

A THIRD RACE EPHESIANS 2:11-18

Let's begin reading in verse 11, **Therefore 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, 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, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both 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 and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Lance Morrow is an award-winning journalist for Time Magazine. He wanted to write an article on **"the universal joke."** *Do all cultures and all people share a similar joke?* Morrow reached out to Time bureaus all over the globe for help - from Moscow to Buenos Aires.

Reporters on every continent searched for *THE* joke.

And yes! According to Morrow there is a joke told round-the-world. It's what Americans call "[A Pollock Joke.](#)" It seems every culture has its own form of Polish Joke where they make fun of another people group.

It's the same basic joke, but its target varies. Every culture has a different "[other](#)" that they like to ridicule.

Morrow wrote of his findings, "[The Flemings have Walloon jokes... The English tell Irish jokes, and vice versa People in Tokyo have jokes about the people in Osaka. On the tiny island of Grenada \(133 square miles\) people on one side of the island have a large stock of vicious jokes about people on the other side of the island; and vice versa...](#)" Apparently, the one form of humor that all human beings have in common is our habit of mocking people different than themselves.

Everyone likes to jibe and jeer "*the other guy.*"

I suppose in the first century the Jews told their Gentile jokes, and the Gentiles had their Jewish jokes.

In fact, I brought a good one with me this morning...

Did you hear about [the Priest](#), [the Preacher](#), and [the Rabbi](#). They were debating who's ministry was most powerful. To settle the argument they challenged each other to go out into the woods and convert a wild bear.

A week later they returned to discuss the results...

[The Priest](#) had his arm in a sling and a broken leg. He said at first the bear jumped him, but he doused him with holy water, and the animal became docile.

The Preacher was in a wheelchair. He had several broken ribs and a concussion. He said he had the toughest time getting that bear down into the water, but once he baptized him, he turned as gentle as a lamb.

The Rabbi was on a stretcher, in a full body cast, hooked up to two IVs. The Priest asked, *“Wow, what happened?”* The Rabbi said, *“Well, if I had it to do over again, I wouldn’t have started out with circumcision.”*

I hope any Jews in the crowd this morning would consider that joke fairly innocent, but the jokes told in Paul’s day were far from innocent. They were vicious...

The Greeks and Romans hated the Jews.

The Jews hated anybody who wasn’t a Jew.

The Greeks called anyone who was a non-Greek a *“barbarian.”* It was their name for an *uncivilized brute.*

If you weren’t Jewish it didn’t matter what you were, among Jews, you were disparaging called *“a Gentile.”*

The Jews called the Gentiles *“dogs”* - not Georgia Dawgs - not your cute cuddly pets - but the wild, mangy dogs that scavenged and terrorized city streets.

According to Jews, Gentiles were *“kindling for the flames of hell.”* They had a motto, *“The best of the serpents crushed... the best of the Gentiles killed.”*

It was against Jewish Law for a Hebrew woman to help her Gentile neighbor give birth to her baby since it would be bringing one more heathen into the world...

You think there's friction today between *blacks and whites, Red and Blue, Occupiers and One-Percenters, even Bulldogs and Yellow Jackets...* Any of today's tensions pale in comparison to the hostility that existed in the first century between *Jews and Gentiles*.

Why is it human beings tend to pull apart, instead of come together? We gravitate toward folks who *look as we look, who like what we like, who live where we live*.

As it's said, "**Birds of a feather flock together.**"

Recently the Wall Street Journal reported a study that found most people have a hidden bias toward any person who speaks with a foreign accent. In fact, the heavier the accent the more what's said gets doubted.

The article concludes, "**If it sounds like you're not from "around here," our suspicion is on high alert. Our bias isn't based on character; but on the fact you talk 'different.'**" We even want you to *sound like we sound!*

Here's another study I read this week. Scientists have identified a hormone in the brain called **oxytocin**.

It's called "**the hormone of love.**" When present in the brain it aids in building trust and bonding with people.

But researchers have found it works only with people with which we have an affinity. It doesn't help with random people or strangers. It produces a love that only extends to our "**in-group**" - to "**our kind of people.**"

The people who live in northern Italy have a name for the Croats who live just beyond the border. They call them “Tramontana” - or, “beyond the mountains.”

