Justification has become available to those following Christ through His substitutionary death: Christ has become cursed in their place (Gal 3:10–13), (3) Paul declares in Rom 10:4 that Christ is the τέλος νόμου, “the fulfillment of the Law,” in the sense that He is completing the Law. Christ became a curse for all who learn to trust God, and He continually helps His followers to fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law as they strive to fulfill the ethical portion of the Mosaic Law as illuminated by Christ under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:4). The Law has not been abolished. The Mosaic Law still has a continuing role in the Messianic Age, which is clearly implicit in 1 Cor 7:19b when Paul says that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision are really anything in and of themselves, but instead what is really important is “keeping the commandments of God,” and then just a little later in the same letter, he quotes a commandment from the Mosaic Law as an authoritative instruction for Christ’s followers in the Messianic Age (9:8–10).

131 Regarding justification by faith and not works of the law: (1) for εἰς ἐργαντὶ νόμου, ἐκ νόμου, and ἀπὸ νόμου, See Gal 2:16, 21; 3:2, 5, 10, 11, 17, 18, 21, 24; Rom 3:20, 28; 4:13, 14; 16; Phil 3:9; cf. Gal 5:3–4; Rom 2:12; 6:4–11; 7:1–6; 8:10–14, (2) for χωρὶς ἐργάνη νόμου, see Rom 3:21, 28.

132 God has made those who follow Christ righteous through Christ’s atoning death and His personal righteousness (Rom 3:21–26; 5:1, 9–11; 8:10, 32–33; 2 Cor 5:21; cf. Isa 53:11–12)

133 In Rom 2:27, Paul stated that if an uncircumcised individual was τελοθεια, “fulfilling/completing” the Law, God would consider him as being circumcised. Six major translating teams interpreted the meaning of τελοθεια as “fulfilling” (HCS, NKJ, KJ), “keeping” (NASB, OAB), or “obeying” (NIV). In context, the use of the word τελοθεια in Rom 10:4 matches a similar statement made in 1 Tim 1:5 where τελοθεια represents the desired outcome, the fulfillment, of godly instruction, which is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith. In Rom 10:4, the desired output of God’s righteous actions (Rom 1:16–17) is that Christ would fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law for those who were learning to trust and obey God. There are several additional usages of a form of the verb τελεθεια used in John 19:28, James 2:8 and Rev 17:17 and a form of the verb τελεθεια used in Luke 13:32 and John 17:23 where a completing or fulfilling action is being described.
"Εργα Νόμου

Our quest to understand Paul’s meaning of Christ’s atoning death and His making ineffective τὸν νόμον τῶν ἑντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν is tied directly to a proper understanding of what it means to do the righteous requirements of the Law. Paul and others referred to the righteous requirements of the Law using thoughts such as “works,” “good works,” or “works of the Law.” When Paul uses the word ἐργαον or ἐργα as a shorthand code for “works of the Law,” or when he directly references the Law, he is normally speaking of doing the righteous requirements of the Law. In addition to using ἐργαον or ἐργα to refer to works of the Law, Paul uses these words to point to other referents. Moo evaluated the sixty-eight times that Paul used a form of ἐργαον and ended up categorizing them into three main categories with subcategories as follows: (1) ἐργαον with no ethical connotation in the sense of an action or activity (deed) as opposed to a “word,”134 (2) ἐργαον used with an ethical connotation in the sense of being part of the criterion of judgment,135 (3a) ἐργαον used in conjunction with salvation and the Law,136

134 Douglas J. Moo, “‘Law,’ ‘Works of the Law,’ and ‘Legalism’ in Paul,” Westminster Theological Journal 45, no. 1 (1983), 93. Rom 15:8; 1 Cor 5:2; 2 Cor 10:11; Gal 6:4; Col 3:17, and God’s work in believers (Rom 14:20; Phil 1:6), Paul’s apostolic work (1 Cor 9:1; Phil 1:22), and the work of the ministry in general (1 Cor 15:58; 16:10; Eph 4:12; Phil 2:30; 1 Thess 5:13; 1 Tim 3:1; 2 Tim 4:5).

135 Ibid. Rom 2:6, 7; 1 Cor 3:13a, b, 14, 15; 2 Cor 11:15; 2 Tim 4:14, and that to which believers are called (Rom 13:3; 2 Cor 9:8; Eph 2:10; Col 1:10; 1 Thess 1:3; 2 Thess 1:11; 2:17; 1 Tim 2:10; 5:10 (2x), 25; 6:18; 2 Tim 2:21; 3:17; Titus 1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14) and from which believers are called (Rom 13:12; Gal 5:19; Eph 5:11; Col 1:21; 2 Tim 4:18; and Titus 1:16).

136 Ibid. Rom 3:20, 28; 4:2 (cf. 9:32), 6; 9:12; 11:6; Gal 2:16a, b, c; 3:2, 5, 10; Eph 2:9; 2 Tim 1:9; and Titus 3:5.
and (3b) ἐργαν used in conjunction with the Law. Therefore, it can be seen through Moo’s work that Paul’s use of the word ἐργαν by itself is not limited to “works of the Law.” Many times, Paul denied justification through any type of “works.” From this conclusion Moo states that Paul was not criticizing “works of the Law” per se, but instead was simply saying that no one was going to be justified by any “works” including “works of the Law.”

The “works” that find favor with God are works that compliment the righteous requirements of the Law. Paul says it this way in Rom 13:10, “Love does not work evil against one’s neighbor, therefore, love is the πλήρωμα νόμου, “fulfillment of the Law.” In Eph 2:8–10, Paul has just said that Christ’s followers were not saved εκ νόμου, but instead διὰ πίστεως, “through faith,” in God they were saved by God’s δώρον, “gift,” of salvation—not εκ ἐργῶν, “from works,” but by χάρις, “grace.” Although salvation does not come about by doing works that find favor with God, God still expects Christ’s followers to do the ἐργαν ἀγαθοί, “good works,” that He had prepared for them earlier.

The meaning of ἐργα and ἐργα ἀγαθά is fairly clear in their contextual settings, but some have questioned whether or not ἐργα νόμου is a technical phrase that has a special meaning for its time. Paul uses the phrase εκ ἐργῶν νόμου and a short-hand version, εκ νόμου, to indicate “by doing the righteous requirements of the Law,” which

most translate simply as "through works of the Law." In Rom 3:21, 28, Paul uses a similar phrase, \( \chiωρις \, \varepsilon\rho\gammaων \, \nuο\mu\omega \), to indicate that justification comes separate from doing the righteous requirements of the Law; justification comes through faith. Most scholars agree that the phrase "works of the Law" refers to the requirements of the Mosaic Law, the Torah. Dunn states that one is correct to say that "works of the Law" are what the Law requires of God's people and are expected because of God's grace. Unless the context directs otherwise, when Paul uses the phrase "works of the Law," he is referring to all required works of the Law.

Because the other New Testaments documents do not contain the phrase \( \varepsilon\rho\gammaων \, \nuο\mu\omega \), it is advantageous to examine extra-biblical Jewish writings of the period from 63 B.C. to A.D. 70 to see how this phrase was used in other documents. J. C. O'Neill states that prior to the Dead Sea Scrolls, there was only a handful of sources that even came close to paralleling Paul's use of the phrase \( \varepsilon\rho\gammaων \, \nuο\mu\omega \) such as: (1) 2 Bar. 57.2, "the works of the commandments"; cf. 2 Bar. 48.22, 24; 51.2–3, 7; 61.6; 63.3; 74:1,141 (2) Sir 19.20, "in all wisdom there is πολύς \( \nuο\mu\omega \)," (3) 1 Macc 2.67, "You shall rally

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139 See nn. 145,151–52, 154, and 159 below for references. Also see the write-up regarding \( \varepsilon\rho\gammaων \, \nuο\mu\omega \) above in this chapter under the subheading "Paul and 'Works of the Law,'" in Key Literary Contexts.

140 Dunn, The Theology of Paul the Apostle, 358.

141 Markus Barth, Ephesians: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on Chapters 1–3, Anchor Bible, no. 34 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974), 245, and cf. 2 Bar. 48.15; 67.6; 85.15
to you all doers of the Law,” and (4) 1 Macc. 13.48, “those who do the Law.” The Septuagint does not use any form of the phrase ὑμῖν ἐργάτας. Although there are not many sources that give explicit attestation to the phrase “works of the Law,” one text known as Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah, which has been discovered in Cave 4 at Qumran, has come under close scrutiny because it contains an identical phrase in Hebrew, ma’ase hatorah, “works of the Law.” Dunn states that the author(s) of 4QMMT used this phrase similarly to Paul’s usage of the phrase in Gal 2:16 to sum up his case against those who were insisting on Gentiles following Judaic practices; he states that the authors of 4QMMT used this phrase to make their case that the addressees should conduct their lives according to Torah. Dunn then goes on to


143 Searching the Septuagint in the TLG for any form of ἔργα... to be found within two word spacings of ὑμῖν ὑμῖν did not produce any matches.

144 4QMMT C.26-27. N. T. Wright, “Paul and Qumran,” Bible Review 14, no. 5 (1998), 18, notes that this document known as Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah, 4QMM, has three distinct parts: (1) regulations about the sacred calendar, (2) rulings on several points of law, (3) wider perspectives retelling the biblical story and stating why these works of law are important at the present time.

145 James D. G. Dunn, “Noch Einmal ‘Works of the Law’: The Dialogue Continues,” in Fair Play: Diversity and Conflicts in Early Christianity, ed. Ismo Dunderberg, Christopher Tuckett, and Kari Syreeni, Supplements to the Novum Testamentum, no. 103 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 281. In this section, Dunn parallels the idea of walking in God’s statutes and instructions with the text of Exod 18:20 in which Moses is instructed by his father-in-law, Jethro, to instruct the people in God’s statutes and instructions, so that they would know how to walk, conduct their lives; and cf. Robert Rapa, The Meaning of “Works of the Law” in Galatians and Romans. Studies in Biblical Literature, no. 31. New York: Lang, 2001, 54, who parallels much of Dunn’s thought here and states that in 4QMMT, the expression ἔργα... is used in discussions regarding halakhic instructions and used in such a way that by following “works of the law,” which in this case are associated with purity concerns, an individual is able to achieve righteousness. Rapa sees a parallel usage here compared to Paul’s letters showing that the phrase “works of the Law” must have had some currency in the Judaism of his day. It is important to note that Exod 18:20, which Dunn considers a contextual parallel with the 4QMMT, is not referring to any one type of regulation, it applies to all of God’s statutes and instructions for all aspects of their day-to-day life. This is contrary to Dunn’s general
state that within the context of the letter, it is seen that the type of *halakhah* that is mainly being addressed relates to "the works of the Law" that relate to the Temple, the priesthood, sacrifices, and purity. Dunn notes that the author(s) are indicating that they have separated themselves from the Temple in Jerusalem specifically because those controlling the Temple in Jerusalem were not performing their religious duties in such a way that followed prescribed *halakhah* correctly. Therefore, they were unclean. This led Dunn to see a parallel thought in this document compared to Paul’s letter to the Galatians in which Paul was addressing Peter because of a similar attitude on the part of Peter and those who had come from Jerusalem. When Wright evaluated 4QMMT in comparison with Paul’s letter to the Galatians he decided that one could not compare the MMT’s "works of the law" contextually with Paul’s use of this same phrase in his letter to the Galatians stating: (1) the writers of MMT appear to represent a group of priests who were part of a sect dealing with other priests who were part of the larger Judaic body, but Paul’s converts were not priests *per se*, and they were not under pressure to see things as some isolated sect saw them, and (2) the writers of MMT were insisting on observance of some post-biblical laws dealing with Temple service, but Paul was resisting those who argument, who identifies "works of the Law" to those particular works of the Law that help Jews maintain their distinct identity compared to the rest of the world.

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147 Ibid., 284–86.

were trying to impose all of the biblical laws including circumcision and dietary on his Gentile converts. Wright does see one commonality between the two circumstances in that both the author(s) of the MMT document and Paul are sharing the idea that they were part of a currently inaugurated biblical eschatological age. ¹⁴⁹ There is another similarity between the 4QMMT document and Paul’s letter to the Galatians. In both cases, the phrase “works of the law” means literally doing the righteous requirements of the Law as understood by each group.

When looking at other Qumran texts, Joseph Fitzmyer has found Hebrew equivalents to Paul’s use of the phrase ἔργα νόμου in such writings as 4QFlor. 1.7, 1QS 6.18 (see also 5.21, 23; 6.14), CD 13.11, 1QpHab 7.11, 8.1; 12.4, 4QpPs 1–2.ii.14, 22, 4QMMT, with a significant variant of the phrase in 11QTemple 56.3. ¹⁵⁰ Fitzmyer’s research in these documents has lead him to conclude that the phrase “works of the law” cannot be restricted to include only those works that separate Israel from the rest of the world such as dietary laws, but instead the texts include regulations regarding: (1) sacrifices, (2) impurity of members, (3) tithes, and (4) other things. ¹⁵¹ Stuhlmacher’s research led him to the same conclusion showing that the extra-biblical sources and

¹⁴⁹ Wright, “Paul and Qumran,” 18, 54.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 20–21.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 23; and cf. Kim, Paul and the New Perspective, 59, 68, who has come to the same conclusion. Kim finds it difficult to see how individuals such as Dunn are able to limit the meaning of the phrase “works of the Law” to cultural laws in texts such as Rom 9:11b [cf. Rom 2:17–24; 3:9–18, 27–28] when the text refers to works as “doing something good or bad” as in the foregoing clause (v. 11a), which is contrasted with God’s election through grace (p. 59). Kim’s research has led him to see Paul’s usage of the phrase “works of the Law” as similar to some of the writers of the Qumran community through texts such as 4QFlor 1.7; 4QMMT 3.29; 1QS 5.12; 6.18. Kim concludes by stating that this phrase appears to be a shorthand version referencing “the keeping of the religious and ethical commandments of the Law” (p. 68).
Paul's own work do not allow one to restrict the meaning of “works of the Law” to any one area of the Law without specific contextual influence directing one to do so.\textsuperscript{152}

Gathercole’s research in this area has lead him to agree with Wright’s and Fitzmyer’s conclusion that the phrase ἔργα νόμου or its Hebrew equivalent has normally been used to indicate “doing” the requirements of the Law in general instead of pointing to some particular area of the Law. Context has to be the determining factor. In his new work, *Where Is Boasting? Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul’s Response in Romans 1–5*, Gathercole looks at the Old Testament to see if it could have been used as the background for Paul and others to have used ἔργα νόμου in Greek or some form of מְשָׁה הַתּוֹרָה in Hebrew or Aramaic to represent “doing” in relationship with the Law.\textsuperscript{153} This study brought him to the conclusion that there was a direct corollary between Paul’s usage of a form of ἔργα νόμου and the Old Testament writings such as: (1) Deut 27:26, which reads that an individual is cursed if he or she does not uphold the words that are written in the Law by “doing” them, (2) Deut 31:10–12, which states that the people—men, women, children, and aliens among them—are to be assembled every seven years to hear the words of the Law in order that they may continually “do” them, (3) Deut 28:58; 29:28

\textsuperscript{152} Stuhlmacher, *Revisiting Paul’s Doctrine of Justification*, 43–44, states that: (1) in 4Q398 (=4QMMT*) frg. 14, col. 11.3 the keeping of special cultic regulations is designated as “works of the Torah,” (2) texts such as 1QS 5.21 and 6.18 speak of “works in the Torah” and others such 1QS 5.23, 24 as simply of “works,” and (3) other texts such as CD 20.6–7 speak of “works performed in accordance with the Torah.” Looking at the overall usage of phrases that are similar to “works of the Law,” Stuhlmacher concludes that this expression normally is referring to the behavior of the members of the community in conformity with the Law. Therefore, he draws the overall conclusion that the usage of “works” and “works of the Law” among the inhabitants of Qumran was similar to Paul’s usage in his letters.

\textsuperscript{153} Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting?*, 92–93.
which demonstrate that the idea of “doing all of the words of Torah” is frequently restated, (4) Josh 1:7–8 and 23:6; cf. Josh 22:5, which instruct God’s children to observe all of the Law, (5) 2 Chr 33:8; 2 Kgs 17:34, 37; 21:8; Ezra 10:3; Neh 10:30, in which “doing the requirements of the Law” is clearly in view, and (6) 2 Chr 14:3, Neh 9:34; Ezra 7:10, in which “doing” is placed directly in front of “Torah” producing an explicit meaning of “doing the Law.”

Regarding 4QMMT, Gathercole divides the text into a halakic section (B1–C7) and a parenetic section (C7-end) and states that the emphasis is on “doing” what is good and righteous in God’s eyes so that they may rejoice at the end of time as they face God’s judgment. Regarding other texts from Qumran, Gathercole notes that texts such as 4QFlorilegium (4Q174.6–7) show a close Hebrew parallel to Paul’s usage of ἔργα νόμον through a community’s sending up a pleasing incense to God through their ἱκανοὶ ἔργα τῆς Λόγου, “works of the Torah.” In the texts such as 1QS 5.21; 6.18, 5.23–24; and 1QpHab 8.1, doing the requirements of Torah is

154 Ibid., 92–93. Gathercole states that there are much closer parallels between Paul’s use of the phrase “works of the Law” and the Old Testament’s usage of similar ideas than most scholars give credit; he states that both Paul and the Qumran texts are showing a natural development of an idea firmly established in the Old Testament.

155 Ibid., 93–94. Gathercole’s research uncovered an interesting parallel to the coming Judgment by the author(s) of the text of CD 3.14–16 in which they rewrote Lev 18:5 in such a way as to apply Torah obedience explicitly to a reward of eternal life instead of just allowing the text to state that those who obey the laws of God will live. There are sapiential works such as 4Q416 2.1.6–7 and 4Q417 2.i.11–16 that also show a future reward of eternal life for those who obey Torah (p. 106).

156 Ibid., 95, 104. Gathercole notes that there are some scholars who think that הָיְנָא תּוֹרָהִית is really הָיְנָא הַתּוֹרָה הַיְתָה and therefore translate this text as “the works of praise.” Gathercole parallels this concept with the text of 2 Bar. 67.6 in which there is a word picture of the righteousness of those doing the Law going up as the smoke of incense to God (p. 95). This concept can be found in texts such as 4QS42 1.i.11–13 where obeying Torah is likened to pleasing sacrifices to God (p. 104).
important for both entering and maintaining oneself in their community. In fact, texts such as 1Q22 2.7–10 and 4Q171 2.13–14, 20–21 show that doing the requirements of the Law was also considered important to preserve the community as a whole.

The Relevance of ἔργα νόμου τοῦ ἔργου in Paul’s Letters

Through their research, many such as Gathercole have shown that the majority of the sources examined are using a form of the word ἔργα or ἔργον to indicate the “doing” of the righteousness requirements of the Law. Doing the righteous works of the Law was normal, expected, and normally applied to all of the requirements of the Law as these requirements were understood along the various points of time by individual groups. When Rapa finishes his evaluation of how this relates to Paul’s use of the phrase ἔργα νόμου in Gal 2:16 and Rom 3:20, he states that Paul was simply stating that “being Jewish in a practical sense” does not automatically mean that one is justified. Rapa goes on to say that Paul’s argument in Rom 3:20 is not against the Law per se but instead against justification through “works of the Law.” Paul’s argument

157 Ibid., 95–96. Gathercole notes that in 11QPs 22.10, each person is repaid at the Judgment according to his or her deeds.

158 Ibid., 104.

159 As O’Neill, “Did You Receive the Spirit by the Works of the Law?,” 71–72, evaluated some of the Qumran texts such as 4QFlor 1:7; 1QS 5:21; 6:18; cf. 1QS 5:8; and 4QMMT (4Q394 1–2; 4Q397–99, lines 30, 33, he understood all of the references to “works of the Law” as works commanded by God and considered good.

160 Rapa, The Meaning of “Works of the Law” in Galatians and Romans, 244, uses Rom 3:27–31 to show that Paul was affirming that no Jew was able to boast about a presumed soteriology based on “covenantal privileges” (p. 249).
is broad enough to embrace the soteriological implications of the Judaizers’ argument as shown through Gal 2:14–16; 3:2, 5, and 10 of which “works of the Law” referred to the nomistic practices necessary to fulfill God’s salvific requirements even for Christians. Moises Silva understands Paul’s basic argument against justification through “works of the Law” similarly. He states that the thrust of the argument in Gal 3:7, 29 as well as Rom 4:9–17 is that the Judaizers wanted the Gentiles to participate in the Abrahamic inheritance, and the only way that they understood them to be able to do so was for the Gentiles to become Jews through circumcision and total Torah observance (cf. Acts 15:1, 5). Silva states that although the Judaizers probably understood Paul to be guilty of pitting two covenants against each other, the Abrahamic and the Mosaic, they were missing the point that Paul was not doing so but instead was teaching that inheritance could not come by both Law and promise. Silva states that on the basis that Paul has many positive statements about the Law, there is no reason to think that Paul would have set Lev 18:5 in direct antithesis to Hab 2:4 but instead is showing that although the Law leads one to life it cannot in itself justify. It is also clear for others such as Rapa and

161 Ibid., 244. Rapa goes on to say that Paul’s argument included the idea that the Law was revelatory (cf. Rom 5:20; Gal 3:19–29), restraining, and provided knowledge of sin. From his own evaluation, Rapa states that one must assume that Paul is stating the unspoken in this argument and implying that “works of the Law” cannot be done sufficiently to justify anyone.


163 Ibid., 192. Pitting the Law against God’s promise to Abraham is equivalent to pitting Lev 18:5 against Hab 2:4. Silva opposes those who interpret Gal 3:11–12 in such a way.

164 Ibid., 192–94; and cf. J. S. “Die hermeneutische Antinomie bei Paulus (Galater 3:11–12, Römer 10:5–10),” New Testament Studies 38, no. 2 (1992), 254-68. Even today, Old Testament scholars such as J. S. Vos question how Paul might have put Scripture such as Lev 18:5 (obedience to the Law produces life) and Hab 2:4 (the righteous live by faith) together in agreement with one another. Vos
Wilckens that Paul is not ever disparaging “works of the Law” per se. Wilckens states that God requires a synergistic approach for Christ’s followers in that they are saved by grace and that there is a real demand that they are actively obedient to His will and laws.\footnote{Wilckens, Der Brief an Die Römer, 143–45.} Wilckens is correct in telling his readers that in order to understand Paul they have to make sense contextually of Paul’s statement in Rom 3:20, 28, in which Paul states that no one will be justified by Gesetzeswerken, and his statement in Rom 2:13, in which Paul states that only the doers of the Law will be justified.\footnote{Ibid., 142–43.} But, Wilckens is not correct in saying that Paul is teaching that those who are following Christ must follow the laws of God in order to maintain salvation.\footnote{Ibid., 143–44.}

**Galatians**

As he writes from Antioch to those living in Galatia around A.D. 48, Paul tells his new converts that even the Judaic-Christians have come to realize that no one, not even Jews, can be made righteous before God εἰς ἑργασίαν νόμου  ἐὰν μὴ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, “through the works of the Law except through faith in Jesus Christ.”\footnote{Gal 2:16a.} Paul is theorizes that Paul might have used common Rabbinic or Hellenistic rhetorical techniques to show the validity of the two statements. Vos states that individuals such as Dahl who followed Hillel in their rabbinic pattern of analysis involving difficult texts approached the texts in such a way as to figure out how both texts could be correct (p. 262). When Vos considered how the Hellenistic rhetoricians might have handled what might appear to some as contradictory thoughts, he stated that the Greeks would have reached their goal “wenn man gezeigt hat, daß bei der eigenen Interpretation beide Texte ‘aufgerichtet’ werden (p. 263).”
simply saying that now, in the Messianic Age, it was clear that Jesus’ atoning death was the only path for justification before God for all people including Jews. Therefore, doing the works of the Law without trusting in Christ and what God had done through the Christ’s substitutionary death for transgressors was insufficient for eternal salvation.169

Now in this Messianic Age, Paul says that even we Jews are believing εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἵνα δικαίωθωμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, “in Christ Jesus in order that we may be made righteous through faith in Christ and not through the works of the Law.”170 In Gal 3:2, 5, Paul proceeds to force them to evaluate whether or not their present life in the Spirit, which includes God working miracles among them, came about through past faith in Christ or by “doing works of the Law.” Paul goes on to make the point that if one were seeking justification by “doing the works of the Law” without having faith in the Messiah, they would fall under the curse of God because God’s righteousness required them to do everything that is written εν τῷ βιβλίῳ νόμου, “in the Book of the Law,” without transgressing it at any time (3:10; cf. 5:3). In this letter, Paul is clear that those who are trusting God and His righteous acts on their behalf are in a close association with Christ, which Paul normally signifies by the

169 In Gal 2:21, Paul brings additional clarity to his argument by telling the Galatians that God’s grace given through Christ’s death would have been needless if righteousness could have come διὰ νόμου alone (cf. 3:21). The writer of Hebrews illuminates more fully what Paul is teaching here when he states that the sacrifices for sins that were required by the Law prior to the Messianic Age were never able in and of themselves to atone for the transgressions of people (10:3–4), but Christ’s single substitutionary death atoned for the sins of those who trust God from all ages (10:10–13).

170 Gal 2:16b.
phrase εν Χριστῷ, “in Christ.” Paul states that those who are “in Christ” including the Gentiles (3:14) are in such close association with Him that it is like putting Christ on as one would put on clothing (3:27). Being in close association with Christ means that no dividing barriers are allowed among His followers including the ordinances of the Law that deal with circumcision and dietary regulations. In addition, all of His followers are going to receive the promise made by God to Abraham’s descendants (3:18, 28–29; 5:6). Christ’s followers are justified before God through Christ’s atoning death and are fulfilling the righteous requirements of the Law through Christ by learning to love their neighbor as they love themselves through appropriate actions under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The true People of God are those who by faith are learning to bear one another’s burdens through the leading of the Holy Spirit.

1 & 2 Thessalonians and 1 & 2 Corinthians

In his canonized letters to the Thessalonians written during the approximate years A.D. 51–52 from Corinth, it is noted that Paul is not dealing with a false understanding of the place of the Law in the Messianic Age, but instead, he is primarily dealing with how Christ’s followers should be living as they wait for the Second Coming of the Messiah. In


both letters, Christ's followers are to be doing the ἐργανοῦ πιστεύων, "work of the faith." These works are associated with κόπος τῆς ἀγάπης, "a labor of love," and πᾶν ἐργανοῦ ἀγαθον, "every good work." Christ's followers are ξένοι and although they ἔπαθον, "have been suffering," in much the same manner as Christ's followers who are living in Judea, they are to continue to give God thanks and await the resurrection from the dead knowing that even those who die before Christ returns will be awakened from the dead to rise and meet Christ with them.

In two letters written to the Corinthians during the approximate years A.D. 56-57 written from Ephesus and the province of Macedonia respectively, Paul deals with some fairly self-centered followers of Christ. Therefore, fairly early in his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul told these Christians that their ἐργα, "works" were going to be judged by Christ Himself. This message is repeated in 2 Cor 5:10. In 1 Cor 7:19, Paul states explicitly that being a Jew or Gentile is not what is important to God, what is important is keeping His commandments. A little later in the same letter, Paul reasoned with the Saints at Corinth who were predominately Gentile believers about their failure to support ministers financially, an act that was absurd even by the worlds standards. He stated that even soldiers get paid for their work. Paul turned to the Old Testament Scriptures and pointed out that ministers of the Gospel should be paid as he used that which was written

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174 The phrase ἐργανοῦ πιστεύως is written in 1 Thess 1:3 and 2 Thess 1:11. A form of κόπος τῆς ἀγάπης ἀγαθον is written in 1 Thess 1:3 and a form of πᾶν ἐργανοῦ ἀγαθον is located in 2 Thess 2:17.

175 1 Thess 2:14-16; 4:14-18; 5:14-22.

176 1 Cor 3:12-15; 2 Cor 5:9-10; cf. Rom 14:9-12.
Paul used the fact that the Mosaic Law stated that even animals were to be rewarded for their work and stated that God was more concerned with His ministers than animals.  

In this passage, it is perfectly clear that Paul has not been teaching an abrogated of the Mosaic Law, but instead, he continually uses it authoritatively to teach God’s principles to both Jew and Gentile who follow Christ in the Messianic Age. All who are are Christ’s followers and they must accordingly live out their lives in holy living, which includes godly unity.

Romans

In his letter to the Romans written around A.D. 57 from Corinth, Paul states that “the work of the Law,” is accepted and practiced even by some Gentiles although they do not have the written Law in their possession (2:11–16). Although Paul clearly states that no one will be justified by doing “works of the Law,” he never says that the Law in and of itself is bad, but rather that it is good, holy, and

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177 1 Cor 9:8–11. There is a second example where Paul used the Law as his point of authority when some of the women were apparently causing disturbances during their worship services. Paul used the Law as his source of authority to bring order back to their worship services (1 Cor 14:34).

178 1 Cor 3:1. Paul wanted them to grow beyond infancy in Christ so that they could realize what God desired in their lives; regarding maturity see 1 Cor 1:30 and 2 Cor 5:17 in which Paul states that those who are are a renewal of creation.

179 In 1 Cor 1:10–13, Paul exhorted his addressees to remove any divisions among them, and shortly thereafter, he challenged them to act as Followers of Christ and start taking care of their own housecleaning internally (1 Cor 6:1–7). Christ’s followers are all part of the same body (1 Cor 12:4–27).
In Rom 3:23, Paul gives his addressees the reason that everyone, both Jew and Gentile, needs God’s grace through faith for justification when he states πάντες γὰρ ἡμαρτον καὶ ὑπερβούνται τὰς δόξας τοῦ θεοῦ, “For all have sinned and are continually falling short of the glory of God.” Whether Jew or Gentile, one needs a way to be forgiven for transgressing the righteous requirements of the Law (2:12). In the newly inaugurated Messianic Age, sacrificing an animal coupled with a repentant heart is no longer adequate because God has opened this era by allowing the Jewish religious leaders to sacrifice the Messiah for the sins of all who are repentant and place their trust in Him. Christ is the τέλος νόμου, “fulfillment, completion, of the Law” (10:4). The Messiah’s followers will be fulfilling the Law as they accept through faith the redemptive work of God. Through His own sacrificial death, the Messiah has provided justification.

180 See Rom 7:12, 16; 8:4; 9:31; 10:5. Paul’s teaching on the goodness of the Law can be seen in his personalization of the effects of sin steering a person away from the righteousness of the Law (Rom 7:1–8:11).

