

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

EPHESIANS 2:1-10

LESSON: GOD'S OVERFLOWING LOVE —March 12, 2017

INTRODUCTION:

Paul opens his letter to the church in Ephesus by likening the church to a body. The church is a living expression of Christ. Believers are not only members of His body, they are members one of another in that body. Christ is the full expression of God, and the church is the expression of Christ. The church is filled with His presence, animated with His life, and endowed with His gifts. In Christ, the church has everything needed to fulfill its mission.

LESSON: I. DEAD - Ephesians 2:1-3

2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;— Paul is talking to the Gentiles whom God has quickened (meaning *brought to life; or raised from death to life*) when they were dead in their trespasses (meaning *fall, slip, blunder, wander away*) and sins (meaning *miss the mark*).

Before Salvation we were:

1. **dead** (v.1). A corpse does not hear what people are talking about in the funeral parlor. Just as a person who is physically dead has no appetite for food, neither will a person who is spiritually dead have any appetite for spiritual food (*to hear the Word of God*). All lost sinners are dead. The last drunkard on skid row and the unsaved society leader are both dead in sin. One corpse cannot be (*more*) deader than another.

2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:— The spiritually dead habitually lived and walked under the control of the world's ways as they obeyed the prince of the power of the air (meaning *the devil*). The prince of the power of the air is the same spirit that still operates in the children of disobedience (meaning *those who will not respond to the truth of God*).

1. **disobedient** (vv.2-3a). There are three main forces that help a person to be disobedient. They are:
 1. **The world** - This world system is constantly trying to get man to conform to its values.
 2. **The flesh** - This refers to man's fallen nature that we were born with. And this fallen nature does everything it can to control our mind and body.
 3. **The devil** - He wants to make people stay as "*children of disobedience.*" He himself was disobedient to God and he wants others to disobey God, too.

With these influences there is little wonder that the unsaved person is disobedient to God. There is no way that he can overcome these three great enemies of God by Himself. They have warred against God. And God is angry because of sin.

However, remember this:

1. **2 To Overcome The Flesh We Need Flight** - The key to defeating fleshly temptations is to flee from them. (1 Cor. 6:18 - "flee fornication"; 1 Cor.10:14 - "flee idolatry"; 2 Tim. 2:22 - "flee youthful lusts").
2. **To Overcome The World We Need Faith** - Faith that Jesus will take care of us when we willingly

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/ephesians-21/>

² <http://www.sermonnotebook.org/new%20testament/temptation.htm>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>

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give up the attachment to worldly things. If we are loving the world, we are not loving God - 1 John 2:15; James 4:4. If we really want victory over the world, then love Jesus more than you love the world - Heb. 12:2. *"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"* 1Jh.5:4-5.

- 3. To Overcome The Devil We Must Fight** - If we stand up to him and fight, he will flee - James 4:7. You must face him in the power of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. He doesn't fear you, but he trembles before the blood of the Lamb! Fight by *"Casting down every imagination and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ"* 2Cor.10:5.

2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Paul tells them that *"all"* including the Jews have lived in times past, indulged in lusts of our flesh, and of the mind (meaning *gratifying the cravings of our lower nature; physical cravings; or natural appetites*). They were by nature children worthy of wrath. The only hope for men in this condition is to experience the grace of God in Christ.

II. ALIVE - Ephesians 2:4-7

2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,— Often people think most about the wrath of God. He doesn't just have wrath against sin but He is rich in mercy (meaning *He has abundant compassion*) because of His great love for us. Even when we were living in a way that didn't please Him, we were God's beloved children whom He had made so valuable, that He would pay the ultimate price to redeem us; that's a love that cannot be compared to any other.

2:5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)— First of all, in our sin we were dead, but even when we were dead in sins, He quickened us. **Why?** Because His very nature is mercy and love. **When?** While we were dead in sins. This quickening is together with Christ. Christ is alive in heaven. We are made alive spiritually by God imparting Christ's life in us. This is what is meant by new birth. *"With Christ"* refers to resurrection: literally in His case and spiritually in our case. **His Grace Saved Us!**

³HOW GOD WORKS IN US AFTER SALVATION (vv4-10)

- I. We are made alive** (vv.4-5): This takes us all the way back to where Paul begins by describing us as *"dead"* (v.1). It is only natural and logical then that the first thing we have in Christ is life. We were dead, now we are alive. That's our testimony – that's our witness – once we were spiritually dead, but now we are spiritually alive. This incredible truth points to the fact that our entire salvation is about the grace of God, so that it overflows here as a brief taste of what is to come: it is by grace we have been saved (vv. 8-9).