But the Croats also have a name for the folks who live in northern Italy. They're called, “Tramontana.”

Logistically speaking the Croats and Italians are neighbors. They could be friends and allies. But both people groups stay isolated, and view each other as strangers. They're divided by the Alps. Each group sees the other as “the people beyond the mountains.”

This is how Jews and Gentiles saw each other. And this is the sinful, divisive nature of all humanity.

Yet Paul writes to the Ephesians to demonstrate how God used the breach and animosity between the Jews and Gentiles to prove that Jesus is able to overcome all forms of *polarization* - and bring about *unification*.

Jesus is able to turn the two into one!

Again Paul writes to the Ephesian believers in verse 11, “Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh - who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands...”

Today, most boys, even Gentiles, are circumcised out of convenience or hygiene. But in Paul's day it was *THE* badge of Jewishness. It was the mark of the covenant God made with Abraham, father of the Jews.

And lots of name calling revolved around this very personal and intimate practice. When Jews insulted Gentiles they called them “*The Uncircumcision.*” When Gentiles wanted to insult Jews, it was “*The Mutilators.*”

In the OT God chose one nation, Israel, to be His special people. He made *promises to and covenants with* Israel, that He didn't make to other nations.

God gave His Law to the Jewish people... In Israel God chose *one family* to win *the whole human family*.

Yes, *Israel was God's special people, but they weren't God's only people.* God created and loves all mankind. It hasn't worked out yet, but God chose Israel that through them He could preach the Gospel to all nations. God wanted Israel to be a light - a beacon.

Instead, the beacon became a barrier. Rather than being humbled by God's blessing, Israel grew proud.

The Jews failed in the mission God intended.

Rather than witness to the Gentiles, their self-righteousness became a turn-off - a major obstacle.

The Jews felt superior in the specifics of their religion. They kept the Sabbath, ate koshered foods, circumcised their sons, offered special sacrifices, and celebrated certain feast days - *all unlike the Gentiles.*

These two people groups were separated by custom, and culture, and religion. The chasm was humongous.

And these differences made the Jews *look down* their nose on the Gentiles, rather than *lift them up*.

Their air of superiority infuriated the Gentiles.

Over the centuries the gap grew wider and wider.

Supposedly, the Jews were “the insiders” - they occupied the coveted position - they had the inside track on God’s favor and blessing. Whereas, the Gentiles were alienated. They were “the outsiders.”

Listen to Paul describe the spiritual condition of the Gentiles in verse 12, “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.”

One commentator sums up their status as Christless, stateless, friendless, hopeless, and godless.

Charles Spurgeon wrote, “*Without Christ!... What terrible evils lie clustering thick within these two words.*”

The Gentiles lived a defeated existence. They had no Messiah, no King - no one to lead them out of despair to a better life. No promise of a new day.

Unlike the Jews, the Gentiles had no national fervor. There was no patriotism to rally around. Rome consisted largely of conquered foes, not loyal citizens.

People had lost confidence in the Empire. Rome was so corrupt it no longer was able to stir anyone's loyalty.

Even worse, the Gentiles lacked a promise from God. Unlike the Jews, they had no assurances God was with them. The Roman pantheon of gods and goddesses were capricious dictators who toyed with man. Sacrifices were made to appease the gods, but none of their gods was willing to strike a deal with man.

This made life a crap shoot. There was no certainty. No assurances. Only a murky vagueness called *destiny* or *fate*. The faith of the Gentiles had no object.

And this made the Gentiles hopeless! Historians now refer to the first century AD as "The Age Of Suicide."

The Roman historian, Tacitus, tells of a man who killed himself because he was angry he'd been born.

The Gentiles resented life, rather than see it as a gift.

Paul sums up the despair, "*without God in the world.*" They were a part of creation but apart from the Creator.

And this is the situation of many people today. No wonder they're aimless, rudderless, and hopeless...

Yet to the contrary the Jews had a Savior on their horizon. Though many Jews had yet to recognize Him as Jesus of Nazareth, they believed He would come.

As a people, the Jews felt appropriately proud of their race. They were a special nation. They belonged to a commonwealth born and blessed by the Almighty.

They had a spiritual birthright. God had made them promises, and entered into covenantal agreements.