181 Rom 3:23–25; cf. 1:1–5, 16–17; 4:7; 5:8–10; 8:13; cf. Gal 6:12–16; 1 Cor 1:13–18, 30; Col 1:19–20; 2:9–15; Eph 1:3–12; 2:13–16. In Rom 6:14, Paul tells the believers at Rome that due to God’s righteous action on their behalf, sin is no longer their master because they were no longer ὑπὸ νόμου, “under the curse of the Law,” but instead living ὑπὸ χάριν, “under grace.” A little later, Paul teaches them that it is because τὸ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ, “the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ,” that they are now free ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου, “from the Law of Sin and Death” (8:2); and many such as William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895; reprint, New York: Scribners’ Sons, 1899, 91–92, have noted that Paul’s use of the word ἱλαστήριον, “mercy seat,” produces an image of Christ and His substitutionary sacrifice replacing in the Messianic Age the very “mercy seat” that God had instructed to have built and placed in the Holy of Holies in the Temple. They go on to say Christ’s atoning death is significant in Paul’s theology (Rom 3:25; 8:3; 1 Cor 15:3; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14, 20; Titus 2:14; cf. John 1:29; 19:36; 1 John 2:2, 4:10; Matt 26:28; Acts 5:30; Heb 1:3; 2:17; 8:3–5; 9:12–22; 10:12; 1 Pet 2:24; 3:18; Rev 1:5). They note that the author of Hebrews generalizes from the ritual system of the Old Covenant that sacrificial blood shedding is necessary to place the worshiper in a condition of fitness to approach the Divine Presence (Heb 9:22). Sanday and Headlam state that the use of the different words denoting “propitiation” is meant to have the same effect: (1) ἱλαστήριον (Rom 3:25), (2) ἱλασμός (1 John 2:2, 4:10), and (3) ἱλάσκεσθαι (Heb 2:17).
for as many as learn to trust Him.\textsuperscript{182} The acceptance of God’s gift of life through faith includes being obedient to the will and commandments of God.\textsuperscript{183} Regarding being obedient to the Law, Paul clearly spells it out at one point with these words, οὐ γὰρ οἱ ἀκροαται νόμου δίκαιοι παρὰ θεῷ, ἀλλ’ οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου δικαιωθήσονται, “For the hearers of the Law are not the righteous ones before God, but the doers of the Law shall be made righteous.”\textsuperscript{184} In fact all will give an account to God for their actions.\textsuperscript{185} For Paul, the Doers of the Law are no longer doing the same things that they would have been doing if they had not entered the Messianic Age. They are not required to sacrifice nor to do the cultural aspects of the Law being \(\text{ἐν} \ \chiριστῷ\), “in Christ,”\textsuperscript{186} but they are required to be obedient toward the Law regarding their ethical behavior toward one another, and they are required to follow the will of God by doing good toward one another knowing that Christ has provided justification for them through His substitutionary death. In fact, those who are “in Christ” will be glorified at the end of this


\textsuperscript{184} Rom 2:13; cf. 3:31.

\textsuperscript{185} Rom 14:9–12; cf. 1 Cor 3:12–15; 2 Cor 5:9–10.

\textsuperscript{186} Paul uses the phrase being \(\text{ἐν} \ \chiριστῷ\) frequently in his letters to indicate those who have accepted God’s redemptive gift of salvation through Christ’s substitutionary death for transgressors of the Law. In Romans, Paul uses this phrase to indicate that believers are in a “spiritually close association with Christ,” which means that they are now free of the bondage due to sin due to their close association to God as His sons through their close association with Christ (Rom 3:24–26; 6:11, 23; 8:1–2, 14–17, 39).
age with Christ as sons of God.\(^{187}\) As he started bringing his letter to a close in Rom 13:8, Paul put it this way, \textit{μηδεν \ οφειλετε \ ει \ μη \ το \ άλληλους \ \γαπαν \ γαρ \ άγαπων \ τον \ \epsilon\tauερον \ νομον \ πεπληρωκεν}, “And you (pl.) do not owe anything to anyone except that you are to love one another; for the one who is loving another has fulfilled the Law.” Immediately in the next verse, Paul exhorts the Romans to follow moral guidelines that are identical to some of the Ten Commandments given on Mount Sinai. Then Paul concludes this section by saying in Rom 13:10, \textit{η \ \αγαπη \ τω \ πλησιαν \ κακων \ ουκ \ εργαζεται \ πεπληρωμα \ ουν \ νομον \ η \ \αγαπη}, “Love (the one who loves) is not working evil toward the one who is near (your neighbor); therefore, love is the fulfillment of the Law.”

\textit{Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon}

As he writes from his imprisonment in Rome around A.D. 62,\(^{188}\) Paul teaches the believers at Philippi to do their work “in Christ” with great humility considering how Christ humbled Himself in order to serve humanity.\(^{189}\) In his use of the phrase \textit{ευ \ \Χριστω} in 2:1–2, Paul gives some of the desired attributes of those who are in close association with Christ by asking the Philippians to fulfill his joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, and being united in life. It is in this letter that Paul tells his

\(^{187}\) Rom 8:1, 14–17. Cf. part of Jesus’ prayer before going to the Cross as recorded in John 17:20–23 regarding the coming glory of those who follow Christ faithfully.

\(^{188}\) Phil 1:12–14; 4:22.

\(^{189}\) Phil 2:5–8, 12–16; 3:20–21. Paul uses the phrase \textit{ευ \ \Χριστω} frequently in this letter (1:1, 13, 26; 2:1, 5; 3:3, 14; 4:7, 19, 21).
addressees that although he was formerly walking as a Pharisee κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τῆν ἐν νόμῳ, “according to the righteousness that is in the Law,” he gladly gave it all up μὴ ἔχον αὐτὸ δικαιοσύνην ἐκ νόμου, “not holding onto his righteousness derived from (works of) the Law,” counting it all as rubbish in order that he might gain the righteousness that comes from God, which is ἐν τῇ πίστεί, “based on faith.” ¹⁹⁰

In another prison letter written approximately the same time as Philippians, Paul writes to Christ’s followers in Colossae encouraging them through his teaching that it is in Christ through whom redemption is available, the forgiveness of sins. Paul along with others are proclaiming the Gospel in order to present as many as possible τέλειον ἐν Χριστῷ, “complete in Christ.” ¹⁹¹ Instead of doing works that are against God and man, ¹⁹² Christ’s followers are to do ἔργα ἀγαθά in the name of the Lord Jesus in a heartily manner. ¹⁹³ In addition to stating that Christ’s followers are to do good works, Paul’s letter to the Colossians gives possible insight into Eph 2:15 because Paul uses a deponent verb, δόγματιζομαι, “to obey rules and regulations,” in Col 2:20. In the context of this letter Paul is asking his addressees why they are listening to some who want them to engage in self-abasement, worship of angels, or follow the regulations pertaining to: (1) food or drink, (2) festivals and new moons, and (3) the Sabbath, which were mere foreshadows of

¹⁹⁰ Phil 3:2–11.
¹⁹¹ Col 1:13–14, 28.
¹⁹² Col 1:21. Paul tells the Colossians that now that they are following Christ they are no longer to be engaged ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς πονηροῖς, “in evil works/deeds.”
¹⁹³ Col 1:10; 3:17, 23.
what was to come.\textsuperscript{194} In his letter to the Colossians, Paul is relating specific δόγματα that relate directly to the Law to regulations that Christ’s followers no longer need to follow. Regarding the Sabbath, it is known historically that the Early Church moved their day of rest and worship to the first day of the week in honor of their Lord’s resurrection; they followed the intent of the Law, but they did not follow the letter of the Law.

In yet another prison letter written approximately the same time called Ephesians, Paul addresses some of Christ’s followers in Asia using the same terminology, ἐν Χριστῷ, to denote their close association with Christ.\textsuperscript{195} The mystery of God has been revealed through God’s redeeming work through Christ. Everyone in close association with Christ, both Jew and Gentile, are joint heirs of God’s promise to Abraham.\textsuperscript{196} For those in Christ, Jesus’ death on the Cross has effectively removed the ongoing hostility that existed between the Jew and Gentile.\textsuperscript{197} In the coming ages, the surpassing richness of God’s grace will be shown to those who are “in Christ” (2:7). God Himself is also in a very close relationship with Christ. With this in mind, Christ’s followers are to be kind, tender hearted, and forgiving toward one another (4:32). In reality, Christ’s followers are God's ποιήμα, “workmanship,” κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ άπλοι ἀγαθοῖς, “having been created in Christ Jesus for good works.”\textsuperscript{198} Although “good works” are...

\textsuperscript{194} Col 2:16–17; cf. 1 Tim 4:1–5.
\textsuperscript{195} Eph 1:1, 3, 10, 12, 20; 2:6, 7, 10, 13; 3:6, 4:32.
\textsuperscript{196} Eph 3:6. This is made possible by being ἐν Χριστῷ.
\textsuperscript{197} Eph 2:13–16.
\textsuperscript{198} Eph 2:10.
expected, no one will be saved by them because salvation is a gift of God (2:8–9).

Christ’s followers are definitely not to participate in τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς ἀκάρποις τοῖς ἐκτὸς, “the unfruitful works that come forth from darkness.”

In his letter to Philemon, Paul reminds Philemon of his close association and his ministerial position “in Christ,” and then asks him to treat Onesimus, his runaway slave, as his ἀδελφὸν ἄραππητόν, “beloved brother,” because of their mutual close relationship with Christ (16). This is a good example where Philemon is asked by Paul to think beyond his traditional view of slaves and realize that they were all part of the same family, they are all sons of God (cf. Gal 3:26–29).

The Pastoral Letters

In Titus, Paul does not use the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ, but it is clear that Christ gave Himself on the Cross to redeem those who were zealous to do καλὰ ἔργα, “good works.” This letter shows that although “good works” are to be performed by Christ’s followers, no one ἐσωσεν, “has been saved,” οὐκ ἔχει ἔργων, “through the doing of those works,” but instead according to God’s mercy. In his two letters to Timothy, Paul has made it clear that salvation and eternal glory have been made possible through Christ for

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199 Eph 5:11.
200 Phlm 8, 20.
201 Titus 2:7, 14; 3:1, 7–8, 14.
202 Titus 3:5.
those who are “in Christ.”²⁰³ For those who are ἐν Χριστῷ, the Mosaic Law is good and still being taught.²⁰⁴ In fact πᾶσα γραφή, “all Scripture,” is θεότερον, “God breathed,” and profitable for the Saints to study and live their lives by so that they may be prepared for πᾶν ἐργον ἀγαθόν, “every good work,” that God has prepared for them.²⁰⁵ No one has been called κατὰ τὰ ἐργα, “according to works,”²⁰⁶ but all are to be prepared for πᾶν ἐργον ἀγαθόν, “every good work.”²⁰⁷

A Proposed Meaning for τὸν Νόμον τῶν Ἔντολῶν ἐν Δόγμασιν Καταργήσας

The research laid out above reveals that Paul normally used the word νόμος to denote the commandments of the Mosaic Law. In addition, the research above shows that throughout his letters, Paul consistently used phrases such as ἐξ ἐργῶν νόμου, “out of works of the Law,” ἐκ νόμου, a shorthand version for “out of works of the Law,” or διὰ νόμου, “through (works of) the Law,” to denote any works that were required by a good, holy, and righteous Law. This Law contained commandments, statutes, and ordinances given to Israel by God through His communication with Moses on Mount Sinai. These phrases in and of themselves were not denoting any specific subgroup of the Law such as

²⁰³ 1 Tim 1:14–15; 2 Tim 1:8–9; 2:8–10; 3:14–17.
²⁰⁴ 1 Tim 1:5–8.
²⁰⁶ 2 Tim 1:9.
the cultural regulations for Israel unless context directed otherwise. So, what did Paul mean when he said that Christ had made the τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν ineffective?

If Paul had limited the wording to τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν, it would have been fairly clear that Paul was using τῶν ἐντολῶν as a descriptive genitive with τὸν νόμον to remove any doubt that he was talking specifically about the commandments of the Mosaic Law, but why did he add the prepositional phrase ἐν δόγμασιν?

Understanding why this prepositional phrase was added becomes an important key in understanding properly Paul’s teachings regarding the authority of the Mosaic Law in the Messianic Age. The meaning of τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν has been long disputed as shown by the current range of ideas on its meaning and prior statements made by individuals such as John Eadie, who wrote over a hundred years ago saying that its meaning had already been disputed for a long time.

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208 In BDF, 89, under the heading of “Genitive,” the authors note that the basic function of the genitive case in Greek is to act as an adjective. The idea behind the concept of the genitive of content, § 167, is appropriate in this case (e.g. John 21:8: τὸ δίκτυον τῶν ἱχθυῶν, “the net containing fish”; and cf. A. T. Robertson, A Greek Grammar of The New Testament: In Light of Historical Research, 3d ed. (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1934), 497–98, who states that the function of the genitive case is largely adjectival. The meaning of word in the genitive case follows its technical root idea and varies in meaning according to the words that it modifies within the context of the text. Robertson’s § 4 on “Genitive of Definition or Apposition” is appropriate for Paul’s usage here and uses Paul’s usage of the phrase τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, “the center-wall, the partition wall which has the task of keeping things separate, the dividing middle-wall,” as an example of this type of genitive, which was discussed in chapter 2. In context, this portion of the phrase, τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν, “the Law of commandments,” can be translated simply as “the Law, the part consisting of commandments” or “the commandments of the Law.”

Grammatically, it is possible to use this prepositional phrase, \( \epsilon v \ \delta \gamma \mu \alpha \sigma \nu \), to restrict the action of the participle to a specific subsection of the commandments of the Law instead of making all of the commandments ineffective or unauthoritative,\(^{210}\) or it is possible to use \( \epsilon v \ \delta \gamma \mu \alpha \sigma \nu \) similar to the usage of a synonymous apposition to emphasize the fact that all the commandments of the Law had been declared ineffective by the Messiah.\(^{211}\) The two different interpretations are significantly different in meaning. There are those such as Peter O’Brien who see the prepositional phrase \( \epsilon v \ \delta \gamma \mu \alpha \sigma \nu \) not as restrictive but as adding emphasis or clarification, “the law of commandments consisting in regulations.”\(^{212}\) O’Brien and others see \( \epsilon v \ \delta \gamma \mu \alpha \sigma \nu \) as suggesting the

\(^{210}\) Some such as Eadie, *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*, 175, 177, understand the phrase \( \tau o v \ \nu \omicron \mu o v \ \tau o v \ \epsilon \nu \tau o l \omega v \ \epsilon v \ \delta \gamma \mu \alpha \sigma \nu \) to be a graphic description of the ceremonial law, but acknowledge that many have disputed its meaning in the past (p. 175). Eadie states that the prepositional phrase \( \epsilon v \ \delta \gamma \mu \alpha \sigma \nu \) defines the nature of the commandments, which were given under Divine sanction. In a special sense, the ceremonial institute seemed good to God, that which He \( \delta \omega k e i \), and that became \( \delta \gamma \mu \alpha \). It was not the moral law, which has its origin and basis in the Divine nature, and therefore, unchanged and unchangeable (p. 177); cf. Barth, *Ephesians*, 287, who states that Paul was specifying specific commandments. The prepositional phrase “in statutes” is used in such a way as to limit what was being abrogated to a specific number/type of commandments; and BDAG, 330, \( \S \) 12, discusses the use of the preposition \( \epsilon v \) as a “marker of specification or substance” listing this phrase as an example. In context, the prepositional phrase \( \epsilon v \ \delta \gamma \mu \alpha \sigma \nu \) can act as marker of specification to restrict the Law, that portion that contains commandments, to that portion of the commandments that deal with or consist of \( \delta \gamma \mu \alpha \tau a \).

\(^{211}\) Some such as Brook F. Westcott, *St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians: The Greek Text with Notes and Addenda* (New York: MacMillan, 1906; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 37, state that the addition of the prepositional phrase \( \epsilon v \ \delta \gamma \mu \alpha \sigma \nu \) defines the commandments as specific, rigid, and outward, fulfilled in external obedience (Luke 2:1; Acts 16:4; 17:7; Col 2:14) and this Law was abolished, annulled, because it was fulfilled and taken up into something wider and deeper (Matt 5:17\( ^{f} \); cf. 2 Cor 3:14); and cf. Harold W. Hoechner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 344, 373, who understands Paul to be teaching that the whole Law has been made inoperative through Christ’s salvific work.

essential form in which the commandments were given. There are others such as Andrew Lincoln who simply translate as and say “the law with its commandments and regulations, ordinances.”

Is it viable to consider the prepositional phrase as restrictive? It was shown above that Paul normally used the term in connection with to denote all of the commandments of the Law unless directed otherwise by context. It will be shown below that the context of Ephesians directs the addressees to a specific subgroup of the Law. In this letter, Paul makes it clear through his exhortations to his predominately Gentile audience that the Messiah has not declared the moral commandments ineffective. Yet, in Ephesians, Paul is not specific about which of the ordinances contained within the commandments have been declared ineffective. Other sources and some of Paul’s other letters will provide help in correctly understanding which ordinances might have been proclaimed unauthoritative in the Messianic Age. Below, some of the common subgroups regarding the commandments of the Law will be evaluated from within the writing of the Old Testament in order to illuminate possible referents regarding subdividing the commandments. In addition, the socio-historical context of Paul’s letters and era will help to illuminate the intended meaning of Christ’s making the ineffective for both Jew and Gentile in His newly inaugurated era. The immediate text shows that making this group of

\[213\] Ibid., 197. The translators of the KJV and NKJV version follow this type of thinking.

\[214\] The NIV and OAB.
commandments ineffective effectively removes the ongoing mutual hostility that has existed for a long time between those Jews and Gentiles who are following the Messiah. How did making the τῶν νόμων τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν ineffective help remove the ongoing mutual ἔχθρα, "hostility," that had existed so long between Jew and Gentile?

Existing ἔχθρα between Jew and Gentile

What did Paul mean by the words ἔχθρα, "the hostility," which he places in apposition with τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, "the dividing middle-wall"? The words ἔχθρα are used twice in Paul's sentence containing the clause τῶν νόμων τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας (2:14–16). Paul states clearly that it is because the Messiah declared the "ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law" ineffective, that the ongoing mutual "hostility" between the Jew and Gentile had been destroyed for those who were following Him. Therefore, understanding the background of this ongoing mutual hostility helps one understand what part of the Law was made ineffective. Werner Foerster says that ἔχθρα and its cognate ἔχθρος normally mean "hostility," and that in the New Testament, ἔχθρα normally denotes an inner disposition against nations, groups, and/or individuals.215 The translators for the Septuagint normally translated the Hebrew word יָּעַשׁ, "one who is hating," as ἔχθρος.216 Although the


216 Hoehner, Ephesians, 371, states that a form of ἔχθρα appears twenty times in the Septuagint and it refers to "hostility" irrespective of the underlying circumstances. It expresses the idea of hatred or hostility toward individuals, groups, and/or nations.
Hebrew can denote both national and personal ἔχθρας (enemies), it normally denotes personal hostility.\textsuperscript{217} Moulton and Milligan list Luke’s account of Herod and Pilate being enemies up until the time that they both questioned and ultimately condemned Jesus, the King of the Jews, as an example of ἴδιος ἔχθρας, “a personal enemy.”\textsuperscript{218} After condoning and authorizing Jesus’ crucifixion, they became friends.

In the ancient Near East, Israel’s peculiar way of life caused hostility between her and the surrounding nations. After returning from their Babylonian exile, many of the Jews showed a general steadfastness in following the Law, which helped them maintain their national unity and gave them a unique identity among their neighbors.\textsuperscript{219} James Jeffers notes that many Jews at various times asked the Roman authorities for special exemptions from their laws and practices in order that they may observe their own laws including observance of the Sabbath and sending their required half shekel to Jerusalem for Temple maintenance.\textsuperscript{220} In his study of Josephus’ \textit{Antiquites}, Christopher Hutson uncovered evidence showing that from the time of Julius Caesar to the messianic revolts of the first and second century, Israel worked hard at maintaining a good relationship with

\bibitem{TDNT811-12}TDNT, 811–12.

\bibitem{Vocabulary}James H. Moulton and George Milligan, \textit{Vocabulary of the Greek Testament} (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1930; reprint, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), § 2189, 26; and BDAG, 419, notes that ἔχθρας can denote “enmity” toward God (Rom 8:7; Jas 4:4) or enmity toward an individual such as a neighbor (Luke 23:12). In addition see LS, 748a.

\bibitem{BetweenAthens}John J. Collins, \textit{Between Athens and Jerusalem}, sec. ed. (Livaonia: Eerdmans, 2000), 19–21, discusses the peculiarity of Judaism as a national way of life from the time of the Babylonian exile up into the first century.

Rome, which culminated in a universal decree by Emperor Claudius to all authorities stating that the Jews were to be allowed to follow their ancestral customs unhindered. In his apologetic work *Against Apion*, Josephus states that Israelites: (1) would die to uphold Torah (1.43), (2) would not follow the decrees of any world power who went directly against God and His Law (1.192–94), (3) were a single and unified race (2.66–67), (5) were faithful to Rome (2.132–34), and (6) had followed the Law faithfully since the time of Moses just as one might follow faithfully a father and master (2.173–75). According to Josephus, the prize for those who live and die according to the Law was a future renewed existence with a corresponding better way of life (2.217–19). Josephus along with many of his contemporaries understood the Law to have been given by God to promote piety, mutual fellowship, a general love for all humanity, and justice (*Ag. Ap.* 2.146–47).

Mary Smallwood notes that the unique lifestyle and stand-alone-identity of the Jews offered some protection against assimilation into a polytheistic life style, but it also made Israel appear antisocial and even hostile to many who lived in the Mediterranean world during this era. As history bears witness, Wright notes that Jews were regarded


223 Mary E. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 123, 126, 247–49, discusses Emperor Claudius’ (A.D. 41–54) response to the Jewish and Alexandrian Greeks disturbances that started during Gaius’ reign. In his letter, Claudius wants them both to abandon their “stubborn mutual
as atheists and considered a potential threat to society due to their ancestral customs. Yes, from the Gentile perspective, the Jews were atheists, antisocial, and hostile to the rest of humanity, and from the Jewish perspective, the Gentiles were anti-Law, and therefore, at enmity with God and them. The New Testament writers are witnesses to the same type of hostility as the newly converted Christians interacted with the non-believers of their own world. Pliny the Younger, acting as the Roman governor of

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224 In his *Roman History*, 6.52.36, Dio Cassius tells those who want to be loyal to the traditions of their Roman fathers must abhor and punish those who try to distort their religion with strange rites bringing in foreign practices—it is from these that divisions and conspiracies arise. In his work *Epitome*, 67.14.1–3, which can be found in *The New Testament Background: Writings from Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire That Illuminate Christian Origins*, ed. C. K. Barrett, rev. ed. (San Francisco: Harper, 1989), 21, Dio states that Emperor Domitian slew his cousin Flavius Clemens, a consul, because he had become an atheist as part of accepting the Jewish ways; In his *Roman History*, 68.1.2, Dio states that after Nerva became emperor (A.D. 96), he did not let individuals accuse anybody of adopting the Jewish mode of life. This statement shows the existence of anti-Semitism during Nerva’s reign.


226 Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem*, 10–11, uses sources such as Diodorus Siculus (2.148) and Josephus (*Ag. Ap*. 1.304–11; 2.92–96, 148) to make the point that many Gentiles looked at the Jewish lifestyle as representing a misanthropic, hostile attitude toward humanity; and cf. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 371.

227 Gerald Abraham, *The Jewish Mind* (London: Constable, 1961), 315–16, 327–29, speaking as a Jew says that Jews are not hated because they have evil qualities, Gentiles assign evil qualities to Jews because they hate them. He says that this phenomenon existed before Christianity emerged: the Jews have been the object of hate dwelling within haters (pp. 315–16). Abraham goes on to say later that general Gentile hatred toward Jews is the same psychologically as putting the Jews in prison. The Jews do not have free-developing minds; they remain small minded. Under oppression, a Jew’s life is made narrow by resentment and fear resulting in overemphasis on rules and minor details (pp. 327–29); and Paul stated in Rom 8:7 that when anyone who was walking in the flesh did not subject themselves to the Law of God and were at the same time ἐχθραῖος ἐἰς θεόν, “hostile toward God.”

228 Acts 19:23–41. A good case in point is when a large group of people in Ephesus gathered together against the Christians including Paul accusing them of trying to destroy their way of life including blaspheming their goddess, Artimus, and god, Zeus. In 1 Peter 2:12, Peter tells his readers that they should continue to do good deeds so that those who slander them as evildoers will glorify God on the Judgement Day; cf. Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians* (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1987), 46–49,
Bithynia during the years A.D. 104–07, wrote to the Emperor Trajan regarding the
punishment of Christians whom he regarded as part of a degenerate cult, who among
other things honored Christ in their daily living and would not worship the local gods nor
the emperor. In Eph 2:14, Paul is declaring that the ongoing mutual εχθρα as described
above has been removed for all who are following Christ as He leads His followers
through the leading of the Spirit and Scripture in the Messianic Age.

Possible Categorical Divisions within τον Νόμος

Before looking at the possible referents for the word δογματα, which is contained
within the phrase τον νομον τον εντολων εν δογμασιν, it is important to know how
the Law might have been considered in terms of subdivisions. In Ephesians, Paul is
implicitly stating that some portion of the commandments of the Mosaic Law no longer
has to be obeyed by God’s people. As will be shown below, this is known through the
context of the letter in which thirty-six out of fifty-one exhortations given in Eph
4:25–6:20 were related to moral commandments contained within the Law. Ephesians
evaluated in light of Paul’s other letters clearly shows that the moral commandments of
the Law have not been abrogated nor made ineffective as Paul exhorts the Gentiles to
follow them just as faithful Jews had done before their time. Searching to see how Old

who discusses the Thessalonian converts’ ὀλοκληρωμα, “affliction,” and attributes them predominately to
psychological affliction caused by the cultural friction of their new way of life. His understanding was based
on such Scriptures as: 1 Thess 2:14 (persecution at the hands of their own countrymen), 1 Thess 4:9–12
(rewards for leaving natural families), and other texts.

229 Pliny the Younger, Letters, trans. by Betty Radice, Loeb Classical Library, no. 59 (Cambridge:
Testament writers may have considered the Law in terms of subgroups will not prove one way or the other that Paul followed these writers, but it will provide an understanding of possible subgroups and the fact that Paul was not out-of-line with his past to do likewise.

The research below shows that some Old Testament writers did indeed think of the Law in terms of two, three, and at times even four different subgroups. Most attention will be given to the idea of the Law as consisting of three subgroups, the moral commandments, the purity ordinances dealing mostly with ritual rules and purity, and cultural ordinances dealing with social behavior peculiar to Israel. These three categories seem to be the most dominant way expressed by the Old Testament writers whenever they spoke of the Law in terms of something other than the whole. There will also be a short paragraph at the end of this section pointing out that there are twelve occurrences in the Old Testament where one of the writers spoke of the Law in terms of two categories, the moral commandments and ordinances, which seem similar to Paul’s usage in Eph 2:15. This research proves that Paul was not being innovative, if he was thinking of the Law as being subdivided into the moral commandments and other decrees called δόγματα, “ordinances.” If Paul was thinking of the Law in terms of two subgroups it provides possible referents.

It should be noted that if Christ had declared a specific subgroup(s) of the Law “ineffective,” that would have in no way abolished any of the ordinances contained within the total collection of commandments of the Law. Christ’s apostles would follow Christ’s decree by teaching that it was no longer a sin to not do the “works of the Law” pertaining
to these specific ordinances during the Messianic Age; these ordinances were now optional.

Starting with Brown-Driver-Briggs' research looking for meaning and usage of Hebrew words used in the Old Testament that relate to the commandments and ordinances of the Law, it is noted that the masculine noun פֶּרֶשׁ and its synonymous feminine counterpart, נֵפֶשׁ, which are Hebrew parallels to the Greek word δόγμα, can have multiple referents depending on context such as “something prescribed,” “a statue,” or “something due.” The “something prescribed” category includes prescribed “portions,” “actions,” “allocations,” and “boundary limits.” The “statue” category includes “enactments/statutes,” “decrees,” “ordinances,” or the “law” in general, which can be enacted by either God or man. Examining usages of פֶּרֶשׁ, נֵפֶשׁ, or one of their plural forms with combinations of a form of נֵפֶשׁ or נֵפֶשׁ including plural forms looking for subgroups within the Law, one notes that a form of פֶּרֶשׁ or נֵפֶשׁ is used in combination: (1) with a singular form of נֵפֶשׁ, a commandment or a complete or partial code of law, in Deut 5:28; 6:1–2; 7:11; 1 Kgs 8:58; Neh 1:7, or (2) with a singular form of פֶּרֶשׁ,


231 Helmer Ringgren, Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, vol. 5, trans. David E. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 139–47, states that two solid referents for this noun are “statute” and “ordinance” (pp. 139, 141–43, 45). Ringgren notes that the verb פֶּרֶשׁ refers to cutting into something, inscribing, which denotes in this context a written ordinance or statute (p. 141). Ringgren states that it is difficult to distinguish this group of nouns from others associated with the Law because they are often used in a series with other nouns or used alone to represent the legal corpus as a whole (pp. 142, 145).

232 All Hebrew and Aramaic translations are the author’s unless otherwise noted; Deut 6:1–2 is an
instruction or law, in Num 19:2; 31:21 (statutes of the Torah—construct);233 2 Chr 33:8;234 Mal 3:22,235 (3) with a singular form of both הָגִים and הָפֵלָה in 2 Kgs 17:34, 37;236 2 Chr 19:10, (4) with a plural form of הָפֵלָה, possibly indicating multiple
example that includes both a singular and plural form of הָפֵלָה. Deut 6:1-2, “And this is הָגִים, ‘the commandment, the law,’ the נְפֹלָה, ‘the statutes,’ and הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘the ordinances/judgments/customs,’ which the Lord your God has commanded (me) to teach you (pl.) to do (them) in the land where you are going over there to possess it, 6:2 in order that you (sing.) might fear YHWH, your God, to keep הָפֵלָה, ‘all of His statutes,’ and הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘His commandments,’ that I have commanded you, your son, and your grandson all the days of your life, indeed that your days may be prolonged”; Regarding the translation of the term הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, some translating teams such as those for the NASB, KJV, NKJV, and the NOAB translators translate the above as “the Law,” “the statutes,” and “the ordinances.” The HCSB translators translate הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה as “the judgments.”

233 Num 19:2 and 31:21 provide two examples where the הָפֵלָה of the Torah refers to statutes that refer to the religious rites of cleansing, purifying.

