

EPHESIANS: Before and After Text: Ephesians 2:11–22

Alienation, Reconciliation, New Creation

1. **Before & After photos are helpful... they show the progress of a restoration**
 - a. Like a repair on a House or the Restoration of a Classic Car...
 - b. The power of before and after photos was used in the ad campaign 'Faces of Meth'
 - c. Each arrest showed the gradual self-destruction of using meth and scared people
2. **Eph 2 gives us a Before & After Picture of our spiritual condition:**

What our life was like Before we found Christ and then after...

I. OUR PROBLEM: Alienation from God (v.11-12)

“What each one honors before all else, what before all things he admires and loves, this for him is God.” (Origen, 185-253 a.d)

A. WITHOUT CHRIST

1. **Gentiles were pagan idol worshipers...**
 - a) Which we think of as primitive or superstitions...
 - b) Times Change but People stay the Same...
 - c) There is Just as much idol worship today as there was in ancient times!
2. **Idolatry is honoring or valuing anything as more important than God**

So People still worship idols today — Idols of MONEY, SEX, and POWER...

 - a) Why do people commit crimes? Or Cheat on spouses? Or Lie? Or Commit Murder
 - b) These Motive Fall Into 3 Reasons: MONEY, SEX or the Pursuit of POWER... ¹
 - c) You might think—What about ENVY? —Ask: What Did they Envy?
What about JEALOUSY? —Ask: What were they Jealous of?
 - **Lust of the Flesh – (Sex)**
 - **Lust of the Eyes – (Money)**
 - **The Pride of Life – (Power) (1 John 2:16)**
3. **But Ultimately Underneath it ALL — is the WORSHIP of SELF**
 - a) Selfish Gain, Selfish Ambition, Gratification, Control, Revenge
4. **Our Worship of SELF—Made us the Enemies of GOD (Romans 1:20–22; 25)**

B. WITHOUT CITIZENSHIP

1. **The Parable of Prodigal Son is a picture of this...**
 - a) THE GENTILES are like the younger brother who wanted his Father's inheritance early and then left to live away from God in the world...
 - b) THE JEWS were like the older brother who stayed and worked for the Father, but was bitter and angry about it, when his brother returned.
 - c) THE FATHER represents God who wants both sons to return and be reconciled and to restore the family together in peace and forgiveness.

¹ Crime detective J. Warner Wallace on motives of the heart, The Truth about True Crime, p.52, 55

C. WITHOUT HOPE

- 1. Like the Prodigal Son — When a person turns their back on God...
they give their heart to lies and idols that are powerless to save.**
 - a) If you worship money and possessions, then you'll never have enough...
 - b) If you worship your body and the cult of beauty and attraction then you will always feel ugly. And when time and age start showing, you will die a million deaths.
 - c) If you Worship power and control, then you will end up feeling weak and afraid, and you will need more and more power and control over others to numb your fear.
- 2. There is no Hope in the things of the world...**
 - a) Like counterfeit gospels... that are fake...
 - b) Like a mirage in desert that has no water or shade or protection. (1 John 2:15–17)

D. WITHOUT GOD

- 1. NOT because God did not want the Gentiles...
—but because the Gentiles did not want God! (John 3:19–21)**
- 2. God is no respecter of persons (Romans 2:11-16)**
- 3. The Light entered the world but men loved darkness rather than the Light**

II. GOD'S RESPONSE: Reconciliation by the Cross (v.13-18)

A. JESUS DIED FOR OUR SINS

- 1. Even while we were enemies of God—Jesus died for our sins**
 - a) Jesus death on the cross broke down every barrier separating us from God
- 2. The layout of the Jewish Temple had a series of inner courts that separated
the presence of God from man...**
 - a) Outer court for the **Gentiles**... then inside was a court for **women**....
 - b) Then a court for **Israel**... then for the **priests**...
 - c) Then an inner-sanctuary of the Holy Place... then the Holy of holies...
 - d) where only the High Priest could enter once a year...
 - e) and only with the blood of a lamb for the sins of himself and the people.
- 3. A wall of separation kept gentiles from entering beyond a point [image]**
 - a) Archeologists found 2 of the engraved stones warning from inside the Temple...

Inscription: “No Gentile may enter within the barricade which surrounds the sanctuary and enclosure. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death.”

B. WE CAN HAVE ACCESS TO GOD

- 1. When Jesus—the True Lamb of God—was crucified...**
 - a) When He cried out “It is Finished” (tetelestai) [It is completed... it is paid in full]
 - b) There was an earthquake... and the Veil of the Temple was torn in two!
 - c) The Veil that separated God's holy presence from man—Was Torn in Two!
- 2. Under the OT covenant—only the H.P. could enter into presence of God...**

3. **But Now in the New Covenant—Jesus OUR High Priest has Opened a New and Living Way to God (Hebrews 10:19–21)**
4. **Now Every Christian has access to God through Jesus our High Priest!**
 - a) NOT Through a Committee, or Counsel of Men... or Church appointed priest...
 - b) NOT Through a man-made Denominational power structure
 - c) We Enter Into the Presence of God Through Jesus—our Mediator and HP

C. WE CAN HAVE PEACE WITH GOD

1. **Not because we are perfect—but because we are forgiven!**
2. **Not because we were holy—but because we were MADE holy by His blood**
3. **Not because we didn't deserve the wrath of God's judgement—but because we have been saved from wrath through Jesus (Isa 53:5)**

III. OUR CONDITION: New Creation in Christ (v.19-22)

A. CITIZENS OF THE CITY OF GOD

1. **We are no longer aliens or strangers...**
2. **We are Citizens of the City of God! (Revelation 21:23–27)**
3. **Our Citizenship is in Heaven, even while we are still on earth (Phil 3:20)**

B. MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY OF GOD

1. **When we are baptized into Christ—we are born again of the water & Spirit**
2. **Born Again as Children of God**
3. **Adopted into the Royal Family of God...**
4. **Given an inheritance that we could never have earned in a million lifetimes**

C. THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE OF GOD

1. **Living Stones in a holy Temple of the Lord (1 Peter 2:4-5)**
2. **A Royal Priesthood in serving the living God (1 Peter 2:9)**

Our Old Condition	Our New Condition
Without Christ	In Christ (Eph. 1:3; Rom 8:1; Gal 3:27)
Without Citizenship	Citizenship in Heaven (Phil 3:20)
Without Hope	A Living Hope (1 Peter 1:3)
Without Peace	Peace with God (Rom 5:1; Phil 4:7)
Without God	Children of God (1 Jn 3:1-2)

CONCLUSION:

1. **Lost but now found... Blind but now see... Dead and now alive...**
2. **Born again in Baptism—with a new hope, a new life, a new future!**
3. **Our Citizenship is in Heaven! (Philippians 3:20)**