The Jews knew the Creator who created them. They were not alone in the universe... All this combined to give the Jews a very hopeful outlook. They were the “*insiders*” - while the Gentiles were the “*outsiders*.”

And here’s the human tendency, most “*insiders*” like to stay on the inside, even if that means perpetuating the notion that the “*outsiders*” are still on the outs!

Rather than acknowledge our commonalities we tend to emphasize our differences. We even use confusing, ambiguous verbiage to push ourselves further apart.

Take for example the word “*colored*.”

Who among us isn’t a color? If you were colorless you’d be invisible. We’re all varying shades of color.

Raleigh Washington is an African-American pastor in Denver, Colorado. And I like how he puts it, “*When I was born, I was black. When I grew up, I was still black. When I go out in the cold, I’m still black. When I go out in the sun, I get more black. When I’m sick, I’m black, and when I die, I’m sure I’ll still be black.*”

But I found out that when white people are born, you’re pink. When you grow up, you become white. When you go out in the cold, you turn blue. And when you stay out in the sun, you turn red. When you’re sick, they say, “*You look green,*” and when you die, you turn purple... Now what I want to know is why do they call blacks ‘*col-*

ored people?" I'll tell you why anyone accentuates the color of another person's skin - it's to further separate them and push us further apart.

It's the sinful pride of man to look for ways to draw boundaries among people - whether we do it by age, or accent, or color, or longevity, or bank account, or politics, or musical tastes, or allegiance to a college...

But Jesus died to bring people together, not push people apart. His goal is to turn outsiders into insiders.

Verse 13, **"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."** Jesus has skin in the game. It cost Him to bring us together. Don't scoff at our unity. It's blood bought.

Paul, a former rabbi, uses Jewish terminology. The rabbis spoke of the Gentiles as *"far off"* from God and the things of God. While the Jews were the people *"near"* to God... *more insider/outsider language.*

The imagery speaks of vast distances - a great gulf of separation - two groups as far apart as possible.

Yet imagine, this continental divide suddenly being shrunk. Recall the movie, **"Honey, I Shrunk The Kids."** With the pull of a switch humans became microscopic.

This is what Jesus did to the gulf that separated man from God - and us from others - even the gulf between Jews and Gentiles. **Jesus shrunk the distance.**

The Greek term translated “*near*” means “to squeeze together or compress.” In Christ a spiritual fusion occurs. We become one - squeezed together... with God and each other. We’re as close as we’ll ever get.

First, think about this in terms of your relationship with God. *Do you realize that in Christ you are as close to God as you can be? “But I don’t feel that close.”*

The feelings may come and go, but in Christ, Jesus has covered the distance. He makes up lost ground.

The blood of Jesus blots out our sin. It bridges the gap between us and God. His blood earns for all believers an immediate, and intimate, and uninterrupted fellowship with the Father in heaven.

One of the common prayers I often hear is, “*God, draw me closer?*” We even sing songs with such lyrics.

But in Christ, we can’t get any closer than we already are. We should pray, “*God, open my eyes to an awareness of Your presence. Show me our closeness.*” We’ve been squeezed together with God. I’m sure at times we don’t feel like it - we feel a million miles from God, but don’t fall victim to your feelings. Live by faith!

I’ll never forget the first time I saw Mount Hood. I was visiting my in-laws in Oregon, and we were driving up to the 11,000 foot peak. It was a cloudy day and the visibility was horrible. I had yet to see the mountain.

In fact, I kept staring off into the distance, thinking I would catch a glimpse of it on the horizon. When all of a sudden we turned a corner and bam. Right in front of my

eyes was the largest thing I'd ever seen. It was colossal. The mountain dominated the landscape.

I was close - but I didn't know it. In my mind I went from **far off** to **far out** in a matter of seconds.

And I pray this is what happens to you! That the Holy Spirit opens the eyes of your heart to just how **"near"** you are to God through the blood of His Son Jesus.

But not only that - this is just half our reconciliation. The blood of Jesus also brings **"near"** to one another!

John Reed tells of driving a school bus in Australia. His bus carried caucasian and aboriginal students. These black kids and white kids squabbled daily.