234 2 Chr 33:8, “And I will not gather (them) in order to turn (away) the foot of Israel from the land which I appointed for your fathers if only they will keep in order to do all which has been commanded according to all הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘the Law,’ and הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘the statutes,’ and הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘the ordinances/judgments/customs,’ given through the hand of Moses.” The NASB, KJV, NKJV, and the NOAB translators translate the above as “the Law,” “the statutes,” and “the ordinances.” The HCSB translators translate הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה as “the judgments.”

235 Mal 3:22 BH shows that both הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, “statutes and ordinances/customs,” are considered part of a greater whole called the הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, “Instruction/Law of Moses”; cf. 2 Kgs 17:13.

236 2 Kgs 17:33–37 is an excellent example of an Old Testament text that illuminates the meaning of הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה with the contextual meaning that plainly denotes “customs, manner, the way people live” in context with statutes, commandments, and Torah. 2 Kgs 17:33, “They were living fearing YHWH and they were living serving their own gods הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘according to the custom,’ of the nations who caused them to be exiled from there (their homeland). 17:34 Up until this day they are doing הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘according to the former customs,’ without fearing YHWH and without doing הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘according to their (prescribed) statutes,’ הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘nor according to their ordinances/customs/way of life,’ הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘nor according to the instruction,’ הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘nor according to the law,’ that YHWH commanded the sons of Jacob, on whom He set His name, Israel. 17:35 Indeed, (in the past) YHWH had made a covenant with them and commanded them saying ‘do not fear other gods, nor bow down to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them.’ 17:36 If it is YHWH who took you (pl.) up out of the land of Egypt in great power and outstretched arm, He is the one whom you should revere, and to Him you should bow-down, and to Him you should sacrifice. 17:37 And הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘the statutes,’ and הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘the ordinances/customs,’ and הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘the instruction,’ and הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘the Law,’ that He wrote for you, keep and do (them) all your days and do not reverence other gods.” Cf. the four subgroups of Neh 9:13. In some instances where four subgroups are given הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה is associated with ideas such as הָפֵלָה הָפֵלָה, ‘His ways,’ such as in 1 Kgs 2:3.
commands, in Exod 15:26; Lev 26:3, 15; Deut 4:40; 6:2; 8:11; 10:13; 11:1; 26:17; 28:15, 45; 30:10, 16; 1 Kgs 2:3; 6:12; 8:58; 9:6; 11:34, 38; 2 Chr 7:19; Ezra 7:11; 43:18; Neh 1:7; 10:20, 30, (5) with a plural form of הָרְשָׁע, possibly indicating multiple
commandments, in Lev 26:46; Neh 9:13, along with both הָרְשָׁע and תְּרֵעַ in Gen 26:5; Neh 9:13, and (6) with plural forms of הָרְשָׁע and a singular form of הָרְשָׁע in Neh 9:14.

When these Scriptures are evaluated, it shows that the overall הָרְשָׁע, the νόμος of the
New Testament, could be thought of at various times in terms of at least three major
subgroups that appear in the Old Testament: (1) הָרְשָׁע, “commandments,” that normally
make up a code of moral and civil law, which includes loving God and neighbor, (2)
מִשְׁנָה, “statues or ordinances,” that normally deal with religious practices including

237 The parts of the Law according to the Covenant given to Israel by God through Moses are
expressed in (Lev 26:46) as מִשְׁנָה, “the statutes,” and מִשְׁנָה, “ordinances/customs/lifestyle,” and הָרְשָׁע, “laws.”

238 Note that in Gen 26:2–6; Lev 26:45–46; and Neh 9:13, Moses is using הָרְשָׁע to represent the
“commandment” portion of the total Torah of God. Deut 6:1–2; 7:11; 10:22–11:2; 26:17; 30:15–16; 1 Kgs
2:1–4; 2 Chr 19:10; Mal 3:22 BH, 4:4 Eng. Neh 10:30 starts by specifying that what follows is associated
with מִשְׁנָה מִשְׁנָה מִשְׁנָה מִשְׁנָה, “walking in the Torah, the instruction, of God.” There are other places where
Old Testament writings show that those who follow God’s instructions are walking in His ways such as
Deut 26:17 and 30:16. There are also places where מִשְׁנָה, commandments, in its plural sense encompasses
all Torah such as in Lev 22:31; 26:14; 27:34; 2 Kgs 18:6; 2 Chr 24:20; Isa 48:18.

239 See Exod 20:6f.; Deut 11:1–13–16; 1 Kgs 14:8–9; 18:18; 2 Kgs 17:16; cf. Helmer Ringgren
and Baruch A. Levine, *TDOT*, vol. 8, 505–14, who state that מִשְׁנָה is one of the expressions for God’s will
and authority and as such normally refers to His “order” or “commandment” (p. 505). Levine notes that
מִשְׁנָה belongs to a group of words that together express the various aspects of authority, which normally
include מִשְׁנָה, מִשְׁנָה, and מִשְׁנָה (p. 506). Levine states that מִשְׁנָה was not used until the Deuteronomistic
writings to denote an “order” or a “commandment” expressing the divine will of God in the Law (p. 510).
From this point in time onward, the מִשְׁנָה represent the totality of laws in the sense that the laws have
become commandments, orders from God (p. 513). Levine goes on to say that the Qumran writings
continue along this line of thought understanding מִשְׁנָה as law (pp. 513–14).
religious purity, and (3) "ordinances or customs," that deal with the manner or way of life of a specific people group. Old Testament writers regularly thought of the Torah, the Law, through a classification of its commandments into subgroups.

There are several places in the Old Testament, where the writers used two terms to denote the Law as an entity similar to Paul’s usage in Eph 2:15a instead of three or more. As shown in footnote 232, Deut 6:1–2 illustrates the Law being described first in terms of three parts, הָלְבִּישׁ, “commandments,” מְצוֹנִים, “statutes/ordinances,” and מִשְׁמַרְתָּם, being technical terms denoting cultic regulations or ordinances. These terms appear primarily in subscriptions at the end of individual cultic regulations or minor collections of cultic ordinances (Exod 12:14, 17; 27:21; 28:43; 29:9; 7:36; 10:9; 16:29–34; 17:7; 23:9–44; 24:3; Num 10:8; 15:15; 18:23; 19:1–22; 31:21; and cf. Ringgren, TDOT, vol. 5, 143–47, who states that during the later stages of writing in the Old Testament, those associated with the Holiness Codes and Priestly writings show the best evidence for הָלְבִּישׁ and מְצוֹנִים being technical terms denoting cultic regulations or ordinances. These terms appear primarily in subscriptions at the end of individual cultic regulations or minor collections of cultic ordinances (Exod 12:14, 17; 27:21; 28:43; 29:9; 30:21; Lev 7:36; 10:9; 16:31, 34, 24:3; Lev 17:7; 23:14, 21, 31, 41; Num 10:8; 18:23; 19:21; 27:11; 30:17; 35:29; cf. Exod 12:43; Lev 3:17; 16:29; Num 9:12, 14; 19:2, 10; 31:21 (pp. 143–44). Ringgren notes that in Ezek 18:9 and other places in Ezekiel the covenant legislature is subdivided into two major domains, הָלְבִּישׁ and מְצוֹנִים, “cultic ordinances and civil laws” (pp. 145–46). Regarding the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ringgren notes that in 1QpHab 8:10, 17, מִשְׁמַרְתָּם refers to the cultic regulations and in other Qumran writings it can refer similarly to cultic regulation or to the Law in general (p. 147).

See Exod 12:14, 17; 13:10; 27:21; 28:43; 29:9; Lev 3:17 (tied with both religious rites and customs); 7:36; 10:9; 16:29–34; 17:7; 23:9–44; 24:3; Num 10:8; 15:15; 18:23; 19:1–22; 31:21; and cf. Ringgren, TDOT, vol. 5, 143–47, who states that during the later stages of writing in the Old Testament, those associated with the Holiness Codes and Priestly writings show the best evidence for הָלְבִּישׁ and מְצוֹנִים being technical terms denoting cultic regulations or ordinances. These terms appear primarily in subscriptions at the end of individual cultic regulations or minor collections of cultic ordinances (Exod 12:14, 17; 27:21; 28:43; 29:9; 30:21; Lev 7:36; 10:9; 16:31, 34, 24:3; Lev 17:7; 23:14, 21, 31, 41; Num 10:8; 18:23; 19:21; 27:11; 30:17; 35:29; cf. Exod 12:43; Lev 3:17; 16:29; Num 9:12, 14; 19:2, 10; 31:21 (pp. 143–44). Ringgren notes that in Ezek 18:9 and other places in Ezekiel the covenant legislature is subdivided into two major domains, הָלְבִּישׁ and מְצוֹנִים, “cultic ordinances and civil laws” (pp. 145–46). Regarding the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ringgren notes that in 1QpHab 8:10, 17, מִשְׁמַרְתָּם refers to the cultic regulations and in other Qumran writings it can refer similarly to cultic regulation or to the Law in general (p. 147).

See Deut 8:11; 11:1; 26:17; 28:16; 1 Kgs 2:3; 6:12; 8:58; 2 Kgs 17:33–37; Neh 1:7. See BDB, 1049, § 6b, shows that מָצוֹן can signify such ideas as “custom, manner of life” such as: (1) 1 Sam 2:13, “custom of the priests,” (2) 1 Sam 27:11, “David’s customs/manner of life,” (3) 2 Kgs 17:33, “custom of the nations,” (4) Gen 40:13, Exod 21:9, Judg 18:7, 1 Kgs 18:28, 2 Kgs 11:14; 17:34, 1 Chr 6:17 (BH; 6:32 Eng.), Ps 119:132, “according to a custom/way of life of a specific type of person or people group,” and (5) 2 Kgs 1:7, “a way of life, manner of a boy”; cf. Bo Johnson, TDOT, vol. 9, 86–98, who states that most occurrences of מָצוֹן are associated with justice and law where one aspect is “customary law,” which leads to referents such as “custom” and “manner” (p. 87). Johnson notes that many scholars state that מָצוֹן denotes authority in general and should not be limited to a judicial sense. He notes that there are some such as Fahlgren, Osborne Booth, and Eliezer Berkovits who prefer to understand its basic sense as “manner, characteristic” (p. 88). But still, Johnson notes that in many texts the word מָצוֹן is related to “justice” (p. 89), what is right (p. 93). In some contexts, מָצוֹן is a collection of individual commandments or it can point to the entire Law (p. 94). Johnson notes that מָצוֹן, מְצוֹנָה, and מָצוֹן are closely related to מִשְׁמַרְתָּם in regard to God’s commandments and ordinances and at times may be strung together to emphasize the totality of the commandments (pp. 94–95). Johnson notes that in other contexts such as Gen 40:13; Josh 6:15; Judg 13:12; 18:7; 1 Sam 27:11; 30:25; 1 Kgs 18:28; 2 Kgs 11:14; 17:26; Isa 28:26; Ezek 16:38; 23:45, and Eccl 8:6, מְצוֹנָה clearly can mean “procedures, customs, traditions, manners” (p. 96).
“ordinances/customs,” and then in close succession two parts, רָצוּכָה, “commandments,” and נִשְׁטָה, “statutes/ordinances.” In this text, נִשְׁטָה and נִשְׁחָתָה have been represented by the single word נִשְׁטָא. The writer of 1 Kgs 8:61 also set “statutes” and “commandments of the Law” beside each other similar to Paul’s usage in Eph 2:15a. In 1 Kgs 8:61, God’s people are לְלַמְדֹּתַה לְצֹחַר מִצְמָאָה והַלְבָּשֵׁהוּ, “to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments.”

Although it is not expressed explicitly in his letters, Paul’s teachings show that the moral commandments are considered differently than the purity regulations and the customs contained within the Mosaic Law. As discussed above, when Paul used the word νόμος in his letters in connection with ἐργα νόμων, he was normally speaking about all of the commandments of Mosaic Law. Yet, through the context of some of his letters, it is clear that at times Paul separates the moral commandments from the ordinances pertaining to purity and culture. It is clear from his letters that all of the commandments, statutes, and ordinances/customs of the Law do not have the same authority and efficacy in the Messianic Age as they had prior to the coming of the Messiah. It also clear from Paul’s letters that some of the ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law have not been abrogated but have become optional.

Speaking for the group of scholars that made up the 1994 Third Durham-Tübingen Symposium, Dunn expresses an agreement among them that the Law continues

242 Cf. Exod 15:26; Deut 4:5; 27:10; 28:45; 30:10; 1Kgs 3:14; 11:34, 38; 2 Kgs 17:13; 2 Chr 7:19. Num 36:13 and 1 Chron 28:7 are texts within the Old Testament where נָשָׁבֵה is paired with נִשְׁחָתָה instead of with נִשְׁטָה to denote the Law.
to play a specific role in three areas of the life of a believer: (1) it discloses the will of God and the consequential awareness of sin (Rom 3:20; 4:15; 5:13; 7:13), (2) it marks out the people of God (Rom 2:2–14), and (3) it provides divine direction for life. The group recognizes that the means by which the three roles are fulfilled are different in the Messianic Age compared to earlier times, yet it is still important for Christ’s followers to be “keeping the commandments of God.” Thielman notes that Paul’s teaching about the ethical obligations of believers intersect the Mosaic Law at several places, most notably with his teaching on the Decalogue and the love commandment (Gal 5:14; Rom 13:8–10). After reviewing Paul’s letters regarding the Law, Thielman states that the function [outcome] of obedience to the Law in the Old Testament and in Paul is identical. The Israelites’ obedience to the Mosaic law marked them off from the other nations as God’s “treasured possession” (Ex 19:5; Lev 18:1–5; 19:24–26) and made them an appropriate dwelling place for God’s presence (Lev 15:31). Similarly, in Paul’s letters the conduct of believers separates them from the rest of the world (1 Cor 5:1; 2 Cor 6:17; Eph 4:1; 5:3; Col 3:12; 1 Thess 4:5) and purifies their bodies and their congregations because they are God’s dwelling place through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16–17; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21). Thielman notes that specific commands from both eras are often similar: (1) proper sexual conduct separates Israel from the surrounding nations (Lev 18:1–30) just as it separates the Thessalonians and the Corinthians from

243 Dunn, “In Search of Common Ground,” 329–33. 1Cor 7:19b.


245 Thielman, Paul and the Law, 240.
their unbelieving neighbors (1 Thess 4:3–8; 1 Cor 5:1–2), (2) the love command [Lev 19:18, 34] is a prominent feature of Paul’s ethical teachings (Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14), and (3) Paul teaches the Ten Commandments (Rom 13:9; Eph 6:2–3; [Eph 4:29–30, 5:1, 3, 6, 33; 6:10–11]).

Possible Referents for Δόγματα

Knowing that the Old Testament and Paul’s writings support the idea of thinking about the commandments of the Law in terms of its individual areas of influence, what are the possible referents for the word δόγματα? Paul’s use of a verbal form of δόγματα in his letter to the Colossians compliments his statement in Eph 2:15. In Col 2:20, Paul asks Ἐὰν ἀπεθάνετε σὺν Χριστῷ ἀπὸ τῶν στοιχείων τοῦ κόσμου, τί ὡς ζῶντες ἐν κόσμῳ δογματίζεσθε:, “If you have died with Christ from the elementary principles of the world, why as if living in the world are you subjecting yourselves to its regulations?” Paul has already discussed a self-abasement category of elementary principles (2:8, 18, 23) and a set of biblical elementary principles that contain the regulations for the cultural aspect of the Law: (1) food or drink, (2) festivals and new moons, and (3) the Sabbath, which were mere foreshadows of what was to come (2:16–17). In the context of this letter Paul is asking his addressees why they are listening to some who want them to engage in self-abasement, worship of angels, or follow the regulations pertaining to: (1) food or drink, (2) festivals and new moons, and (3) the

246 Ibid., 240–41. Thielman notes that on one occasion Paul recalls a rule from the Mosaic Law to help him settle a dispute over the rights of those who preach the Gospel (1 Cor 9:9).
Sabbath, which were mere foreshadows of what was to come. Here Paul is relating specific δόγματα that relate directly to the Law to regulations that Christ’s followers no longer need to follow. Regarding the Sabbath, it is known historically that the Early Church moved their day of rest and worship to the first day of the week in honor of their Lord’s resurrection; they followed the intent of the Law and in reality had not discarded this commandment. In his letter to the Colossians, Paul made it perfectly clear that the Gentiles who followed the Messiah were not required to submit to a specialized set of decrees that had regulated the cultural lifestyle of Israel prior to His coming. In addition, Paul uses the word δόγμα to denote “decrees” in Col 2:14 that represent officially declared judgments against those who have sinned against God and accepted His personal payments for their transgressions. The only other New Testament writer to use a form of the word δόγμα was Luke. He used δόγμα to express the Roman Emperor’s legal declarations in Luke 2:1 and Acts 17:7, and he used a form of the word δόγμα in Acts 16:4 to denote the authoritative declarations of the Jerusalem Council of A.D. 49 regarding the requirements of Gentile believers within the Body of Christ.

Regarding the usage of the word δόγμα in the Septuagint, note the following: (1) in Ezra 3:9, Hamon requests that the king write a decree to have those who would not follow the laws of the land to be executed; Hamon’s request is in the form of a hortatory:

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247 Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, § 1378, 166, state that the word δόγμα was commonly used to express legally binding declarations of the Roman Senate. They note that Luke used this word for the legally binding declarations of the Emperor (Luke 2:1; Acts 17:7); and cf. BDAG, 254, and note that the word δόγμα can be used to denote: (1) a formal statement concerning rules or regulations that are to be observed by a certain group of people, or (2) something that is taught as an established tenant or statement of belief.
let it be written (a decree) [BH; בָּנְכָּר; LXX; δύσιμα νεκτάτω]; the decree carries an authority that is equal with any law of the land. In this passage in the Masoretic text, the king’s decrees are designated using an Aramaic word, סָעֶל, which is the plural construct form of סָע, (2) in Dan 6:12, the translators of the Septuagint translated the Aramaic phrase סָעֶל לֹא כֶּלֶם as τῶν Μηδών καὶ Περσῶν δύσιμα, “the decrees of the Medes and Persians,” and in Dan 6:9 they had just translated the king’s סָע as δρομόν; “a decree.”248 Here in the same text is an example where δρομός and δύσμα are both being used to denote the Aramaic word סָע, (3) in the the Apocrypha text of 1 Esdras 6:33, the perfect past tense of δύσιμα δυσιματικα, δεδομένα, is used by the translators for the Septuagint to denote that King Darius had made an official request, a decree. This decree carried the weight of his office, which was equal in authority to any law of the land, (4) in 3 Macc 1.3, the translators used the phrase τῶν πατρίων δύσιμων to refer to the ancient traditions of the people, (5) in 4 Macc 4.23–26,249 a form of δύσμα was

248 LS, 1251b. The word δρομός can denote such ideas as “boundaries,” “limits,” “decrees,” and “vows.” In in Dan 6:9–10 and 6:13 the Masoretic text shows that the סָע or סָעֶל, “a decree,” is an ḫבָּא, a binding obligation, that is בְּלִים, “certain/true”; it is not apt סָעֶל, Haphel infin. of סָע, “to change,” and סוּעַ, it will not pass away. This text illuminates the permanent nature of a king’s decree in the Middle East

249 4 Maccabees is an important mid-first century document paralleling the writing of the New Testament. Therefore, it is helpful in developing an understanding of the meaning of some Greek words that still may seem elusive to later generations. Some individuals such as H. Anderson, The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 533, dated this work somewhere between 63 B.C.E–70 C.E.; but others such as Emil Schürer edited by Vermes, Millar, and Black, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135), rev. and ed. Geza Vermes & Fergus Millar, vol. 4 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark in 1987), 589–91, understands the time of writing in its final form to be mid-first century C.E.; and more recently, individuals such as Donald Gowan, Justification and Variegated Nomism, vol. 1, The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism, ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 231, sets the limits of this work from
used three different times to indicate an order, a decree, given by Antiochus to force the Jews of Jerusalem to give up the observance of τῷ πατρίῳ πολιτευόμενοι νόμῳ, “the ancestral Law by which they are being governed,” and (6) 4 Macc 8–10 portrays a pious Jewish family who would rather die than be coerced to disobey τὰς πατρίους ἡμῶν ἑντολὰς, “our ancestral laws,” which God had given through their, συμβούλῳ Μωυσεῖ, “counselor Moses.”250 After his father and two older brothers had been tortured and murdered, the third eldest son declared that he would also rather die than turn against τοὺς αὐτοῖς ἀνετράφην δόγματα, “the same teachings that I was raised on.”251 Therefore, it is noted that in the few places that the translators of the Septuagint chose to use the word δόγματα, it was used to denote either “authoritative decrees” or “ancient traditions, teachings.”

A first-century translation of a Hebrew text, which was fairly similar to the Masoretic text,252 made by Theodotion and probably several earlier translators, provides

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19–54 C.E.; and David A. deSilva, Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 355–56, sets the date of this document around mid-first century C.E.

250 4 Macc 9.1–2.

251 In context, ἀνετράφη, indicates the idea of raising a child to eventually become an adult.

252 Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, Invitation to the Septuagint (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000), 41–42, state that according to the traditional view, Theodotion lived in the late second century. His translation of the Book of Daniel supplanted the Septuagint’s translation. The problem with this tradition is that now it can be shown that certain renderings that were once thought to be distinctive to Theodotion are now known to have existed a century or two before he lived. Jobes and Silva go on to say that recent discoveries confirm that there were Hebrew Bible translations similar to Theodotion’s already in the first century B.C. Therefore, Theodotion’s work can be viewed as a later update to an earlier translation of the BH; it is mentioned in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone, 3d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1602, that others such as D. Barthélemy, Les Devanciers d’Aquila, (Leiden, 1963), 144–67, understand Theodotion to have translated his version from the Hebrew in the first century. In either case, the work of Theodotion is later than the Septuagint and
another first-century source that uses the word δόγμα to denote an official order, decree, of a king. The decrees of the kings were equal in authority to any of the laws of the land and were not likely to be abrogated. The translator(s) of the Theodotion text used: (1) δόγμα and ρήμα to denote a ἔντατος ἔντας, “a decree,” made by the Babylonian king in the Aramaic text of Dan 2:13 and 15, (2) the words ἔθηκας δόγμα, “having set/made a decree,” to express the Hebrew idea of בָּשׂ הָתִּית, “you set/made a decree” when translating Dan 3:10 and 3:12,253 (3) a form of δόγμα in Dan 3:96 to express in the first person, εγώ ἐκτύθημαι δόγμα, “I personally am setting forth a decree,” denoting an official decree by King Nebuchadnezzar,254 (4) δόγμα in Dan 4:6 to represent the Aramaic/Hebrew idea of בָּשׂ הָתִּית to denote “a command, an order,”255 (5) the word δόγμα in Dan 6:9–10 and 6:13 to denote both ἔντατος ἔντας and בָּשׂ הָתִּית, which appear to be synonymous for the king’s “decree.” From this text, one learns that a king’s decree is an ἔντατος ἔντας, “a binding

appears to have been based on an existing translation from the first-century B.C.

253 The translators of the Septuagint used the words προστάσσω καὶ κρίνω in verse 3:10 in the aorist tense to represent the idea of the “ingressive action” of the king who had set forth a decree and consequently continued indefinitely to judge offenders; this translation appears to have come from a different Hebrew text than Theodotion’s Hebrew or the current Masoretic text. In verse 3:12, it appears that the translators of the Septuagint translated the Hebrew idea of בָּשׂ הָתִּית with the Greek word ἐντολή. The later translators, who lived closer to the time of Jesus and Paul translated the Hebrew concept of בָּשׂ הָתִּית with a form of the Greek word δόγμα.

254 The translators of the Septuagint simply translate the Hebrew as εγώ κρίνω, which can be interpreted as “I am making a decision” in the sense of an official decree; LS, 996ab, shows that κρίνω could signify a fairly large range of thoughts regarding “separation,” “choice,” “decision,” or “judgment”; and in Dan 3:95–96, it appears that both groups of translators, the Septuagint and Theodotion, were using the same text and chose alternative words in their respective translations.

255 BDB, 1094b, shows that בָּשׂ הָתִּית can signify “taste,” “judgment,” or “commands.”
obligation,” that is הָלִּיתָ, “certain/true”; it is not apt לְהָלִיתָ, “to change,”256 and אֲנַהַת, “it will not pass away,” and (6) δόγμα in Dan 6:27 to translate the word בָּלָד, which in this case refers to a “decree” of King Darius. In summary, the Theodotion translators as their predecessors, the translators for the Septuagint, used the word δόγμα to denote an “authoritative decree or order.”

Philo used a form of the word δόγμα in several places in his works that is also helpful in understanding possible first-century referents. There are four places in his work where a form of δόγμα was used in close proximity with νόμος. In all of these cases, Sacrifices of Abel and Cain, 19; The Worse Attacks the Better, 135; Who Is the Heir of Divine Things, 292, Special Laws, 4.149, δόγμα was used to indicate “a teaching, a doctrine.” In Special Laws, 4.149, Philo used δόγμα to denote that fathers ought to be teaching τὰ ἀρχαία ἔθη, “the ancient customs,” which are οἱ ἀγραφοὶ νόμοι, “the unwritten laws,” of the people. Another first century writer, Josephus, used the word δόγμα to denote the decrees of King Herod in Antiquities of the Jews, 17.159.3. The people would not follow King Herod’s δόγματα when they would cause them to violate the Laws of Moses.

Two non-Jewish first-century writers, Dio Chrysostomus of Prusa, a Greek orator and philosopher working in Rome,257 and Mestrius Plutarchus of Chaeronea, a writer and

256 Haphe1 infinitive of νῦν.

257 Oxford Classical Dictionary, ed. Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 470. Dio Chrysostomus, Dio Cocceianus, was a Greek orator and
government official, give additional insight to possible referents for δόγμα in the first-century. In one of his works, *Orations* 3.44.1, Dio states that ὁ νόμος βασιλέως δόγμα, "a decree of the king is the law" gives another instance where δόγμα refers to a directive given by somebody in supreme authority. Plutarch uses the word δόγματα to refer to: (1) "doctrines/maybe philosophical teachings" in *On the Delays of the Divine Will Regarding Vengeance/Vindication*, 562.B.8–9 and in *Men in Power with Principles of Philosophy To Be Discussed*, 779.B.14. In *Men in Power*, Plutarch is hoping that these philosophical teachings will eventually become νόμοι, "laws," as the teachings are incorporated into everyday life by the leaders of the land, (2) "teachings" of two philosophers that are considered the same as the "laws" of the ancient Greeks in *The Eating of Flesh II*, 998.A.6, (3) "decrees" of the leaders in *Caesar* 6.3.2–3, *On Exile*, 607.D.11, (4) "decrees or possibly decisions" versus νόμοις, συνθηκαίς, καὶ ὁμολογάς, "laws," "contracts," and "agreements," in *Table Talk IX*, 742.D.7, (5) "individual laws" that had been passed within the whole corpus of νόμοις in *The Lives of Ten Orators*, 833.F.12, and (6) "a proposal" put forth to those attending a symposium by two individuals, Κράτωρ καὶ Θέωνα, in *Table Talk I*, 620.B.5. Taken together, Dio and Plutarch used the word

popular philosopher who was born sometime between A.D. 40–50 and died after A.D. 110. Dio was born into a wealthy family in Prusa, which is in Bithynia and began his career as a rhetorician in Rome.

258 Ibid., 1200f. Mestrius Plutarchus was a notable writer and government official from Chaeronea who was born prior to A.D. 50 and died after A.D. 120.

δόγματα to denote "authoritative decrees," "laws," "teachings, doctrine," and "proposals." From the evidence shown, it is clear that Jewish and Gentiles authors alike use the word δόγματα to point to a similar set of references. From Jewish and Gentile sources, it has been demonstrated that δόγματα had a range of meaning in Paul's era from (1) "laws" in general, (2) "decrees" that were made by individuals in authority to govern some aspect of everyday life," (3) "teachings, doctrine," to (4) general "proposals."

The Meaning

Now it is time to illuminate the intended meaning of the clause τῶν νόμων τῶν ἐν τολμῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας. It was noted above that Paul used the prepositional phrase ἐν δόγμασιν as a grammatical tool to limit the Messiah's declaration that the commandments of the Law had been made ineffective to a specific set of ordinances. This assertion is made based on the fact that later in this same letter Paul exhorts the addressees to obey a large number of the moral commandments of the Law showing that many of the commandments had not been abolished nor made ineffective. This will be discussed more fully below. From the literature above, it has also been shown that the referents for the word δόγματα could have been used to either restrict or enhance the meaning of the phrase "commandments of the Law" due to the fact that in this grammatical arrangement δόγματα can denote either the entire Law or point to specific decrees within the Law. The sources studied above show that most of the time when the word δόγματα was used to denote commandments of a law, it was referring to individual
ordinances versus the whole law. A study searching for possible classifications of the various commandments of the Law from the Old Testament showed that the commandments of the Law were often considered in three categories and sometimes in two of the these same three categories: (1) מְנַחֵם, “commandments,” that normally make up a code of moral and civil law, (2) מִנְשָׁתָה, “statutes,” that normally deal with religious practices regarding purity, and (3) מַעֲנֵי קֶשֶׁף, “ordinances/customs,” that deal with the manner or customs of everyday life.

This research shows that it would have been normal for someone who studied Scripture such as Paul to feel comfortable in thinking of the commandments of the Law as belonging to subgroups according to function or role. Paul was not being a radical thinker by considering the whole as the sum of its parts. Yet, it was radical for the apostles of the Early Church to proclaim that the Messiah had proclaimed a subgroup or portion of the commandments of the Law ineffective in order to allow Gentile and Jewish believers to live in peace with one another during His Messianic reign. Most would not have expected any portion of the Law to be made ineffective nor abrogated during the Messianic Age. This is part of God’s plan that had been hidden from earlier generations.260 At this point, the context of Ephesians and the rest of Paul’s letters will be used to bring final meaning to this text.

Within the Literary Context of Ephesians

The literary context of Ephesians reveals that the Messiah, Jesus Christ, the peacemaker, is God’s redeeming gift of eternal life. This free gift of life is available to all humanity redeeming those who respond properly to His salvific death on the Cross through faith in the God who has shown so much grace and patience toward His creation (2:8–10; cf. 1:3–2:7). Paul wants Christ’s followers, both Jew and Gentile, to know that prior to the foundation of the world, God had pre-planned and kept hidden the fact that He was going to allow His Son to be crucified in order to reconcile all willing participants of His creation into one unified body to Himself (1:3–5, 9; 2:14–18; 3:1–12). In addition, the Messiah proclaimed that parts of the Law no longer required obedience in order to facilitate unity among the Jewish and Gentile believers.

