

## 7.18.21 – WE ARE GOD’S PEOPLE – Ephesians 2:11-21

### Answer Guide

#### Section One – We Are – God’s People

##### I. Replacement View

A. The Bible (pick the best answer).

1. Old Testament was written to ethnic Israel.
2. Contains some things for Christians, some things for the Jewish people.
3. Says the New Covenant replaces Israel with the Church.
4. Is written to God’s people, all of it. **Yes, best answer. 1-3 have elements that can be argued, but they each fall short of the unity of God’s people and His word to them. Yes, there is an historical context to Scriptures, but the promises given to God’s people are not to be distinguished from His purposes that Jesus accomplished in uniting all by faith.**

B. The apocryphal book 2 Esdras (2:10-11) says:

1. God is going to give \_\_\_\_\_ **kingdom of Jerusalem** \_\_\_\_\_ to the Church.
2. Pastor Winans is advocating for the above view: T or F **False**

C. Read Ephesians 2:11-22. How does the replacement view (The Church replaces Israel as the people of God) diminish what Jesus has accomplished for Israel? **The replacement view does not emphasize the unity of the two peoples or two ages. Jesus fulfilled what Israel as a nation did not accomplish, yet there were still believing Jews, those circumcised of the heart. Jesus unites Old Testament believers (true Israel) through his life death and resurrection with New Testament believers (Jews and Gentiles). One group looked forward to what He would do and the other looks back on what He did. Both are united by faith and are one people of God.**

##### II. Separated View

A. The separated view believes some sections of the Bible are written only to the \_\_\_\_\_ **church** \_\_\_\_\_ and others are only written to the nation of \_\_\_\_\_ **Israel** \_\_\_\_\_.

B. The Separated View takes the Bible the most literally. T or F **False. Separation proponents would argue this, but they are arguing for a particular view of Biblical interpretation not a more literal view. All 3 views believe in literal interpretation but disagree on how that is accomplished. By seeing some things as only applicable to ethnic Israel, this view is not**

distinguishing between true Israel (the believing remnant) and ethnic Israel, which is troublesome for other views that are taking the Bible literally according to their view.

C. The Separated View believes the following (pick the one that false).

1. We are in the Church Age.
2. There is no difference between a Jew and a Gentile in how a person becomes a child of God. **This is not held by a Separatist View.**
3. The age of the church is also known as the great parenthesis.
4. The Bible is written to two distinct peoples. The nation of Israel and the Church.

D. Read Ephesians 2:11-22. How does the Separated View (The Church and Israel are distinct peoples of God) diminish what Jesus has accomplished for the Church? **In uniting the two people and two ages, the Church receives the promises of God given in the Old Testament. To deny the Church these benefits is to diminish what Christ has done and to veil the blessing God intended for Israel to be to the nations from the outset. Yes, Israel did not fulfill God's purpose as she should have, but Jesus (the one true Israelite) did.**

### III. Fulfillment View

A. Dr. J Ligon Duncan III expresses the following Fulfillment View:

1. The promises of God are fulfilled in the Gentiles.
2. God grafts the Gentiles into the people of God.
3. Therefore, the Gentiles and Israel are one people.

B. Read John 15:5-6. (pick the best one)

1. Jesus describes a child of God as one who is a part of the vine. **Best.**
2. Jesus describes a child of God who is born of the nation of Israel.

C. Read Romans 9:6 (pick the best one)

1. All people who are descended from Israel are not true Israel. **Best.**
2. All people who are descended from Israel are true Israel.

D. Read Matthew 3:7-10. (pick the best one)

1. Jesus warned the Pharisees and Sadducees that they were not necessarily Abraham's children. **Best.**
2. Jesus assured the Pharisees and Sadducees that because they were descended from Abraham that they would bear good fruit

E. Read Hebrews 3:16-4:2

Of all the people who left Egypt only \_\_\_Caleb\_\_\_ and \_\_\_Joshua\_\_\_ entered into the Promised Land.

Entering into the rest of God depends upon \_\_\_Faith\_\_\_.

F. Read Galatians 6:14-16. Describe what these verses mean. How does the Bible describe how a person becomes a new creation? **They warn all people that becoming a child of God does not depend on what race you are or what good things you do. Having faith in the sacrifice that the Lord Jesus Christ made on the cross is the only way to become a new creation, which is another way of saying a child of God (or as v.15 puts it the Israel of God).**

G. If we believe that Replacement or the Separated Views are correct, then the \_\_\_promises\_\_\_ and \_\_\_covenants\_\_\_ God made to Israel cannot be fulfilled by the \_\_\_church\_\_\_.