Finally, John had enough. He pulled his bus over and made all the kids exit. He told them, **"From now on, I refuse to allow either whites or blacks to ride in my bus. If you want to ride my bus you have to be green."**

He asked the students, **"Now what color are you?"**

Before they could re-board the bus, John made each kid answer, **"Green."** When all were seated, he cranked up a quiet bus, and thought he'd finally found peace.

That's until he heard one of the kids shout, **"All the dark green kids on one side and the light green kids on the other side."** John had hoped to end their division by interjecting a new commonality - but his effort failed. It had no substance. *Why believe anyone was green?*

But there's more to our unity than mere words and gimmicks. Want substance - how about blood, sweat, and tears? Jesus went the distance to bring us "*near*" one another. Live estranged and you deny His blood!

Jesus doesn't negotiate a peace. He doesn't smooth talk us. Verse 14, "**For He Himself is our peace...**"

The method God uses to break down differences, and bring people together, isn't sitting them down at the bargaining table. It's not you meet me half-way, and I'll meet you half-way... *Tit-for-tat ain't where it's at.*

God doesn't arbitrate or negotiate. Instead He grabs you by the hand, and He grabs me by the hand, and says to us both, "*If you want Me, you got to take him!*"

1 John warns us, you can't say you love God if you hate your brother. The cross has two bars - vertical and horizontal. Jesus died to reconcile man to God (*the vertical*), and man to his fellow man (*the horizontal*).

Whatever it is you're holding on to that helps you justify your separation from that other group - whether your prejudice is racial, or political, or social, or economic... It pales in comparison to what's drawing us, wooing us, beckoning us to all to come together.

Jesus died not just to forgive us of our sin, but to deliver us from that "**Us Versus Them**" mentality.

I don't care how righteous you think your bias might be, it's sinful if it keeps you from answering God's call for unity. Jesus is our peace! And to resist the peace made possible by His blood is to resist Jesus Himself.

Every year the NFL has an All Star game. It's called the Pro Bowl. Top-notch players from the American Conference wear white jerseys, and the National Conference stars don blue jerseys. But the game is notoriously sloppy. And the players put out little effort.

Last year they talked about discontinuing the game.

Here's the problem... A player isn't paid by his conference. His salary comes from his team.

And though the stars wear the jersey of their conference. They wear their team's helmet. Their actual allegiance is to their team. It's not worth risking injury to the team just to perform for the conference.

And let me suggest this is what happens in the church. We come together on Sundays and don the jersey of Christ! Supposedly, we're all on His team.

Yet just like the Pro Bowlers we actually play for whatever special interest holds our loyalty - whether it be my race, or ethnicity, or culture, or professional guild, or economic status, or political party, etc., etc.

This is why Church gets such a lackluster effort. We're wearing a jersey, but our helmet doesn't match.

We might be excited at game time, but because our commitment is so nominal and dwarfed by other identities we fall short of the harmony God wants to exhibit through us... People then blame it on the church, and wonder if church is really worth the bother.

Paul finishes verse 14, “who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation...”

On the cross - by His blood - Jesus paid for our unity.

But then He rose from the dead kicking in fences, and breaking down walls, and uprooting hedges, and taking apart barriers, and redrawing dividing lines.

Jesus was good at redrawing lines...

The Temple in the first century was a court, within a court, within a court. Moving from outside in - there were six courts... *the Court of the Gentiles, and of the Women, and of Israel, and of the Priests, and the Holy Place, and the inner-most court, the Holy of Holies.*

From each court to the next, certain people were disqualified from admission. Until finally only one man, on one day a year, was allowed into the Holy of Holies.

Walls and barriers existed between each court.

Jerusalem archeologists working on the Temple Mount have discovered the wall separating the Court of the Gentiles from the Court of the Women.

A placard hung from that wall which threatened death to any Gentile who dared to enter further!

People get serious about *keeping outsiders out!*

In fact, this was the very reason Paul was in prison.

In Acts 21 he was accused of bringing a Gentile beyond this very wall. *Paul was amazed that he was punished for ignoring a wall God wanted torn down.*

In Christ, *ALL the walls between God and man, and even us and them*, have been razed to the ground.

It reminds me of the three French soldiers who came home after WW2, bringing the dead body of a friend.

