

"Saved by Grace"

Ephesians 2:1-10

Part 3

Introduction: Today as we return to our study in Ephesians, we are again going to look into Ephesians 2. Now we have spent 2 weeks in this chapter so far and we have been looking at our past condition. In chapter 1 we looked at our PRESENT condition and in chapter 2 we have been looking at what we were in the past. The focus in these first 10 verses of chapter 2 is God and His grace. So, to better grasp the grace of God Paul has carried us back into the past to give us the details of our unsaved condition.

I. We were Dead in our Sins

Notice Ephesians 2:1

II. A Detailed Description of the Believer's Past Condition

Paul gives us the details of what controlled our lives and why we were enemies of God. This is also a description of the unbeliever's life right now.

1. **We were controlled by the course of this world.**

Notice Ephesians 2:2

2. **We were controlled by the Prince of the Power of the Air.**

This is Satanic influence.

3. **We were controlled by the spirit that NOW works in the children of disobedience.**
4. **We were controlled by the lusts of the flesh.**

Notice Ephesians 2:3

5. **We were children of wrath.**

Notice Ephesians 2:3 again.

This is the dark picture of who we were and if you are not saved this is the dark picture of who you are presently.

III. God's Mercy

Now in 2:4-10 we are going to see what God has done for us.

Notice Ephesians 2:4

The word "BUT" introduces a contrast here that is so important. We were spiritually bankrupt, but God is rich IN MERCY. I want to take a moment and talk about the word "MERCY".

Grace is unmerited favor which means it is getting what we do not deserve. **Mercy is NOT getting what we deserve.**

Because of God's love for us He has saved us and now we will never get what we deserved. Let me show you what we deserved.

Revelation 20:12-15

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

This is the Great White Throne Judgment of all that will die unsaved in their sins. This is where we all should have eventually ended up BUT GOD is RICH IN MERCY.

Notice Ephesians 2:4-5

God loved us EVEN when we were dead in our sins. Take you to the book of Genesis to show you what God has done for us.

God chose to love us despite our sinful condition and despite of the fact that we were His enemies. Let me take you to the book of Genesis to show you what God has done for us.

Genesis 3:6-12

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

⁸ *And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*

⁹ *And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*

¹⁰ *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*

¹¹ *And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?*

¹² *And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*

When Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit God then began to seek them out. He asks questions which He knew the answers to, but it was an opportunity for them to confess and repent. This was the sin that would plunge the entire human race into sin, and this was the sin that would send Jesus Christ to the cross. Yet God chose to love them and to seek them out so they could be forgiven. Let me show you what else God did.

Genesis 3:21-24

²¹ *Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.*

²² *And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:*

²³ *Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.*

²⁴ *So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

God had told Adam that in the day that he ate of the forbidden fruit he would die. But here we see that God killed several animals (probably lambs) and they died in the place of Adam and Eve. Then God blocked the way to the tree of life for it would have been a tragedy for them to eat of that tree and live forever in their sin filled bodies. God had something better.

Application:

This is exactly what God did for us. We were dead in our sins and He sought us out and He worked in our lives to bring us to where we could hear the Gospel. His Spirit convicted us of our sin, and He provided a Substitute to die in our place for we too were under a death sentence. It was a Lamb that died for us also, Jesus Christ the Lamb of God. Now we are promised a glorified body one day, so we do not need to live forever in these bodies of sin.

But it even goes beyond this.

IV. God's Grace

Notice Ephesians 2:5-6a

Here we see that we have been QUICKENED/ MADE ALIVE together with Jesus Christ. It is only in Christ that man can have life.

John 14:6

⁶ *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

He raised us up together with Christ and made seated us in the heavenlies. Paul is talking here about our POSITION IN CHRIST. Let me show you what Paul is talking about here.

Romans 6:1-6

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

² *God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

³ *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*

⁴ *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

⁵ *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*

⁶ *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

These verses are saying the same thing. When we were saved, we were baptized into the body of Jesus Christ and so with Him we died, were buried and rose again.

