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# THE BEREANS

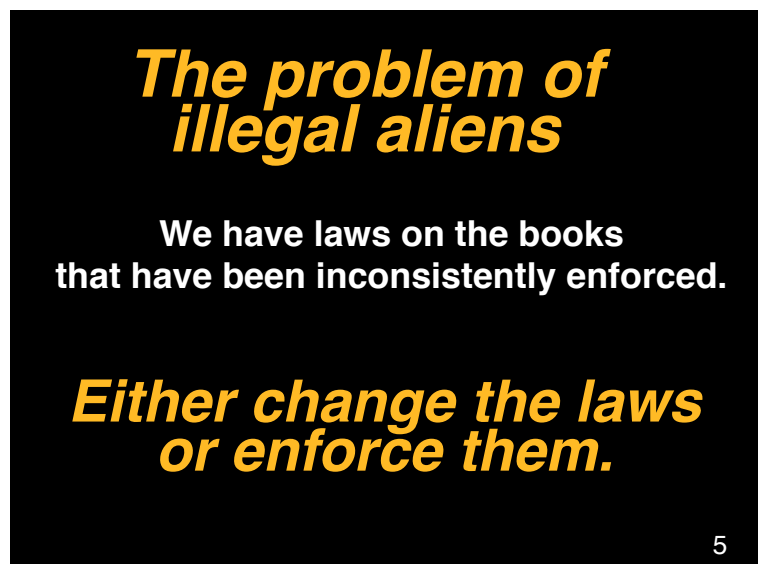
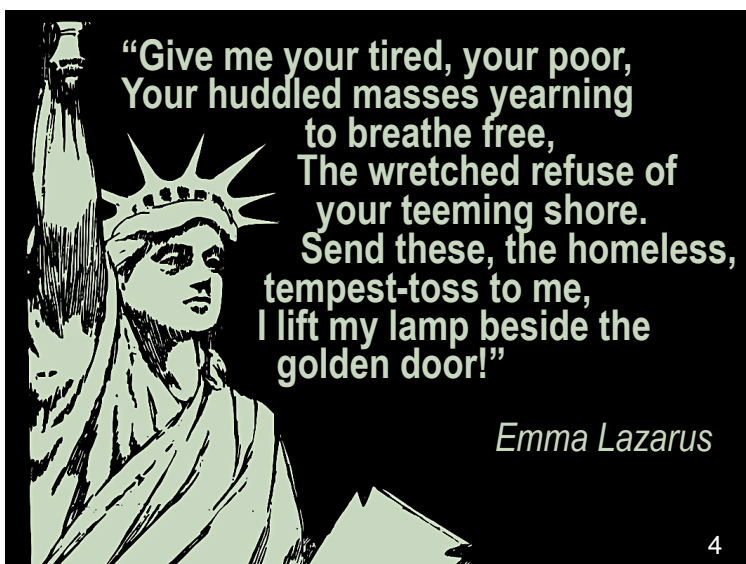
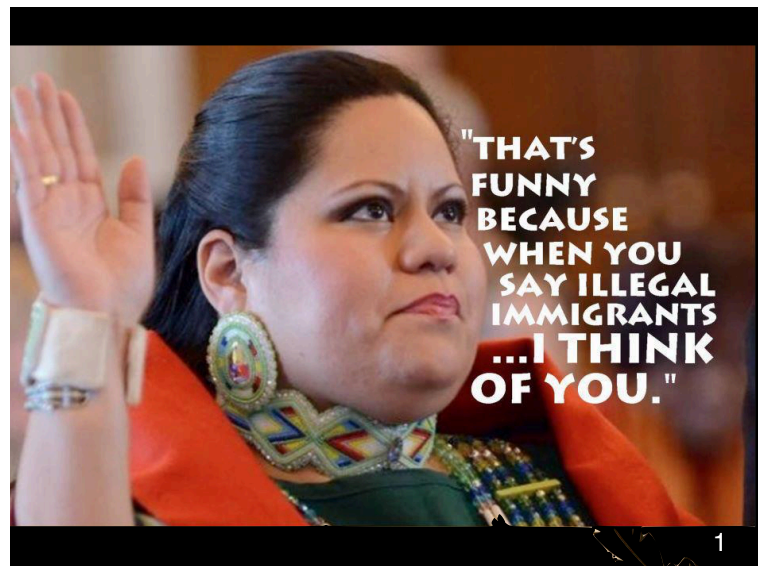
ACTS 17:11