They asked the Catholic priest in town to give him a decent burial in the church cemetery. The priest asked, "**Was he baptized Catholic?**" They didn't know.

The priest refused. This was a Catholic graveyard. So the soldiers buried their friend outside the fence...

But when the men returned the next day they were surprised to find the grave inside the graveyard fence.

They wanted to know "***who moved the grave?***"

The priest admitted, "**Last night I felt guilty. I couldn't sleep, so I went to the graveyard and moved the fence to include your friend's grave...**" And this is what Jesus has done - He moves fences! He breaks down walls. He erases lines of demarcation that once divided us.

Paul says what kept the Gentiles outside of God's family was the Jewish Law "***contained in ordinances.***"

Notice, the problem wasn't God's Law per se. Jesus boiled down the whole law into two commandments - *love God with all you've got and love your neighbor.*

The OT illustrated what that love looked like in an agrarian society at that time. The Jews had 613 *“ordinances”* they were expected to keep. But to the Gentiles many of these ordinances were irrelevant.

Gentiles didn't know to keep the Sabbath, or conform their diet, and they had no reason to be circumcised.

Jesus didn't abolish **the Law** - He fulfilled it, by putting God's love in our hearts. But He did wipe out the *“law contained in ordinances.”* And in doing so, Jesus broke down the wall between Jew and Gentiles.

He left no more reason for us to remain separate.

Verse 15, *“So as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace...”* In 1991 the world watched in amazement as the Berlin Wall came down.

That concrete barricade stood between east and west for 40 years. People were shot crossing the wall.

Then in 1989 East Germany allowed it's citizens to visit relatives in the West. And it was the joy of friends and family - the power of unity - that caused Germans to rise up and dismantle the former wall of separation.

Yet the Berlin Wall stood for just 40 years. The wall Jesus abolished, *“the Law contained in ordinances,”* stood for 1400 years. Many people thought it was an unscalable wall. It represented fundamental differences that could never be resolved. Even more than East and West, there was no way Jews and Gentiles could ever hammer out an agreement, and establish a unity.

But what negotiation couldn't do, a Savior does.

The peace we experience in Jesus lifts us above all our dividing lines and walls of separation. It's been said, "Only a new love can destroy an old prejudice."

Verse 16, "And that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity." We're one body of believers since we're saved through One Body sacrificed on the cross.

The cross is how we're *all* forgiven.

The cross is how we *all* come to know God.

The cross is how we're *all* saved and blessed.

The sacrifice of Jesus is such a unifying force, how dare any of us insist on hiding behind our walls.

Notice the word "*abolish*" in verse 15 it means "to nullify or make irrelevant." Christian unity eclipses our differences by giving us an overarching commonality.

The sacrifice of Jesus creates such a powerful bond between us, we're willing to overlook our peculiarities.

If you're a Gentile be a Gentile, if you're a Jew be a Jew, if you're a brother be a brother, if you're a redneck be a redneck, if you're a Democrat be a Democrat, if you're a Republican be a Republican, if you home school home school, if you send your kids to public school then support public school, if you're a Yellow Jacket *be a Bulldog*... no, no, no, I'm just kidding...

My point is we're never going to agree on everything.

It's been said, "The only time two people think alike is when one of them isn't thinking." We'll never be united when our only path is to sit down and negotiate a settlement on every point over which we disagree.

In Christ, we have a commonality greater than all our differences. It's when we surrender to Jesus that we're finally united! It's said, "True Christian unity isn't found at a negotiating table, but at the communion table."

When the Berlin Wall did come down, suddenly there was no more East Germans and West Germans - just Germans. There was now one new, unified Germany.

This is what Jesus did. From Jews and Gentiles He created **a third race**. "*One new man from the two...*" Christians are a new people group - *a new race*.

Jesus doesn't intend to make Gentiles Jewish, nor Jews more like Gentiles. He doesn't make white folk ebonic, nor does He want black folk to become vanilla. Act your age. Have *your* music. Enjoy your tastes.

Jesus just overshadows all the superficial distinctions, and launches one new man, *the Christian*.

In Christ, we're not a hybrid - a mixture - some kind of schizophrenic unsure of his or her identity. We're an entirely new race - **a third race**. We're called to relate to others, and come together, around this new identity.

