

# The Objects of God's Unconditional Love

*The Kind of Love God Has for Us*

**T**he book of Hosea opens up to us a revelation of God's love in its unconditional sense. In this Old Testament book we see God's love toward us according to God's definition and thought, not according to our thought and limited view. Also, at the same time, Hosea unveils something of the very character and nature of God. We ourselves probably never fathomed the kind of love God has toward us. Indeed, the example of Hosea's relationship with his wife Gomer, who is a harlot, may cause us to shake our head in disbelief. Yet, that very relationship is a picture of God's relationship with us and the kind of love He has toward us.

God's unfathomable love is toward fallen, sinful man, who in his degraded condition is even described as "a mass of corruption" (the meaning of "Diblain" in Hosea 1:3). In the New Testament book of Romans we again see this same love that goes beyond our human thought. As we mentioned in the last issue of *the Christian*, Romans 5:6-8 tells us that God demonstrated His love to us by dying for us *while* we were in a state of being ungodly, when there was no improvement, no bettering of our condition.

In the same sense, while Gomer is a harlot, *while* she is a failure and a mass of corruption, *while* she is a spoiled piece of humanity — *while* she is in this state —

Hosea is to take her and to love her, and to continue to love her. May this kind of word sink into our inner being, be indelibly etched upon our insides, and stay with us for life. God's love is of this nature, rather than according to our fickle ideas, or our conditional concepts, or our interpreting whether or not He loves us based on our own subjective feeling.

*Examples of Unconditional Love*

You may wonder how a righteous God could tell Hosea to marry a woman like Gomer. Let us answer with the Word of God itself. In the Bible, the Lord made certain individuals examples for eternity of the nature of God's love. One of these examples is Abraham in Genesis 22:1-14. It was to Abraham that God gave a son of promise, Isaac. Then, one day He told Abraham, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering . . ." (v. 2). So Abraham obediently took his son, and the wood for the offering, and went to the mountain. There he prepared the altar, put his Isaac on the altar, and had the knife ready to slay him. Right at that point, the Lord stopped him.

This account of Abraham is also something that cannot be comprehended by the human thought. Why would God tell Abraham to kill his son? The answer is

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that Abraham was a type of God giving His own Son on the cross. In the same way, Hosea taking Gomer for a wife is to be a practical picture to us, because it symbolizes the nature of God's unconditional love. It exemplifies that in the worst condition, we become the objects of His love. It proves to us that God loves sinners!

*The Depths of God's Love  
and the Depth of Our Corruption*

“Love” and “sinners” are both general terms. But when you start detailing the love of God and the condition of God's people who were loved by Him, these general terms take on new significance and new meaning. So let us now look at the condition of the ones who are the objects of God's unconditional love. To consider this point may seem somewhat negative because we must deal with several negative things related to the condition of God's people. But, it is the very unveiling of the rottenness of our condition that causes us to understand the love of God in a deeper and greater way.

You may read the biographies and diaries of some of the saints in the past, such as David Brainard and Jim Elliot, who was a modern-day martyr. When you look at their daily accounts of interacting with the Lord, you see again and again their confessions of their rottenness, of their vileness before the Lord, and of their rebellious heart and disobedience. Yet these are the very ones that we would esteem as loving the Lord so much. However, when you read their diaries, you can see that they realized how deep their corruption was. Yet, at the same time, how intimate, how sweet, and how precious the Lord was to them because of His mercy and because of His precious blood.

The closer something gets to the light the more you see its real condition. For example, the dirt on my hand has been there all the time, but I did not see it. Yet when I put my hand up to the light, I see what has been there all the time. God has completely known us, just as David says in Psalm 139. God sees us and knows what has been there all the time. Many times you may be surprised at what comes out of you. You did not expect yourself to react in a sinful, fleshly way. But God is not surprised at all. He knew what was in you all the time. So, when we get into the light as He is in the light, we

just see what He has already seen and known. And because of His great love and because of the blood, He has not withheld any fellowship or any love. He has not withheld anything of Himself. He just gives Himself because the blood is cleansing us from all sin (1 John 1:7).

