

DEEP SIX STUDY

March 1st, 2026

New Light – “Citizens”

MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS *(You can view the full message online at capecodchurch.com)*

Opening: In Ephesians chapter 2, the Apostle Paul confronts one of humanity’s most persistent and divisive challenges: how we see and treat those we label as “others.” Drawing on the image of a literal stone wall in Jerusalem’s Temple that separated Jews from Gentiles, Paul declares that Jesus demolished every such “wall of hostility” through his death on the cross. The result isn’t merely improved tolerance between groups, but the creation of one entirely new people: a family bound together by their identity in Christ – the identity that supersedes every racial, national, economic, or political identity we carry.

1. Rethinking What I Think of Others (Ephesians 2:11,14)

- Paul reminds Gentile believers they were once outsiders — called “heathens” by the Jews — illustrating how naturally human groups create an us-vs.-them dynamic. The two groups couldn’t have been more separated – culturally, religiously, and physically (by a literal wall).
- We all build identity around race, culture, nationality, politics, and economics. These things aren’t bad in themselves, but become destructive when elevated above all else. But Jesus, through the cross, broke down the literal and symbolic wall of hostility, uniting divided peoples into one.
- John 13:35 sets the standard: when Christians genuinely love those they once considered others, the world takes notice — because our love for each other is proof that Jesus is real and at work.

2. Rethinking My Identity (Ephesians 2:14-15,19)

- Christ didn’t just give us advice on getting along — he created one new people from two groups, making former enemies into brothers and sisters. Our identity as citizens and members of God’s family supersedes (although it doesn’t erase) every other identity we have: racial, national, political, or cultural. It subordinates them all.
- So how then are we to treat others? Here’s some simple, Biblical guidance:
 - a. Dignity (Genesis 1:27) – Every person bears the image of God (Gen. 1:27). Our words and attitudes should reflect honor, not disdain.
 - b. Proximity (Leviticus 19:33-34) – The command to love our neighbor extends to ALL neighbors, including foreigners (Lev. 19:33–34) and the most unlikely people (e.g., the Good Samaritan).
 - c. Advocacy (1 Timothy 2:1-2) – Pray for all people and for those in authority; support the rule of law, law enforcement, just laws, and their just enforcement.

3. The Unparalleled Power of Jesus and the Cross (Ephesians 2:16-18)

- Christ reconciled both groups to God through his death, putting hostility itself to death. This is not a program or set of talking points — it’s a supernatural transformation. The cross levels the playing field: every person enters God’s family the same way — reaching the end of themselves and meeting Jesus. Now all — Jew and Gentile, every nationality, party, tribe and culture — can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit.

- Some of us (many of us...) struggle to get the “song” right that he’s given us to play, but the closer we stay to Jesus, listening to his voice and absorbing his love for every image-bearer, the more naturally we play the music of love, unity and reconciliation he has written for us.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

These passages may provide additional insights related to the subject of this week’s message. All verses are NLT unless otherwise noted.

Isaiah 1:17; Jeremiah 22:3; Matthew 5:43-48; John 17:20-23; Ephesians 4:1-6; 1 Peter 3:8-9;

Video of the Week: [Justice](#) by the Bible Project

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Who are the “others” in your life right now – and how do you think about (or treat) them differently than you think about / treat “your people”?
2. If your identity in Christ truly superseded every other identity you have, how do you think that would change the way you engage with your “others” on divisive issues?
3. Read Ephesians 2:14-15 again. Paul says Christ didn’t just come to improve relations between groups — he created “one new people” out of all those who choose to trust in him. Why is that idea so significant?
4. In the Good Samaritan story (Luke 10), the “other” was the one who showed up and demonstrated love for someone he didn’t even know. In the context of today’s culture (and our own “others”), what is Jesus telling us about who we should love – and who we should expect love to come from?
5. Which of the three “Biblical guidance for treating others” concepts — dignity, proximity, or advocacy — do you find easiest to practice, and which is hardest? Explain your answers.
6. Who is one specific person in your life right now that you need to take “the coffee challenge” with — and what’s the biggest thing holding you back from doing it?