It's interesting, this was the exact terminology used by the early Church. This is how they saw themselves.

In the second century, Clement of Alexandria, wrote, “**We who worship God in a new way, as the third race, are Christians.**” He coined a new phrase. We’re not Jews. We’re not Gentiles. We’re a third race, *Christian*.

And until today’s Church - *until our church* - sees ourselves first and foremost as “**the third race**” - a new people group. We’ll never overcome the pettiness, and division, and complacency that keeps us defeated.

Don’t wear the jersey, if your helmet doesn’t match.

What identity we embrace makes all the difference...

There’s a herd of red deer that live in the forests of Germany along its border with the Czech Republic.

In 1989 when the Iron Curtain fell the fence between east and west was taken down. The deer were now free to migrate back and forth, but they didn’t. They continued to travel as they had when the fence was up.

Even years later their migratory patterns remained the same. Younger animals - born after the fence was removed - still refuse to cross the former line.

Deer follow traditional trails that get modeled for them by older generations. Apparently, the younger deer have yet to venture off the beaten path. One researcher stated, “**The wall in their head is still there.**”

And this is what we should be on guard against - *the wall in our head*. What scares me are the inbred biases and prejudices that have been passed down to us.

There are walls in all our heads.

We like the familiar. We favor our favorites. And unless we force ourselves to venture off the beaten path we'll never really exhibit the unity that's in Christ.

There's too much today to divide us. Our fractious world makes it far too easy for Satan. There's so many *side issues, splinter groups, special interests, hobby horses* - unless we stay true to Christ's claim on our lives, and not get distracted, we're doomed to fall short.

I love verse 17, “**And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.**”

Notice both Jews and Gentiles needed the Gospel.

It's a one-size-fits-all remedy. For *privileged sinners* and for *orphaned sinners* it's what saves *all sinners*.

In verse 18 we find the ultimate evidence of just how far we Gentiles have come. “**For through Him we both (Jew and Gentile) have access by one Spirit to the Father.**” Everyone, no matter who they are, or where they're from, come to God *through Jesus, by His Spirit*.

Think of two believers in Jesus... one is a Jew - he's memorized Scripture, and spent his whole life adhering to God's Law... the other is a Greek - he's spent his life offering incense to Zeus, adrift on a sea of paganism.

Yet the former idolater has the same access to God as the faithful Jew. *Our only access is through Jesus!*

Imagine, if you got a text message saying that tickets go on sale for Heaven starting first thing tomorrow.

You don't want to miss heaven so at 8 AM you're the first person at the window. But that's when the clerk says, "Sorry, Heaven is sold out." You'd be upset. You'd say, "*How? I'm the first customer to the counter.*"

But here's what happened. God bought out His own show. On the cross, Jesus paid for all Heaven's tickets, so He can give them freely to those who trust in Him.

It's through Jesus we have access to God. The Greek word translated "*access*" also means "*usher*" or "*escort.*" In Christ we're escorted into God's presence.

If you've never really known God. If you've heard of Him, and wondered if He's real, *but aren't really sure...*

Realize access to God isn't granted to just anybody.

It's the blood of Jesus that pays your ticket, and the Spirit that ushers you in. *Have you trusted in Jesus?*

For 35 years Wilfredo Garza lived the life of an illegal Mexican immigrant. Every day he crossed the border to find work to support his family. Garza spent every day looking over his shoulder - often risking his life.

Four times he was caught by Border Patrol.

One day, Garza worked up the courage to walk into the office of an Immigration Attorney. The lawyer discovered Garza's dad had been born in Texas. This meant Wilfredo Garza was an American citizen, but didn't know it. For 35 years he'd lived as a stranger!

And there are folks here today who are Christians. They wear the jersey - *but their helmet doesn't match.*

They act like a stranger - an illegal. Always looking over their shoulder - never becoming a part. Perhaps you're a Christian, *but you're a lot of other stuff too.*

Jesus is serious about our unity. He is our peace.

Don't keep living behind the walls in your head.

It's time we shelf our other agendas, and *live for*, what Jesus *died for*.... Let's embrace **the third race!**

If there's a commitment in your life more important than *our unity* - think again. On the cross Jesus created **"one new man."** I pray you and I will live like it!