

Ephesians 2:1-9
Chosen... Together... & Walking in Christ

May 15, 2016

Intro:

1. In our passage today Paul talks about **death**, which reminds me...
 - a. Joke: A man died and went to The Judgment and the record keepers told him, “Before you meet with God, I should tell you — we’ve looked over your life, and to be honest you really didn’t do anything particularly noteworthy.”
 - 1) “We’re not really sure what to do with you. Can you tell us anything you did that can help us make a decision?”
 - 2) The newly arrived soul thought for a moment and replied, “Yeah, once I was driving along and came upon a person who was being harassed by a group of thugs. So I pulled over, got out a bat, and went up to the leader of the thugs.”
 - 3) “He was a big, muscular guy with a ring pierced through his lip. Well, I tore the ring out of his lip, and told him he and his gang had better stop bothering this guy or they would have to deal with me!”
 - 4) “Wow that’s impressive,” said the record keepers, “When did this happen?”
 - 5) “About three minutes ago,” came the reply.
 - b. Let’s see get into our passage to see what Paul has to say about this topic...

Let’s look at our passage: Read Ephesians 2:1-9 (NKJV)¹ and Pray¹

1. Theme in Ephesians: We are **Chosen** in Christ, **Together** in Christ, **Walking** in Christ.
 - a. If you are a note taker, in today’s passage, we’ll see that...
 - 1) Christ has brought us from death to life by grace through faith.
 - 2) This passage contains what I believe are the two most important verses of the whole book, Ephesians 2:8-9.
2. Let me deal with one thing before we dive in...
 - a. Old saying: “**God helps those who help themselves.**”
 - 1) COMPLETELY unscriptural!
 - 2) I honestly don’t want to hear anyone say that.
 - 3) Our passage will clearly show why.

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Ephesians 2:1 ¹ *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,*

1. Notice the phrase *He made alive* is italicized, which indicates that these words were added by the translators.
 - a. The passage would literally read, *And you ~~He made alive~~, who were dead in trespasses and sins...*
 - b. Because the phrase *made us alive* is found in verse 5 below this addition here has been accepted by many in the translation community as it brings a greater sense to the passage and what the **author** (Paul) was trying to convey.
2. How can a group of living people, who are reading Paul's letter be *dead in trespasses and sins*?
 - a. Because Paul is **not** describing their physical condition, but rather their spiritual condition.
 - b. In my favorite movie of all time, **The Princess Bride**, Fezzik and Inigo Montoya bring the Man in Black's dead body to **Miracle Max**.
 - 1) Miracle Max tells them, "It just so happens that your friend here is only MOSTLY dead. There's a big difference between **mostly dead and all dead**. Mostly dead is slightly alive. With all dead, well, with all dead there's usually only one thing you can do..."
 - a) "Go through his clothes and look for loose change."
 - 2) Spiritually speaking you might as well start going through our clothes looking for loose change for we are **ALL DEAD spiritually** apart from Christ.
 - c. Our friends the Serranos just had a baby boy – That baby is alive physically!
 - 1) And when Ezequiel is old enough to understand he, like all of us, has to **make a decision** if he will follow Jesus or not.
 - 2) Those who do not believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior remain spiritually dead and that is a condition **we were all in** at one point in our lives.
3. The idea behind the word *trespasses* is that we have crossed a line, challenging God's boundaries.
 - a. The word **sin** is an archery term that means to miss the mark.
 - b. Spiritually speaking it's to miss the perfect standards of God.

And you... who were dead in trespasses and sins...

Ephesians 2:2 ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

1. The word **walked** means **meandering**, without direction or goal.
 - a. It's just a wandering or maybe just a floating along.
 - b. And the forces around you are influencing your direction.
2. The Greek phrase translated **course of this world** refers to a **weather vane** or **wind**.
 - a. The implication is that whichever way the wind was blowing was the way we were going.
3. The Ephesians understood that Paul was referring to Satan who is **the prince of the power of the air**.
 - a. For Satan is the one who is directing **the course of this world**.
 - 1) Just look around, that's not hard to see.
 - b. Today we see the **the course of this world** is blowing into the direction of Transgender acceptance.
 - 1) Perhaps you saw that this past week that **President Obama** signed a new order declaring that all public schools should let transgender students use bathrooms, locker rooms and other sex-segregated facilities consistent with their gender identity, according to the guidance.
 - a) Staff are directed to address transgender students by their preferred names and pronouns.
 - b) Schools cannot require students to have a medical diagnosis, undergo any medical treatment, or produce a birth certificate before treating them consistent with their gender identity, the guidance states.
 - c) To violate this will result in both a loss of federal education funding and a federal lawsuit.
 - c. While there have been many throughout history who have committed evil in the name of Christ, whose actions are inexcusable, this represents only a small few.
 - 1) There is a far greater number of Christians who have gone before us and even lied down their lives to **defend, protect and provide** for those **in need**...
 - a) All while remaining true to the Word of God.

