuine. And I know the Holy Spirit can, oh, I know what that means. Right? God understands. I don't have to have articulate, you know.

I used to, you know, gotta get it right. No, you don't. You read your heart. Get it out. That's the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit. Who applies the work, helps us, teaches us, leads us, enables us. Right? So what does it mean to have access to the Father? What does that mean, verse 18? We have access to the Father.

We can go to the Father. What are the implications of that? Well, Hebrews 10 describes that. 10, 19, he says, Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places, so he's picturing the temple, entering the holy places, we have confidence to enter the holy places.

How? By the blood of Jesus, okay, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, so he's talking, remember the curtain before the holy of holies?

[ 42 : 12 ] through the curtain. What's the curtain now? That is through his flesh. So Jesus was the real curtain to the Father.

That's just the invitation. When Moses did the tabernacle, he followed the pattern that was shown to him that's the original.

The original is in heaven. So that's just the copy. That's gone. Now, here's the way I go to the Father. That's the veil.

I can go through the veil. Christ's flesh, which opened it up because, why? He kept the law and he annulled the law in regards to defining a way to God.

A relationship with God. Love it. Yeah. Love it. Love it. He opened for us through the curtain, that is through his flesh. And since we have a great priest over the house of God, Jesus, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.

[ 43 : 22 ] When you go to the Father, have full assurance because you go in Jesus' name and not your name. Even if you're filthy and you're dirty, go, you have full confidence. Why?

Because it's already taken care of. It's already taken care of. And I go before him in light. He reveals whatever I need to confess to him.

In full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. So as I read the word, the word pours over me and washes me. Right?

And the Holy Spirit applies that washing as I go before the Father. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering for he who promises faithful. And let us consider how to stir one another up to love and good works.

How? By not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

[ 44 : 25 ] So Christ made a way to the Father. And since he has made a way to the Father, we can draw near. We can. Do you?

Do you? Do you take advantage of your access to the Father? I think we take that for granted. If we remember the temple system and all the work that it took to approach a holy God.

it's no light thing that we can approach in, but the scripture says, come. Come. Come. I want you to come.

I know you're dirty. Come. I'll clean you. Come on. Come. Come. Come. I will give you rest. Do you draw near to him?

Do you enjoy God? You ever think of that? Yeah? What's the first question of the catechism?

What's the chief end of man?

[ 45 : 32 ] To glorify God and enjoy him. Piper puts it, glorify God by enjoying him. I like that. Do you realize that he's always with us?

I mean, drawing near, I don't have to go to a temple. I don't have to go to a chapel. I don't have to, I mean, I think the chapel encourages us when we're together to do that.

But I can do that as I'm driving. Just don't close your eyes. You know, I can do that as I'm walking. I can do that as I'm, huh? Have faith.

Yeah, have faith. Well, I'll walk by faith. It's right by faith. No. I can do that as I'm sitting, right? As I'm lying down, as I'm rising up, I can do that.

Do we? He is our Father. And we come with the help of the Holy Spirit who energizes us, who directs us, who helps us.

[ 46 : 39 ] and that one spirit not only works in us individually, but more importantly, the Holy, the one spirit works in the body collected. It's one thing, I think, you know, we're in an age where we watch, we can watch church.

You know, and that's good. That's, if I can't make it, that's great. In July, we'll be taking some time off and we'll be watching. Be watching. No.

We'll be joining. But it's not the same. And we always feel that when we do the thing, it's just not the same. I love to see the people and I love to get the hugs and I love to talk and I'm always, it's the best day for me.

I'm always so encouraged by folks. I hope you are too. Christ is our peace. He has made peace.

He's created one new body. And as Colossians 3.15 says, let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which you were called in one body and be thankful.

So how important is the church? Is the church important? Gathering together, is that important?

Charles Hodge, great theologian, wrote in 1856, a couple years ago.

[ 48 : 04 ] I think it's still true. He said, the church is the body of Christ. It consists of those in whom he dwells by his spirit. So, to be alien from the church, therefore, is to be alien from God.

It is to be without hope and without Christ to be alien from the church. You believe that? Does God design us to be just me and God?

Just me and Jesus? He designed us to be a body together. He does walk with us individually, but he designed us to be a united people.

To honor him together, to display the light. I can't, I'm not a very good light, but together we're a light. Okay, let's close.

Father, we thank you for your word. We pray, Lord, you cause these concepts to be rooted in us, to help us to understand the bigger picture.

[ 49 : 18 ] It's not just me and God. It's just, not just me being forgiven. That is wonderful. But you have, the cross, the great purpose of the cross is to create a new body of people and to reconcile us to God in one body together.

So grant us, Lord, to think on these things and to give us your spirit to help apply these things in our lives. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.