On one hand, we see the depth of His love, and on the other hand, we see the depth of our corruption. We are confessing and we are admitting, yet we are also singing and enjoying that we, such vile sinners, can be washed in the precious blood, and that we can know the intimacies of the love of God in our heart. What a wonder! It is good for us to see the depths of corruption within our hearts, so that we will enjoy in an even greater way the everlasting love of God, the incredible love of God, that is continuously with us. From such love Paul had to say he could not be separated.

You have to consider God's love in this way — He has put us in the beloved One. As Ephesians 1:6 says, “He has made us accepted in the Beloved.” According to the Greek, this verse is better translated “He has *graced* us in the Beloved.” Usually you would consider that the word “Beloved” is a noun, referring to a person who is called “the Beloved One.” However, in this verse it is a participle, a verbal adjective. Also, it is in the Greek perfect tense, meaning that the action or state of being began at a point of time and continues to be a present reality right now.

The perfect tense can be thought of as a combination of three tenses — past, present, and future. Particularly, it means that something is a present reality right now. When the Lord Jesus is referred to in Ephesians 1:6 as the Beloved, the Greek perfect tense is used. This means He is the One who is continuously the object of the Father's love. “The Beloved” is not just describing Him as a person, but it is describing a state that He exists in this very minute — the state of being the object of the Father's love. In this universe there is a current, a stream, of the love of the Father flowing, and this current is directed toward and is “hitting” His Son. It is flowing from the Father to the Son, and again from the Son back to the Father in a continuous cycle.

The Son is the Beloved, and He pours the love He receives from the Father back to the Father. It is an eternal “bosom life” that the Son has with the Father. He is “[into] the bosom of the Father” (John 1:18). He is the

unique object of the Father's love. He is in that state this minute. There is a glorious love-life going on right now in the universe between the Father and the Son. And moreover, He has graced us in the beloved One. That means God has put us into Christ — into this One who is in this state. This current of love between the Father and the Son can be likened to the flowing illumination of neon lights. We are all watching the love flowing between the Father and the Son, and between the Son and the Father. Then God put us in the Son! And now we are the objects of the Father's love. He has graced us in this beloved One. Because we are now in the Son, we too are the objects of the love of God.

*The General Condition of the Objects  
of God's Unconditional Love*

Let us look more at what these objects are like that God's unconditional love is directed toward continuously. By seeing the condition of these objects we can have more appreciation of the depths of the love of God. Surely, we have already seen something of the nature of God's love in the example of Hosea's marrying Gomer, "a wife of harlotry." Then we further appreciated God's love as it is depicted in Hosea's continuing to love Gomer while she was committing adultery, while she was departing from him. In our experience there have been periods of time in which we too have departed from the Lord.

*Departing from the Lord*

Usually, departing from the Lord is not initially a big outward departure. It is first of all an inward departing. Of course, we must realize that the Christian life is a life of union and fellowship with the Lord. The normal life is to be one spirit with the Lord, to live Him, to live by Him, to hear His voice and obey, and to stay with Him, drawing from the riches of His grace. Thus, to become a Christian is simply to receive a great capital called "the exceeding riches of His grace" (Eph. 2:7), and then to spend those riches by contacting the Lord, staying with Him, and enjoying Him.

But, what happens characteristically is that the devil attacks us. His goal is to cause us to inwardly

depart from the Lord. And the first or incipient stage of inward departure is simply to depart from the enjoyment of the riches of Christ. It is not a departure from merely patterns or habits we have built up; but it is a departure from drinking at the fountain (Jer. 2:13; John 4:14) and being in fellowship with the Lord. We may inwardly get distracted like Martha in the Gospel of Luke. Our preoccupation may be with good things that usurp us, so that we are caught up with just making a living. It does not have to be evil things usurping us. Like Martha, we may be serving others; yet we have departed from our fellowship with the Lord. But Mary, in contrast to Martha, chose the better part. She did not depart, but sat at Jesus' feet. She just stayed with the Lord.