The phrase τὸν νόμον τῶν ἑντολῶν ἐν δόγμασι is contained in the first part of a compound sentence consisting of two sentences contained in verses 2:14–16 and 2:17–18 respectively. A more thorough breakdown and discussion of this compound sentence is presented in the next chapter. The first sentence, which is contained within verses 2:14–16 follows,

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261 Ernest Best, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), 226, regarding Eph 2:8–9, states that the author of Ephesians is saying that believers are not the source of their own salvation. There salvation is not εἰς ὑμᾶς, but is God’s gift. He goes on to say that this emphasis is already present in the Old Testament in such passages such as Isa 31:1; 42:5ff.; 43:3, 11; Hos 1:7; and Ps 33.
The main clause of the first sentence is elaborated on through an aorist participial clause, ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἔν, which is further developed by three additional epexegetical aorist participial clauses that are marked linguistically by a leading epexegetical καὶ, as shown in the corresponding grammatical layout in chapter 4. This καὶ should be translated as something like “indeed.” All of the participial clauses are aorist, which in this context stress the ingressive aspect of Christ’s redeeming action and commands. Christ has brought peace to the Jews and Gentiles who are following Him. Each of the aorist participles in this context is portraying the idea of Jesus having done some particular action once for all time. The second of the three aorist participial clauses that follow the epexegetical καὶ is the point of emphasis with the first and the third stating clearly that the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile has been illuminated, πῶλοντες ἔθερον, as written in Acts 4:34.

262 Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament, 858–60, 891, states that the aorist participle in and of itself is depicting punctiliar action that can be described as ingressive, effective, or constative. The idea of tenses are secondary to aspect and determined by context. When an aorist participle is used in a circumstantial participial clause, it normally shows either prior or present action in conjunction with its finite verb (pp. 858–60). In contrast to the aorist participle, which has an aspect of punctiliar action, the present participle has an aspect of durative time. Regarding tense, similar to the aorist participle, the present participle may show antecedent and present time relative to the finite verb, but differently, it may also indicate future time in the sense of purpose, which is also shown through context (pp. 891–92); cf. BDF, § 339, 174–75. These authors state that originally participles had no temporal function but instead only portrayed the type of action. Although relative past time eventually became associated to some degree with the aorist participle, the context must determine whether its “type of action” occurred in the past in relation to the finite verb or is occurring simultaneously with the action of the finite verb. Blass, DeBrunner, and Funk give an example from Acts 1:24 where an aorist participle is showing simultaneous action with the controlling finite verb, προσευχάμενοι εἶπαν and a second example where a present participle is showing its aspect of duration along with action that occurred prior to that of the finite verb that it is illuminating, πῶλοντες ἔθερον, as written in Acts 4:34.
abolished for those who are in Christ. These two participial phrases emphasize the fact that Christ has personally destroyed the ongoing mutual hostility between those Jews and Gentiles who submit their will to His. Grammatically, the first clause introduces the second and the third clause closes this epexegetical section forming an inclusio.

Following is an overview. After saying that Jesus is our peace, the One having made it possible for both Jew and Gentile to become one united man thereby producing peace, Paul develops this important doctrine using a three-part epexegetical participial section, “καὶ λύσας τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, τὴν ἐξθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ, “indeed, having broken down the dividing middle-wall, the hostility, through (the sacrificing of) His own flesh,”263 τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας, ἐνα τοὺς δύο κτίση ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιῶν εἰρήνην καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, “having made ineffective the Law consisting of commandments specifically pertaining to ordinances, in order that He may create the two in Himself into one new man producing peace, and in order that He may reconcile both into one body to God through the Cross,” and thereby ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἐξθραν ἐν αὐτῷ, “having destroyed the (ongoing mutual) hostility through His own actions.” How does this sentence fit into the context of the whole letter?

Considering the entire letter, one can see that Paul is not saying that the Messiah has made all of the commandments ineffective. In Eph 6:1–3, Paul commands children to

263 See chapter 2 for a development of the meaning of the phrase τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ.
obey their parents and then tells them to honor their father and mother stating that this ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρῶτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ, ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται καὶ ἔσῃ μακροχρόνιος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, “this is the first commandment with a promise, that it may be well for you and that you may live a long time on the earth.” This imperative given by Paul to the children of believers shows the ongoing validity of at least one of the major moral commandments of the Mosaic Law. By looking at the both the Masoretic Hebrew and the Septuagint referencing Exod 20:12, one notes that Paul is directly quoting one of the Ten Commandments. Not only is this moral commandment still valid, it appears to have the same efficacy that it had when God gave it to Israel at Mount Sinai: honoring one’s parents normally gives one a long life in return. This imperative with promise shows that this commandment contained within the Mosaic Law has not become “ineffective” nor has it been abrogated. When one examines Paul’s fifty-one combinations of second-person imperatives and third-person jussives coupled with the present active participles that Paul used in Eph 4:25–6:20 to move his predominately Gentile addressees from their past life style to a manner of living that is pleasing to God, one sees that thirty-six of his exhortations are similar to some of the moral commandments of the Mosaic Law.264 Within the context of this letter, Paul’s exhortations clearly demonstrate that he was not saying that the Messiah had abrogated nor made ineffective the moral commandments of the Law. This in itself informs contemporary readers that Paul did not use the prepositional phrase, ἐν δόγμασιν, to emphasize that all of the commandments had been

264 The fifty-one exhortations and the thirty-six parallels are shown in chapter 4.
abrogated nor made ineffective. Paul used the prepositional phrase to limit the meaning of Christ’s καταργήσας, “having made ineffective,” the commandments of the Mosaic Law to a specific group of ordinances.

In addition to knowing that Paul is speaking about a specific set of ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law, his letter gives a good clue to what that group of ordinances might be by looking at the purpose of making them ineffective. Firstly, Christ died on the Cross to make reconciliation possible between God and man and between man and man. Secondly, by making this particular set of ordinances ineffective, Christ had made it possible for both groups, Jew and Gentile, to be reconciled on earth during His messianic reign into ἑνὸς σώματος, “one body,” the family of God. Paul’s letter shows that the moral commandments were not made ineffective and it shows that whatever ordinances were declared “ineffective,” this change made it possible for the Jew and Gentile to be reconciled on earth in “one body.” Paul was saying that this action make it possible for Jewish and Gentile believers to live together in an ongoing mutual state of peace instead of an ongoing mutual state of hostility. These ordinances were made ineffective in order to facilitate Christ’s uniting the Jew and Gentile into “one new man” bringing about peace among God’s children during the Messianic Age. There are no further clues in Ephesians to clarify which specific ordinances that Paul is referring to. Therefore, at this point, one needs to evaluate the rest of Paul’s letters and the socio-historical context of his era in order to understand more fully to which ordinances Paul is referring.
Within the Literary Context of Paul’s World

From the study above regarding Paul and the Law, it became clear that although no one is justified through doing "works of the Law,"²⁶⁵ Christ’s followers are to be οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου, “doers of the Law”;²⁶⁶ Christ’s followers are to be continually doing the ἐντολῶν θεοῦ, “the commandments of God.”²⁶⁷ This doctrine, which is advocated in several of Paul’s letters, matches his teaching in Ephesians in which Paul demonstrates the validity of the moral commandments contained within the Law through his exhortations to fulfill them. Paul teaches that both Jew and Gentile are equally required to work toward the fulfilling of the moral laws.²⁶⁸ Thielman notes that obedience to the justifying gracious God of the Mosaic Law leads to the destruction of the barrier between

²⁶⁷ 1 Cor 7:19.
²⁶⁸ O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, 198, states that early Judaic literature stresses the moral law while the cultic law recedes into the background; In his article “Interpreting Romans Theologically in a Post-'New Perspective' Perspective,” 238, Brendan looks at Romans 8 and says that Paul has answered the question of God’s righteousness and faithfulness. God is both faithful and righteous, and this is demonstrated in how God has dealt with sin and its destructive, death-dealing captivity. In the face of human incapacity to live other than selfishly, God has created the possibility for humans to live righteously through the Spirit and thereby to fulfill the covenant requirements in accordance with the vision of Ezekiel 36 and Jeremiah 31; and cf. Knox Chamblin, “The Law of Moses and the Law of Christ,” in Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship between the Old and New Testaments: Essays in Honor of S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., ed. S. Lewis Johnson and John S. Feinberg (Westchester: Crossway, 1988), 181, 187, 194, who states that grace is not antithetical to God’s laws (p. 181) and goes on to say that the “New Covenant” of Jer 31:31–34 actually achieves the forgiveness of sins, and it does not entail creating a new law but a new and more personal administration of the Mosaic Law; this will accomplish the deepest mutual knowledge between Yahweh and his people (p. 187). Chamblin reminds his readers that the Mosaic Law is an expression of God’s grace and when one considers the Law and the Gospel they are considering two manifestations of God’s grace (p. 194).
Jew and Gentile and on to proper love for one’s neighbor (Gal 2:15–21; 3:28; Eph 2:11–22; Col 3:11; Phlm 2:13).²⁶⁹

As one studies Paul’s letters as a whole, even scholars such as Thielman, who consider Paul to be teaching total abrogation of the Law, take note of how many places that Paul’s exhortations intersect the Mosaic Law.²⁷⁰ Thielman also reminds his readers of the fact that some of the greatest theologians of all time such as John Calvin taught that the moral commandments given at Mount Sinai were eternal.²⁷¹ In addition, he notes that God still requires those who want to participate in His New Covenant to be holy making them His “treasured possession” and appropriate dwelling place.²⁷² Stephen Davis states

²⁶⁹ Thielman, Paul and the Law, 240.

²⁷⁰ Thielman, The Law and the New Testament, 169, states that Paul refers to Paul’s ethical teachings variously as “ways in Christ Jesus,” “the law of Christ,” the “tradition,” “the fruit of the Spirit,” and the received “pattern of teaching” (2 Thess 2:15; 3:6; 1 Cor 4:17; 9:21; 11:2; Gal 5:22–23; 6:2; Rom 6:17). Thielman states that these commands intersect the Mosaic Law at several places, most notably at the Decalogue and the love commandment (Gal 5:14; Rom 13:8–10). See n. 82 for additional information.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 20–21. Thielman referred to John Calvin’s work noting that Calvin had taught that the moral law was still active as it reflected God’s unchanging will (Inst. 4.20.15; cf. 2.7.1). Calvin taught that the moral law serves three functions: (1) the law makes sin explicit leading people to seek God’s grace (Inst. 2.7.6–9), (2) the law serves as a check on unbelievers serving to restrain them from doing evil on the basis of partial knowledge (Inst. 2.7.10–11), and (3) the law serves believers as a guide to God’s will. Thielman understood Calvin to have vigorously opposed anyone who claimed that believers were not obligated in any sense to its commandments (Inst. 2.7.12–17); and cf. Bruce W. Longenecker, The Triumph of Abraham’s God: The Transformation of Identity in Galatians (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clarke, 1998; reprint, Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 118–19, who states that in Early Judaism, it would have been inconceivable to restrict the Mosaic Law within temporal time boundaries, because the Law was known to be eternal in its glory and function (p. 118). The immanent power of God was said to have resided with Israel and was embodied within Torah (p. 118). Longenecker went on to say that in a real sense, Torah requirements are built into the very structure of the world and the heavenly realms (Jub. 15; cf. 15.9, 11, 13, 28), and the Law itself is for all generations (p. 118). Paul came to understand Jesus Christ as the embodiment of wisdom (1 Cor 1:24; Col 1:15–20) and found in Him all the attributes of wisdom previously associated with Torah (p. 119).

²⁷² Ibid., 240–41. After reviewing what Paul has written regarding the Law and the Gospel in his letters, Thielman states that the function [outcome] of obedience to the Law in the Old Testament and in Paul is identical. The Israelites’ obedience to the Mosaic law marked them off from the other nations as God’s ‘treasured possession’ (Ex 19:5; Lev 18:1–5; 19:24–26) and made them an appropriate dwelling
that many have failed to understand Paul's teachings on the Law for the Messianic Age because they have followed theories that expect substantial changes in the Law between the Old and New Testament basically producing a different Torah. Schreiner states that Paul simultaneously celebrates life in the Spirit with its freedom in Christ and gives exhortations based on the Mosaic Law. Schreiner goes on to say that if one describes Paul's views of the Law merely in terms of abolition, this would be unsatisfactory because Paul's letters contain a motif of fulfillment, which include ongoing prohibitions against adultery, murder, stealing, and coveting. Indeed, the plain sense of Paul's teaching in Rom 8:4 is that the Mosaic Law is being concretely fulfilled by those who are not walking according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

place for God's presence (Lev 15:31).


275 Ibid., 325. Schreiner notes that Paul's teachings show: (1) the whole Mosaic law is fulfilled in terms of love (Rom 13:8–10; Gal 5:14), which includes the prohibitions against adultery, murder, stealing and coveting as part of the law of love (Rom 13:8–10). Schreiner notes that all of these commands are part of the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:13–17; Deut 5:17–21), (2) one must love one's neighbor as oneself (Lev 19:18), and (3) elsewhere there are commandments against murder (Rom 1:29), adultery (1 Cor 6:9), stealing (1 Cor 5:10–11; 6:10; Eph 4:28), with coveting receiving extended treatment in Rom 7:7–25, which can be compared to 1 Cor 10:6; 2 Cor 9:5; Eph 4:19; 5:3; Col 3:5); and cf. Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 124, who states that Christians are to fulfill the will of God, which finds paradigmatic expression in the Decalogue (Rom 13:8ff.) and can be summarized most concisely in the love command (Gal 5:14; Rom 13:8). The will of God will be the criterion of the final judgment, which God has given over to his Christ (2 Cor 5:10; Rom 2:12–16).

276 Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God's Glory in Christ*, 327. Schreiner looks at Rom 8:7 as strengthening such a view as Paul states that those who are in the flesh do not and cannot submit to God's law. This view of Rom 8:4 also fits with Romans 7, in which Paul proclaims human beings' inability to keep God's law in the flesh, which is in contradistinction to those who are being empowered to fulfill God's Law through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; considering Jesus' recorded teaching regarding the Law, Moo, "The Law of Moses or the Law of Christ?" 203–05, states that it is likely that the fulfillment referred to in Matt 5:17 means that Jesus' new, eschatological demands do not constitute an abandonment of the Law but express that which the Law was all along intended to anticipate. Moo goes on to say that Jesus' teaching clearly stresses an "anticipation-realization" continuity within the scheme of salvation-history. Within this
Regarding Eph 2:14–18, Markus Barth states that it would not make sense for Paul to teach that all of the Law is abrogated knowing that at times he has stated that the Law has not been abrogated but was to be upheld and established.  

Peter O’Brien understands Christ’s redeeming work as that which removed the threat of death from the written Law but not as something that would do away with the revelatory aspect of the Law that reveals the character and will of God. When Snodgrass evaluated this phrase within the context of Ephesians, he concluded that Paul was not teaching that the Law is abolished as the Word of God, which acts as a moral guide, but instead notes the fact that Paul continues to use some of the Ten Commandments in his exhortations.

If Paul understood Christ’s redeeming work to be a fulfilling of the Law—and he did—what does he mean when he proclaims that Jesus, who has full authority over the Law as the sent and appointed Messiah, has rendered ineffective τον νομον των εντολων εν δογματων, “the ordinances contained in the commandments of the Law”? It seems clear from Paul’s letters and from the socio-historical environment of Paul’s day that he was definitely not saying that the Messiah had abrogated nor made ineffective the moral commandments of the Law given to Israel through Moses. In 1 Cor 9:8–10, Paul explicitly used the Mosaic Law as an authority for Christ’s followers. In another set of context, the Law as stated in Matt 5:18–19 is understood to possess enduring validity.

277 Barth, Ephesians, 287. Barth references Rom 3:31; 7:22; and 13:8–10.


circumstances given in Rom 3:28–31, Paul specifically states that although believers
understood that God was justifying a man without regard to his ἔργα νόμον, “works of
the Law,” they were not καταργοῦσιν, “making ineffective,”280 the Law, but instead, they
were ἵστάνουσιν, “establishing,” the Law. The root verb, καταργέω, is the same root verb
that Paul used in Eph 2:15a. Therefore, contextually from his letters, Paul teaches in Rom
3:31 that in general, the commandments of the Law have not been made ineffective or
abolished, and in Eph 2:15a the same individual is teaching that a set of ordinances
within the commandments of the Law have been made ineffective so that the hostility
between Jewish and Gentile believers may be abolished.

It is known from letters such as Hebrews, that at least one set of ordinances from
the Law was no longer efficacious in the New Covenant; it was those ordinances that had
dealt with sacrifices for individual and national sins. Prior to the Messiah’s sacrificial
death during the rule of the Old Covenant, animal sacrifices were required as a temporary
substitute and as a reminder of the terrible price that the Messiah was going to pay
personally at some time in the future for those who would learn to trust God. Hebrews
explicitly states that after the Messiah died for the sins of the faithful, sacrificing animals
for sins, which pointed to the sacrificial death of the coming Messiah, was no longer

280 BDAG, 525–26, shows that the main idea behind the verb καταργέω is to cause something to
be unproductive, ineffective. It can mean “abolish,” but knowing that the early Church understood Christ to
be a fulfiller of the Law, which matches prophecy and general expectations, the translation of “abolish”
does not fit context; cf. Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, § 2673, 331, who state
that the primary idea behind the verb καταργέω is to hinder, render idle, or to make inactive; and cf. LS,
908b, who show the primary referent as to “leave unemployed or idle.” It can also mean to make something
useless or to hinder someone or something. Regarding Rom 3:31, Henry Liddell and Robert Scott
understand this verb applied to the Law to mean “make of no effect.”
required nor advantages. In fact, if one continued to sacrifice animals as part of their repentance of sins, it was a sign of rejecting God's gracious plan of redemption. In statements such as Christ γενόμενος κατάρα ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, "having become a curse for you (pl.)," and Christ's death being a gift to justify sinners who put their faith in God through Christ's own shed αἷμα, "blood," Paul tells his addressees that the Messiah's death fulfilled the required penalty for those trusting God and there was no longer a need for a daily sacrifice for their sins. Christ's followers were justified through Christ's atoning death on the Cross for them.

A couple of Paul's letters help expand the set of ordinances that had been declared ineffective by the Messiah. As noted above, Paul's letter to the Colossians contains good insight into understanding Ephesians because it uses the word δόγματα in conjunction with his statement that Gentiles were not required to follow such cultural and cultic ordinances of the Law as: (1) food or drink, (2) festivals and new moons, and (3) the Sabbath. Additional clues come from his letter to the Galatians, in which Paul tells his addressees that the Messiah's death fulfilled the required penalty for those trusting God and there was no longer a need for a daily sacrifice for their sins. Christ's followers were justified through Christ's atoning death on the Cross for them.

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283 Rom 3:23-25.
284 Cf. Theilman, The Law and the New Testament, 28-35, 169, 181, who understands the abrogation of the cultic and civic elements of the Law through Paul's spiritualizing of the Temple and sacrificial cult (1 Cor 3:9-17; 6:19 [-20]; Phil 2:17; 4:18; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1; Rom 12:1), and Paul's belief that Jesus' death atoned for all past human sin (Rom 3:25-26); and regarding Christ's atoning death in Paul's thinking, Sanday and Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 91-92, state that Christ's atoning death is significant in Paul's theology (Rom 3:25; 8:3; 1 Cor 15:3; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14, 20; Titus 2:14; cf. John 1:29; 19:36; 1 John 2:2; 4:10; Matt 26:28; Acts 5:30; Heb 1:3; 2:17; 8:3-5; 9:12-22; 10:12; 1 Pet 2:24; 3:18; Rev 1:5).
285 Col 2:16-17.
addressed by Gentile males do not need to be circumcised nor are Gentiles in general obligated to follow the dietary regulations of the Mosaic Law in order to be considered full members of the Church. Everyone could follow the cultural norms that they had been previously following before becoming a member of the Body of Christ in the Messianic Age. Dunn and Thielman are just two of many who understand Paul to be clearly saying that the ordinances dealing with purity and culture have lost their authority in the Messianic Age. Yet, as discussed above, at the same time that Paul is teaching that believers are not required to obey a specific group of ordinances, he is also teaching that Christ’s followers will obey the moral requirements of the Law through obedience to God through the leadership of the Holy Spirit. In this way, they will fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law.

To bring everything into proper perspective, it was noted above that a major clue to the intended meaning of Christ’s declaration that the δόγματα from τῶν νόμων τῶν

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286 Dunn, “Noch Einmal ‘Works of the Law,’” 275–76, states that the issues in both cases, circumcision and food laws at Jerusalem and Antioch, focused on what Law abiding Jews had regarded as fundamental and essential to the practice of their faith at least since the Maccabean resistance (1 Macc 1:60–63); and cf. Thielman, The Law and the New Testament, 28–35, 169, 181, who notes that Paul is excluding circumcision, traditional Sabbath keeping, and dietary observance from the life of Gentile converts (1 Cor 7:19; Gal. 5:6; 6:15; Rom 14:5–6, 14), and notes the abrogation of the cultic and civic elements of the Law also show up through Paul’s spiritualizing of the Temple and sacrificial cult (1 Cor 3:9–17; 6:19; Phil 2:17; 4:18; 2 Cor 6:14–7:1; Rom 12:1), his belief that Jesus’ death atoned for all past human sin (Rom 3:25–26), and his admonitions to submit to the Roman government (Rom 13:1–7).

287 It is interesting to note that the Early Church must have concurred with Paul’s teaching that it was important to follow the intent of the Law through the leading of the Holy Spirit, but not the letter (Rom 7:6; 2 Cor 3:6). One of the ways that this is shown through their actions is that they shifted the Sabbath to the day after the Sabbath, which corresponded to the day that their lord and savior had been raised from the dead by the Father. God had asked for His children to have a day of rest and worship set aside on the Sabbath, which occurs weekly; they complied with the intent, not the letter, by shifting their weekly rest and worship to coincide with their Lord’s resurrection.
\( \varepsilon\nu\tau\omicron\omicron\lambda\omicron\nu \) were officially ineffective during His messianic reign is that by making these ordinances ineffective, the Jewish and Gentile believers were expected to live in peaceful coexistence. Whatever the Messiah declared ineffective should have helped effectively removed the existing \( \varepsilon\chi\theta\rho\alpha \) between them. John Calvin’s studies led him to believe that when Paul penned the phrase \( \tau\omicron\omicron\ \nu\omicron\mu\omicron\ \tau\omicron\omicron\ \varepsilon\nu\omicron\ \delta\omicron\gamma\mu\alpha\omicron\alpha\omicron\nu \), Paul was referring to the ordinances of the Law such as circumcision, sacrifices, washings, and abstaining from certain kinds of food that were symbols of sanctification, badges and marks of their former identity, and he was not referring to the commandments regarding the moral law, which were equally valid for both Jew and Gentile.\(^{289}\)

As noted earlier in this chapter, from the Gentile perspective, the ongoing \( \varepsilon\chi\theta\rho\alpha \), "hostility," existed because Jews were considered atheists due to their monotheistic practices, they were considered anti-social because they would not participate in many social functions, which normally included polytheistic worship, and the Gentiles were envious of many of the diaspora middle-class Jews because they were generally wealthier than they were.\(^{290}\) Now, in the Messianic Age, those who decided to follow Christ and His


\(^{290}\) The general non-believing world was not happy with the Gospel message any more than they were with the Jewish proclamations of living a righteous life before God because there was still a message about the "one true living God" versus the many gods of the polytheistic world of the first century, and there was still the difference in the way that God's morality affected the way that both Jews and believers lived, which revealed the sins of those not following God's ways. In addition both Jews and believers believed in striving for greater excellence in the work place, which in and of itself normally made both groups more productive and economically prosperous. It is interesting to note that Ovid, a first-century non-Jewish writer, brings out a point in his work *The Art of Love* that confirms a Jewish entrenchment into the middle-class business world in Rome: Ovid discusses the problem of the cost of dating young girls due to their general desire to receive gifts. His advice to young men who were dating was to take their dates out on the
teachings, whether Jew or Gentile, were following the same God removing any charges of atheism among themselves, had the same outlook on work ethics, and were no longer following the ordinances regarding sacrificing for sins, which had been fulfilled through Christ’s redeeming sacrificial death. This left one area for potential friction between the Jewish and Gentile believer: their distinctly different cultural and purity ordinances. It is clear from the context of Paul’s letters and his socio-historical environment that when Christ declared the δόγματα, “ordinances,” contained within the commandments of the Law ineffective, He was referring to the purity and cultural ordinances contained within the commandments of the Mosaic Law. At this point it appears that not all of the original “works of the Law,” which had been mandatory under the Old Covenant are mandatory for Christ’s followers; purity and cultural ordinances are optional.

Therefore, when Paul says that Christ has made τῶν νόμων τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγματι “ineffective,” he is saying that Christ “has made ineffective the cultural and purity ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law.” If one was not required to keep these ordinances, there was nothing left in their common religious unity as the family of God that should cause division within Christ’s “one new man.” When Christ declared the cultural and purity ordinances “ineffective” during His messianic reign, He did not abolish nor outlaw these ordinances but instead changed their status from “mandatory” to “optional” for all who were part of His Body.

Jewish Sabbath because many of the shops were closed on that particular day. See Ovid, The Erotic Poems, trans. Peter Green (New York: Penguin, 1982), 403–29, 178–79.
CHAPTER 4


Introduction

In this chapter, the exegetical work of uncovering the intended meaning of Eph 2:11–22 will be undertaken. Chapters 2 and 3 provide the basis for understanding the meaning of two aorist participial phrases contained in Eph 2:14–15: τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν έχθραν καὶ τῶν νόμων τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας. These participial phrases have been perplexing and have consequently created much scholarly debate over the years. Because they are fairly difficult to understand, there was an extra effort made to research possible referents for several of the words of each phrase and then determine how these referents might help illuminate the meaning of the text in its proper literary and socio-historical environment. The understanding of their meaning as shown in chapters 2 and 3 have been imported into this chapter at the appropriate places without major excursuses taking away from the flow of Paul’s line of thought. Many of the remaining portions of this passage flows fairly smoothly. Wherever there has been any significant confusion in the past regarding grammar, variants, and/or meaning of any part of the text, the text is discussed and a solution is offered.
An Overview of Ephesians

Considering letters in antiquity, Ephesians can be classified predominately as a letter of exhortation. Stanley Stowers’ classifies Paul’s first canonical letter to the Corinthians and his letter to those living in Galatia as a skillful mix of paraenesis and specific advice.\(^1\) In Ephesians, Paul has skillfully mixed a long illuminating theological introduction with the second half of his letter, which consists of protreptic and moral exhortations encouraging Christians to walk morally sound in proper *unity* according to the will of God.\(^2\) Paul was addressing a specific attitude problem that existed in the cultural milieu of his time. There was an ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile, that had originated from the distinctively different lifestyles.\(^3\) This was discussed more fully in chapter 3. As he addresses a predominately Gentile Christian audience, Paul starts by focusing on how God has made a way for Gentiles to have equal and direct


\(^2\) Abraham J. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation, A Greco-Roman Sourcebook*, ed. Wayne A. Meeks, Library of Early Christianity, no. 4 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 122–29, has a short section in this book defining and giving ancient examples of two well known literary styles that Paul used in this letter, protrepsis and paraenesis. Protrepsis being argumentation to encourage someone to change any part of one’s lifestyle versus paraenesis being exhortation toward living at a higher moral standard; and there are some such as Sungnam Kil, “The Unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ: An Exegetical Study of Eph 2:11–22 with Special Reference to the Relationship between Jews and Gentiles” (Ph.D. diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2001), 255–73, who propose that Paul was not facing a problem of Gentile disunity with Jewish believers but rather an ongoing general Judaizer push for Gentiles to obey fully the Mosaic Law. From this basic belief, Kil’s thesis is that Paul wrote Ephesians to “assure the Gentile believers of their new identity” in Christ as full members of God’s household (p. 267–68). As part of this assurance, Kil states that Paul has assured them in Eph 2:15 that the Mosaic Law is completely abolished, and therefore, they were God’s new people in “the Torah-free gospel” (pp. 264–65).

\(^3\) Best, *Ephesians*, 238, makes a simple yet astute observation regarding the author and addressees. He can tell that this letter has been written and constructed from a Jewish mindset because a Gentile would never think of dividing the world into Jew and Gentile categories; Jews would be one of many races or nations.
access with the Jews to Him. His theological introduction informs contemporary readers that the Gentiles whom Paul was addressing needed to understand and act on God’s grace more fully,⁴ which centers on His desired unity for all who learn to trust and obey Him. The Gentiles needed to act on the fact that they belong to a single Body, the family of God. Therefore, Paul used an enlightening theological introduction to lead his addressees into a coordinated section of protreptic and general moral exhortation that was designed to move them away from their hostility toward the Jew, which was grounded in old tradition, and toward God’s desired unity for all believers.⁵ God wants Jewish and Gentile

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⁴ Cf. Harold W. Hoehner, Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 104–06, who in addition to recognizing that unity is a “very prominent theme” in Ephesians, notes that Paul has used a form of the Greek word διακοιναίω considerably more in this letter than in any of his other letters. These occurrences are centered around God and Christ’s love for individuals and God’s desire to see believers learn to love one another. Therefore, Hoehner concludes that the purpose of Ephesians is to promote love for one another based on God’s love.

⁵ Andrew T. Lincoln, Ephesians, Word Biblical Commentary, no. 42 (Dallas: Word, 1990), xxxvii, states that Paul’s argument in this letter starting with bringing the Gentiles to remember where they have been is used to help shape their present attitudes and actions. He goes on to show that the first section, a tightly organized theological section formed with thanksgiving (1:3–3:21) compliments the second section that consists of exhortations (4:1–6:20) (pp. xxxviii–ix). In addition, Lincoln goes on to say further that the content of this letter shows that the writer does have a pastoral concern for a particular group of recipients, certain churches in western Asia Minor, and has shaped his material to meet their needs (p. xi). He goes on to say that the first part of this letter plays the epideictic role of illuminating a truth in order to intensify adherence to values; these values are espoused in the second half of the letter exhorting Gentiles to take certain actions in the future that they had not been taking in the past (xlii). As he focuses on the rhetorical aspects of the letter, Lincoln notes that the first part reinforces the addressees sense of Christian identity and then proceeds to indicate that his audience is not as aware as they should be of some of the dimensions of their Christian identity (lxxv). Lincoln states that Paul’s closing exhortation to clad oneself in God’s armor and to depend on Christ’s power brings his addressees to the point of wanting to appropriate their identity and position in Christ as they strive to practice a distinctive Christian lifestyle (lxxv). Lincoln’s study led him to believe that these Gentile addressees who have experience the Gospel need to grow and make progress in a number of areas of their Christian walk (lxxvi–vii); yet there are some such as Barth, Ephesians, vol. 1, 58–59, who do not see Ephesians as an occasional letter, but instead more of a long prayer such as Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer recorded in John 17. He understands that because the doctrinal and hortatory statements are phrased in the form of prayer, the letter was meant to be heard by God and a group of people whom he does not know personally. The addressees are Gentiles who were converted after Paul left Ephesus.
believers to live together in unity according to and exceeding the general moral commandments of the Mosaic Law.