*Ephesians 2:11-22*

*Lesson #11*

*A Gospel for Gentiles*

*10/08/2017*





**All Gentiles were aliens  
to God's promises to Israel  
until the law  
was abolished.**

The church

One Body  
in Christ  
One Spirit  
collaborative  
Welcoming  
peaceful  
hopeful  
Compassionate  
Empathetic  
Caring  
Open  
Free  
Fair  
Equality  
Humane  
One Calling  
educated  
One Faith  
One Love  
One People  
One Church  
One World  
One God  
One Jesus  
One Holy Spirit  
One Kingdom

***Christless, stateless,  
friendless, hopeless,  
and Godless***

**The Wall of Separation**      **The Temple**      **Court of the Gentiles**

**Paul was nearly lynched by an angry Jewish mob who thought he had taken a Gentile (Trophimus) into the temple area.**

**Acts 21:27-31**

9



**Christ?**

“<sup>21</sup> And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach – <sup>23</sup> if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard,”

11



"13 But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances,"

*Galatians 3*

"26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise." (See also *Col.3:10-11*)

12

Promised blessing  
through Abraham  
Genesis 12:1-3

*Genesis 22:18*

"In your **seed** all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,"

**Gentiles**

were included only by becoming Jewish proselytes, now or in the end.

*Galatians 3:16*

"He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "and to your seed," that is, **Christ**."

The kingdom of God

13

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The Body of Christ

The kingdom of God

14

Progressive revelation  
of God's nature



Natural law

(subtle ethic)

Creation,  
Conscience,  
Culture

It tells us that  
God is there.

Mosaic Law  
(superficial ethic)

The 10  
Commandments

It reveals the  
heart of God  
and of man.

Law of Christ  
(supreme ethic)

The life of Jesus

It reveals the Ethic  
of the Kingdom

15

**Spiritual immigrants  
to the Kingdom of God  
were excluded by the Law**

**The law has been abolished  
IN CHRIST.**

**The only barrier now is  
FAITH IN CHRIST  
not the Law.**



16

**In what sense did Christ abolish the Law?**

"15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances,"

- The **ceremonial** aspects of the Law were fulfilled in Christ's death.
- The **covenant** demands of the Law were fulfilled in Christ's righteousness imputed to believers.

**The constraining aspects of the Law remain as a reminder of God's nature.**

17



## Christians should be free from the Law as a covenant



**NOT**  
Above  
the Law  
(Libertines)

**NOT**  
Under  
the Law  
(Jews)

**NOT**  
Outside  
the Law  
(Gentiles)

18

Romans 10:4

“For Christ is the end of the law of righteousness to everyone who believes.”

## How should Christians view the Law of Moses?

Christians are free from the Law -

- as a covenant  
of works  
righteousness



- but not as  
an ethic of  
the Kingdom

19

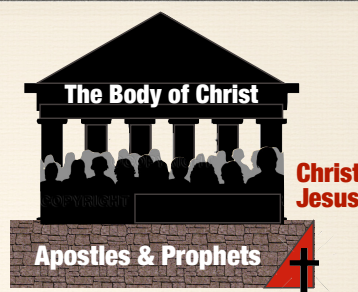
Ephesians 2

“17 And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; 18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, 20 having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.”

- In being reconciled “in Christ” to God we are reconciled to each other.

20

The church is the end game in God’s plan not a means to another end.



Ephesians 2:20-21

“having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord.”