Getting back to Ephesians. We were dead in trespasses and sin, but God in His great love pursued us and when we were saved, He made us alive IN CHRIST and now we are

resurrected with Christ and so all that once controlled us has lost its grip and power. Now in Christ we are new creations.

2 Corinthians 5:17

¹⁷ Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

God reached down into the depths of sin and he lifted us out and placed us firmly into Jesus Christ.

Psalm 40:1-3

I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

² He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

³ And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

Now the power of sin has been broken and the power that raised Jesus from the grave flows through us.

Galatians 2:20

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Notice Ephesians 2:5 again.

The word "SAVED" here is in the present tense and I want you to understand what that means.

Listen to the words of **Wuest**:

"The perfect tense speaks of the existence of finished results in present time. The parenthesis here could read:

"By grace you have been saved in past time completely, with the result that you are in a state of salvation which persists through present time."

The unending state of the believer in salvation could not have been put in stronger or clearer language. The finished results of the past act of salvation are always present with the reader. His present state of salvation is dependent upon one thing and one thing only, his past appropriation of the Lord Jesus as Saviour."

The word "SAVED" here in this verse speaks of a past completed action. And it also speaks of our present condition in that we are being saved from the power of sin. We are being saved from that which we were enslaved to as mentioned in verses 1-3.

We have been saved from the power of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. All sinful power has been broken and now we are free. Not free to go and live in sin but free to live a life that glorifies God which we could not do before we were saved. That means that sin is now a choice. We are not enslaved to sin anymore so now if we sin it is by choice.

Now let us notice what else God has done.

Notice Ephesians 2:6

Here we see that we have been seated together in HEAVENLY PLACES in Christ. When we read this we right away think of our eternal home and we tend to think this means that in the mind of God we are already seated in our heavenly home.

That is part of the meaning but there is more. This statement is used three times in this letter.

Ephesians 1:3

³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*

Ephesians 2:6

⁶ *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*

Ephesians 3:9-10

⁹ *And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:*

¹⁰ *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,*

Let me read for you what **Ryrie** says concerning Heavenly Places:

"This refers to the realm of heavenly possessions and experiences into which the Christian is brought because of his or her association with the risen Christ."

To be seated in the heavenlies means that because we are now spiritually alive in Christ we have been placed into the realm of spiritual blessings. Before we were saved, we were in the realm of darkness under the wrath of God on a path of eternal destruction. Now

however we are IN CHRIST and we are in the realm of God where He can bless us with spiritual blessings.

Notice Ephesians 2:7

Here is the reason God has done this. So that He might bless us in the ages to come. In Christ God shows forth the riches of his grace to us now and in the ages to come.

WHAT ARE THE AGES TO COME?

The current age is the Church Age where we receive the blessings of God in our lives today. The next age is the Kingdom Age where we shall rule and reign with Jesus Christ in His Kingdom. Then there will be the Eternal Age where we shall dwell with God forever. In all of these Ages we see riches of His grace.

Conclusion:

I want to close with the words of F. B. Meyer:

"That He could love us when we were dead like Lazarus, in trespasses and sins; that He has linked us in the bonds of indissoluble union with his Son; that He had made it possible for us to share his Resurrection, his Triumph, and his Throne; that we, the poor children of earth and sin, should be admitted into the inner circle of Deity--this will be, to all eternity, the mightiest proof of the exceeding riches of his grace.

The word "exceeding" might be rendered "beyond throwing distance." Fling your thoughts forward as far as you can, and there will always be an immense beyond; throw them as high as you may, till they out soar the stars, and there will always be an above; let them sink for ever, and there will always be a beneath--in the exceeding riches of God's grace.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork"; but the glory of the position and character of the saints, contrasted with the degradation from which they were raised, will be accounted in coming ages a more extraordinary exemplification of the riches of Divine grace than the splendour of the heavens is of the wealth of his skill."