Many contemporary Bible scholars agree that knowing something about the historical and social context of a text is important in order to gain additional insight beyond what the text itself can offer helping one to understand more fully the intended meaning of the author(s). Yet, in order to correctly understand the intended meaning of an author, it is the text itself that must be allowed to give the greatest weight to the actual meaning. In his article, “Discourse Analysis,” George Guthrie states that words and sentences only have meaning as they are grouped appropriately and given their proper place in the contextual whole. In the last half century, more and more biblical scholars are looking more carefully at the way an entire discourse is laid out, and many are currently using the rubric of either “discourse analysis” or “text-linguistics” to denote a more thorough examination of the whole. Yet, in considering the whole more carefully, scholars are not downplaying the importance of properly understanding the “sense” and/or the “referents” of the words, sentences, and individual paragraphs that make up the whole. For any good exegesis, Guthrie considers it important to oscillate back and forth

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6 Grant R. Osborne, The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1991), 64, 92, who is one of many similar voices, states that in order to understand a particular text as accurately as possible, one must study a text as an entity looking at its particular structural arrangement, the syntactical makeup of the text, and place the text into its proper historical-cultural background.


8 Ibid., 255.
from the micro to the macro, which allows one to sharpen continually both the meaning of the whole and the individual parts as one’s understanding of both increases with continued evaluation. ⁹ In order to help one understand more fully the rational of a particular discourse, which includes understanding the way that an author or authors emphasize certain points, Peter Cotterell and Max Turner suggest looking at how an author might changes certain aspects of his writing to help his addressees properly follow his thinking. ¹⁰ In trying to sharpen one’s ability to evaluate the whole discourse more carefully, Cotterell and Turner categorize several ways that an author might indicate a change of emphasis or direction in his text to get the addressees attention such as: (1) the changing of the grammatical “person,” between the first, second, and third, (2) the changing of the social indicators that are used to address individuals such as “sir,” “teacher,” or “lord,” (3) the changing of the frame of time, (4) the changing of the narrative location, and (5) the use of standard discourse conjunctive markers such as διό, οὖν, “therefore,” τούτου χάριν, “for this reason,” or δέ, “but.” In Ephesians, the categories that one needs to be most sensitive to are the grammatical person, time references, and careful observation of Paul’s use of standard discourse markers.

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⁹ Ibid., 259–62.

¹⁰ Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1989), 244–47, 236 respectively. Regarding peaking, Cotterell and Turner note that there are three normal ways an author can help his addressees realize what he is trying to emphasize: (1) a coming together of all participants or an isolation of the main participant(s), (2) a change of pace where there is either a rapid resolution or a sudden rhetorical emphasis, and (3) placed what needs to be emphasized at some significant point or narrative time in the structure of the text.
The body of Ephesians can be subdivided into two main sections: the first primarily being an illuminating theological section designed to inform in order to convince the addressees to put aside their old cultural bias against Jews, 1:3–3:21, and the second, 4:1–6:20, which is introduced by a standard discourse marker, ὅτι, is primarily a combination of protreptic and paraenetic exhortation encouraging the Gentile addressees to forget their past mutual hostility with the Jew and move forward toward a godly unity and general holy life style as part of the united family of God. This section teaches the Gentile addressees important considerations for Christian unity in their marriages, family, and in the Body of Christ. All godly unity originates from Christ’s followers having a proper relationship with Christ. Believers are to submit themselves to one another due to their great respect for Christ in whom they are all united even as a godly couple is united and becomes μίαν σάρκα, “one flesh.”11

The first main subsection can be broken down into six smaller linguistic subgroups: 1:3–12; 1:13–23; 2:1–10; 2:11–22; 3:1–13; 3:14–20. In this first main subsection, Paul is continuously switching between the first and second grammatical persons moving between God, His grace, and we Jewish believers, 1:3–12; God, His grace, and you Gentile believers, we Jewish Believers, and all believers, 1:13–23; God, His grace, sin, and God’s interaction with you Gentiles, we Jews, and we believers, 2:1–10; and God’s intention for you Gentiles to join the Jewish believers in becoming an intimate part of His household, 2:11–22. As part of God’s intended plan, Paul has been

11 Eph 5:21, 31–32.
called by God Himself to invite the Gentiles to join believing Jews in fulfilling His plan of salvation in godly unity, which has not been fully disclosed to any former generation, 3:1–13. Because of God’s plan of grace toward the Gentiles and because Paul has been called to proclaim God’s message of grace to the Gentiles, he is praying that God make known to them the surpassing richness of His grace, 3:14–20.

The second major subsection, 4:1–6:20, takes on a different tone as Paul changes his style of writing from shifting back and forth between us Jews, you Gentiles, and all believers, who are now are part of the ἐνα καὶ νῦν ἄνθρωπον, “one new man,” the reconciled family of God,12 and settles into the protreptic exhortation for unity and the moral exhortations directed directly to his Gentile addressees on how they need to alter their life styles in order to walk in the will of the One who so graciously saved them. This second subsection looks back on the illuminating theological introduction, which describes what God has done through Christ to bring about His desired unity between Jew and Gentile and their joint reconciliation to Him, and points to the future looking for a real change in the Gentile’s attitude toward their Jewish brothers and sisters in Christ.13

12 Eph 2:15b.

13 Cf. Peter T. O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 66, who states that although he divides the letter basically into two sections, 1–3 and 4–6, there is still an interplay between them. Earlier, O’Brien had noted in Paul’s exhortation toward unity given in 4–6 that this exhortation is an essential element in living according to their calling (4:1). O’Brien goes on to say that God had done the impossible: He had brought together the irreconcilable Jew and Gentile and united them in one body, the Lord Jesus Christ (p. 64). The first half of the letter has spelled out reconciliation that God has made possible through Christ, and the second half describes what it means to live according to the new humanity (p. 64). O’Brien continues by saying that it is significant that Paul addresses sins and issues that might cause dissension and alienation within the Body, sins that work against the Body’s unity (pp. 64–65). Even in discussing marriages, Paul focuses on an ideal Christian marriage and its relationship to the union of Christ and His Church; both represent a union where “two” becomes “one” (p. 65). Ephesians 4–6 clarify further the kind of unity that Paul sees at the center of God’s saving plan to bring all things into unity with Christ (p. 65).
The second main subsection can be divided into four smaller linguistics units: 4:1–24; 4:25–5:16; 5:17–6:9; 6:10–18. This second main subsection makes it clear that Christian unity between Gentile and Jewish believers is paramount as Paul immediately starts exhorting his predominately Gentile addressees περι πατήσας ἀξίως, “to live out their lives in a worthy fashion,” τῆς κλήσεως ἡς ἐκλήθητε, “of the calling of which they have been called.”¹⁴ Paul continues by telling the Gentiles that they need to be σπουδάζαντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἐνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης, “striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the common bond of peace,” as they conduct their lives in an attitude of humility, gentleness, and long suffering, which originates from a godly love for one another.¹⁵

This opening shows Paul’s desire for his addressees to apply what they were taught in his theological introduction, which was brought to a high point in Eph 2:11–22: God desires both the Jew and the Gentile to have an intimate relationship with Him and one another. In Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, he had told them παρακάλω ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοί, διὰ τοῦ ὄνομας τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες καὶ μὴ ἔν ὑμᾶν σχίσματα, ἢτε δὲ κατηρτισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοῦ καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ γνώμῃ, “I am exhorting you brothers, through the name of our lord, Jesus Christ, that you all may be saying the same things and not letting there be divisions among you, but instead that you be made complete in the same mind and the

¹⁴ Eph 4:1.

¹⁵ Eph 4:2–3.
same knowledge." Similar to his situation toward the addressees of Ephesians, Paul was exhorting a predominately Gentile Christian group in Corinth to avoid from following the norm of their culture, which would have encouraged them to be more loyal to their chosen individual teachers than to the Church's master teacher, Jesus Christ. In Ephesians, Paul is addressing still another cultural norm that is a problem for the Body of Christ: Gentiles had been raised in such a way that they felt that it was wrong to associate intimately with Jews because of their religio-political differences. Now, Paul was telling a predominately Gentile audience that for those who were in close association with Christ, there was only ἐν σώμα καὶ ἐν πνεύμα, "one Body and one Spirit." In the Calling of the one true God, those Jews and Gentiles who personally committed to following the sent Messiah were part of the same family, the reconciled family of God. After using much of the letter up to this point to arrive at this truth, Paul expects this truth to convince Gentile believers that they have good reason to change their way of living from the "old man" to God's ways for the "new man" as they now live in close association with Christ. Gentiles must not continue to conduct their lives as they formerly had at a time when they were ignorant of God's ways. He tells them that now, μηκέτι ὑμᾶς περιπατεῖν, καθὼς καὶ τὰ ἐθνη περιπατεῖ ἐν ματαιότητι τοῦ νοὸς αὐτῶν, "you are no longer to be conducting your lives as even the Gentiles who are living in the

16 1 Cor 1:10.

17 Eph 4:4–6.
futility of their mind." In reality, they are no longer Gentiles; they are reconciled children of God first and Gentile believers second but not "Gentiles."

From this point to the conclusion of the second major subsection, 4:25–6:20, Paul uses fifty-one combinations of second person imperatives and third person jussives coupled with present active participles to move the Gentiles from their past acceptable life styles to a manner of living that is pleasing to God. Thirty-six of the fifty-one exhortations either compare directly or indirectly to commandments recorded in the Mosaic Law as noted in the footnotes below. For the "one new man," all are to be: (1) ἀποθέμενοι τὸ ψεύδος, casting away deception, 4:25,19 (2) μὴ ἀμαρτάνετε, not sinning, 4:26a,20 (3) ὃ ἡλιος μὴ ἐπιδυνάτω ἐπὶ [τῷ] παροργισμῷ ὑμῶν, not allowing the sun to go down on their anger, 4:26b, (4) μηδὲ δίδοτε τόπον τῷ διαβόλῳ, not giving the Devil any place in their lives, 4:27, (5) μηκέτι κλεπτέτω, not stealing, 4:28,21 (6) κοπιάτω, working (for a living),22 4:28b, (7) πᾶς λόγος σαρπός ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν μὴ ἐκπορευέσθω, not allowing any rotten words to go forth from their mouth, 4:29a,23 (8) ἀλλὰ εἰ τις ἁγαθὸς πρὸς ὀἰκοδομήν τῆς χρείας speaking edification to a

18 Eph 4:17–24.
22 Cf. Exod 20:8–11.
particular need, 4:29b, (9) μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἁγιὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, not grieving the Holy Spirit of God, 4:30a, 24 (10) πάσα πικρία καὶ θυμὸς καὶ ὀργή καὶ κραυγή καὶ βλασφημία ἁρβήτω ἀφ' ύμων σὺν πάσῃ κακίᾳ, removing every form of evil such as bitterness, fury, retribution, outbursts, and blaspheme, 4:31, 25 (11) γίνεσθε εἰς ἀλλήλους χρηστοί, kind to one another, 4:32a, 26 (12) χαριζόμενοι ἑαυτοῖς, full of grace for one another, 4:32, (13) γίνεσθε μυμηταί τοῦ θεοῦ, imitators of God, 5:1, (14) περιπατεῖτε ἐν ἁγίᾳ, conducting your lives in love, 5:2a, 27 (15) παρνεία καὶ ἀκαθαρσία πᾶσα ἡ πλεονεξία μηδὲ ὀνομαξέσθω ἐν ύμιν, not letting any sexual impurity, uncleanness, nor any excess be named among you, 5:3, 28 (16) ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον εὐχαριστία, (living in such a way that) thanksgiving to God is seen among them, 5:4b, 29 (17) ἵστε . . . , knowing that those who live out their lives in uncleanness do not have an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God, 5:5, 30 (18) μηδεῖς ύμᾶς ἀπατάτω κενοῖς λόγοις, not being deceived by empty words, 5:6a, 31 (19) μὴ γίνεσθε συμμέτοχοι


26 Cf. Exod 34:5–7; Lev 19:2, 18, 34. These same scriptures apply to §§ 12, 13, 14.


31 Cf. § 1.
αὐτῶν, not participating with those who are disobedient toward God, 5:7,32 (20) ὡς τέκνα φωτὸς περιπατεῖτε, walking as Children of Light, 5:8c,33 (21) δοκιμάζοντες τί ἐστιν εὐάρεστον τῷ κυρίῳ, considering what is well pleasing to the Lord, 5:10,34 (22) μὴ συγκοινωνεῖτε τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς ἀκάρποις τοῦ σκότους, not taking part in the unfruitful works of Darkness, 5:11a,35 (23) ἐλέγχετε, be rebuking the works of Darkness, 5:11b,36 (24) βλέπετε ἀκριβῶς πῶς περιπατεῖτε, looking carefully at how you are conducting your lives, 5:15a,37 (25) μὴ γίνεσθε ἄφρονες, not being foolish, 5:17a,38 (26) συνίετε τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ κυρίου, considering the will of the Lord, 5:17b,39 (27) μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οὐνῦ, not being drunk with wine, 5:18a,40 (28) πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι, being filled with the Spirit, 5:18b,41 (29) λαλοῦντες ἑαυτοὺς [ἐν] ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὡμοίως καὶ ὀφθαλμίς πνευματικῶς, speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and

35 Cf. § 4.
36 Ibid.
38 Cf. Num 12:11.
39 Cf. Exod 20:3.
spiritual songs, 5:19a, (30) εὐχαριστοῦντες πάντοτε ὑπὲρ πάντων . . . , giving
thanks to God at all times regarding all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
5:20, (31) ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλους ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ, submitting to one another in
the fear of Christ, 5:21, (32) and οἱ γυναῖκες (ὑποτασσόμενοι) τοῖς ἱδίοις
ἀνδρῶν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ, the wives are to be submitting to their husbands as unto the
Lord, 5:22, (33) and οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπᾶτε τὰς γυναίκας . . . , the husbands are to be
loving their wives as Christ loves the Church, 5:25a-b, (34) and ἐκαστὸς τὴν ἐαυτοῦ
gυναίκα οὕτως ἀγαπάτω ὡς ἐαυτὸν, (the husbands) are to be loving their wives as
they love themselves, 5:b, (35) and τὰ τέκνα, ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν ὑμῶν, the
children are to be obeying their parents, 6:1, (36) and τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν
μητέρα, (the children) are to be honoring their father and mother, 6:2a, (37) and οἱ
πατέρες, μὴ παροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν, the fathers are not to be (deliberately)
bringing their children to anger, 6:4a, (38) and ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν ποιμείῳ καὶ
νοοθετῷ κυρίῳ, (the fathers) are to be raising their children in the training and
instruction of the Lord, 6:4b, (39) and οἱ δοῦλοι, ὑπακούετε τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα

42 Cf. Exod 15:2; Lev 19:2.
43 Cf. § 11.
47 Cf. Deut 31:10–12.
κυρίων, the servants are to be obeying their earthly lords, 6:5a, (40) and μετ’ εὐνοίας
dουλεύοντες ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ, (the servants) are to be serving with good intentions as to
the Lord, 6:7a, (41) and οἱ κύριοι, τὰ αὐτὰ ποιεῖτε πρὸς αὐτούς, ἀνείντες τὴν
ἀπειλήν, (the lords) are to be acting before their servants without threatenings, 6:9a, (42)
and all are to be ἐνδυναμοῦσθε ἐν κυρίῳ, strengthening themselves in the Lord, 6:10,48
(43) ἐνδύσασθε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, clothing themselves in the whole armor of
God, 6:13, (44) ἀναλάβετε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, taking up the whole armor of
God, 6:13a,49 (45) περιζωσάμενοι τὴν ὀσφὺν ὑμῶν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, wrapping your (pl.)
waist in truth, 6:14, (46) ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν θώρακα τῆς δικαιοσύνης, putting on the
breastplate of righteousness, 6:14b, (47) ὑποδησάμενοι τοὺς πόδας ἐν ἐτοιμασίᾳ
tοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς εἰρήνης, putting on shoes in preparation of the Good News of
peace, 6:15, (48) ἐν πάσῳ ἀναλαβόντες τὸν θυρεὸν τῆς πίστεως, in everything
lifting up the shield of faith, 6:16, (49) τὴν περικεφαλαίαν τοῦ σωτηρίου δέξασθε
καὶ τὴν μάχαιραν τοῦ πνεύματος ... , receiving the helmet of salvation and the
sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, 6:17, (50) προσευχόμενοι ἐν παντὶ


49 Cf. Deut 33:29.
καρφῶ ἐν πνεύματι, praying in every instance in the Spirit, 6:18a,50 and (51) εἰς αὐτὸ ἀγρυπνοῦντες, being alert in Him, the Spirit, 6:18b.51

Ephesians 2:1–10: Saved by Grace

Eph 2:1–10 is used by Paul to transition from all that God has done for both the Jew and the Gentile to what that means specifically to his predominately Gentile audience, which he makes clear in 2:11–22.52 Paul is reminding the Gentiles that God’s desire for peace, their reconciliation, came with a great cost, and therefore the Gentiles need to make every effort to keep God’s desired unity for those who are in the Body of Christ. One notes that Paul starts this subsection by pointing directly at his Gentile addressees and telling them that ὑμᾶς ὄντας νεκροὺς τῶν παραπτώμασιν καὶ τῶν ἁμαρτίων ὑμῶν, “you being dead due to your transgressions and sins.” He softens the blow by going on to say that even though Jews were not transgressing on the same level as the Gentiles in the past, they were still being controlled by the desires of the flesh: we were also ποιοῦντες τὰ θελήματα τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοούν, “doing the desires


51 Cf. Deut 11:16.

52 O’Brian, The Letter to the Ephesians, 155, notes that there is a dramatic contrast portrayed in this passage between the addressees’ past and present. This contrast is meant to appeal to both their minds and emotions as Paul impressed on them just how much they owe God for what He has done through Christ; cf. Best, Ephesians, 198, who notes that Eph 2:1–10 reminds the Gentile believers how they moved from paganism to Christianity while the next section 2:11–22 tells them about how they were able to be incorporated into the people of God; and cf. Lincoln, Ephesians, 88, who notes that the knowledge that Paul is now developing will, in turn, lay the foundation for the paraenesis that follows. Lincoln goes on to say that this section coupled with the next, 2:11–22, functions to persuade the audience to reflect on their past and present using their mind and emotions in order to understand how much they owe to God for what He has done through Christ preparing them for the exhortations to follow (p. 91).
of the flesh and our thoughts.”\textsuperscript{53} But God in His infinite ελεει, διὰ τὴν πολλὴν ἀγάπην αὐτοῦ, “mercy according to His abundant love,”\textsuperscript{54} has made both the Jew and Gentile believer συνεξοποιήσεν τῷ Χριστῷ, “alive together in the Christ, the Messiah.”\textsuperscript{55} Yes, both Jew and Gentile can experience God’s grace. Those from among the Jew and Gentile who are following Christ have already been spiritually συνήγειρεν καὶ συνεκάθισεν ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, “raised together and seated together in the heavens with Christ Jesus.”\textsuperscript{56} At this point Paul again points his finger at the Gentiles and reminds them that χάριτι ἐστε σεσωμένοι, “by grace you have been saved,” which he repeats for emphasis saying τῇ γὰρ χάριτι ἐστε σεσωμένοι διὰ πίστεως· καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν, θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον· οὐκ ἐξ ἐργῶν, ἵνα μὴ τις καυχήσῃται, “For it is through grace that you have been saved through faith; this (salvation) does not originate from you, it is a gift from God—it is not derived from works with the result that no one may boast.”\textsuperscript{57} This line of thought is

\textsuperscript{53} Eph 2:3b.

\textsuperscript{54} Eph 2:4.

\textsuperscript{55} Eph 2:5b.

\textsuperscript{56} Eph 2:6.

\textsuperscript{57} Eph 2:5c, 8–9. Grammatically, ἵνα may be used to introduce a “result clause” as well as its primary role in introducing “purpose clauses.” See BDF, § 391, which discusses the concept of “the infinitive of result” along with stating that ἵνα can replace such a construction. An example cited deals with 1 John 1:9 where Jesus’ faithfulness and righteousness exists either for the purpose of allowing Him to forgive sins or with the result that He is able to forgive sins; Robertson, \textit{A Greek Grammar of The New Testament}, 981–99, sheds additional light on the subject and shows that ἵνα can function to show purpose (pure final clauses), result (consecutive clauses), or some thing in between (sub-final clauses). He gave many biblical examples showing that ἵνα can indicate result and, in addition, gave extra biblical sources, which also show general use as such. One of his examples should suffix to illustrate that ἵνα was being used
apparent in all of Paul’s writings as discussed in the previous chapter; Paul consistently teaches that no one can be justified by their actions due to the fact that no one can conduct his or her life perfectly before God.58 But, just as he had previously explicitly told the Romans and the Corinthians that although no one could be justified by their works,59 God does justify those who try to obey His commandments and follow His will for there lives.60 Here again, Paul speaks of justification coming about only through God’s grace.61 Then he goes on to exhort both Jew and Gentile to conduct one’s life doing God’s will; he states that we, “the one new man,” αὐτοῦ ἐσμεν ποιήμα, κτίσθεντες ἐν Χριστῷ

to introduce result clauses. He cites 1 John 3:1 and notes the present force of the result clause: ἴδετε τοτε ἀγάπην δεδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ πατήρ, ἵνα τέκνα θεοῦ κληθόμεν, καὶ ἐσμέν, “Behold the special love that the Father has given us, with the result that we are being called the sons of God, and indeed, we are (sons)”; regarding boasting, Best, Ephesians, 227, states that there is legitimate boasting in God and what He has done (Rom 5:2, 11; 1 Cor 7:14; 9:2) including successful conversions (2 Cor 7:14; 9:2), but one should not boast in their own activities (Rom 4:2; 2 Cor 11:16; Gal 6:13); and cf. Hoehner, Ephesians, 345, who follows Best’s thinking adding additional texts. He says that a person is not to boast about his or her efforts (1 Cor 1:29; 3:21) but only in God (Rom 5:11; 1 Cor 1:31; 2 Cor 10:17; Phil 1:26; 3:3) or the cross of Christ (Gal 6:14).

58 T. K. Abbott, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, The International Critical Commentary (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1897; reprint, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), 52, states that the phrase οὐκ ἔχειν ἔργων is such an essential teaching of Paul that he must have repeated it often among the Jew and Gentile. He goes on to say that it would have been tempting for the Gentiles to regard their salvation as secured through their holy living.

59 Rom 3:27–28; cf. Gal 2:16, 21; see chapter 3 for a full discussion of this topic.


61 Cf. O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, 176–77, who states that Paul normally used the idea of “works” or “works of the Law” to denote those works that were commanded by the Mosaic Law. But, he goes on to say that in this case with a predominately Gentile audience, Paul is speaking about all activity including the requirements of the Law. He goes on to say that Paul is making it clear that salvation is not based on human performance but purely God’s grace; and cf. Klyne R. Snodgrass, Ephesians, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 104–06, who also states that this section is directed to a predominately Gentile audience and although “works” here follows Paul’s teachings using the longer expression “works of the Law” to indicate the requirements of the Law, here Paul is referring to any human condition or accomplishment.
'Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ ἐργοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ὁς προητούμασεν ὁ θεὸς, ἵνα ἐν αὐτοῖς περιπατήσωμεν, "are being built-up by Him, having been created through Christ Jesus, for good works that God has arranged beforehand in order that we may be living out our lives doing them." Therefore, this section closes with an exhortation for the addressees to seek God’s will and then to live out their lives according to what God has already worked out beforehand for them. God has foreknowledge of all and those whom He knew were willing to listen to Him, they are the ones whom He places in close association with Christ.

**Ephesians 2:11–22**

Eph 2:11–22 is the climax of Paul’s illuminating theological section and in it, he makes it clear to his predominately Gentile addressees how God has made it possible for them to join fully the Jewish believers as part of God’s “one new man.” From this more fully understood perspective, the Gentiles should respond correctly by dropping their old

62 Eph 2:10; Barth, *Ephesians*, vol. 1, 250, states that “works” are the total historical existence of man. A man of God is a working man for God who has been elected by God. Works that God has prepared will stand the fire of the coming judgment of those Saints who stand before Christ. He goes on to say that Paul is a good example of one who disciplined himself under the conviction that he was doing God’s work (2 Cor 5:18–20); and cf. Best, *Ephesians*, 230, who states that God never acts purposelessly and this is expressed by this author when he states that there is purpose in creation which is expressed in the “good works” that have been prepared for those who listen to God.

63 Kenneth S. Wuest, *Ephesians and Colossians in the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 70, notes that God creates anew those who follow Him in Christ Jesus unto good works. He goes on to emphasis that this new creation is *in Christ* and that without this close association with Christ, the new creation would not have taken place (Eph 2:15; 4:24; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; Col 3:10). Wuest notes through Paul’s teaching that before God had created believers in Christ, He had prepared the good works that He desires them to live out during their lives (70–71).

64 Barth, *Ephesians*, vol. 1, 275, states that Eph 2:11–22 is the key and high point of the whole epistle.
ways and living as believers; this includes putting aside any residual hostility that they
may have had toward Jews, especially their Jewish brothers and sisters in the Lord. After
he explains to the Gentile more fully what God’s plan of salvation means to them
personally, Paul will come to a point in this letter where he will ask the Gentiles to
commit to honor God because of His great mercy by walking in God’s prescribed unity
with their Jewish brothers in Christ; he will start this life-changing exhortation in Eph
4:1–6 with a call to true unity among all believers, both Gentile and Jew. 65 Eph 2:11–22
can be divided into three sections, 2:11–12; 2:13–18; 2:19–22, which will be discussed
individually below. 66 In the grand scheme of things, section 2:11–12 introduces this
section by calling the addressees to a remembrance of their past life without God. The
next section, 2:13–18, teaches the addressees more fully about their present situation by

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65 Cf. Lincoln, Ephesians, 125–26, 131–33, who takes note of the importance of the author’s ποτέ
. . . νῦν schema and how it leads the Gentiles in realizing more fully their privileges with Jewish believers
in Christ (pp. 125–26). Lincoln goes on to say that this call to remember the past in respect to their present
situation in Christ is an attempt to influence the addressees to base their present values and actions on their
present situation not the past (pp. 131–33). At this point, Lincoln sees the author, one of Paul’s students
(p. ix), as not so much arguing for unity among Jew and Gentile as just wanting the Gentiles to know that
they belong to God’s household (p. 132–33).

(Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), 32, breaks down Eph 2:11–22 into three sections: (1) was sie
einmal waren, “what they at one time were,” (2:11–12), (2) was ihnen widerfuhr, “what happened for
them,” (2:13–18), and (3) was sie jetzt sind, “what they are presently,” (2:19–22); cf. Barth, Ephesians,
vol. 1, 275, who states that the logical structure of Eph 2:11–22 can be broken down into three sections with
the last two building on the first: (1) the description of the division of mankind (2:11–12), (2) the praise of
Christ’s work of reconciliation (2:13–18), and (3) the elaboration of the tangible result of peace, the
growing Church (2:19–22); cf. Rudolf Schnackenburg, Der Brief an den Epheser, Evangelisch-Katholischer
Kommentar, no. 10 (Zürich: Benziger, 1982), 101, who breaks this section down into three parts of which
2:11–13 through the scheme of “then-now” connects 2:1–10 to 2:14–18, which gives the view of how Christ
produced peace, then on to 2:19–22 showing the Church als den wachsenden Bau Gottes, “as the growing
building of God,”; cf. John Muddiman, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians (London:
Continuum, 2001), The Epistle to the Ephesians, 115, who understands Eph 2:13 to be the introduction to
the second section; and cf. Snodgrass, Ephesians, 129, who notices how the brief statement in 2:13 is
elaborated on in verses 2:14–18.
explaining God’s part in bringing about His desired reconciliation for both, Jew and Gentile, to be reconciled together into one Body to Himself. In this section, Paul partially achieves this enlightening of the eyes of their heart (Eph 1: 18–19) through the use of two metaphorical images, one architectural and one biological in Eph 2:14 and 16 respectively. The final section 2:19–22 forms a summarization and strengthening of what Paul has just taught as he now develops further what God’s reconciliation and unity mean through a second architectural metaphorical image of Jewish and Gentile believers being fashioned together to form one temple, the very house that God indwells.67

Ephesians 2:11–12: You Gentiles Were without God

After reminding his predominately Gentile audience that God has saved them through His own grace, not through anything that they have done, Paul starts this subsection by asking the Gentiles to consider what their relationship with the people of the One True God was really like prior to the Messiah’s atoning death for all. Everyone who decided to follow the Messiah was now reconciled to God and one another through the redeeming work of the Messiah.68

67 Kil, “The Unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ,” 118–19, notes the way that the author has used the ποτὲ-νῦν contrast schema to highlight the positive and changed situation of the Gentile addressees now that they are in Christ.

68 Hochner, Ephesians, 352, 380, makes a special point to state that it is not Jews and Gentiles per se who have been united, but Jews and Gentiles who are in Christ; cf. Joachim Gnilka, Der Epheserbrief (Freiburg: Herder, 1971), 134, 139, who notes at the start of this section that Paul was not concerned with an analysis of “eines einstigen Zusandes: a former condition,” for the Gentiles, nor “das gegenwärtig Verhältnis der Kirche zur Synagoge: the present relationship of the Church to the Synagogue,” nor “das zukünftige Schicksal der jetzt unglaubigen Juden: the future fate of the contemporary unbelieving Jews,” but instead, he was much more concerned with “dem Aufweis des einstigen Risses in der Menschheit von vornherein hingelent auf die Ogliche und schon geschehene Überwindung der Spaltung: the presentation of the former split in humanity (which) from the beginning he has been steering (the Gentile understanding) toward the possible and already completed conquest of that division” (p. 134).
There are no significant textual variants in the text of Eph 2:11–12. This text should be considered as one sentence in which Paul asks his addressees to look back to 2:1–10 through the inferential conjunction διό and then immediately asks his predominately Gentile audience to reflect on their past using a second person present active imperative, μνημονεύετε. The imperative is followed by two subordinating clauses, which are both introduced by the discourse marker ὅτι producing the imperative “remember that” as he looks at their past. The two subordinating ὅτι clauses are juxtaposed without a copulative marker. Both clauses are reinforced with supporting participial clauses as shown below. Note that each of these supporting participial clauses in the second clause is strengthened with an epexegetical καί, which are both followed by explanatory information. Here, each explicative καί can be translated as “indeed being.”

