

Remember (6)

Third Verse: *“Remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands, that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one [Heaven and Earth], and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two [Jews and Gentiles], thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both [Jews and Gentiles] to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off [Gentiles] and to those who were near [Jews]. For through Him [Christ] we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”* (Ephesians 11-22).

In Summary, St. Paul calls Christians of Gentile origins to always remember their condition before knowing Christ, how spiritually miserable and poor this condition was from all aspects. After they knew Christ they attained grace and had countless blessings. In other words, he reminds them to always **place before their eyes how and what they were before knowing Christ and how they had great glory after knowing Him.**

This also applies to us. We were of gentile origins, far from knowing God, aliens to the divine blessings, and without hope or salvation. However, when we believed in Christ and entered with Him into the covenant of Baptism and became partakers of His body and blood, we became part of His sanctified family and became qualified to attain great blessings and grace.

Why does the Bible want us to constantly remember this? The Lord may want us to place the following before our eyes:

1- Without Christ, man is **wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked** (Revelation 3:17), has no future, no support, no comfort, nor hope for a better life. On the other hand, **when man is steadfast in Christ, he has everything.** He becomes accepted by God, becomes a sanctified temple for the Holy Spirit, inherits the Kingdom, and attains joy and glory.

2- **The situation of mankind before Christ was full of misery and humiliation.** According to the description of St. Paul in this chapter, this situation was: Darkness, alienation, estrangement, Godless, without a leader, without a shepherd, without hope, and without future. This is exactly the situation of any man who is deprived of Christ. **But when we are in Christ, through His blood that is shed on our behalf, we are in an elevated state full of honor and glory.** We become in a state of: Close to Him, Peace, unity with God, clear vision, freedom from enmity, removing the judgment of death, new creation, reconciliation, love, being in the bosom of God, we become saints, we become members of the household of God, we become a sanctified temple and a dwelling place for God, founded **in Him** and **on Him; In Him** because we became members of His body from His flesh and bones (Ephesians 5:30) and **on Him** because we became built on the foundation of the apostles, the prophets, and Jesus Christ Himself, the corner stone.

3- **The gifts of God reveal His great love towards us. He loved us unto the end; He loved us and gave up Himself unto death for us. We must always remember this love and thank God, praise His name, and give Him glory from all our hearts, day and night, for His Love and His invaluable gifts to us.**

4- **When we always remember our condition before we knew Christ and how it became after knowing Him, we become very cautious not to regress** to the state of sin, misery, shame, deprivation once more. David the Prophet placed his sin at all time before his eyes, with all of its complacency, bitterness and catastrophic results it brought to his family and his kingdom. This was the best way to avoid falling in this sin again or falling in any other similar sins. Therefore, the Bible wants us to remember how horrific sin is, and how graceful Christ is in lifting us up from sin and elevating us. Thus we would never drift towards sin or the devastating paths of evil once more.

5- **The remembrance of the change that took place in our lives helps us to change and grow more.** The spiritual life is continuous growth not changing the course just once. Rather, when we remember the change that happened to us, our longing for more change becomes renewed again. Thus we strive to grow more in the love of Christ and His knowledge and we change, by the work of the Spirit within us, from glory to glory (2Corinthians 3:18).

To be continued.

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