

## Is There Anything Too Hard For The Lord? - Ephesians 2:14-18 – February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018

- I want to do something a little bit different before we get started and begin by asking an open-ended question for us to answer.
- Here's the question, "Is there a serious situation or problem you presently have in your life that's so bad only God can solve it?"

- Perhaps it's a financial problem that's so impossible only God can solve it. Maybe it's marriage problems only God can resolve.
- Maybe it's a prodigal son or daughter that's away from you and from God. Only God can bring them back to Himself and you.
- Whatever that situation is in our lives as ominous and even perilous as it may appear to be for us, it's never too hard for the Lord.

Jeremiah 32:27 - "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?"

Genesis 18:14a - Is anything too hard for the LORD?

- I suppose it goes without saying, but the question of, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" is a rhetorical one because there's not.
- While I realize that this may seem like a firm grasp of the obvious, the fact remains, that nothing is impossible for the Lord to do.
- Such is the case with the text we have before us today, by virtue of the impossibility of bringing unity between those at enmity.

- More specifically, uniting Jews and Gentiles together vis-à-vis a new identity in Christ, because of the finished work of Christ.
- Lest you think this wasn't or in some way still isn't an impossibility let me hasten to say that Jews and Gentiles hated each other.
- So much so, that the Jews saw the Gentiles as dogs and would thank God daily they weren't born a dog, a woman or a Gentile.

- If this weren't bad enough, Jews believed that God had created the Gentiles as fuel for the fires of hell, to burn for all eternity.
- This may explain why a Jew who accidentally touched a Gentile, would immediately have to go through a ceremonial cleansing.
- Also, if a Jew were to ever marry a Gentile the family would actually have a funeral service for them as if they no longer existed.

- In addition to all of this, a Jew would never eat with a Gentile because doing so meant that they would form an intimate bond.
- This is one of many reasons a Gentile could never go into the temple past the wall that had separated it from the outer courts.
- Ironically Paul wrote this while under house arrest in Rome awaiting trial being falsely accused of taking a Gentile past that wall.

- The reason I deemed it necessary to go into this is that if God can bring Jew and Gentile together, then God can do anything.
- The question becomes how? How did God do this? Answer; what united them was more powerful than what divided them.
- Namely, the person of Jesus Christ Who not only brought unity from diversity, (unity), but gave them a whole new identity.

- It's for this reason that Paul says He made the two groups one by destroying the wall of hostility and hatred that divided them.
- Now, they are no longer identified as a Jew or Gentile, because they are reconciled with, and have access to, the same God.
- As such, Paul says they're now part of the same family, with the same heavenly Father and are indwelt by the same Holy Spirit.

One commentator said it best this way, "it is not that Christ has brought one up to the level of the other, but that he has produced a greater: 'as if one should melt down one statue of silver and another of lead, and the two together should come out gold.'"

Galatians 3:28 - There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 3:11 - Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

- Let's bring it back full circle in asking and answering the aforementioned question of what's in your life that only God can solve.
- If you'll kindly permit me to, I would like to take and tackle what I see as the top four needs that we receive as prayer requests.

### 1. Salvation

Hebrews 7:25 - Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them.

### 2. Healing

Matthew 9:27-30a - 27 When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" 28 And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." 29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." 30 And their eyes were opened...

### 3. Guidance

Proverbs 3:5-6 - 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

### 4. Provision

Philippians 4:19 - And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

Luke 1:37 - For with God nothing will be impossible."

Ephesians 3:20-21 - 20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.