A linguistic-grammatical layout follows:

\[\text{Διὸ} \]
\[\text{μνημονεύετε} \]
\[\text{ὅτι ποτὲ ὑμεῖς τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκὶ,} \]
\[\text{οἱ λεγόμενοι ἀκροβυσσία ὑπὸ τῆς λεγομένης περιτομῆς} \]
\[\text{ἐν σαρκὶ χειροποιήτου,} \]
\[\text{ὅτι ἦτε τῷ καρπῷ ἐκείνῳ χωρὶς Χριστοῦ,} \]
\[\text{ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραήλ,} \]
\[\text{καὶ ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας,} \]
\[\text{ἐλπίδα μὴ ἔχοντες,} \]
\[\text{καὶ ἀθεοὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ.} \]

\[69\text{ Cf. Abbott, Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, 55, who sees the same thing.}\]
Meaning and Context

Contextually, Paul uses the conjunction δὲ and the immediate imperative μνημονεύετε to remind his predominately Gentile audience of their past position with God and to compel them to consider what he has just taught them about God’s grace, 2:1–10. He couples this imperative with two corresponding ὅτι clauses, asking them to remember firstly the fact that they were τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί, “the Gentiles in the flesh,”70 and thus at one point in not-to-distant past, they had been labeled as “the Uncircumcision” by the Jews,71 and secondly, during that time, they did not have a relationship with the Messiah, and therefore, they had been estranged from God and His Israel with the result that they were not able to share in the hope and inheritance of God’s people.72 Looking at it from the Jewish perspective, Kenneth Wuest knows that the very name that had been

70 John Eadie, A Commentary of the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, ed. W. Young (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1883; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 161, states that the article before ἔθνη signifies a class of people known as ἑπετήριοι, which denotes from the Jewish perspective outsiders who were ignorant of God and therefore irreligious; and cf. Roehner, Ephesians, 353–54, who agrees with this idea and states that the word ἔθνη denotes the whole class of people who were not Jews.

71 Nils, “Bibelstudie über den Epheserbrief,” 33, states that although at that time Israel was not a self-standing nation and most Jews lived outside their own land, the Jews followed their own laws and customs. In order to join the monotheistic religion of the Jews, “ein Heide mußte beschnitten werden: a Gentile must be circumcised.” A Gentile must give up belonging to his group and become a Jew; cf. Hoehner, Ephesians, 353, who states that although all people were in a desperate situation regarding their relationship with God, the Gentiles were worse off compared to the Jews because they had not been chosen to receive God’s revelation and possess certain privileges that came with being chosen by God; and Kil, “The Unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ,” 133, notes that the term ἀκροβυσσιτικός was never used by itself in the LXX to refer to Gentiles.

72 Abbott, The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, 58–59, notes that the verb ἀπολλατρίζω always means “estrange” and gives a few references, Eph 4:18; Col 1:21; Ezek 14:5, 7; Eccl 11:34; and 3 Macc 1.4. In addition, Abbott states that because ἐλπίδα does not have the article, the author is not so much pointing at the hope that one would have in the coming Messiah, but a general absence of hope because they did not know God.
given to the Gentiles, ἄκροβυστία, “Uncircumcision,” was a name of contempt. After all, the Gentiles had not been waiting for the Messiah, they were alienated from τὰς πολύτειας τοῦ Ἰσραήλ, “the commonwealth of Israel,” they were separated from covenants of promise, they did not have any real hope of substance, because they did not know and follow the one true God.

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73 Eadie, *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*, 162, notes that when Paul spoke about those who had been circumcised, he added that it was by works of the hand to make the point that the rite in-and-of-itself is not able to secure eternal life for anyone; and cf. Muddiman, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians*, 117, who states that circumcision was considered important enough that it was performed on a child eight days after birth whether or not that day fell on the Sabbath. Although this was considered sacred work, healing someone on the Sabbath was not (John 7:22).

74 Origen, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, Edited and trans. by Ronald E. Heine, The Oxford Early Christian Studies, ed. Gillian Clark and Andrew Louth, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 132–33, states that this Scripture silences those who think that believers have formed a new commonwealth different from the commonwealth of Israel. Origen goes on to say that those who understand that the Law is spiritual and live accordingly by it are to identify themselves as part of the commonwealth of Israel more so than those who are Jews in the flesh. The editor, Heine, is following a new critical text of Origen, which has been compiled by Francesco Pieri (pp. vii, 38–39); Eadie, *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*, 164, states that the word πολύτεια often denotes the state or commonwealth itself, especially when followed by a possessive or synonymous genitive containing the people’s name. He goes on to say that the commonwealth of Israel is that government framed by God in which religion and polity were so co-joined that piety and loyalty were synonymous; cf. Best, *Ephesians*, 241, who states along the same lines that this phrase refers to the membership in Israel as a defined political and religious community, but not in the sense of a modern nation. It is from this community that Gentiles were excluded; contra Kil, “The Unity if Jews and Gentiles in Christ,” 141, who follows individuals such as Fritz Rienecker, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Epheser* (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1961), 94, and states that it is better to consider the πολύτεια τοῦ Ἰσραήλ as a theocratically constituted nation; and regarding the Gentile addressees’ original estrangement from Israel, Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 355–56, states that this estrangement placed the Gentiles in a position that they did not share with Israel the national hope of the coming messiah. Hoehner goes on to say that the participle derived from ἀξιολογοῦσα was used only two other times in the New Testament and in both cases was used to mean “excluded” or “alienated.”

75 Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 359, states that it is best to consider the three specific covenants that Paul is referring to here as the eternal covenants, which are the New Covenant (Jer 31:31–34; 32:38–40; Ezek 36:23–36), the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam 7:12–17; 23:5; Ps 89:3, 27–37, 49 (MT 89:4, 28–38, 50; LXX 88:4, 28–38, 50); 132:11–12 (LXX 131:11–12)), and the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12:1–4; 13:14–18; 15:1–21; 17:1–21), and not the Mosaic Covenant, which was temporal.

76 Eadie, *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*, 167, states that word ὀθεός does not mean atheists as in the modern sense, but instead means those who are denying the one true God. In the secular world both Cicero and Plato had used the word to describe those who denied the gods of the State (de Nat. Deor. 1.23 and *Opera*, ed. Bekker, vol. 2 (London), 311, respectively); cf. Wuest, *Ephesians and Colossians,*
Through this section of Scripture, Paul wanted the Gentiles to remember their past empty lives without God, which they had just recently exchanged for a full life in Christ, and to remember that their new life in Christ consists of close fellowship with God and all fellow believers including Jewish believers. If the reader would like to see a copy of the fourth edition of United Bible Societies’ Greek text of Eph 2:11–12 and/or a copy of the author’s English translation, they are located in the Appendix, which is titled “Greek Text and a Translation of Ephesians 2:11–22.”

Ephesians 2:13–18: Christ Provides Reconciliation for Both Jew and Gentile

What God has presently done had been hidden from all previous generations. He was now bringing obedient Gentiles into His family on an equal basis with all obedient Jews without full adherence to the Law. In this section, Paul teaches that Christ’s death on the cross has made it possible for both Jew and Gentile alike to have reconciled fellowship with God and one another. In addition, Christ has declared that the ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law pertaining to cultural and purity issues

72–74: cf. Brooke Foss Westcott, *Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians* (New York: MacMillan, 1906), 35–36, who does not place that much weight on the fact that Christ is the long awaited Messiah, but points instead to the total separation of the Gentile from the one true God and His people; cf. Schnackenburg, *Der Brief an die Epheser*, 110–11, who does not see the author attacking the “herrschenden Religion: dominant religion,” of the Gentiles per se, but instead understands the author to be describing their condition, which is “fern vom Leben Gottes: distant from the living God.” The Gentiles are separated von Gott und seinem Zukunft schenkenden Leben; cf. O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 189–90, who notes that Paul is not so much accusing the Gentiles who may or may not have hope through their common pantheon of gods, but instead, he was evaluating their past and asking them to think back with him and remember that in reality they had not had a valid hope, and that although they had a multitude of gods to turn to, they were in reality without any god because they did not acknowledge the one true God; and cf. Muddiman, *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, 122, who reminds contemporary readers of our day that from the general Gentile position of this era, it was the Jews and Christians who were godless because of their refusal to participate in civic religion, which included the worship of the many city and state gods.

77 Eph 3:1–12.
were now "ineffective," in order that they would not become a stumbling block for the Gentiles causing some to reject the Gospel. It is God’s desire to unite the Jew and the Gentile into one close-knit Body to be reconciled to Himself.

**Grammatical Construction and Textual Variants**

Eph 2:13–18 is the main subsection of a larger subsection 2:11–22, and it consists of two sentences, 2:13 and 2:14–18. Although many commentators have chosen to place 2:13 with 2:11–12, it has been used by Paul as a temporal marker to show how things have changed for the Gentiles from ποτὲ, "then," to νῦν, "now," and therefore, this transitional sentence makes a natural opening for 2:14–18, which describes the "now," rather than bringing closure to 2:11–12. The closing of this subsection, 2:19–22, was used by Paul to bring his predominately Gentile audience to a greater realization of their joint citizenship with Jewish believers who together make up the household of God. All of this is leading to Paul’s exhortation for greater unity in the Body of Christ, 4:1–6.

The first sentence begins with the strong adversative conjunction, δέ, accompanied by an adverb of time, νῦν. The kernel sentence is simply ὑμεῖς ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς. This basic sentence is accompanied by a clarifying participial clause, ὅτε ποτὲ ὄντες μακρὰν, and two clarifying prepositional phrases. The first, ἐν Χριστῷ, emphasizes the point that those who were far and now near are so because of their

78 There are many such as Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 131, who place Eph 2:13 in the first subsection of 2:11–22. The layout changes slightly to: (1) 2:11–13, which lays the foundation, (2) 2:14–18, which provides further illumination, and (3) 2:19–22, which take up the contrast of past and present time in a summarizing form. To see a few alternate views, look at n. 49.
close relationship with Christ and the second, ἐν τῷ αἰματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, functions instrumentally telling the addressees that it was through Christ’s death that it had become possible for them to be near to God.79 There are no significant variants in this sentence, but it should be noted that Ἄρ.46, a late second century or early third century proto-Alexandrian papyrus, along with B, a middle fourth century Alexandrian document,80 dropped the article within the genitive of description, τοῦ Χριστοῦ, in the last prepositional phrase of this sentence. By dropping the article whether deliberately or on purpose, it would have changed the sense of the prepositional phrase slightly from pointing at the Messiah as the redeemer to noting the fact that it was the Messiah who gave His life for all.

The second sentence is fairly complex grammatically and theologically.81 Therefore, there is the expected controversy over its intended grammatical construction, which correspondingly affects its meaning, and controversy regarding the intended meaning of two of its aorist participial clauses, τῷ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λόγος, τήν ἔχοντα σαρκί καὶ τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταγράφασιν, which were fully discussed in chapter 2 and 3 respectively. Regarding textual integrity, there are two

79 Best, Ephesians, 246-47.


81 Muddiman, The Epistle to the Ephesians, 131, notes that the grammar of this section in its present form is so loose and ambiguous that it allows for several constructions.
mildly significant variants for this sentence, and they will be discussed below with their corresponding texts. In addition, there are a couple minor variants where some of the copyists of various manuscripts had written the reflexive pronoun ἐαυτῷ in place of the pronoun αὐτῷ, which was probably done in an attempt to bring attention to the subject, the one responsible for everyone’s redemption, the Christ Jesus.⁸²

After studying the discourse markers and the layout of Paul’s argument, which includes noting the use of the introductory marker γάρ to tell the addressees that this subsection clarifies the immediate preceding statement, the best option is to divide this long sentence as follows. The two core sentences that comprise this compound sentence are separated by the copulative marker καί, which is coupled with the circumstantial participle ἐλθὼν. Because of the narrative distance between the two independent sentences, it may be better to separate them with a semicolon in the actual text. If viewed side-by-side, the core independent clauses within the compound sentence read Αὐτὸς ἐστιν ἢ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν, καὶ ἐλθὼν, εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνη ὑμᾶν τοῖς μακρῶν καὶ εἰρήνην τοῖς ἐγγὺς, “He is our peace, and having come, He proclaimed peace to you who were distant and peace to the ones who were near.” The second sentence is augmented with a standard ὅτι clause explaining why peace is possible; this clause contains two prepositional phrases that give further elucidation. The main clause of the first sentence is elaborated on through an aorist participial clause, ὅ τούτης τὰ

⁸² Novum Testamentum Graece, 506. In both cases, the prepositional phrase ἐν αὐτῷ was modified.


The second epexegetical aorist participial clause is the point of emphasis with the first, καὶ 
τὴν ἐφησαν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτῶ, and the third, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἐφησαν ἐν αὐτῶ, stating clearly that the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile has been abolished for those who are in Christ; they both have one prepositional phrase functioning to clarify the point that it is through Jesus that this ongoing hostility has been removed. Grammatically, the first participial clause introduces the second and the third clause closes this epexegetical section forming an inclusio. The opening clause of this inclusio contains a metaphorical image of destroying a dividing middle-wall, which is placed appositionally alongside a clear statement that Christ has destroyed the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile for all of His followers; grammatically, the participle can be moved to the front of the

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83 Abbott, The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, 61, states that this is an exegetical καὶ and translates it as "inasmuch." There are many who do not consider the fourth aorist participial clause in this section, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἐφησαν ἐν αὐτῶ to be in parallel with the second and third aorist participial clauses. They will set the fourth participial clause as subordinate to the second τῶ clause without placing it as part of an inclusio; e.g. O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, 192–93.

84 Cf. Muddiman, The Epistle to the Ephesians, 136, notes that this participial clause, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἐφησαν ἐν αὐτῶ is looking back to the participial clause in Eph 2:14, λύσας τὴν ἐφῆσαν, and highlighting it; most exegetes do not place the third aorist participial clause, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἐφησαν ἐν αὐτῶ, on an equal basis with the two preceding aorist participial clauses. But, when looking at Paul’s argument, this participial clause helps to complete his thought on the entire subsection. Although it is not normally considered as such because of its sequential position behind the second ἐν clause; contra to many, when Best, Ephesians, 266, evaluated the place of this aorist participial clause in the total flow of the presentation, he states that this clause was pointing back to the enmity between Jew and Gentile laid out in verse 14, not the enmity between God and man discussed directly preceding it; it is interesting that when Lincoln, Ephesians, 128, and Muddiman, The Epistle to the Ephesians, 124, looked at Eph 2:14–18 as a former hymn and divided it up into its separate parts, the clause ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἐφῆσαν ἐν αὐτῶ was moved out into a more prominent position. The linguistic-grammatical layout proposed is shown below.
clause for clarity in structure resulting in λόγος τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, τὴν ἔχθραν. In his apology against Marcion, Tertullian translated this clause simply as an ablative absolute clause, *soluto medio pariete inimicitiae*,85 "the middle-wall of hostility having been destroyed," in Christ's flesh. Tertullian placed *inimicitia* in the genitive thereby forcing his addressees to see hostility as the real essence of the *dividing* middle-wall.

As stated above, the linguistic-grammatical layout places emphasis on the middle clause, τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας.86 This participial clause contains a textual variant: δόγμασιν is missing the prepositional phrase, ἐν δόγμασιν. But, according to the Nestle-Aland translation team, that is the only known early Greek source that is missing this prepositional phrase.87 Tertullian's mid-second century Latin apology against Marcion contains evidence of the existence of this prepositional phrase and thereby shows early evidence that this phrase was considered part of the text from a very early date.88 This participial clause is augmented by two ἵνα clauses that are tied together


86 Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 375, states that this participle is probably a participle of means indicating the means by which the hostility was destroyed. Regarding the meaning of the verb καταργέω, Hoehner states that in Paul's writings this verb was used twenty six times, and it was always used to mean "to render inoperative, nullify, invalidate" and never to mean "destroyed" (Rom 3:3, 31; 4:14; 6:6; 7:2, 6; etc.). Hoehner notes that the translators of the LXX chose to use a form of this verb, καταργέω, to translate the Aramaic word פָּרֹשׁ, which means "to cease." It was used in conjunction with rebuilding the Temple and meant to "hinder" or "to cease" from building.

87 *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 506.

88 In his Latin apologetical work from the mid-second century against Marcion, *Tertullian Adversus Marcionem*, 620, Tertullian references this particular clause saying *legem praeceptorum sententias*
by the connective marker καί denoting a close coupling, which through context is showing a sequence from “purpose” to “purpose-outcome.” The first clause is showing the purpose or reason that Christ declared the cultural and purity ordinances “ineffective,” and the second ἵνα clause shows the desired outcome behind the purpose: God wants both the Jew and Gentile to be reconciled to Him in one Body, not in two separate groups.9⁸ Therefore, the interconnecting καί between the two clauses can be translated in this case to show their interconnection and desired output by using words such as “and thereby.” The first ἵνα clause contains a mildly significant variant in that Ἰ, F, and G have recorded καλῶν ἀνθρώπον, “common man,” instead of καυνῶν ἀνθρώπον, “new man.” Contextually it could work, but all of the other early sources including Tertullian understand the original Greek to read καυνῶν.9⁹ This idea of a “new man” is not a new thought for Paul; in an earlier letter to the Corinthians, Paul had expressed this very

vacuum facti, “He has made empty/ineffective the Law consisting of precepts/commandments pertaining to sentences/judgements/decrees.” In the late fourth century, Jerome’s translation of the best Greek of his day into Latin does not exactly match Tertullian’s, but it is similar in many respects. Jerome’s translation recorded in the Latin Vulgate says legem mandatorum decretis evacuans, “making empty the Law consisting of commandments pertaining to the decrees/ordinances.” The work of these two Latin writers tell modern readers that they were familiar with three interconnected nouns, not two, from their Greek or Latin sources, which demonstrates that they both recaptured the essence of the Greek prepositional phrase ἐν δόγμασιν choosing different words in Latin with similar referents and placing them in the ablative case to recreate the grammatical function of Greek prepositional phrase. These early Latin witnesses give modern scholars a high degree of confidence that Paul’s original letter contained this particular prepositional phrase.

98 The conjunction διὰ, which is used in discourse much of the time to mark direct or indirect speech, sensation, or explanatory or causal clauses, may also be used to mark result clauses. See BDAG, § 5c, 732b; there are some such as Best, Ephesians, 263–64, who see the two ἵνα clauses as more distant, and therefore, they prefer to consider this καί as purely copulative.

99 Tertullian, Tertullian Adversus Marcionem, 620, quotes the Greek phrase ἤνα καυνῶν ἀνθρώπον as unum novum hominem, “one new man.”
thought stating that all who are in Christ are καινὴ κτίσις, “a new creation.”91 The second ἕνα clause is attached to the first by the copulative conjunction καὶ that serves more than just as a parallel thought, but includes the dual nuance of purpose and shows the desired outcome of reconciling the Gentile to the Jew; now they both can be reconciled as “one new man” to God in one Body through the Messiah’s atoning death on the cross.92 Finally, both ἕνα clauses contain prepositional phrases that help bring further clarity. Through the first ἕνα clause, the reader notes that Christ is creating ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον, “one new man,” ἐν αὐτῷ, “through His own actions.” This clause has an epexegetical present participial clause attached to it giving the reason for making these ordinance ineffective: in order that the Messiah may create “one new man” in order to produce peace. The prepositional phrase διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, “through the cross,” which is attached to the second ἕνα clause, shows that reconciling both Jew and Gentile into “one Body” to God came with the great cost of the substitutionary death of the Messiah through an agonizing death on a cross. Following is a linguistic-grammatical layout of Eph 2:13–18:

91 2 Cor 5:17, ἀπεκτένω εἰς τὰς ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις; τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῄθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά, “with the result that if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things have passed from (him), (and) behold he has become new.”

92 Abbott, Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, 65–66, notes that this καὶ is not a mere copula, but indicates a logical sequence. Abbott suggests translating this conjunction as something like “and consequently”; and Kil, “The Unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ,” 111, notes the dual dimension of these two clauses brings out both the desired unity of Jews and Gentiles through the creation of “one new man,” and the reconciling of both to God.
νυνὶ δὲ
ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ
ὑμεῖς ἐγεννήθητε ἐγγύς
οἱ ποτε ὁντες μακρὰν
ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

γάρ ⁹³
Αὐτὸς ἔστιν ἡ ἐξήγησις ἡμῶν,
ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἐν
(καὶ) (1) τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν
ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ,
(2) τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας,
ἐνα τοὺς δύο κτίσιν εἰς ἓν καὶ τὸν ἀνθρώπον
ἐν αὐτῷ
ποιῶν εἰρήνην
καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφότερους
ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ
διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ,
(3) ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν
ἐν αὐτῷ.
καὶ ἐλθὼν,
ἐὐθυγελίσατο εἰρήνην ὑμῶν τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ εἰρήνην τοῖς ἐγγύς,
ὅτι ἔχομεν τὴν προσκυνήσιν οἱ ἀμφότεροι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα
δι᾽ αὐτοῦ
ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι.

Meaning and Context

The meaning of the first of the two sentences that make up this subsection is clear.

Our current understanding of the socio-historical context and literary context behind this
text and its linguistic-grammatical arrangement lend themselves to a clear understanding.

As described above the first sentence provides a transition with what immediately
proceeds it and what follows. Nils Dahl sees the force of this sentence as the center point

⁹³ At this point in the discourse, γάρ is being used as a marker of clarification, therefore, γάρ can
be rendered something like “for, you see.” See BDAG, § 2, 189.
of Eph 2:11–22. This sentence begins with the strong adversative conjunction, δέ, accompanied by an adverb of time, νῦν. Paul continues to address his audience directly in the second person as he tells them that now, through Jesus’ actions and due to their close association with Him, they, who were at one time distant from God and His earthly household, have been made near through Christ’s sacrificial sacrifice. The positioning of the prepositional phrase ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ at the beginning of this whole section immediately points to the fact that none of what follows would have been possible except by means of Christ’s work and by virtue of one being in close fellowship with Him. The cost of their reconciliation to God and one another was very high and has been paid by God Himself. Speaking to the Gentile addressees, Paul states that “you all” have ἐγεννηθήτε ἐγγύς by means of τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

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94 Dahl, “Bibelstudie über den Epheserbrief,” 33, states that in Paul’s statement—that in Christ Jesus you now have become near through the blood of Christ, those of you who were once far—stands “der zentrale Satz unseres Abschnittes.”

95 Hoehner, Ephesians, 362, following Lincoln notes that there are references in the Old Testament where Gentiles were said to be distant from God (Deut 28:49; 29:22; 1 Kgs 8:41; Isa 5:16; Jer 5:15) and a place where Israel was said to be near (Ps 148:14).

96 Kil, “The Unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ,” 147, notes that in Ephesians one must look to context to see whether the author was using this prepositional phrase in the instrumental or locative sense. In the locative sense, the author was referring to the incorporation of believers into Christ, their union with Him.

97 Hoehner, Ephesians, 363, notes that the cost of redemption and the resulting reconciliation that brought the Gentiles near was dear. Hoehner also referenced several texts that stated that the sacrificial death of Christ was necessary to propitiate God’s demand of holiness (Eph 1:7; Rom 3:25; 5:9; 1 Cor 10:16, 11:25, 27; cf. Heb 9:12, 14; 10:19, 29; 13:12, 20; 1 Pet 1:2, 19; 1 John 1:7).

98 Kil, “The Unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ,” 156, notes that the emphasis in this section is not that Gentiles have been incorporated into Israel per se, but instead they have become near to God by being incorporated into Christ; and Muddiman, The Epistle to the Ephesians, 123, gives additional references where Paul has taught that Christ spilt blood played key role in God’s redemptive plans for humanity: Rom 3:25; 5:9; 1 Cor 10:16; 11:25.
The second sentence is long and grammatically complex, which has caused problems in deciding how the parts make up the whole. Some of the important grammatical points were discussed above and in Chapters 2 and 3. Some look at this long sentence and conclude that it cannot be Paul's due to his emphasis on the unification of the Jew and Gentile, but many such as Markus Barth understand Paul's work to affirm Jew and Gentile unification through Christ. In addition, there are two places within this text that modern scholars are having a difficult time agreeing on meaning. The first place in the text that causes contemporary confusion is the meaning of the word, $\mu\varepsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon\chi\omicron\nu$. This generation had lost the word's intended referent, and therefore, modern scholars have been determining its meaning from the surrounding text attempting to make an educated guess of its meaning. In chapter 2, the use of the words $\mu\varepsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon\chi\omicron\nu$ and $\mu\varepsilon\sigma\sigma\omicron\upsilon\sigma\nu$...

99 There are those such as Schnackenburg and Lincoln who start with the presupposition that Paul is not the author but instead the author is a post Pauline Jewish author such as one of his students. Schnackenburg, Der Brief an die Epheser, 112, states that he has rejected what many of his contemporaries have concluded: that the author used and modified an earlier hymn. He states that it is clear to him that 2:13–18 is a “christologische Exegese: christological exegesis,” of Isa 9,5f; 52,7; 57,19. Schnackenburg goes on to say that the “Friedenfürst: principle of peace,” from Isa 9:5 compared with Isa 52:7 and 57:19 points to the work of the Messiah as the finality of the peace of God not only for Israel but also for “die Fernen: the distant”; others such as Lincoln are convinced that 2:14–18 has not come out of exegetical work from the Old Testament or general thought but instead from modifying an earlier hymn such as Lincoln, Ephesians, 126–30. Lincoln develops and discusses what according to him appears to have been an earlier hymn and the author's possible alterations (p. 128). In his analysis, Lincoln sees some similarities between this section and what he calls another cosmic hymn found in Col 1:15–20 or the text of Col 1:21–23 of which there are close verbal similarities (p. 130). In addition, Lincoln acknowledges that there are some general similarities in thought from this section compared to Paul’s other letters (pp. 126–27); and there are others such as Hoehner, Ephesians, 364–65, who consider this section most likely to be an explanatory digression. Hoehner states that there are not enough verbal similarities (19 out of 238 words) nor is the reconciliation emphasis the same when comparing similar sections of Ephesians and Colossians. Hoehner, like many before him look to Isa 57:19 to be a possible Old Testament referent for this section of Paul's writing.

100 Barth, Ephesians, vol. 1, 262, gave the following references: Gal 2:11–21; 3:13–29; 1 Cor 1–3; 10:16–17; Rom 1:8–3:31; 9–11, noting that some think that this is not Paul’s thinking, and it therefore must be either a pre- or post-Pauline hymn.
τοίχοι along with their Latin counterparts, medius paries and communis paries were investigated for Paul’s era in order to find out how these words were commonly used in order to understand Paul’s intended meaning of the phrase τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ. It turns out that the word μεσότοιχον was a common architectural term used in Paul’s day to denote a common partitioning-wall, which is today commonly called a “party-wall.” As shown in chapter 2, this term normally denotes a solid wall that was commonly used in buildings to isolate spaces totally one from another. These buildings could house business, residents, or combinations of both. If one was considering multi-residence buildings, it normally referred to the solid walls that were shared by contiguous dwellers in order to provide total privacy from one another. In this text, Paul is not asking them to think about walls in general, τοίχοι, “building walls in general,” nor τείχα, “city-walls in general,” but instead he is making this very personal for each of his addressees by painting a metaphorical picture using a very specific type of wall, μεσότοιχον, “a middle-wall, a party-wall.” His addressees were very familiar with “party-walls” and knew that their function was to separate one family from another in their common multi-residence buildings as discussed in chapter 2. This metaphorical picture was very personal and brought a picture of how they were supposed to act on a daily basis: they were supposed to act as one family that was not divided by a μεσότοιχον. This is an idea that they could each relate to from their everyday living experiences: he is asking them to imagine what it would be like for a contractor like Christ to demolish the solid wall of hostility that exists presently between the Jewish
portion of the family of believers and Gentile portion of the family of believers just as a
general contractor would demolish a μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, “dividing middle-wall,”
that was standing between them and therefore denying easy access to one another. Paul
was placing an image in their heads of the destruction of a residential “dividing middle-
wall” that had been separating two distinct estranged parts of the same family who were
no longer distinct; they were now reconciled into the Body of Christ; they were
collectively “one new man,” the reconciled family of God. The prepositional phrase ἐν
τῇ σαρκί αὐτοῦ was added to this participial clause to reiterate the fact that the primary
means that Christ used to reconcile man to man and man to God was through His
redeeming death on the cross.101

As noted in chapter 2, when he attached the definite article to μεσότοιχον, Paul
was pointing to a particular “middle-wall,” the present ongoing inherited mutual hostility
that Christ’s followers brought with them from their pre-Christian days. Now, with the
use of this familiar architectural term used as a metaphor, Paul wants his audience, the
Gentile believers, to understand that Christ did not want the family of God divided over
anything, traditions or otherwise. For those who are in Christ, there is only one family,
one new man. With the destruction of τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ, “the dividing
middle-wall,” the traditional ongoing mutual hostility, the Jewish and Gentile believers
were to live together as one family in the larger space provided by God.

101 Dahl, “Bibelstudie über den Epheserbrief,” 36, states that Paul accents this fact to show that
[parts of] the Law “nicht willkürlich beseitigt wurde: was not being arbitrarily undone.” He elaborates by
saying that Christ stood under the curse of the Law Himself as a substitute for others, and therefore,
overcame the power of the Law to separate people from God (cf. Gal 3:13; 4:5; Col 2:14).
A second point of confusion in this text is Paul’s statement that Christ’s redeeming death on the cross was accompanied by His making ineffective τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἔν δόγμασιν, “the ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law.” Modern scholars have been divided over whether or not Paul was teaching of an abolishing or making ineffective the entire set of commandments within the Law or only a certain portion designated as δόγματα, “ordinances or decrees.” There are some such as Muddiman and David Mapes who see the Law as remaining in force during the Messianic Age; the covenant has been changed, but the Law is intact.  

