

# “Live a Life Worthy of Your Calling”

*Outsiders: Breaking Down the Hostility that Separates Us* (2:11-18)

Therefore remember that previously 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 people of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who previously were far away 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 hostility, which is the Law composed of commandments expressed in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two one new person, in this way establishing peace; and that He might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the hostility. And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

## Barriers of Hostility

These last few years may be the most sorrow-filled years of my 38 years as a pastor.

- Politics
- Race
- Masks/Vaccinations
- Socio-Economic Privilege
- Equality
- Clash of Cultural and Biblical Morals
- Denominational Divisions

Sometimes, the very mentioning of such subjects reveals the hostility and divisive power they wield over us

### James 4:1-3

What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? <sup>2</sup>You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. <sup>3</sup>And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.

It Can Be Complex! (Just like it was with Jesus' and His Disciples...and the Early Church)

Peace



Truth

## Breaking Down Walls

### Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

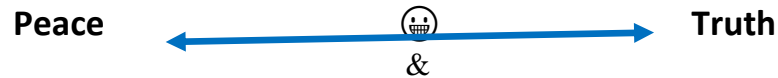
### 1. Humble, Gentle, and Patient

### Ephesians 4:2-3

Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.

## 2. Litmus Test of True Kingdom Growth

- **You can so easily be fooled here!**
  - Winning a debate is not true Kingdom growth;
  - Compassion and Acceptance at the expense of Truth is not true Kingdom growth;
  - **Peace AND Truth:** That's How You Know! (and Yes – it's a lot of hard work!)



- **The Right Question: Is True Kingdom Growth being accomplished, or am I somehow appealing to my own needs, my own desires, my own fears...?**
  - **Breaking Down Walls of Hostility:**
    - Letting Go and Refusing to Take Offense
    - Forgiveness
    - Speaking & Believing the Best About Others
    - Sacrificing & “Emptying” Yourself for Others
    - Considering Others Needs Before Your Own
    - Humbly Seeking and Embracing Truth Even When Painful
    - Sharing Truth Through Listening, Patience, and Kindness -- Making Room for Others’ Journeys
    - Replacing Broken Walls...Restorers, Reconcilers, Rebuilders...

### Isaiah 58:12; 61:4

Some of you will rebuild the deserted ruins of your cities. Then you will be known as a rebuilder of walls and a restorer of homes...They will rebuild the ancient ruins, repairing cities destroyed long ago. They will revive them, though they have been deserted for many generations.

Matthew 5:9 God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.

## Rebuilding \_\_\_\_\_

### Ephesians 2:19-22

...You are members of God's family. Together, we are his house...We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord...(We are) being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.