

The Family of God and
The Church of God
Ephesians 2:19-22

INTRO: The last verses of Ephesians two are addressed to Gentile believers who by the new birth had been brought into the family of God and by baptism had become part of the local church at Ephesus.

Today there is little or no distinction made between the family of God and the church. Many folks say church when what they should say is family. I want to quote from the late H. Boyce Taylor of Murray, KY: “The family of God includes all the children of God in heaven and on earth. In Ephesians 3:15 Paul speaks of the ‘whole family in heaven and on earth.’ This family includes all believers. ‘Ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ’ (Gal. 3:26. . . The church of God is never used of any institution, except of an assembly or congregation of baptized believers in some given locality, e.g., the church of God at Corinth (I Cor. 1:2)” (61). The etymology of the Greek word for church, *ekklesia*, will not allow for a universal church of any kind.

I. VS. 19, IN THE FAMILY.

- A. Verse 19 opens with a negative statement: “Now ye are no more....”
 - 1. Paul takes a look back at the past sinful condition of the Ephesians, back when they were lost (2:1-3, 11-12).
 - 2. There was a time when the Ephesians were on the broad way to destruction; now they are on the narrow way, saved, save, and secure.
 - a. Friend, you are either on the broad way that leads to destruction or on the narrow way that leads to eternal life.
 - b. You are either a Christian or you are not a Christian.
 - c. Aristotle said, “There is no mean between two opposites.” There is no middle ground, no mean between. It is either - or.
- B. “No more strangers.”

1. A stranger is a person passing through a land not his own. They had been allowed to pass through Palestine; but they, the Gentiles, were strangers.
 2. No longer are they strangers to God; now they are strangers to the world, separated unto God (I Pet 1:2; 2:11).
- C. No longer were they foreigners. The foreigner, Greek *zenos*, was one who was not welcome, one who was looked at with suspicion and disdain.
- D. Gentile believers were no longer referred to as strangers and aliens spiritually. The stranger, Greek *paroikos*, was a resident alien, paying taxes for the ability to exist in a land that was not his own. The Gentiles did not fit with the Jews; they were outcasts. Gentile believers were not second rate citizens, but fellow citizens with Jewish Christians.
- E. "And of the household of God."
1. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we enter into the family of God.
 - a. John 1:12.
 - b. Gentile believers Hobbs says, "live in His house as His children" (50).
 2. The family of God is made up of believers in heaven and on earth (Eph. 3:15). We all are at home with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

II. VS. 20, THE CHURCH AND ITS FOUNDATION

- A. Paul goes from the family (vs 19) to the church (vs 20).
- B. The Apostles and prophets were indeed, though in a secondary sense, the foundation of the church.
1. The Apostles were the first members of the church that Jesus built.
 - a. The Apostles had been baptized by John the Baptist (Acts 1:22).
 - b. I Cor. 1:28: "And God hath set some in the church first Apostles. . . ."
 - 1.) This does not mean they were the first believers; it does mean they were the first placed in the organism called the church (Lk 6:13-16).

- 2.) The church is an *ekklesia*, a called out assembly.
 2. Prophets- a prophet is one with a message from God. The Apostles were prophets; John the Baptist was a prophet.
 3. E. Y. Mullins: "Apostles and prophets' refers to the twelve apostles and to the prophets of New Testament churches" (71).
- B. Christ is the chief cornerstone of the church. He founded it upon Himself.
1. Matthew 16:18- He is the rock on which He built His kind of church.
 2. The cornerstone binds a structure together. Our Lord Jesus Christ has bound, united, the Jews and Gentiles together at the church of Ephesus. The Jews would think of the Herod's Temple in Jerusalem and the Gentiles at Ephesus would make reference to the Temple of Diana.
 3. Christ has His kind of church; He is the head of the church.

III. VSS. 21-22, THE CHURCH'S SURE FOUNDATION

- A. Vs. 21, This verse gives us the relationship between the cornerstone and the building, in this case the New Testament church.
1. The cornerstone is all important. "A cornerstone is a primary foundation stone at the angle of the structure by which the architect fixes a standard for the bearings of the wall and crosswalls throughout."
 2. Jesus as the cornerstone is the basis for the whole building, binding everything together, sustaining the weight of the superstructure (Isa. 28:16). He is central and vital.
 3. B.H. Carroll founder of Southwestern Seminary said of this verse: "Each several building or particular assembly groweth into a holy temple of the Lord. That is, by itself, it is a temple of the Lord" (9). They were fitly joined together in that local church. Jews and Gentiles working together for the Lord Jesus.

Each part accomplishing the purpose of God.
Every member of the local church is important.

- B. Vs. 22, “In who ye [the church at Ephesus] also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”
1. Again I quote B. H. Carroll: “What is true of each is true of the church at Ephesus, ‘In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit’ (9).
 2. Christ walks and ministers in the midst of His churches (Rev. 1:13; 2:1). He inhabits His churches.
 - a. The candlesticks are the seven local churches of Asia minor (Rev. 1:20).
 - b. The church is the dwelling place of God today.
 3. God through the Spirit is working in His churches today.

CONCLUSION: Are you in the family? You may be in the family and not in the church. Be obedient and follow the Lord in believers baptism-- the door of the church.

Dr. Cecil A. Fayard, Jr.
April 13, 2008