Again, the normal Christian life is a life of fellowship, a life of enjoyment with the Lord. But what we have seen is that we often get busy. We spend less time with the Lord, and there is less beholding of Him in the Word and in prayer. We neglect the means by which we receive the riches of His grace. Besides our own personal time with the Lord, we also neglect the church meetings, the home gatherings — the corporate fellowship. Whether it be a large meeting, a home meeting, in twos or threes, we do not have much touch in this way. We just start departing. And then backsliding begins to take place in a very hidden, secret, progressive kind of way.

Thus, it is first an inward departing, which causes a breaking down of fellowship with the Lord. As a result there is not a continuous current of divine life coursing through our being — supplying our mind, supplying our emotions, supplying our will — energizing us to choose Him, to turn to Him. Isaiah 7:15 says, "Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good." This prophecy is about Christ. "Curds and honey He shall eat" means He was nourished with the words from the Father. He was living by every word proceeding from the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4), that He would know to "refuse the evil and choose the good." So the Lord Jesus Himself in His humanity needed to live supplied from the Father. Then He intuitively knew what to reject and what to choose. This kind of knowing comes from living out of God as our source. It comes from being in fellowship with Him. Thus, when we lose that supply, what is left is our

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# The Creation of the Corporate New Man

Perhaps no item in the entire Bible has been written about, preached about, sung about, or expounded more than the cross of Christ. And properly so. The death and resurrection of Christ is the life pulse, the very core, of the gospel. Remove the cross, or deny the resurrection, and the power of the gospel has been nullified. Justification, reconciliation, forgiveness, and salvation become empty, vain terms.

Yet it is interesting to note that though the cross is so widely and frequently proclaimed, its *full work* is rarely apprehended. Yes, Christ saved us through His work on the cross. But regrettably, this is where so often our revelation of the cross stops — at individual salvation. We see the cross exclusively in terms of *individual* justification, *individual* salvation. We emphasize the fact that Jesus loved *me* and He died for *me*. These are true facts that no believer would deny. But they do not tell the full story of the cross. His glorious work at Calvary did more — much more. There is indeed more for us to see.

What else then did Christ do at the cross? What, besides my personal salvation, was accomplished? Let us examine the following passage from Paul's epistle to the Ephesians:

Wherefore remember that once you, the nations in the flesh, those who are called uncircumcision by those who are called circumcision in the flesh made by hand, that you were at that time apart from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have become near in the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, Who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition, the enmity, having abolished in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, making peace, and might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, slaying the enmity by it; and coming, He preached the gospel of peace to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near; for through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow-citizens of the saints and members of the household of God.

(Eph. 2:11-19)

It is unmistakable that Paul in this passage is speaking about the Lord's work on the cross. He is describing what transpired on Calvary and what Christ accomplished there. However, we must see that in these verses, he is not speaking in individual or personal terms. He does not say that Christ died for me and shed His blood for me. That truth is presented in other portions of his epistles. But here the terms are corporate. Here he employs corporate identities such as circumcision (the Jews) and the uncircumcision (the Gentiles), the nations in the flesh and Israel, those far off and those near, and "the two." Therefore, we can conclude that, in Paul's thought, the work of the cross had something to do with man in a corporate sense, and not just an individual sense. That is, the scope of Christ's work included man's corporate side as well as his individual, personal side.

## *The Fallen Condition of Corporate Humanity*

Before we address *what* the cross did for us in a corporate sense, let us first ask *why*. Why would the cross need to deal with man's corporate side? The answer is given to us in the above passage — it is because of the middle walls that divide. Adam's race is not one. It is not united, nor is it at peace. Love does not flow between the numerous and sundry groups of people. Although noble attempts to reconcile all humanity have been launched with great expectations, though cries to give peace a chance have been sounded, they have always failed miserably. Mankind is hopelessly divided. We are divided over our nationality — Americans, Russians, Mexicans, Chinese. We are divided over our race — white, black, red, brown, yellow. We are divided over our social and economic standing — upper class, middle class, lower class. This is humanity according to the old man, the old creation — divided countless times over.