102 Muddiman, *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, 132–33, states that ἔν δόγμασιν was added to tone down the idea of abolishing the whole Law, and in reality only remove the validity of its regulations and statutory aspects that were no longer needed; and David L. Mapes, “A Covenantal Basis for Paul’s Paradigm of Law in Galatians and Romans” (Ph.D. diss., Mid-American Baptist Theological Seminary, 2001), 186–91, who states that although the covenants of God with Israel are independent agreements, they are all part of a single desired relationship between God and man and God’s corresponding promise to Abraham that his seed and the seed of the Gentiles would be blessed through his faithfulness. Mapes states that the Abrahamic Covenant finds further expression in the Sinaitic and the New Covenants (pp. 186–87). In his conclusion, Mapes takes note of the fact that Paul teaches in Romans that the Law given to Moses contains law principles that apply to Gentiles as well as Jews; both are condemned due to violation of the principles taught by the Law given to Moses (pp. 190–91); cf. Schnackenburg, *Der Brief an die Epheser*, 115, who reasons that the author added the words τοῖς δόγμασιν to τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν for some reason other than restating ἐντολαί. Schnackenburg takes note of the fact that Paul never spoke directly against the Law (cf. Rom 3:31) and went on to say that in context the “Feindschaft zwischen Judentum und Heidentum: enmity between Jew and Gentile” is related to what is being brought to an end. He concludes that the part of the Judaic Law that is on the horizon are the regulations that are causing separation between the Jews and Gentiles. The regulations that divide deal with “Beschneidung, Reinheit, und Speise: circumcision, purity, and food”; and cf. there are some such as J. Armitage Robinson, *St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians* (New York: MacMillan, 1903), 11, who note Paul’s use of καταργεῖν in Rom 3:31 in which Paul said that the Law had not been annulled and for a variety of reasons have decided that Paul was not saying that the Law was being made ineffective, but instead, a code of manifold precepts, which had been expressed in ordinances; and a voice from the past, a third century scholar, Origen, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians*, 135–36, who states earlier in his commentary that the those who understood the Law to be spiritual were living accordingly (Rom 7:14). If they understand the Law to be Spiritual, believers will understand the doctrines behind the commandments of the Law; they are not directly tied to the letter of the Law that kills and therefore is to be despised (2 Cor 3:6; Eph 2:11).
it. And finally, there is a camp represented today by some such as O'Brien, Kil and Heinrich Schlier who advocate that the Law was totally abrogated upon Christ's death on the cross. A full study of the possible referents for the word δόγματα was made in chapter 3 along with other variables including possible categorizations within the Law and Paul's overall theology regarding the place of "works of the Law" and the Law itself in the Messianic Age. Chapter 3 shows the possible ways that this clause could have been interpreted in respect to its grammatical construction and the context of Paul's other letters in light of his socio-historical environment. As discussed in chapter 3, the grammatical structure of this clause allows the prepositional phrase ἐν δόγματι to work

103 Best, *Ephesians*, 259–61, states that the author has the whole Law in mind and yet notes that the author still places value on one of the Ten Commandments. Best looking at Paul and his writings and considering the author to be following his traditions states that the author would not have thought of the Law as abolished or destroyed, he thought of it as now "ineffective"; it is no longer the means by which one could be saved; cf. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 373, who understands that the whole Law was made inoperable because the Jews had misused it and had come to the point that they used the Law as tool to look down on the Gentiles; and cf. Wuest, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 76, who understands Paul to be saying at this point that all of the Law with its ordinances have been made "inoperative."

104 O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 22, 198–99, advocates the total abrogation of the Law and yet comes to the conclusion that if moral laws still stand, maybe it is better to say that what Jesus abolished was not necessarily the Law per se but the Law as part of the Old Covenant. This means that under the New Covenant, the stipulations of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant still need to be worked out; Kil, "The Unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ," 178–88, 252, 259, 264, who states that as in Judaism, for Paul the Law was fundamentally a unity (p. 179). From there, Kil states that the phrase ἐν δόγματι was used syntactically to show the form in which the commandments were given; they were given as decrees, and therefore, the author was emphasizing that the entire Mosaic legal system was abrogated (p. 182); and Heinrich Schlier, *Der Brief an Die Epheser: Ein Kommentar* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1957), 125–26, who also argues for total abrogation of the Law states that the δόγματα refer to "Verfüllungen, Erlasse, Anordnungen, Verordnungen, u. a.: decrees, edicts, ordinances, enactments, among other things," which he equates to the "vielfältigen Geboten: multiplex of commandments." He goes on to state that when Christ "hat die Feindschaft vernichtet: brought the enmity to an end," through His flesh, the Law, which is the Torah, the instruction of God, fell; cf. Gnilka, *Der Epheserbrief*, 141, who looks back at Rom 7:4, and sees all believers having "Freiheit vom Gesetz durch Jesu Tod: freedom from the Law through Jesus' death." Gnilka sees the "dividing middle-wall" as representing the Law, "die Gesetzesmauer: the wall of the Law." The Law has been "zerstört: destroyed," through the Christ's death; and others such as Westcott, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 37, who say that when Paul added ἐν δόγματι, he was defining the commandments as specific, rigid, and outward, and in reality Christ had abolished the Law because He had fulfilled it.
either as an epexegetical modifier reinforcing the idea that Paul is referring to the whole Law or as a clarifying modifier restricting the idea of making only a portion of the Law ineffective.

Within the context of Ephesians as demonstrated earlier in this chapter under the subheading titled "An Overview of Ephesians," Paul uses fifty-one combinations of second person imperatives and third person jussives coupled with present active participles directing the moral walk of his addressees within Eph 4:25–6:20. Out of the fifty-one moral exhortations, thirty-six have either direct or indirect affinities to the moral commandments recorded in the Mosaic Law showing clearly that Paul is not stating that the moral commandments of the Law have been made "ineffective." As it was shown in chapter 3 under the subheading "Within the Context of Ephesians," Eph 6:1–3 is a direct quote of the Fifth Commandment, a commandment with promise regarding a child's honor for his or her parents. It was also noted in chapter 3 under the subheading "Within the Context of Paul's World" that within the context of Paul's other letters, it is clear that Paul is not advocating an abrogation nor a "making ineffective" of the entire Mosaic Law. The Law is eternal and has been given to Israel at Mt. Sinai for the benefit of all mankind. 

Both Jew and Gentile are convicted by its moral principles. In Rom 3:31, Paul uses the same Greek verb, καταργέω, that he uses in Eph 2:15 to say that Christ's followers are not making the Law as a whole ineffective nor abrogating it, but instead they are establishing it as they live out their lives in faith. One may look at chapter 3 for a much more in-depth look at the place of the Law for the Messianic Age.
Is Paul contradicting himself or is he making a different point in Ephesians?

Taking into account that the Old Testament and Intertestamental writers wrote as if Torah was eternal, Paul’s letters when taken as a whole seem to match earlier Judaic writings and indicate similarly that the Mosaic Law has not been abrogated and that all of the Old Testament is inspired and highly profitable for teaching, training, correction, and reproof for Christ’s followers during the Messianic Age (2 Tim 3:16–17). Therefore, it seems highly probable that Paul’s intended meaning at this point in Ephesians is, “having made ineffective the cultural and purity ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law.”

In reality, the Messiah’s death on the cross made it possible for both Jew and Gentile to be reconciled to God and one another. His declaration that the Jewish cultural and purity ordinances were no longer mandatory made it possible that Jewish and Gentile believers could be reconciled on earth to one another immediately as καὶ νῦν ἄνθρωπον, “one new man.”

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105 One known exception to this generalization regarding the view that Christ had made the purity and cleanliness laws optional is stated in Acts 15:28-29 in which Gentiles are told that they should abstain from consuming blood or eating things that have been strangled, which assumes that the blood has not been drained sufficiently from the animal before eating it. This points back as far as Cain and Able to the idea that the blood from a deceased living creature should return to the ground from which it originally came as the world was being created.


107 Kil, “The Unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ,” 194–96, 287–89, compares the first man, Adam, to the New Adam, Christ, and states that Christ is the One New Man par excellence and the creator of this one new humanity (pp. 194–95). Kil goes on to state that the author is probably introducing that thought here to remind the addressees that they are this one new humanity in Christ, not through Jewish particularism (p. 196). In his conclusion, Kil states that the author is not teaching that the “one new man” is designating a “third race,” but instead that it is pointing to the contrast between the old humanity and the new humanity created in Christ, the second Adam. The Church is to some degree in continuity with Israel in the Heilsgeschichte of God (p. 287). Kil does not support the two covenant theory, but states that the ethnic people of Israel cannot be replaced by the Church and will be grafted back into the Olive Tree at the end of the Age (p. 289).
It is at this point that Paul makes it crystal clear that it is only *in Christ* ποιῶν εἰρήνην, “the one who is making peace,” that the new man is being made. Abbott notes the apostle’s use of this wording to show the basis of the new man and the desired outcome to which Paul now turns. Paul says ἵνα καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τὸν ἄμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, “and thereby, that He may reconcile both in one body to God through the cross.” This is the second metaphorical image used in this section that would help the Gentiles understand God’s desired unity. This time Paul uses a metaphorical image, a biological image of a living body to show the closeness of God’s desired unity for Christ’s followers. This metaphorical image helps develop a better understanding of God’s desired unity as it presents a second fairly familiar idea. The Gentile believers will understand that they and their Jewish brothers are to all be working together even as the individual separate parts of a body work together as a healthy whole. When some of the parts are missing, inoperable, or even missing

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108 Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 380, considers the present participial clause ποιῶν εἰρήνην to be expressing result and therefore translates this clause as “so making peace” explaining “He is our peace” from verse 14.


110 Ibid., 65–66, notes that this καὶ is not a mere copula, but indicates a logical sequence. Abbott suggests something like “and consequently . . .” Abbott goes on to say that there is a subtle point made here that by Christ’s death, ἐξῆλθα showed itself and was overcome; cf. Westcott, *Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians*, 38, who states that Christ’s objective in making [part of] the Law ineffective could be looked at having dual outcomes: (1) that He might unite the two people groups into “one new man,” and (2) that He might reconcile them as one group to God; Wuest, *Ephesians and Colossians*, notes that καὶνὼν refers to newness in “quality” not newness of “time”; regarding the “one Body,” cf. Gnillka, *Der Epheserbrief*, 143, who states that this “einem Leib” signifies “gleiche Teilhaben der Heiden mit den Juden am Heil,” nullifying any differences that had been between them; and Kil, “The Unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ,” 197–98, notes that this is the only place where both the vertical and horizontal relational dimensions are put together by Paul stating that in 2 Cor 5:18–20; Rom 5:8–11, and Col 1:18–20, the reconciliation between God and man is the focus.
weak, the whole body suffers. Paul had used this metaphorical image before when facing divisions within the Body of Christ such as when the Corinthian believers were dividing over loyalty to various teachers.\(^{111}\) Paul uses metaphorically the idea of a living body to show how individuals with different gifts and talents all contribute to God's economy just as the individual parts of the body with their specialized functions help make the body complete.

The last of the series of aorist participial clauses \(\delta\pi\omega\kappa\tau\varepsiv\delta\tau\iota\varsigma\ \varepsilon\chi\theta\rho\alpha\nu\ \varepsilon\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\) brings the series of three elucidating clauses to a summarizing close restating with a new nuance that Christ's redeeming death on the cross has removed the ongoing \(\varepsilon\chi\theta\rho\alpha\nu\) between Jew and Gentile. It is clear from what immediately preceded this participial clause that the reconciliation went beyond bringing two estranged groups together. In addition to removing the ongoing mutual hostility between believing Jews and Gentiles, the second \(\ell\nu\alpha\) clause made it clear that Christ's redeeming death on the cross has also removed the ongoing hostility between all who follow obediently God's sent Messiah and God Himself. O'Brien notes that at this point, man's relationship to God has been introduced along with what has been at the forefront up to this point, the Gentile and Jewish relationship among believers.\(^{112}\) Now, man's hostility toward God can be turned

\(^{111}\) 1 Cor 1:11–13; 12:1–27.

\(^{112}\) Cf. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 204–05, notes that at this point in the letter it becomes apparent to the addressees that Paul's argument suggests a two-fold enmity possessing both a vertical and horizontal dimension.
into love and trust because God's love toward humanity has expressed itself in such a way as to provide reconciliation for all who receive His grace.\textsuperscript{113}

Paul closes this section by summarizing the outcome of Christ's coming and dying on the cross, which he has just laid out above. He closes by saying that Christ, \(\varepsilon\lambda\theta\omega\nu\), "having come," through His actions and words, has declared the Good News of peace to \emph{both} of you,\textsuperscript{114} you Gentiles who were distant from God being \(\xi\varepsilon\nu\omicron\omicron\) \(\kappa\alpha\iota\) \(\pi\alpha\rho\omicron\omicron\kappa\omicron\omicron\)\textsuperscript{115} and you Jews who were close to God.\textsuperscript{116} That Good News of peace declares that o\(i\) \(\dot{\alpha}u\omicron\theta\omicron\rho\omicron\omicron\), "both groups,"\textsuperscript{117} who have been reconciled together, have the one

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  \item \textsuperscript{113} Eadie, \textit{The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians}, 183, states that \(\varepsilon\chi\theta\omicron\rho\alpha\) did not exist on God's part toward man but instead on man's part toward God. God displays \(\dot{\alpha}p\gamma\eta\) toward sin not \(\varepsilon\chi\theta\omicron\rho\alpha\).
  
  \item \textsuperscript{114} Westcott, \textit{Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians}, 39, states that this is in accordance with Christ's resurrection greeting of "peace be with you" (John 20:21). He goes on to say that the Gospel is the message of peace that was to be proclaimed in all the world; and Best, \textit{Ephesians}, 270–74, notes that although the exact Gospel message is not revealed in this text, it follows the line of thinking of Isa 57:19 in the sense that God is seeking humanity's well being. Best concludes by saying that whatever the exact Gospel is, it is preached to both those who were close to God and to those who were distant. At this point, Best notes that the next sentence summarizes and explains what has preceded it. The one Body, the Church, comprised of both Jewish and Gentile believers now has free access to God; and cf. Dahl, "Bibelstudie über den Ephesebrief," 36, who states that the whole mission of Christ, which included His death and resurrection, "wird als eine Verkündigung des Evangeliums des Friedens angesehen: is being seen as a proclamation of the Gospel of peace." Dahl reminds his readers to bear in mind the connection of Isa 52:7 and 57:19 with this concept in Ephesians.

  \item \textsuperscript{115} Lincoln, \textit{Ephesians}, 150, notes that in the LXX, the Hebrew word \(\tau\omicron\) was translated at various times using both Greek words \(\xi\varepsilon\nu\omicron\omicron\) and \(\pi\alpha\rho\omicron\omicron\kappa\omicron\omicron\). He also notes that \(\pi\alpha\rho\omicron\omicron\kappa\omicron\omicron\) was used in the LXX to translate both \(\tau\omicron\), "Gentile," and \(\nu\nu\omicron\nu\omicron\), "resident alien," indicating that the terms were used to emphasize more the idea of being an "outsider" than the fact that they were "strangers" or "resident aliens." Lincoln states that this is also the case in this passage in Ephesians.

  \item \textsuperscript{116} Cf. Lincoln, \textit{Ephesians}, 126–27, 147, notes that the wording in the MT of Isa 57:19 is fairly close showing that there is peace upon peace to those who are far off and to those who are near and also the LXX wording of Isa 52:7, which speaks of the one who is preaching the good news of peace.

  \item \textsuperscript{117} Kil, "The Unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ," 203, notes that in context both groups are united in Christ, yet they may retain their distinctive ethnic and social differences. This leads one to think that the ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law regarding cultural behavior and purity regulations have not been abolished but instead are optional.
\end{itemize}
and same προσώπον γίνεσθαι, “access,” to the Father through Christ through the same Spirit.  

Eadie notes both the secular idea of having the right to approach a king through a προσώπον γενόμενος and the Jewish idea of having the ability to come into the presence of God through the High Priest's entrance. Joachim Gnilka notes that this verse, 2:18, not only provides the function of declaring the free access of believers to God, but it also functions well to transition the reader into the next subsection.

Paul has made it perfectly clear in this part of his teaching that it is through the Messiah's death on the cross that God has made a way for true reconciliation for all who learn to trust the Messiah and Him. In order to effectively start that peace on earth between Jew and Gentile believers, the Messiah declared the cultural and purity ordinances that were contained within the commandments of the Law as ineffective; they were no longer mandatory for God's people. This is the same message that Paul preached from his earliest known letters. From his first canonical letter, Galatians, Paul opposed forcing Gentile believers to follow the cultural and purity ordinances of Israel. In a much

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118 Cf. Rom 5:1; and Schnackenburg, *Der Brief an die Epheser*, 118-19, who notes that the author puts special emphasis on *den gleichen Zugang zum Vater*, “the equal access to the Father.” This matches Paul's teachings (Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 12:13; Rom 3:21-24; 10:12) and those in the “Urkirche: Early Church” (Col 3:11; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 2:4-10; Rev 5:9; 7:9). Schnackenburg also ties in the fact that there is only one God and Father of both the Gentile and Jewish believers.

119 Eadie, *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*, 186-87. In addition, Eadie states that having access to God means more than having an open door; cf. Wuest, *Ephesians and Colossians*, 78, who states that the sense of προσώπον γενόμενος is that Christ has secured for His followers the privilege of speaking directly with someone in a sovereign position, God the Father; cf. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 209, who notes the parallel aspects of the Greek imagery, which would point to someone having the right to have a meeting with a king, and the Hebrew imagery of having free entry into the presence of God; and cf. Westcott, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 39, who states that this word emphasizes the work of the Lord in “bringing us to God,” work that is completed only through Him (1 Pet 3:18; cf. Rom 5:2; John 14:6; Heb 4:14ff).

120 Gnilka, *Der Epheserbrief*, 146. Gnilka also notes the parallel theme in Eph 3:12.

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later letter addressed to a predominately Gentile audience living in Rome, Paul warned his addressees against divisions as he exhorting the Gentiles to remember to whom they had been grafted in, Israel. Here, approximately five years after writing to the predominately Gentile churches in Rome, Paul is again addressing an apparent problem of division within the Body of Christ because Gentile seem to have forgotten that they are united with the obedient members of the Commonwealth of Israel as they now take their part in the true Israel. If the reader would like to see a copy of the fourth edition of United Bible Societies’ Greek text of Eph 2:13–18 and/or a copy of the author’s English translation, they are located in the Appendix, which is titled “Greek Text and a Translation of Ephesians 2:11–22.”

Ephesians 2:19–22: Jewish and Gentile Believers Are the Household of God

As he closes Eph 2:11–22, Paul reinforces God’s desired unity between Jew and Gentile by developing a metaphorical image of the unity of the Body of Christ as consisting of a building under construction in which God is dwelling in both the Jew and the Gentile who now form a common dwelling place through the Holy Spirit. Although this unity represents “one new man,” Paul reminds the Gentiles that this great unity makes them συμπολιται των ἁγίων, “fellow citizens of the Saints,” of whom he had already stated in the beginning of his letter were initially all Jews; the Jews were called to be the first of the Saints before the world was even set in place.\(^\text{121}\)

\(^{121}\) Eph 1:4 within the context of 1:3–12. Note that in verse 12, it is clear that the “we” of this section are the Jewish believers. At the close of this section, Paul again speaks of the Gentiles as being fitted together with the Jews in such a way as to say, you Gentiles are being fitted together with us, the Jewish believers whom God chose to be the first of the Saints.
Ephesians 2:19–22 is grammatically one sentence that consists of two main clauses separated by the adversative conjunction ἀλλὰ with the second main clause being supported by a participial phrase, a genitive absolute clause, and two prepositional clauses as shown below. The sentence starts with a pair of inferential markers, ἀρα· οὖν, that work together to emphasize the importance of what has just been said and connect to what immediately follows. 

Together, ἀρα· οὖν can be expressed to depict strong emphasis using words such as “therefore, as a result.” The adversative main clause starts off with the second person plural indicative of εἰμί followed by two predicate nominatives each followed by a genitive of quality construction. After Paul told his predominately Gentile audience that they were currently members of the household of God, he used an aorist passive participle to metaphorically build an image of how the Gentile believers might consider themselves fitting together with the early Jewish

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122 Westcott, Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, 40, states that Paul is the only New Testament author to use this pair of conjunctions, ἀρα· οὖν (Rom 5:18; 7:3, 25; 8:12; 9:16, 18; 14:12, 19; Gal 6:10; 1 Thess 5:6; 2 Thess 2:15); cf. Best, Ephesians, 276; cf. Hoehner, Ephesians, 391, who states that the combination of ἀρα· οὖν was not used in classical literature except in the interrogative form ἀρα· οὖν, notes the twelve times that Paul used it in the New Testament, and states that Paul did so to reinforce the conclusion of the preceding section and introduce the logical consequence to follow; and BDAG, § 2b, 127.

123 BDAG, § 2b, 127. The discourse marker ἀρα· οὖν is a combination of ἀρα· used to mark a consecutive thought with indicators such as “as a result,” or “consequently,” and οὖν expressing the logical transition with indicators such as “therefore.” This dual marker can be expressed lightly using words such as “so then” or as strongly as “therefore, as a result.”

124 See BDF, 89, under the heading of “Genitive,” the authors note that the basic function of the genitive case in Greek is to act as an adjective; and cf. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament, 496–97, for a discussion on “genitives of quality,” “descriptive genitive,” “attributive genitive,” which all denote the same thing: the genitive used in the attributive position acts like an adjective, but it produces more sharpness and distinctiveness than a regular adjective; cf. BDF, § 165, 91–92.
believers in forming God’s residence.\textsuperscript{125} In a typical classical type construction, Paul proceeded to use a genitive absolute clause, δυτως ἀκρογωνιαῖον αὑτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, to introduce the position of someone who had not yet been named in the sentence.\textsuperscript{126} Jesus Christ was the metaphorical building’s cornerstone. There is a mildly significant variant regarding this genitive absolute clause: the copyists for D, F, and G chose to insert the word λίθου after ἀκρογωνιαῖον changing ἀκρογωνιαῖον from a substantive to an adjective modifying λίθου in order to make it even clearer that Christ was the corner “stone.”\textsuperscript{127} The author finishes this sentence with two prepositional clauses bringing further clarity to the impact of Christ’s redeeming work toward Gentiles; this is laid out below. In the first of the two prepositional clauses, there is one additional variant that merits mentioning: the earliest corrector of Ε, Sinaiticus, an early fourth-century Alexandrian text,\textsuperscript{128} decided to change slightly its original meaning. The corrector along with later copyists inserted a definite article between πᾶσα and ὁ λογοτεκτόν, which changed the meaning from “every construction,” which refers to each individual believer, to “the

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\textsuperscript{125} Abbott, Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, 70, notes that the author chose to use an aorist passive participle to show that the action of being built-up starts at the moment of becoming a Christian.

\textsuperscript{126} See BDF, § 423, 218.

\textsuperscript{127} BDAG, 39, shows that ἀκρογωνιαῖος denotes in general something lying at an extreme corner; by qualifying the adjective, which had been used as a substantive, with the word λίθος the copyists did not allow for any questions; for information on texts, see Metzger, The Text of the New Testament, 49–51, and The Greek New Testament, ed. Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland, et al., 4th rev. ed., United Bible Societies (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 904. D is a fifth to sixth century Western text and F a ninth-century Western text; G is a ninth-century Byzantine text.

\textsuperscript{128} Metzger, The Text of the New Testament, 42–46.
whole construction” speaking of the building as a whole. The second prepositional clause is emphatically engaging its predominately Gentile audience as Paul starts off even καὶ ύμεῖς, “in whom even you (Gentiles) . . .”

The earliest texts bear witness that Paul wrote this clause without the definite article preceding οἶκος δομῆς, which fits the context of the text surrounding this clause. At this point in the text, Paul is making a point that the Gentiles were individually being fit together, συν-, with each other and the Jewish believers of whom some were the first of the Saints, as God was growing all of them into His Holy Temple, Οἶκος κατοικισμοῦ, “dwelling place.” A linguistic-grammatical layout follows:

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129 BDAG, 782–84, shows that it was common to use a form of πᾶς with an article in the singular to denote “the whole.” The normal thought behind the use of any of the forms of the word πᾶς used with a noun that did not have a definite article was “each, every.” Some of the later texts that contained the definite article were A, C, and P. For more detail see Novum Testamentum Graece, 507, and The Greek New Testament, 4th rev. ed., 659. For information regarding the origination and dating of the texts, see Metzger, The Text of the New Testament, 42–51, and The Greek New Testament, 4th rev. ed., 904–06; Abbott, Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, 75–76, notes that the πᾶσα before οἶκος δομῆς looks forward to the συν- in συναρμολογοῦμένη. Abbott is pointing out that the emphasis is on the individual parts being joined together; Robinson, St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, 165, notes that many Greek commentators read πᾶσα οἶκος δομῆς as the “whole edifice”; and cf. Westcott, Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, 41, who states that all of the individual believers were equally part of the Sanctuary in the new Temple, which has its harmonious development in Christ Jesus. This is a present and continuous process.

130 Cf. Hoehner, Ephesians, 412, states that the prepositional clause’s antecedent refers back to Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, not ἐν κυρίῳ; this καὶ plays more the role of an intensive particle than a copula working with ύμεῖς to bring emphasis on how Jesus’ redeeming work even allowed the Gentiles to become part of God’s dwelling place.
Meaning and Context

The contextual meaning of this section is fairly straightforward. Paul uses three ideas to convey the meaning of turning one's life over to God. Firstly, at one time all Gentiles who had not fully converted to Judaism were strangers and sojourners regarding Israel, but now those who made an affirmative decision to follow the Messiah Jesus have become fellow-citizens of the Saints. There are some such as Abbot who understand there to be continuity between the old an new Israel, and

131 BDAG, 694. The word ὀικείος denotes belonging to a certain household.

132 Barth, Ephesians, vol. 1, 276, states that all of the metaphors compiled in 2:19–22 serve to describe diverse aspects of a social event: these Gentile believer are now essential members of that community which God has chosen for residence, the Church.

133 Eph 2:12 shows that at one time Gentiles were not part of the citizenship of Israel, and then proceeds to teach that those Gentiles along with the Jews who were part of the citizenship of Israel now form “one new man.” This does not mean that Israel is no longer a term that refers to God’s people. The Old Testament prophets and Paul teach otherwise. In Gal 3:13–14, Paul makes it clear that in this present age the Messiah has come and removed the curse of the Law through His own substitutionary death for Gentiles as well as Jews, and therefore, it is not a matter of whether or not one formerly followed Judaism, but in reality, the Israel of God now consists of those who were a καινή κτίσις, “a new creation.” Those who walk according to this rule (of the Gospel) constitute the Israel of God (Gal 6:15–16).

134 Abbott, Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, 69, states that συμπολίται is a
others such as Hoehner who understand the “one new man” to teach against any continuity. Secondly, these addressees who were at one time distant, who now being believers, have become oikeo o Tco ou, “members of the household of God,” which matches Paul’s “dividing middle-wall” metaphor discussed above reiterating that they were part of one family, God’s family. And thirdly, Paul uses a second architectural metaphorical image as he compares the Gentile addition to the household of God as being similar to adding the appropriate pieces of the wall of God’s house in order to complete the structure just as one adds the various stones or other materials to build the walls of a building. The first-century addressees would have been more inclined to think of the ναὸς of Eph 2:21 in terms of the many temples scattered throughout their cities and lands where their many gods lived rather than the Temple located in Jerusalem. In the mind of a

reference to the πολιτεία of Israel showing that now all Christians, both Jew and Gentile, constitute the people of God, a position formerly held by the Jews; Dahl, “Bibelstudie über den Epheserbrief,” 34, 37, as he looked back and brought 2:13 back into his thoughts, which had stated that the Gentiles had been distant from God in the not-so-distant past, noted that those who had been distant had now been brought near and were presently taking part in a full citizenship with God’s people. He goes on to say that Paul can say that because he sees “eine Kontinuität des Gottesvolkes im alten und im neuen Bunde: a continuity of the people of God in the Old and New Covenant (cf. Rom 11:16–24).”; cf. Gnilka, Der Epheserbrief, 137, who understands through Paul’s work that “die universale Ekklesia ist das wahre Israel, das Israel Gottes: the Universal Church is the true Israel, the Israel of God.”

135 Hoehner, Ephesians, 393, 395–96, balances this statement with the Qumran idea that there would be no Ammonites, Moabites, half-breeds, foreigners, or strangers to enter into God’s house in the last days. In the last days, only the clean Israelites would enter (4Q174 3.3–4 (1.3–4); cf. 1QH 14.27 (6.27)) (p. 393). Hoehner goes on to say that this section in Ephesians teaches against a continuation of old Israel (pp. 395–96).

136 Muddiman, The Epistle to the Ephesians, 139, states that these two phrases, συμπολιτεύω, “fellow citizens,” and oikeo, “household members,” compliment each other having different but interrelated meanings in this context. A citizen is one who has voting rights [and obligations] within a certain city or community and a household member includes clients of a patron as well as biological members; and Best, Ephesians, 278–79, looking at the cosmic context of Ephesians, includes the angels along with believers into the “household members of God.”

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first-century Gentile who did not know the one true living God, a ναός was simply a term that denoted a dwelling place for one or more of his gods.

When Paul used the words πᾶσα οἶκοδομή instead of πᾶσα ἡ οἶκοδομή, he was emphasizing the fact that the Body of Christ is made up of individual believers who are being shaped to take their assigned places as part of the νάος ἁγιός, “the Holy House,” that God desires as He creates His eternal dwelling place through Christ. From this point, the section is closed with a summary stating that the individual parts make up a complete whole.