H. Read Acts 15:13-18 and Amos 9:11-12

Acts 15:16 quotes the \_\_\_Amos\_\_\_ passage and in verse 17 gives the reason that the \_\_\_Gentiles\_\_\_ are to be made into \_\_\_God's\_\_\_ people.

I. How does a person know they are a child of God? Are you? How does this impact the way you approach the Scriptures and apply them to your life? **We are children of God by faith in his Son Jesus as Savior and Lord of all. Because of this we should approach the Scriptures with hope and assurance of God's promises. While we need to understand the historical and cultural context of the Scriptures to apply them appropriately to our life, we should have confidence that they are instructing us in the ways of God and that the salvation promised in them are for all His people. The fulfillment view seeks the unity of the Scriptures and the unity of the people of God in Jesus Christ.**

## Section Two – Going Deeper

**Apologetics: Why some books/letters are included, and not others?**

**How should we view writings like 2 Esdras and early epistles (letters) like the “Epistle of Barnabas” that was mentioned in the sermon, yet not in our bibles? Are there others? Why are they not part of the Bible?**

**Not to be confused with the Gospel of Barnabas, the Epistle of Barnabas, also known as the Letter of Barnabas, is an early writing of Christianity, frequently mentioned by other church fathers. Although it is named for Barnabas, an associate of Paul, the letter itself does not**

mention its author. Rather, this connection was made by commentators such as Clement of Alexandria. This dates it somewhere in the late first to very early second century. The text gives insight into Old Testament Jewish laws and traditions, comparing and contrasting them with Christian practice under the New Covenant.

Early church fathers referenced the Epistle of Barnabas, including Origen, who seemed to think it was an authentic writing of Barnabas. The text was included at the end of some early copies of the Bible, where it might have been considered as a reference. Most early Christians did not seem to consider it part of inspired Scripture; however, it was valued for its insights into Jewish theology. That perspective is best described as interpreting the Old Testament through the lens of early Christianity. Those explanations make up most of the letter.

For more information: <https://www.gotquestions.org/Epistle-of-Barnabas.html>

### **Are there others? Why are they not part of the Bible?**

Yes, there are other books and letters like this one, and that were not included as part of the "canon" (officially recognized books of the Bible). Space prevents going into a lot of detail, but here is a partial list:

The Acts of Paul and Thecla (c. 1st century)  
The Gospel of Thomas (c. 1st century, gnostic)  
The Apocalypse of Peter (c. 2nd century)  
The Gospel of the Ebionites (c. 2nd century)  
The Gospel of Philip (c 3rd century, gnostic)  
The Epistle of Barnabas (c. 4th century)  
The Gospel of Mary (c 5th century, gnostic)  
There are many more!

As you can see many of the above books were written much later than the books we find in our Bible, and could not have been authored by the person whose name is in the title.

When the New Testament was being written, the individual books and letters were immediately accepted as God's Word and circulated for the benefits of others. The church of Thessalonica received Paul's word as the Word of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13). Paul's epistles were circulating among the churches even during apostolic times (Colossians 4:16). Peter recognized Paul's writings as inspired by God and equated them with "the rest of the Scriptures" (2 Peter 3:15-16). Paul quoted the Gospel of Luke and called it "Scripture" (1 Timothy 5:18). This widespread acceptance stands in stark contrast to the few debated books, eventually rejected as non-canonical, that enjoyed a limited favor for a time.

Later, as heresy increased and some within the church began clamoring for the acceptance of spurious religious writings, the church wisely held a council to officially confirm their

acceptance of the 27 New Testament books. The criteria they used allowed them to objectively distinguish what God had given them from that of human origin. They concluded that they would stay with the books that were universally accepted. In so doing, they determined to continue in "the apostles' teaching" (Acts 2:42).

There is no shortage of information on this subject, and Christians should be familiar with how the books of the Bible came to be.

For more information see this list of related topics, including books such as 2 Esdras:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/apocrypha-deuterocanonical.html>

[https://www.gotquestions.org/content\\_Bible\\_canon.html](https://www.gotquestions.org/content_Bible_canon.html)

## **Going Deeper – Doctrinal Section**

### **“What is the visible church?”**

The Westminster Larger Catechism answers this question as follows: *The visible church is a society made up of all such as in all ages and places of the world do profess the true religion, and of their children.*

The visible church is distinguished from the invisible church. Whereas the visible church includes all peoples as defined above, not all within this society are true believers. The invisible church, however, contains all true believers, i.e., those born again. We understand this as no man can identify the true heart of the saved or the unsaved. Only God and the testimony of the Holy Spirit within the redeemed individual know this absolutely.

As it pertains to Sunday's sermon, the invisible church is equal to true Israel. This is not due to a bloodline of Jewish descent, but of the Seed of Promise (Jesus) and the blood He shed for all persons He would draw to Himself, both Jew and Gentile, grafted into one true vine.