

- A. *One New Creation and Heavenly Nation:* (v.19): In a spiritual sense, Christians, like Jews, are to be distinctly different. We are given precious *promises* and *privileged* to be God’s children! We are *accepted* in the Beloved and have *access* to God’s throne of grace. We have one *faith* built on one *foundation*, one *Father* and share one *future*. Our true citizenship is in *heaven* which is our *Hope* given by our one Lord. Jesus is our *Head* and we are members of His body!
- B. *One Habitation of God’s Spirit of Unity:* God the Spirit has formed a *new community*, a *living temple* with no walls, a *loving family* who are stronger living and serving together! This is a “mystery of God’s grace”, kept as a secret, now revealed “in Christ”! Our unity is a fulfilment of God’s marvelous plan and a witness to how God wants to reconcile the world to Himself! We must know, grow and show this new, strong reality of a united community reconciled to God!
- C. *One Mission to be ministers of reconciliation:* The church is not just an outward form but the Spirit’s life in us and mission by us. We belong to God and to one another! No human prejudices can survive the gracious work the cross. Any sign within the church of the existence of class, color, race, national or social distinctions of the past is a denial of His work of redemption. As members of one body, we share a ministry of reconciliation and are *sent to all nations!*

Conclusion: Whatever our Christian background or life experiences, without Christ, at one time, by nature we were all objects of God’s wrath (v.3) and each one in need of God’s saving grace (v.8) What creates factions or causes quarrels in churches? Our Christian unity is our essential witness to a watching world. We will not forget: We are Stronger Together *in Reconciliation!*

“*Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*”
Ecclesiastes 4:12

STRONGER TOGETHER
Based On The Book Of Ephesians
Stronger Together In Reconciliation
Dr. Chris Gnanakan

INTRODUCTION

- A. Health pandemic, Social strife. Political division. Everywhere you look, the world is in trouble and experiencing hard times. The good news is we have the hope that people are searching for, and it’s only found in Jesus. We must tell and show our community that we are stronger together through Jesus!

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”
Ephesians 6:10

- B. Drawing from the book of Ephesians the Stronger Together Teaching Series will help you thrive in uncertainty and flourish as one. You will discover how we can be stronger together in a world gripped by chaos. The messages include:

Oct 4	Stronger Together In Jesus
TODAY	Stronger Together In Reconciliation
Oct 18	Stronger Together In Prayer
Oct 25	Stronger Together In Unity
Nov 1	Stronger Together In Purity
Nov 8	Stronger Together In Humility
Nov 15	Stronger Together In Victory

- C. **TEXT:** Ephesians 2:11-22 (Pew Bible/Page 197/New Test.)

STRONGER TOGETHER IN RECONCILIATION

Introduction: We live in a broken, divided and hostile world! Perhaps the greater problem is a divided Church. Pride and prejudices within the human heart has set up social, religious, racial, cultural, economic and political barriers. The Church at Ephesus struggled with Jew-Gentile differences and had obstacles to overcome. Paul addresses the unity issues to show that “none of us are stronger than all of us put together!” “In Christ” God has reconciled Jews and Gentiles, previously hostile people, not only to Himself but to one another, making us stronger together!

- I. ALIENATION:** Godless Gentiles were total strangers to all God’s blessings (2:11-12).
The world is divided into two ethnic groups – Jews and Gentiles. Paul wants Gentiles in Church to “remember” their pagan plight *before Christ* saved them. Formerly, at that time, they were:
- A.** *Excluded* from the citizenship of Israel: By birth they were “far off” and ignorant of the living God. A great gulf was fixed between them and the nation, Israel. They were “uncircumcised”, without the sign of a special covenant status and the “privileged” Jews despised them!
 - B.** *Foreigners* to God’s covenants of promise: They were alienated and “not in on” God’s saving plan for them. They were clueless that the world’s only future hope for in a God-sent Messiah!
 - C.** *Hopeless* pagans without the one true God: Gentiles had suppressed the truth about their creator and deliberately turned to idols and the living God had given them up to vain worship.
- II. REDEMPTION:** “But now” Christ sacrifice put them at peace with God, and others! (13-18).
“But now” highlights the believer’s present position “in Christ”. Jesus’ blood sacrifice dealt with humanity’s main problem, the heart of every problem, the wages of sin – death! Jesus perfectly kept the law, became sin for Jews and Gentiles, and nailed the curse of the Law to his cross:

- A.** *The dividing Wall:* Such a “wall” and its effects was graphically felt at the Jewish temple as it issued a death warrant to all in the court of the Gentiles! Walls of separation between Gentile and God and Jews are broken. All barriers down, Gentiles have full “access” to God so together with Jews they can point people to Christ! They are brought near/into God’s blessing for all nations!
 - B.** *The demanding Law:* Things that made Israel distinct or different from the Gentiles, *the law* had commanded: circumcision, diet, dress, feasts, worship style... Paul categorically states that though *given* by God for a purpose, now “in Christ” they are abolished, *gone!* Human effort is replaced by faith in God’s grace and saved Gentiles are brought near to God, as much the Jews!
 - C.** *The deadly Enmity:* The age-old, irreconcilable bitterness and tension between the Jews and Gentiles has been dissolved. How? Through the cross of Christ: the only Bridge that “reconciles” both Jews and Gentiles. It has both destroyed the hatred and positively made peace! The Cross has put to death our hostility, not just to God but to each other – whatever the other ethnicity!
- III. UNIFICATION:** All “in Christ” are members of *One* Church - God’s *New Creation!* (19-22).
Our redemption results in reconciliation – the common experience, whether a Jew or Gentile, of peace with God that results in goodwill toward all people! Peace is a Person, the by-product of an assuring presence – Jesus IS our peace who broke down every wall to make us one and peacemakers together. We need each other to preach the Gospel of peace that is the only thing that can bring peace to our divided, warring world! We are stronger together since we are...