137 This idea of individual separate parts making up a complete whole has a close parallel in 1 Cor 12:1–27 where Paul used the idea of a body metaphorically to show how individuals with different gifts and talents all contribute to God’s economy just as the individual parts of the body with their specialized functions help make the whole body complete; cf. Schlier, Der Brief an Die Epheser, 143, who states that the grammatically correct translation is “jeder Bau: each construction.” Schlier states that although each individual believer becomes an οἶκοδομή, just as some variants push for the ganz Bau, one must keep in mind that “whole building” is being constructed; cf. Best, Ephesians, 280, 286–87, who states that the metaphor of building is used in two distinct ways, statically, in depicting a group of people as an edifice, and dynamically, of the maturing of people in their faith. Best goes on to say that the dynamic usage is by far the more frequent in the Pauline corpus and probably is derived directly from the Old Testament. In reference to the dynamic building of individual believers, Best cites Eph 4:12, 16, 29 and compares them to 1 Cor 10:23; 14:4–20; 2 Cor 10:8; 12:19; 13:10; and 1 Thess 5:11 (p. 280). When he addresses the issue of πᾶσα οἶκοδομή without the definite article, Best states that the author is referring to the idea of individual stones being smoothed and prepared to fit into their assigned locations as they were being carefully fitted together (pp. 286–87); and contra there are some such as Eadie, The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, 201, and Hoechner, Ephesians, 407–08, 410, who interpret πᾶσα οἶκοδομή without the article as “whole” or “all.” Hoechner considers πᾶσα οἶκοδομή to mean “the whole” for a couple of reasons: (1) context informs him that Paul is talking about one building not multiple buildings, and (2) there are other cases in the New Testament where anarthrous constructions were used with the whole in mind (Eph 1:8; Matt 2:3; 28:18; Acts 2:17, 36; 17:26; Rom 3:20; 11:26; Col 1:15). Hoechner goes on to state that οἶκοδομή normally denotes either a building (Matt 24:1; Mark 13:1–2; 1 Cor 3:9; 2 Cor 5:1) or the act of building (Rom 14:19; 15:2; 1 Cor 14:3, 5, 12; 14:26; 2 Cor 10:8 12:19; 13:10; Eph 4:12, 16, 29). Eadie states that οἶκοδομή normally signifies “the art or process of building” (p. 201). Hoechner states that the Greek work νάος was consistently used in the New Testament to denote the sacred place where God dwells, which in the Temple was the Holy of Holies (Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:44), and in heathen temples the νάος was the place where the gods were considered to be dwelling (Acts 17:24) (p. 410).
whole, a ἁγιός ναός, a single dwelling place for God that includes you Gentiles who were distant from God before Christ’s salvific work.\textsuperscript{138}

The metaphorical image in this section is the last of a three-fold series where Paul is developing his addressees’ understanding of God’s desired unity by moving them mentally from an image of a single united family sharing a common residence due to the fact that Christ had destroyed a “dividing middle-wall” that had been previously dividing them to a final metaphorical image in which Christ and all of His followers form the very house where God dwells. The foundation has already been lain, it consists of the ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, “apostles and prophets,”\textsuperscript{139} of which Jesus Christ Himself is the ἀκρογονιάος, “cornerstone.”\textsuperscript{140}

\textsuperscript{138} Dahl, “Bibelstudie über den Ephesebrief,” 38–39, states that the reconciliation with God “schließt die Versöhnung der Heiden und Juden, die in der Kirche zusammengebracht wurden, in eine Versöhnung ein, in der Gottes Plan, das All zu einer Einheit in Christo zu bringen,” which is already being realized (cf. 1:10; Col 1:20) (p. 38). Dahl goes on to say that the essence of Christ’s work is reconciliation and that the major problem that Paul had with Peter was not over some great theological doctrine but instead over Peter’s yielding to contemporary pressure and “sich von der Tischgemeinschaft mit nichtjüdischen Christen zurückzog: pulled himself back from table fellowship with the non-Jewish Christians” (p. 39).

\textsuperscript{139} Origen, The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, 138–39, states that the whole contrast with near and far and not belonging to and then belonging to the commonwealth of Israel lends itself to considering the prophets to be Old Testament prophets; cf. Abbott, Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, 72, who points out that there are at least a couple more parallels in Ephesians such as 3:5 and 4:11 in addition to other New Testament texts such as 1 Cor 12:28 that show the idea of apostles and prophets working together in the Early Church. Prophecy is an active spiritual ministry in the Early Church (1 Cor 14:1ff.) (p. 72); cf. Schlier, Der Brief an Die Epheser, 142, who states that Paul is speaking of New Testament prophets and then gives some references including one from one of the writings of the Apostolic Fathers: Acts 8, 1ff.; 11:27; 13:1; 15:32; 21:10; 1 Cor 12:28; 14; Rev 16:6; 18:20, 24; 22:6, 9; Did. 11:3ff.; 13:1; 15:1ff.; cf. Barth, Ephesians, vol. 1, 315–16, who states that in the final analysis, the very essence of the Church rests upon the foundation of the inspired proclamation made by apostles and prophets. Looking further, one notes that in Eph 4:7–13, it is presupposed that the apostles and prophets are personally alive and at work in Paul’s day. It is their proclamation, witness, and confession that is the foundation of the Church; and cf. Lincoln, Ephesians, 153.

\textsuperscript{140} This phrase, ἐντὸς ἀκρογονιάου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, brings a division in scholarship as to whether Paul was referring to Jesus as being the “keystone” at the top of the building due to His
Jesus is the very person on whom the rest of the parts of the house of God depends for direction and stability. Christ’s followers are all needed individually to make up their specific part of God’s home, His ναὸς ἅγιος, “Holy House, His Temple,” in which He dwells through the Holy Spirit. Paul’s three metaphors strung together say very clearly that there are no dividing walls in the Body of Christ. If the reader would like to see a copy of the fourth edition of United Bible Societies’ Greek text of Eph 2:19–22 and/or a copy of the author’s English translation, they are located in the Appendix, which is titled “Greek Text and a Translation of Ephesians 2:11–22.”

exalted position as the Head of the Body or to Jesus as being the foundational cornerstone, the first stone laid in the foundation from which all other foundational stones are aligned. The general sense of the wording within this metaphor places Jesus as the foundational cornerstone by which all other foundational stones, which represent the apostles and prophets, are aligned and tied into the Buildings structure; cf. O’Brien, The Letter to the Ephesians, 216, who takes note of two points of emphasis that come to light through the author’s use of the genitive absolute ἐν τῷ ἱλαστῆρι τῆς ἴδιας Χριστοῦ. 1:20: (1) that it is Christ alone who is in the cornerstone of the entire building which is emphasized by the emphatic τοῦ, and (2) Christ has been set apart from the apostles and prophets through the use of a genitive absolute construction, which draws attention to His special standing and function; If left as a metaphor as intended, this image works well in showing the importance of Christ; cf. Schnackenburg, Der Brief an die Epheser, 124, who considers it logical in the context of the argument for Christ to be the Eckstein, “the Cornerstone.” He notes that there is a correlating Old Testament verse, Isa 28:16, that produces an image of an important cornerstone in God’s salvific plans. In context, Schnackenburg sees alle anderen Steine des Fundaments being placed according to this Eckstein; cf. Kil, “The Unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ,” 232, who notes that in the immediate context, a foundational cornerstone is the best fit. He notes that in the LXX translation of the Χριστοῦ of the foundation laid in Zion, the translators used the same word as this author, ἀπόστολος, which was later quoted in 1Pet 2:16; cf. Hoehner, Ephesians, 404–06, who notes that although a genitive absolute does not have any direct syntactical connection with any part of the sentence, it does connect Jesus Christ as being the cornerstone to the idea that the apostles and prophets are the foundation of the building that God is constructing. This makes the Christ Jesus the cornerstone of the foundation; and contra there are some such as Lincoln, Ephesians, 154–56, who look at other Scripture such as Ps 118:22, Mark 12:10, and Acts 4:11 and opt for Jesus as being the “keystone” on theological grounds, which includes some of Paul’s later metaphorical imagery of Christ being the Head of the growing Body in Eph 4:15–16.
Summary

It is clear that Paul wants the Gentiles to understand this great truth about God’s will for all humanity that was hidden from all prior generations but now has been exposed through the Gospel that focuses on the redeeming death of the Messiah for both Jew and Gentile. Christ’s death on the cross has made it possible for Gentiles to join the household of God without accepting those ordinances of the Mosaic Law that pointed to Christ’s atoning death nor those regarding cultural and purity regulations such as specific food laws. God did not abolish any of the Law, but for those living in the Messianic Age, many of the ordinances of God were made “ineffective,” thus making them optional. This allows the Gentiles to enter into God’s household through faith in Him and His redemptive work and to follow His moral commandments without needing to discard all of their traditional cultural norms.

The Gentiles are expected to follow God’s moral commandments, which God has always made known through direct communication and through nature to all people of all time (Rom 1:18–32; 2:11–13). Paul makes it clear from his exhortations in the last part of his letter that the moral commandments contained within the Mosaic Law were still very much a practical guide for the Gentile as well as for the Jewish believer. Paul’s exhortation for children to obey and honor their parents accompanied with the promise of a long life on earth points directly to one of the Ten Commandments given to Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai. Thirty six of Paul’s fifty one exhortations described above, which were directed to Gentile believers living in the post resurrection era, point
back to moral commandments recorded in the Mosaic Law. It is clear from the letter of Ephesians, that Paul is teaching that God still demands holy righteous living from all of His creation especially those who consider themselves to be part of Christ’s Body. In fact, the New Testament writings state collectively that all true followers of Christ will actually live out their lives in a steady state of fulfilling and exceeding the moral requirements of the Mosaic Law through the leading of the Holy Spirit.

The ordinances regarding purity and cleanliness have been made optional to allow Gentiles to enter into God’s family without needing to change their live styles except regarding life-styles that conflicted with the moral commandments of the Law. The Jewish believers continued to follow many of the commandments and ordinances of the Law. This difference in life styles was not to lead to division within the Body of Christ. This whole section leads Paul’s predominate Gentile audience to understand more fully that God expected those who were being reconciled to Him to also be reconciled to one another; there is no room in His family for divisions.

This research leads to a thesis statement regarding Christ’s destruction of the ongoing mutual hostility that has long existed between the Jew and Gentile for all who obediently follow Him. The thesis statement follows: when Paul said in Eph 2:14–16 that Christ had made the purity and cultural ordinances of the Mosaic Law optional as part of His redeeming work on the cross in order to reconcile man to man and simultaneously reconcile them together as one body to God, he used a metaphorical image, an image of Christ acting as a general contractor who had destroyed the “dividing party-wall,” between their contiguous residences, in order to place both Jewish and Gentile believer,
the divided members of God's family, into a common residence, which in turn represented Christ's redeeming work destroying the residual traditional ongoing mutual hostility between Gentile and Jewish believers allowing them to interact fully as the family of God that God intended through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The Ongoing Function of the Law

It was noted in the subsection "'The Mosaic Law' and 'Works of the Law' in the Roman Era Up to A.D. 70" of chapter 3, that many who have studied the Old Testament prophets and Intertestamental writings such as W. D. Davies in his work *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or in the Age to Come* have come to the conclusion that there was no clear view that spoke of an abrogation of the Law during the Messianic Age. Davies pointed out that even in Jer 31:31-34, there is no mention of a new Torah being instituted with the New Covenant, but instead, it appears that the existing Law will be written on the hearts of God's people. Joseph Klausner's research as a Jewish scholar led him to understand that when the coming messiah came to take his rightful place in the world, Torah would be shown to be eternal and all nations would come to the Temple in Jerusalem to worship God. David Hay's research of Philo uncovered the fact that Philo taught that the Mosaic Law was eternal. As recorded in Matt 5:17-20, Jesus, the sent Messiah of God, taught that He had not come καταλῦσαι, "to abolish," or "destroy," τὸν νόμον, "the Law," or to contradict what God's prophets had prophesied, but instead, He came πληρῶσαι, "to fulfill," the Law and that which was spoken by the prophets. Jesus emphasized that the Law was not going to be changed during the Messianic Age by
saying that God would not allow even the smallest part of the Law to be removed until
the final renewing of the Creation. Jesus continued by warning that whoever breaks one
of the least of the commandments and teaches others to do similarly shall be called
“least” in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Paul’s teachings are in alignment with the Messiah Jesus’ teachings. In the
subsections titled “The Place of the ‘Mosaic Law’ in the Messianic Age” and “The Place
of ‘Works of the Law’ in the Messianic Age” of chapter 3, it was noted that
Stuhlmacher’s study of Romans led him to consider Rom 2:13 to be the highpoint of
2:12–16, which in-turn led him to understand this verse in light of known Jewish
teachings that God will in fact judge the world according to the criterion set by the Law
(cf. Ezra 7:37; 70–73; 2 Bar. 48.27, 38–40, 46f.). When he evaluated Rom 3:31, in which
Paul had stated that the faithful would not abolish nor make ineffective the Law but
instead would establish it, Stuhlmacher went on to say that Paul has taken an emphatic
stance regarding the Law and its commandments when he taught that Christ’s work did
not nullify the Law (2:12–16), but fulfilled it (5:18). It is the Law that witnesses to the
righteousness of God (3:21; 4:3) and continues to teach righteousness for those who are
led by the Spirit (8:3f.). Gathercole stated that in Rom 8:3–4 Paul is teaching that
individuals have the ability to fulfill the Law, the Torah, through the power of the
indwelling Spirit. Snodgrass, who places emphasis on the continuity of the Law in the
Messianic Age, understands Paul’s teaching in 1 Cor 7:19 and Rom 8:4 to mean that
Christians will obey the Law during this era. In 1 Cor 9:8–10, Paul explicitly uses a
teaching from the Mosaic Law by name as an authoritative voice for Christ’s followers. In
his book *Paul Apostle of God's Glory in Christ*, Thomas Schreiner discusses the fact that although there is a putting aside of what Dunn calls the "ethnic boundary markers" from the Mosaic Law, there is a strong sense in Paul's letters that Christ's followers "fulfill" the Law. Schreiner states that this same Paul, who celebrates life in the Spirit, freedom in Christ, and the centrality of love, also fills his letters with commands and exhortations apparently not believing that exhorting believers contradicts the reality of the Spirit leading their lives so that they may fulfill the requirements of the Law (Gal 5:13–15; Rom 8:4; 13:8–10; cf. Rom 2:26–29).

It has been shown from the context of Ephesians and his other letters that there is a high probability that Paul was not teaching that Christ had abrogated the Mosaic Law nor make it ineffective. After writing that Christ is ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἔν, "the one having made both one unity," and then teaching that Christ had destroyed the ongoing mutual hostility between Jew and Gentile for those following Him just as a general contractor might have destroyed a "dividing middle-wall" that was separating them one from the other thereby dividing God's family, Paul wrote that Christ had made the τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν, "made the cultural and cleanliness ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law," ineffective. This meant that for Gentiles as well as Jews, those ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law relating to cultural and cleanliness issues were *optional* from this point forward. This letter, like his others, shows that Paul was not abrogating the whole Law nor any part of it. Now, in the Messianic Age, there were parts of the Law that were optional; it was no
longer a sin if one did not follow the cultural and cleanliness ordinances contained within the commandments of the Law.

By making these ordinances optional, Christ has made it possible for those who have been reconciled to God and one another through His death on the cross to have true peace on earth as they learn to serve together and take the Gospel to all people. Both Jewish and Gentile believers have been created into “one new man” being reconciled together into “one Body,” God’s family, to God. From the context of the letter itself, it is clear that Paul is not teaching that the Mosaic Law has been abrogated nor made ineffective as a whole (cf. Rom 3:28–31).

The Message of Unity in Ephesians 2:11–22

The message of Eph 2:11–22 is quite clear. As Paul’s three metaphorical images were examined, it was clear that Paul was using these images to teach his predominately Gentile addresses more fully about God’s desired unity for their lives with Him and one another. In this passage, Paul uses three metaphorical images to move his predominately Gentile addresses to change their present world-outlook and understand God’s. Paul wants his addressees to understand how close-knit God desires their unity to be with Him and one another which includes accepting the Jews as an equal integral part of their family. Firstly, Paul uses the imagery that Christ has done away with the Jewish and Gentiles believers’ hostility the same as if He removed metaphorically the “party-wall” that exists between their personal contiguous dwellings. Secondly, they should consider themselves as part of the same body as Jewish believers, in which every part is important...
for the health of the whole. Lastly, they must come to understand that Christ’s followers collectively make up the very building, the home, that God lives in, with Jesus Christ being the cornerstone of its foundation. These three metaphorical images help sharpen Paul’s addressees’ understanding of God’s desired unity and reconciliation among His family members and of His family to Himself.

This passage is tightly packed with these three images of God’s desired unity for Christ’s followers and Paul emphasizes that this potential unity came at a great cost to God: God allowed His Son to be sacrifically crucified in order to provide justification and reconciliation among men and to Him Himself. This unity is based on a reconciliation that can only be realized through obedience to God’s will as known through the leading of Christ through the Holy Spirit, which is always in alignment with God’s inspired Word. A realized reconciliation shows itself in believers living out their lives according to God’s plan as the one family that He intends them to be. Obedience to God brings reconciliation among God’s obedient children producing peace among them and simultaneously with God Himself. God’s children must strive against living out their lives with any biases, which automatically build “walls” between them and other believers who are in reality also intimate co-members of God’s family.

Eph 2:11–22 is the heart of Paul’s illuminating theological introduction, which he used to prepare the hearts of his addressees in order to change their traditional Greco-Roman world-view to God’s world-view and consequently change their lifestyle accordingly. This section coupled with 2:1–10 challenges the Gentiles as a distinct group of people to consider the reality of the quality of their life before and after becoming
followers of Christ, then to consider the price that God paid to make possible a true reconciliation of Jew and Gentile who could be reconciled together to Himself, and finally to live out their lives according to God’s desired unity and morality in practical terms. They were saved just as the Jews by God’s grace and not by anything that they had done. After considering more fully God’s desired outcome and what He had already done to make it possible, Paul asked his addressees to change their day-to-day life style to match God’s expectations. Knowing what God had done for them should motivate this predominately Gentile audience both emotionally and intellectually to follow Paul’s exhortation to godly living, which he laid out in the second half of his letter, 4:1–6:20. This godly living includes both a realized unity and a godly moral life style. God’s desired unity for those who are following Christ is just as important today as it was in the Early Church. Jesus made it clear in His recorded prayer in John 17, which was made to the Father just before going to the cross for all humanity, that when His followers lived out their day-to-day lives striving for God’s desired unity, the world sees God’s love for humanity and knows that God sent His Son to be its savior. The converse of that truth is that if Christ’s followers do not strive for God’s desired unity, the world has a hard time seeing that God loves them and knowing that God sent His Son to be its savior. Today, many who profess Christ are not striving to follow God’s desired unity for the Body of Christ.
The Church’s Responsibility To Be the “One New Man”

What significance does Paul’s teachings regarding God’s desire unity for the Body of Christ have today for all of the local congregations that are scattered around the world? It is appropriate at this point to listen afresh to the words of God’s sent lord and savior, Jesus Christ, just before He went to the cross to die for humanity’s justification and reconciliation to God and one another. The apostle John states that Jesus prayed this prayer out-loud so that His followers would know what was on His heart before going to the cross on their behalf in order that they may understand and personally experience His joy (John 17:13). The climatic truth in His prayer comes when Jesus turns His attention from His immediate disciples and adds all future disciples who will learn to trust God through the hearing of the truth of the Gospel, which His immediate disciples will be proclaiming (John 17:20). Eventually, a few of their Gospel messages will be written down so that their proclamations will continue to bring new followers of Christ into God’s eternal family until Jesus physically manifests Himself and assumes world leadership. What follows in Jesus’ prayer is not a metaphorical image of unity but a direct and clear statement made to the Father that serves to inform all believers of the Messianic Age that He is sharing His personal glory with them and by doing so is insuring that there will not be any reason within God’s desired reconciliation for them that could cause disunity among them due to their relationship with God and one another. For those who are following Christ, there is absolutely no reason to feel inferior because every believer, Jew and Gentile, is loved by the Father in just the same way that He loves Jesus, the same
Jesus who worked by His side in creating all humanity and the surrounding universe.

After saying that He desires all of His disciples of all ages to have and be part of the same perfect unity that He has with the Father, Jesus says,

and I have given to them the glory that you have give to me in order that they may be united just as we are united: I in them and you in me in order that they may be completed into one united group with the result that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them just as you love me.

In the context of John’s description of Jesus’ glory recorded in John 1:14, one knows that Jesus’ glory was based on His unique son-father relation with God the Father and that it was also based on the personal nature of Jesus Himself. Jesus’ personality was such that His immediate disciples came to see Him as one who was full of χάρις καὶ ἀληθείας, “grace and truth.” As Jesus shares His personal glory with all who learn to follow Him out of love and trust, He shares His sonship position with the Father with them removing any possible form of envy within God’s immediate family. In addition, Jesus’ attributes of grace and truth will be developed in the very nature of every believer. Paul states in his letter to the Romans that all who learn to return God’s love have already been predestined to be conformed into the moral image of Jesus, to be justified, and to be glorified in order that Jesus may be the πρωτότοκος, “first,” in connection with many brothers (8:28–30). Jesus made it clear that the Church’s visible unity, which is to be demonstrated through its actions and words, would help those who are rebelling against God understand that there was a loving creator who sent His son Jesus to be the saving Messiah for all.

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1 John 17:22–23.
How should Christ’s followers respond today to God’s powerful message of love and unity? During the height of the Reformation struggle, some of the most difficult times occurred when some of the reformers started dividing over their different understandings of doctrines contained within Scripture. In his research on the Reformation, James Prayton noted that Martin Bucer used Jesus’ words from John 17 at a Marburg conference in 1529, which was called by some of the reformers to discuss some of their differences in understanding Scripture. Bucer used Jesus’ words to remind his fellow reformers of Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross in order to provide reconciliation and godly unity for those who follow Him. Furthermore, since no one is omniscient other than God and since Christ died for the reconciliation of the lost, should not they be striving for God’s desired unity even if they were not thinking exactly the same on every doctrinal point? Bucer’s point in using Jesus’ words from this prayer stemmed from the fact that it was the Lord who was talking and expressing concern for the well being of His followers at the very time that He was going to die such a horrendous death for the sake of all. If the lord of the Church cares so much for His followers and died so that they would be reconciled to God and one another, should not those same believers make every effort to live according to their Lord’s wishes?

Today, four centuries later, the Church has seen even further erosion of its visible unity. As during the Reformation, one of the major causes of division today is that Christ’s followers are not placing enough emphasis on Jesus’ ongoing leadership. In

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reality, there is only one lord and master teacher, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt 23:8). But despite what God is saying through Scripture, many are giving their primary allegiance to individuals such as John Wesley, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and many others or the institutions that have sprung up in their place at the expense of realizing the type of real and visible unity that God desires. Although the various denominations represent a rich tapestry of the Church’s struggle against wicked spiritual forces, Christ’s followers must not allow the individual parts of this tapestry to divide the Body. With division comes reduced joy and a weaker witness for all. Those who are following Christ must allow God to renew their minds (Rom 12:2) in order that they may see the Creation from God’s perspective. Paul’s teaching in Ephesians and elsewhere makes it clear that Christ died so that His followers could be “one Body” now and forever. Nothing is to divide the Church, not denominations, race, social standing, age, or gender. Anything that causes divisions among those who are truly trying to follow Christ according to the entirety of God’s inspired Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit is contrary to the very Gospel message itself (2 Tim 3:14–17; Rom 8:1–4, 14–17).

In an article, which was written in honor of Dietrich Bohhoeffer’s resolve to stand true to the Word of God and his resulting martyrdom under Hitler’s suppression of certain people groups and types, Preman Niles used Eph 2:12–22 as a springboard to discuss the “one new man” who was created through Christ and His atoning death on the cross. 3 Niles basic theme is that believers’ differences, [socially, ethnically, generationally, and

denominationally) should never be the cause of hostility or any type of estrangement, but instead Christ’s followers should be aware that the differences among the Reconciled help the Body to work as designed and are not intended to divide the Body.\textsuperscript{4} As Nils looks at the different ethnic groups around the world, he reminds believers that they cannot conform to the expectations and standards of the world, but instead, they must live out their mission of proclaiming God’s grace and peace to the world through actions and words that are in alignment with God’s will (which is expressed by His written Word and the leading of the Spirit).\textsuperscript{5} Christ’s commission to proclaim the reality of the Gospel should be at the center of Christ’s followers’ thoughts at all times.

In his article, “Removing the Wall: Eph 2:1–22,” Charles Ray states that the answer to fragmentation within the Church is regeneration, and recognizing such should move Christ’s followers to pray to God asking Him to soften their hearts so that they will start obeying Him more fully than ever before.\textsuperscript{6} True joy comes as God’s people learn to obey their true father and sustainer. The current problem of disunity in the Church would begin to dissipate if Christ’s followers listened to what God has already spoken to them through His ministers such as Paul. In Eph 2:14, Paul makes it clear that Jesus and His redeeming death on the cross is humanity’s one and only source of “peace.” Without Christ and the redeeming work that God did through Him, all people would be relationally bankrupt with God and one another.

\textsuperscript{4} Ibid., 6.

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., 9–10.

In reality, Christ’s followers’ joy and witness to the world are contingent on their genuine level of commitment to God’s sent Son, the Messiah Jesus. In Ephesians, after giving a long illuminating introduction on what Christ had accomplished through the cross for those who follow Him, Paul started his exhortation for everyday living by asking his audience to strive for God’s desired unity which is based their being part of one Body of which Christ is the leader. Obedience is paramount. John remembers Jesus saying, Ἐάν τις ἡγαπᾷ με τὸν λόγον μου τηρήσει, “If someone loves me, they will keep my word.” Stephen Wellum understands that one of the main problems in the Church today is that many fail to evaluate their everyday lives in light of Scripture. Wellum says that it is sad that instead of carrying out Paul’s examples and exhortations consistently, Christ’s followers attempt to correlate the teachings of Scripture with contemporary thought, and in doing so normally place the authority of Scripture behind current secular thought, which is constantly changing with the times. Every Christian today must learn how to bring every personal thought captive to Christ whether dealing with social issues or anything else. It is Scripture that gives the most accurate picture of reality as it describes individuals’ problems in terms of sin [transgression against God and one another] and the effects of sin on their relationship with God and one another.

7 John 14:23b.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., 2–3.
Are there any practical advantages today for Christ’s followers to pay attention to Paul’s exhortations regarding unity among believers? Yes, there are many advantages for those local church leaders who will work with other church leaders from the various denominations of their respective areas to seek out areas of ministry that can only be done effectively on a city-wide or greater level. The ingredients for successful large-scale ministry involving more than one or two local churches or a single denomination must originate out of the hearts of those who are willing to strive to follow God’s will as manifested through Scripture and the ongoing leading of the Holy Spirit. Paul’s exhortation in Eph 4:1–6 applies to Christ’s followers everywhere. They must learn to make every effort to cooperate with others who are like-minded staying in alignment with Scripture and allowing Jesus to lead them. Striving to work in unity in their local areas and larger areas will not only enhance the joy of those participating due to their realized unity, but in addition, it will enhance God’s image in the eyes of those who are rebelling against Him. The reality of seeing a genuine picture of God’s love at work in His obedient children and their resulting unity in communities around the world will point to the reality of God’s love for all people and the reality of a risen Savior who leads all who listen. As followers of Christ, God’s people need God to rekindle a passion in them enabling them to follow more fully Jesus and His one new commandment, which exhorts them to love one another as He loves them (John 13:34; 15:12–13). In their rekindled passion for Christ and one another, the local church leaders will learn the joy of working together to serve their congregations and all who live in their areas of influence and service. Not only will para-church support increase significantly, but special city-wide,
area-wide, and world-wide ministries will be established through God who will call some
to minister collectively in ways that are impossible unless approached from a united front
within the Church.

From a practical perspective, Paul’s exhortations for unity can be met when like­
minded leaders from their own respective local churches strive to find ways to work with
other local church leaders in their respective areas. Paul’s letters and other New
Testament writings show that Christ’s followers worked together through councils of
elders in their respective areas. There is no reason that this type of arrangement cannot
work today. Each area striving for God’s desired unity can form a council of elders and
learn to work from that platform supporting their area’s existing para-church
organizations that are carrying out their ministries in a manner worthy of God’s calling. In
addition, they can discuss and vote on the pressing needs of those living in their areas that
are not being met by para-church or local church ministries and then help organize and
supply both personnel and material resources to make those combined ministries a
success. In turn, the community will see God’s love at work through His people’s actions
as well as their words. There is no need for large entrenched organizations to be formed.
It is actually advantageous to maintain loosely held councils of elders so that the councils
are not bound to maintain some specific organizational status quo. Leadership within the
councils can be rotated as circumstances dictate. Ministry projects can be renewed or
removed easily through the leading of Jesus, the Messiah, through the Holy Spirit. Like­
minded local churches may at any time join in any or all of the projects as they feel led by
the Lord.
The success of the local churches at becoming a more unified part of the Body of Christ is directly related to the willingness of local church leaders to align their minds with Christ so that Christ can transform their minds to match God’s (Rom 12:1–2; 1 Cor 2:15–16). God wants Christ’s followers all over the world to understand Scriptures such as Eph 2:11–22 and 4:1–6 and apply them in practical ways to their everyday lives. God’s love, which has been manifested through Christ’s death, should be all the motivation needed for Christ’s followers to strive for God’s desired unity. Christ died a horrendous death on the cross in order to provide reconciliation for as many as receive Him. Therefore, Christ’s followers need to put aside every thought that is contrary to God’s will and realize the joy of being a united member of Christ’s Body, the family of God. As God’s children strive to fulfill God’s desired plans for their lives and walk in His light, they will have fellowship with one another (1 John 1:7). When Christ’s followers learn to walk more fully in unity, they and those who do not know God will see a much clearer image of the glory of God.
APPENDIX

GREEK TEXT AND A TRANSLATION
OF EPHESIANS 2:11–22

Ephesians 2:11–12

2:11 Therefore, remember that at
one time (in the past) you, the Gentiles
in the flesh, the ones being called
“uncircumcised” by the group, which is
being called “circumcised” having been
circumcised by human hands in the
flesh, 2:12 that at that time, you were
without Christ, having been estranged
from the citizenship of Israel, and were
indeed strangers of the covenants given
by the promise, not having a hope,
indeed without God in the world.

Ephesians 2:13–18

2:13 But now in Christ Jesus, you who
at one time were distant (from God),
have been made near through the blood
of Christ. 2:14 For you see, He is our
peace, the One having made both (Jew &
Gentile) one entity, indeed having
broken down the dividing party-wall,
(which has been) the (ongoing mutual)
hostility, through (the crucifixion of) His
flesh, 2:15 having made ineffective the
Law consisting of commandments
pertaining to (the ritual and cultural)
ordinances, in order that He may create
the two in Himself into “one new man”
producing peace,
Ephesians 2:16-22

2:16 and thereby, that He may reconcile both in one body to God through the Cross, having destroyed the (ongoing mutual) hostility through His own actions; 2:17 indeed, with His coming, He proclaimed the Good News of peace to you who were distant and peace to the ones who were near 2:18 because through Him we both have access to the Father through one Spirit.

2:19 Therefore, consequently, you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but instead you are fellow citizens of the Saints and members of the household of the (one true) God, 2:20 having been built up upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone, 2:21 in whom every construction, which is being fitted together, is growing (as one) into a Holy Temple through the Lord, 2:22 in whom even you (Gentiles) are being built up together (with us Jews) into the dwelling place of the (one true) God through the Spirit.
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