

"The Revelation of God's Mystery"

Ephesians 3:1-21

Part 3

Introduction: We have been looking at this letter and learning about our identity in Jesus Christ. Today I want to take some of what we learned and then present to you a question.

In Ephesians 2 we were reminded of who we were before we were saved.

Ephesians 2:1-6

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

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:

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.

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

⁵ Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

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

We then went on to see how we were with hope before we were in Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:11-12

¹¹ Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

¹² That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

I. The Blessings

But all of this changed when we were saved.

Ephesians 2:13-15

¹³ *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*

¹⁴ *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;*

¹⁵ *Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;*

When we repented of our sin and we placed our faith in Jesus Christ our spiritual standing changed. In chapter one Paul spoke of the blessings which we have in Jesus Christ.

1. **Blessed with all spiritual riches in Christ.**
2. **Made holy and blameless.**
3. **Placed into God's royal family.**
4. **Accepted in Christ.**
5. **Redeemed by His blood.**
6. **Forgiven of all our sin debt.**
7. **Blessed with an Eternal Hope.**
8. **Sealed with the Spirit.**

In our study of Romans this past Wednesday evening we saw this Truth presented in a different way. In Romans 11 Paul gave two illustrations and I want to look at one of them.

Romans 11:16-17

¹⁶ *For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.*

¹⁷ *And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;*

Paul gave an illustration here of two olive trees. One was cultivated by God and the other olive tree grew wild.

This cultivated olive tree is under the care of God and it represents the place of blessing and privilege. The wild olive tree represents the Gentiles. When we were saved God grafted us onto the cultivated olive tree and now, we are in a place of blessing and privilege. The branches that were broken off were unbelieving Jews who rejected Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

II. The Question

Are you sure you are saved? I don't raise this question to cause you to doubt your salvation, but I raise the question because I truly care about each of you and I want you to be sure.

There is something in this text that makes me very concerned.

III. The Warning

Paul also gave a warning in Romans 11 and it is this warning that causes me to be concerned.

Romans 11:18-22

¹⁸ *Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.*

¹⁹ *Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.*

²⁰ *Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:*

²¹ *For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.*

²² *Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.*

This is NOT a warning about losing your salvation. That is something that is Biblically impossible. Let me show you a few verses.

Hebrews 10:14

¹⁴ *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

John 11:25-26

²⁵ *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:*

²⁶ *And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.* *Believest thou this?*

These are just a couple of verses that show us we cannot lose of salvation. So, what is the warning Paul is giving in Romans 11?

Romans 11:18-22

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¹⁹ *Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.*

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Paul is warning people who are unbelievers who are sitting in the churches week after week but have never been saved. They are religious but not saved.

Listen to the words of another teacher on this thought:

"This warning has gone largely unheeded in the history of the church these last 2000 years as we have seen Gentiles who have thought that they could remain in the place of blessing apart from genuine faith in Christ (substituting in its place ritualism, religion, rationalism, etc.)."

It is sad to say that there are many people who sit in the church and give the appearance they are saved but they have NEVER accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Matthew 7:22-23

²² *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?*

²³ *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

Don't miss the word "MANY" in this text. There will be MANY who think they are saved and will find when they stand before the Lord they are not.

There is an Old Testament passage which comes to mind here. In 2 Kings we read about Elisha after Elijah had been taken to heaven and Elisha has a conversation with the men of Jericho.

2 Kings 2:19-22

¹⁹ *And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren.*

²⁰ *And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him.*

²¹ *And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land.*

²² *So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.*

Jericho was a city that looked amazing. If you would have passed by you would have desired to live there. The houses were nice the tree had many blossoms and it gave the appearance of being the ideal city. But there was a problem. The water was bitter. This caused the trees to never bear fruit. It was barren.

This is a picture of the religious person. They sit in the place of blessing and they give the appearance they have it all together. But there is something missing in their lives and it is God's power. They are barren for they bear no spiritual fruit. They have never been saved. They are like the people Jesus described in Matthew 7. They are religious but lost. Just like the city of Jericho they are in need of a miracle in their lives. They need to trust in Jesus Christ and then they would receive the Holy Spirit and they would bear fruit.

Application:

I want to explain to you how to be saved:

- 1. We have all sinned**

Romans 3:23

²³ *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

- 2. Sin separates us from God**

Isaiah 59:2

²*But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*

- 3. Sin must be paid for**

Romans 6:23

²³ For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

4. You cannot work for forgiveness

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Isaiah 64:6

⁶ But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

5. God sent His Son to die for you

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

³ For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

⁴ And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

6. Forgiveness is a free gift

Romans 6:23

²³ For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

7. You need to repent and accept Jesus Christ as your Savior.

John 1:12

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

There is no other way to heaven than through Jesus Christ.

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.