- 2) History has shown us that times, peoples, and cultures change, but the Word of God is timeless truth.
 - 3) So when our President oversteps his bounds and enacts “laws” like a king apart from Congress then we have a problem.
 - 4) And we have a problem when that act **endangers** our mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters.
 - a) The doors have been opened, literally, for a great evil to take place all under the name of acceptance.
- d. This is nothing more than the **course of this world** unfolding before our eyes.
- 1) I believe we have a **moral obligation** to oppose the President’s illegal and immoral act.
 - 2) I believe we need to speak out against the President’s actions by contacting our local school board and our legislators asking them to oppose this nonsensical act.
 - a) While still lovingly reaching out to those who need to hear the gospel.
 - b) The real solution is not creating new laws, or in blocking bad law, but rather in the spread of the gospel.
4. Paul says that the Ephesians had **once walked** in this way.
- a. This indicates that they were **no longer walking** in the **course of this world**.
 - b. We are children of the Light and we should not be walking in step with the **sons of disobedience**.
 - 1) We are on a new path, walking in a different direction.

Ephesians 2:3 ³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

1. All people, without exception are sinners.
 - a. **Romans 3:23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
- b. We are all lost and we cannot save ourselves.
 - 1) Here’s the standard we are to meet: Jesus said in **Matthew 5:48**
Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.
 - 2) We have a problem!!!

Ephesians 2:4a**⁴ But God**

1. This is the message of the Gospel. Man is doomed to suffer the consequences of his sin, BUT GOD...
 - a. But God intervenes and provides another way, one that Only He can provide.

Ephesians 2:4-5

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together **with Christ (by grace you have been saved),**

1. God is **rich in mercy**.
 - a. How **rich**? This speaks of an abounding abundant supply.
 - 1) What does that look like? Consider the ocean...
 - 2) We would drown in it before we could ever swim all the way across it.
2. God's **love, mercy** and **grace** are so great that they extend even to the detestable... to the children of wrath (vs 3).
 - a. Every reason for God's mercy and love is found in Him and has nothing to do with us.
 - b. We give Him no reason to love us, yet in the greatness of His love, He loves us with that great love anyway.
3. **when we were dead** - This is when God started loving us.
 - a. He did not wait until we were lovable.
 - 1) He loved us even when we were dead in trespasses, providing nothing lovable to Him.
 - b. Therefore, we must stop trying to make ourselves lovable to God, and simply receive His great love while recognizing that we are unworthy of it.
 - 1) This is the grace secret of the Christian life.
4. Paul declares... **by grace you have been saved**.
 - a. Our salvation—our rescue—from spiritual death is God's work done for the undeserving.
 - 1) This is God's will!

5. Pastor **Chuck Smith**, "It is interesting to me how that so often people fear the will of God. Having walked in the will of God, I cannot understand why any man would fear it. But Satan has so lied to people about God, about the nature of God, that it has caused people to oftentimes fear submitting their lives to God."
- a. But God's rich mercy and great love should cause us to trust all the more in His will for our lives.

Ephesians 2:6-7 ⁶ and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly places **in** Christ Jesus, ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us **in** Christ Jesus.

1. God has raised *us* up together... in the heavenly places.
 - a. **Philippians 3:20** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,
 - b. We don't sit in the heavenly place **yet**, but we are represented there **in** Christ Jesus.
 - 1) For Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father as our Advocate.
2. No longer are we chained to our old sinful ways, Christ has set us free and seated us with Him spiritually in the heavenlies.
3. In **the ages to come** is a reference to eternity.
 - a. God's Grace will be on display for all of eternity for we will be there as God's trophies of Grace.

Ephesians 2:8-9 ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

1. Salvation comes by **grace** through **faith**.
 - a. Remember that **grace** is **undeserved, unmerited favor**.
2. How does **grace** and **faith** work together? Like **water in a glass**.
 - a. This is an imperfect illustration, but please consider for a moment...
 - 1) The water is what is important to quench your thirst, but the glass is what brings that water to you.
 - 2) What you need is the water, but the glass is the vehicle that allows you to receive it.

- 3) Your faith is like a glass that is filled with God's grace, which leads to salvation when you drink it.
3. This salvation by grace through faith is a **gift**.
 - a. Something you don't earn...
 - 1) Something you can't buy otherwise it's not a gift.
4. Paul also says that even the faith it took to be saved is **not of yourselves**.
 - a. That is why Jesus declared in **John 6:44**, "**No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him**".
 - 1) Those who respond to the gospel when its shared with them can often look back and see the hand of God drawing them to Himself.
 - 2) For me, I responded to the teaching of the Word and I surrendered my heart.
 - 3) But as I look back it was God who was drawing me to Himself – it was not of myself.
 - b. Illustration: Little boy who came into the church all by himself.
 - 1) I did my part (sinning and running away...)
 - 2) And He did His part (out running me and saving me...)
5. Paul says that salvation is **not of works, lest anyone should boast**.
 - a. If salvation was the accomplishment of man in any way, we could boast about it.
 - 1) But under God's plan of salvation, God alone receives the glory.

Conclusion:

1. In today's passage we saw that...
 - a. Christ has brought us from death to life by grace through faith.
2. Have you extended your glass of faith to the Lord that He might fill it with His grace for the saving of your soul?
 - a. Those who have extended their glass of faith to the Lord have found that their cups overflows...
3. At the fountain drink machine there have been times when, while filling my cup I've looked away for a moment and in my distraction my cup was missing the flow of fluid.
 - a. Soda was freely flowing; it just wasn't going into my cup.

- b. Christian, have you allowed distraction to keep your spiritual cup from being filled to overflow with the grace of God's love in your life?
- c. Let's redirect our attention on the Lord and get our lives in alignment with all that He has for us.

¹ The following people and commentaries were used in preparing these notes: Life Application Bible, ESV Study Bible, MacArthur Study Bible, D. Guzik, J. Courson, J.V. McGee