This is not all. Yes, man is divided. And yes, there is an absence of love. But worse, actual *enmity* abounds. So often, intense feelings of hatred, racism, bigotry, suspicion, resentment, and bitterness flow between the various groups. Paul summarizes all these feelings when he uses the word "enmity." It is not that mankind has recognized its differences and managed through the years to exercise toleration in a civilized manner. Instead, the outbreaks of enmity, whether seen in small acts of bigotry or large engagements of war, have continued without interruption throughout human history. Regardless of how much we try to instill understanding, peace, and love into each conflict, it seems that, in the end, enmity prevails.

Now, we must note what Paul identifies as the source of enmity. It is what he terms "ordinances" —

those peculiar items that characterize each group. They are the things or practices that distinguish groups from one another and give each its uniqueness. These ordinances are often vigorously promoted and dogmatically held. Of course, the Jews had their ordinances, which consisted of their ritualistic laws and commandments. And perhaps the ordinance that held the greatest prominence for the Jews was circumcision. Just this one practice alone distinguished them from the Gentiles. It was this ordinance that made them so unique. But that same ordinance also generated an enormous amount of enmity toward the Gentiles. In fact, the Jews called the Gentiles “the uncircumcision” — a derisive, contemptuous term. What do ordinances do then? They create bad feelings (enmity). And these bad feelings become the middle walls that divide and alienate humanity.

What then can we conclude? We can conclude that Adam’s race is fallen, not merely in an individual sense, but also in a corporate sense. Divisions, middle walls, alienation, and enmity are as natural to our fallen nature as lying, greed, pride, sensuality, and so on. Such matters are simply “part and parcel” of the old man and the flesh. Hence, we need salvation! We need a Savior! Not only individually, but also corporately. And just as God used the cross to accomplish individual salvation, so He also used it to accomplish corporate salvation.

#### *The Cross Terminating the Old Man*

Now we must ask the question, *how* did Christ deal with divided humanity on the cross? First, let us say what He did not do. He did not try to “patch up” the old man by promoting a better understanding among the divisions. He did not attempt to negotiate a peace accord between different groups. He did not give us a vision that all of humanity is one, and that we should just drop our differences and realize that we can learn to live together in harmony. He did not stir up sentimental feelings about the brotherhood of man. He did not use any of these approaches. Rather, He took the approach of crucifying, terminating, and putting to death! Instead of instilling a better understanding between American and Russian, He crucified American, and He crucified Russian. Instead of attempting to bring black and white together without bigotry, He crucified black, and He crucified white. There was no patching up of the old man at the cross. No mending. No salvaging. Christ simply terminated the whole thing. Hallelujah! And in so doing, the walls of partition were demolished and the enmity dissolved. Paul declares that Christ “has broken down the middle wall of partition, the enmity.” He even says that He slew the enmity. Moreover, Paul tells us that He “abolished in His flesh the law of commandments in ordinances.” In other words, Christ destroyed

the source of the enmity — all the unique ordinances that distinguish groups and generate so much ill feeling. Notice the kind of words Paul uses here — “slay,” “break down,” and “abolish.” These are not weak, wishy-washy words. They are words which indicate that, in relation to corporate division and enmity, He accomplished an absolute, radical, and thorough work on the cross.

Of course, it is obvious that this passage in Ephesians 2 is specifically addressing the great division between Jew and Gentile. This was a high and thick wall. We could say that it was the wall of all walls! Enmity ran deep in both directions. A Jew would not even eat with a Gentile. Conversely, the Gentiles looked down with great contempt upon the Jews. *However, we should not assume that this is the only wall that the cross dealt with.* In other epistles, Paul reveals that the cross obliterated *all divisions in humanity* — social, racial, cultural, religious, and national (Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 12:13; Col. 3:11). Every division known to humanity — past, present, and future — and every trace of enmity felt between this group and that, was utterly and completely crucified at the cross! What a glorious fact!