2:6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (meaning *exalted us to a high*). **How?** By belief, trust, and faith. God counts that person as being together with Christ in His righteousness, death, and resurrection. God set us down alongside of Christ in the heavenly realms.

³ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/ephesians-24/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>

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The believer is of both realms: (1) the earthly realm (the natural) experiencing the things of this world and he is of (2) the heavenly realm (spiritual) experiencing the things of the heavenlies. The heavenly places are in Christ and we are believers in Christ. This is already a done thing. We are already seated with Christ at the right hand of God. And God sees us as we really are. Therefore, God sees believers as having already been raised and exalted to live eternally with Him—because He sees *their faith and counts them* in Christ Jesus.

- II. **We are raised with Christ** (v.6): To understand what Paul is talking about here, we need to glance back at the last part of chapter one (vv. 20-21). The focus is on God's power over everything because God raised Christ up and seated Him at His right hand. God did this so that in the future world He could show how truly good and kind He is to us because of what Christ Jesus has done.

2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. The work of God's mercy has one purpose: to show believers the riches of His grace throughout all the ages to come, that believers might glorify God for bestowing His endless and limitless grace and kindness on us.

III. SAVED - Ephesians 2:8-10

2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:— It is by grace (*God's gift of loving kindness*) we are saved through our faith (*trusting Him*) and not of ourselves (*not of our own action; it didn't come from us*). It is the gift of God. To receive a gift, it takes a person's willing acceptance.

2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. "*Works*" mean the things we do— they don't make us more holy or more spiritual or more important to God. Works flow naturally. They flow out of who we are created to be by the craftsmanship of God. So it would be impossible for any man to boast. Works are important but they do not earn us salvation. So, Works don't save us. We are not saved **BY works**, but **FOR works**. Our works, therefore, are as a **RESULT** of salvation, not a **CAUSE** of salvation.

2:10 For we are his workmanship,— This means God's handiwork, His work of art; His work that comes from His mind; His molding and transforming work of His Spirit in us; His spiritual creation. It's not of man, not to any degree whatsoever. Salvation's work is of God; of God's grace and of God's grace alone.

- God *quickens the spirit* of the believer and makes his spirit alive (Eph.2:1; 2:5).
- God causes the believer to be *born again spiritually* (Jh.3:3, 5-6; 1Pt.1:23; 1Jh.5:1).
- God places His *divine nature* into the heart of the believer (2Pt.1:4).
- God makes a *new creature* of the believer (2Cor.5:17; Gal.6:15).
- God creates a *new man* out of the believer (Eph.4:24; Col.3:10).
- God *renews the believer* by the Holy Spirit (Tit.3:5).

2:10b ...created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Believers are created in Christ Jesus to be able to show forth His good works. Let's be clear: God saves man *for good works* not *by good works* which He had already ordained (meaning *pre-arranged; pre-destined; prepared in advance*) that we should walk in (meaning *make our daily way of life*). God's people are to give ample evidence of the power of a new life which operates in them. Yes, believers mess up sometimes, but they repent and get back on track because they then allow Christ to live in them. Man will keep coming back to God because it's in their nature to do so. He is a new creature in Christ to do



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good works. Therefore, he does them. Just like a tree bears the fruit of its nature.

SUMMARY:

Paul is talking to the Gentiles whom **God has quickened** (meaning *brought to life; or raised from death to life*) **when they were dead in their trespasses** (meaning *fall, slip, blunder, wander away*) and sins (meaning *miss the mark*) (2:1). They habitually lived and **walked under the control of the world's ways** as they obeyed **the prince of the power of the air** (meaning *the devil*). The prince of the power of the air is the same spirit that still **operates in the children of disobedience** (meaning *those who will not respond to the truth of God*) (2:2). Paul tells them that "*all*" including the Jews have **lived in times past indulged in lusts of our flesh and of the mind** (meaning *gratifying the cravings of our lower nature; physical cravings; or natural appetites*). They were **by nature children worthy of wrath**. The only hope for men in this condition is to experience the grace of God in Christ (2:3). Paul paints two pictures for us – one "*before*" Christ (2:1-3) and one "*after*" (2:4-7). He then brings it all together (2:8-10) and tells us what the goal of this comparison is.