21

love one another (John 13:35 - this command comes 16 times)  
be devoted to one another (Romans 12:10)  
honour one another above yourselves (Romans 12:10)  
live in harmony with one another (Romans 12:16)  
build up one another (Romans 14:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:11)  
be likeminded towards one another (Romans 15:5)  
accept one another (Romans 15:7)  
admonish one another (Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16)  
care for one another (1 Corinthians 12:25)  
serve one another (Galatians 5:13)  
bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2)  
forgive one another (Ephesians 4:2, 32; Colossians 3:13)  
be patient with one another (Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13)  
be kind and compassionate to one another (Ephesians 4:32)  
speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19)  
submit to one another (Ephesians 5:21, 1 Peter 5:5)  
consider others better than yourselves (Philippians 2:3)  
look to the interests of one another (Philippians 2:4)  
bear with one another (Colossians 3:13)  
teach one another (Colossians 3:16)  
comfort one another (1 Thessalonians 4:18)  
encourage one another (Hebrews 3:13)  
stir up one another to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24)  
show hospitality to one another (1 Peter 4:9)  
employ the gifts that God has given us for the benefit of one another (1 Peter 4:10)  
clothe yourselves with humility towards one another (1 Peter 5:5)  
pray for one another (James 5:16)  
confess our faults to one another (James 5:16)

The two greatest commands, on which, according to Jesus, all the others depend, are concerned with relationships, with God and one another

(Matthew 22:36-40)

44% of the N.T. Epistles are about our responsibilities to “one another”

4% is about teaching and preaching

22

## The nature of Christ’s church

- It is a spiritual community (not ethnically defined or restricted) that transcends worldly culture by creating a new culture or society.
- It is a community of reconciliation, uniting (not dividing) people of different races.
- It is in process and not yet fully formed.
- Jesus’ death and resurrection not tradition, the Old Covenant, or subjective experiences constitute its cornerstone.
- The Apostles’ teaching not cultural distinctive define its boundaries.

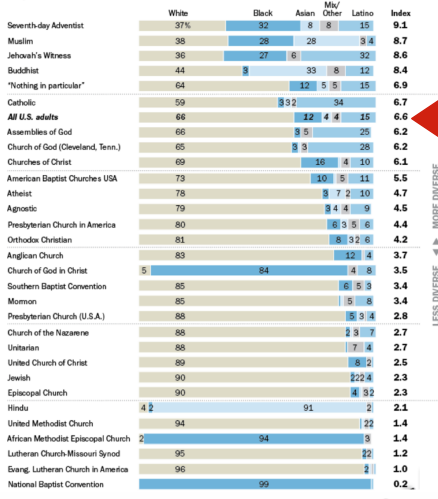


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#### How Racially Diverse Are U.S. Religious Groups?

% of each religious group in each racial/ethnic category, and each group's diversity score on the Herfindahl-Hirschman index



General population

<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/>  
2015/07/27/  
the-most-and-least-racially-diverse-u-s-religious-groups/



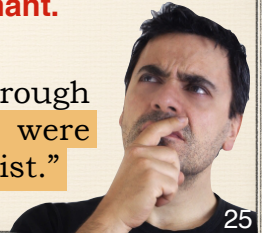
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## So what?

- There is one Body (church), one Spirit, one Lord, and one Faith. **Act like it!**
- Racial reconciliation **in Christ** is a major part of our witness to the world (2:7).
- Our understanding of the Gospel comes from the grace of the New Covenant **not the Law of the Old Covenant.**

John 1:17

"For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ."



25

**Culturally homogeneous churches may grow faster and become bigger, but perhaps at the expense of authenticity?**



26

**How do we bear witness to the Gospel of grace?**

by defying the world's pattern of discrimination –  
**economically, educationally, ethnically, racially, etc.**



27



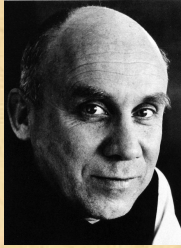
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29



Thomas Merton



"The deepest of level  
of communication is  
not communication,  
but communion.  
It is wordless ...  
beyond speech ...  
beyond concept."

30

***Be somebody  
who makes  
everyone  
feel like a  
somebody.***



31