#### *The Cross Creating the One New Man*

But His work on the cross did not stop here. Christ not only did a terminating, slaying work, but also a germinating, creating work. Yes, He crucified the old corporate humanity, but He also created a new corporate humanity. And Paul refers to this new corporate humanity as “the new man.” Just as the old humanity is summarily referred to as “the old man,” so the new humanity that Christ created on the cross is called “the new man.” How can we describe this new man?

First, we can say that the new man was *created*. It is something brand-new — never seen before. Prior to the cross, this new man did not exist. There was only the old man and the old creation, which God created at the beginning of time, as recorded in the first pages of the Bible. But the creation that Paul is referring to in Ephesians 2 is different from the creation described in the book of Genesis. This creating work occurred at the cross, not at the beginning of time. And this creation is new, not old. At the cross Christ created the new creation. He brought forth the new man — a new corporate humanity.

Second, this new man is *corporate*. It consists of Christ and the church. Christ is the Head of this corporate man, and the church is the Body. Too often, believers mistakenly assume that the new man in the Bible refers to a new self that the individual acquires through salvation. However, this is not accurate. The

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unsupplied self. We are left to ourselves; and the self has only one direction to go, and that is down — into self-centeredness and into the flesh. So we are just left to whatever we are, to however our flesh expresses itself.

So we can see from the Word of God and from our own personal experience, that when we inwardly depart from the Lord and His supply of grace, the result is an outward departure. For example, we may start speaking to others in a cruel way. We may even cheat others and become loose about what we read and what we listen to. When we were supplied we learned to refuse the evil; but when we are unsupplied we just return to those same old ways. Then we are outwardly departing.

### *Forsaking the Fountain of Living Water*

When Jeremiah spoke to God's people, telling them they were backsliders, he was speaking the same thing Hosea was speaking. Their ministries even overlapped to some degree. Jeremiah 2:13 says, "For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns." So we see that first they forsook the fountain, and then eventually they were in idolatry, in all kinds of outward departure.

This was the same situation in the book of Hosea. There, God's people, symbolized by Gomer, had departed from Him. Then Hosea took his adulterous wife Gomer back again, expressing God's unchanging love to His people. If you are a departing one — whether right now you are in the stage of inwardly departing because you left the supply, or in the stage of outwardly departing, doing things you never would have imagined when you were with the Lord — be assured that God has taken you as the object of His love. He loves those who have departed.

If we are departing ones, we simply need to face the real situation. On the other hand, we need to know that God's love is dependable to every departing one. If you have departed for one month, one year, or ten years, the love of God is toward you. All He will say to you is "Martha, Martha." He will call you by your name, and draw you with cords of love. He will speak to your heart, wooing you lovingly to Himself, getting you to look at yourself for a moment and to admit where you

have been. He loves you, and then He loves you some more, until you find yourself saying, "What have I to do anymore with idols?" In other words, His love wins your heart. He is not coercing you. He is not barging in and forcefully saying, "Turn over your whole life to Me." If this were the situation, you would be gritting your teeth and trying to eke out that kind of willingness. No, He woos and wins your whole heart.

How awful it would be to have a marriage in which the husband is commanding his wife to love him: "You have to love me. The Bible says so." The poor wife is under that kind of relationship. That is not love. Love needs freedom because love is self-communicating. Love is giving. "God is love" means that God is giving Himself. He is free to give Himself. In the same way, we love the Lord not by being under a law to love the Lord. But we love the Lord because we are free to love the Lord. That is what love is. And this is the kind of relationship that we need to cultivate with the Lord, even when we are departing from Him.

### *Backslidden*

Now let us look at the general condition of God's people who have departed from the Lord and are "backslidden." The Bible uses the word backslidden to indicate a going back or a slipping back from the normal, proper state. The general condition of God's people who have departed from Him is revealed in Hosea's family. We have already mentioned that Hosea's wife was a harlot and that she continued in that sinful lifestyle after he married her. Then she bore Hosea a son, and God called his name Jezreel, which means "God will scatter." Then she bore a daughter named Lo-Ruhamah, meaning "no mercy," and a second son, Lo-Ammi, meaning "not My people" (Hosea 1:4-9). It is very interesting that when God's love is revealed over His people, it is sometimes revealed seemingly in a way of severity. In some verses in these chapters of Hosea, God's judgment is over His people. But before long, the love of God is again alluring them.

This shows us that He is doing everything He can to win our hearts. He will try from one position to gain an entrance into our hearts and then again from another position. And then if He cannot, He will try in yet

another way. His love is always coming to us in one way or another. In other words, whatever way God could break through our coldness, our hardness, our indifference, it is always a form of His love coming to us. If it is a spanking, that too is His love to us. Who knows which way God's love will come to us!

Some of the names in Hosea are used by the Lord in a double sense. For example, Jezreel, "God will scatter," means the nation is scattered, seemingly no more existing. Then later the Lord says, "I will sow her again as Jezreel" (Hosea 2:23). This time He is not using the name in a scattering sense, but in the sense of sowing. The Hebrew word Jezreel means both "I will sow" and "I will scatter." The first mention of Jezreel meant a scattering and a dispersing, but the next mention meant a sowing in the earth with mercy. Praise the Lord. This again shows us what kind of God we are related to. This is His love. So here we could see Hosea's family revealing something of our condition, and affording God the opportunity to display more of the depths of His love toward the departing ones.

#### *A Decided Point of Departure*

Now, let us look more specifically at the various aspects of a backslidden condition. First, there is a decided point of departure. Hosea 2:5 says, "For their mother has played the harlot; she who conceived them has done shamefully. For she said, 'I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my linen, my oil and my drink.'" In Hebrew, the verb "I will go" indicates a definite, determined decision. It is saying, "I have made up my mind. I have inwardly resolved and determined that I am departing from the Lord and going after my lovers." This is rebellion; and this is the condition not only of Gomer, but of God's people, and of us at times in our history.

Maybe you have been with the Lord for a while, but things have not happened according to your expectation. So you are disappointed and perhaps disillusioned. Do not forget that all of this is a kind of test to you. Then at this point some lover comes along — a material thing, a relationship, your own goal or purpose. And you say within yourself, "I am not going to live for the Lord's interests anymore. I am going to go after my

lovers who will give me my bread and my water — who will meet my needs. This life of trusting the Lord is too insecure. I want to go where there is some security. I want someone who is going to love me and give me all the things that I need." So there is a departing from the Lord.

We would analyze this condition and probably conclude that it is quite rebellious. But in this very condition, God loves you. You have not escaped the love of God. You said, "I will go after my lovers." And He said, "I will come after my beloved," because He has an investment in you. His Son, the Object of His love, is in you, and you will never extract Him out of your spirit. He is there to stay. You may feel like you are in hell, but you are there with Christ in you; and God will seek you there because you are in His Son, and therefore, the object of the Father's love. God has an eternal vested interest in your whole being — spirit, soul, and body — that you would be in the image of His Son. And so God's love will find you wherever you go, even when you have determined to depart and go after your lovers.

This indeed is God's love. I can testify to this kind of love because I have had secret, hidden departures in my own life. But each time, what I have come back to again and again is the Lord's love. There is no way to escape His love. It is so wooing, so attractive, so irresistible. It is an irresistible love that brings us back to Himself. He loves the one who at a certain point has decided to depart from Him.

In Revelation 2:4-5a the Lord speaks to the church at Ephesus, <sup>4</sup> "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. <sup>5a</sup> Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works." In other words, there was a point of departure in which they made a decision to go after something else. So the Lord comes and tells them to repent, to come back. This is all the Lord's love to us.\*

*(To be continued)*

— Bill Freeman

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\* The above article, "The Objects of God's Unconditional Love," is part of the second chapter of a new book, *God's Unconditional Love*, by Bill Freeman. The book is available for \$5.00, postpaid. You may order by writing to **Ministry Publications**, P.O. 12222, Scottsdale, AZ 85267, or calling (602) 948-4050.

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new man is not an individual entity, but rather a corporate one. It is comprised of Christ and all His redeemed people as one glorious entity called the new man.

Third, this new man is *wholly in Christ*. Paul says that Christ “created the two in Himself.” *In Himself!* He took divided humanity — in this context, Jew and Gentile, each existing in their own separate spheres — and placed them both into one sphere. And that one sphere is Christ. The entire new man is in the sphere of Christ. Nothing of this new man exists outside of Him.

Fourth, this new man is *wholly Christ*. It is not just wholly in Christ, but also wholly Christ. Consider what Paul tells the Colossians: “And having put on the new man . . . where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all” (Col. 3:10-11). The new man is a place *where Christ is all*. What a statement! He is all and in all. He is the life, the essence, the content, of the new man. If you will pardon the expression, Christ Himself is the race, the nationality, the religion, the culture, and the social standing of the new man. There is no room for any other race, nationality, religion, culture, or social standing. In fact, there cannot be anything other than Christ Himself. The sense of the original Greek language which Paul uses here is very emphatic. It means that it is *utterly impossible* for anything like a Jew or Greek (racial distinction), circumcision or uncircumcision (religious distinction), barbarian or Scythian (cultural distinction), or slave or freeman (social, economic distinction) to exist in the new man. There is simply no room for these things. There is only room for Christ. He is all and in all.

Fifth, this new man is *one*. There is no division or schism in the new man. There is no more “both” and no more “two.” Instead, there is only “one.” This realization is reiterated time and again by Paul in this short passage (italics added): “[Christ] has made *both one*” (v. 14), “. . . that He might create the *two* in Himself into *one* new man” (v. 15), “. . . and might reconcile *both* in *one* Body to God” (v. 16), “. . . we *both* have access in *one* Spirit unto the Father” (v. 18).

The *both* have become *one*. Where? In Christ. Christ is our oneness. He is also our peace. Our oneness and peace is not something negotiated or manufactured by human effort. Our oneness and peace is a Person — Jesus Christ Himself.

To summarize, this new man is created — it is brand-new. It is corporate, consisting of Christ and the church. It is wholly in Christ. There is no part that exists outside of the resurrected and glorified Christ. It is wholly Christ. He is the life, essence, and content. It is one — having no trace of schism or bad feeling. And finally, it is full of peace — full of Christ Himself pervading our relationships as peace. This is what Jesus

Christ created at the cross. Glorious! What a revelation of the cross! What a wonderful work Christ accomplished on the cross! He not only saved us individually. He also created a whole new humanity — the one new man.

### *Faith in the Accomplished Fact*

So often believers today look to the coming kingdom as the time when the church will finally be one. Or (it is reasoned) if it is to ever happen in this age, it could only occur if some cataclysmic event precipitated it, like a great persecution against the church. Then believers would be forced to drop all their differences and be one. Yet, according to the New Testament, the one new man is not a matter of wishful thinking or of something that belongs only to the distant future. Nor is it a matter that is dependent on a certain dramatic event. The new man is an accomplished fact. It was created by Christ at Calvary. It has already been produced. It is a spiritual reality today. In other words, there is nothing left to be done. It is finished! — just like all the other work of Calvary.

What then is our part? To simply believe the facts of Calvary. To have faith in Christ’s finished work. He created the oneness of the church. We cannot produce oneness by our own ingenuity and efforts, just as we cannot produce a righteousness before God by our good works. The oneness which the church possesses is not something negotiated, arbitrated, or hashed out by means of a human bargaining process. It is not a matter of discussing issues and then compromising. Our oneness is in a completely different realm. Our oneness is an accomplished fact that has already been produced at Calvary. In fact, it is Christ Himself. And there is nothing left to do but say “Amen” by faith to what He has done. Therefore, we must first see that He has already produced the oneness of the new man. Then, we must simply respond by faith.

— Kirk Eland

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