

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 22ND - 23RD, 2022 // BOOK OF EPHESIANS

OLD TO NEW (EPHESIANS 2:1-10) OUR SPIRITUAL CONDITION

Paul paints a bleak picture of who we are prior to salvation. The clearer the picture of our destitute condition before we were saved, the greater our appreciation for what Christ has done. We were spiritually dead in our trespasses and sin.

- **To walk in sin is to live a lifestyle opposed to God's commands.**

"ACCORDING TO THE WAYS OF THIS WORLD"

This world is associated with the realm of Satan. We can't live for Christ when we're living for ourselves. We either live for Christ or Satan (Matthew 12:30).

- **Apart from Christ we gratify the desires of our flesh. Our orientation is toward selfishness.**
- We are born into this condition.

"BY NATURE ..."

The fall in Genesis was not simply a lapse in morality or judgment. It was a deliberate rejection of God and His divine plan. Paul explains we are now under His wrath because of our rejection of Christ. This is why Paul wrote to the Romans, "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

"BUT GOD ..."

Because of God's great mercy, we don't get what we deserve. In our transgressions, we deserved death, but in Christ, He gives us life. By His grace, He gives us what we don't deserve, and by His love, we are no longer alienated from Him.

- **We can only experience new life when we accept what Christ has done for us.**

"HIS GREAT LOVE ..."

In chapter 1, we read, in Christ, we are **blessed, chosen, holy, blameless, and forgiven.**

"But God demonstrates His love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

- **The love of God isn't based on our performance; it is based on His character.**

THREE THINGS

He made us alive. We are no longer slaves to sin. We share in His power and authority.

- He raised us up with Christ. Because of Christ's resurrection, we too will one day rise with Him. This is not our home!
- Seated us with Him. As Christ followers, we are destined to be seated with Him in Heaven.

"SO THAT ..."

Paul wants us to know we are the living display of God's kindness. God doesn't take us out of this world but, through His Spirit, gives us the power to live in victory over sin. **There has to be a change after we become followers of Jesus.**

- **We don't do this alone. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit** (Galatians 5).

THE GIFT OF SALVATION

Paul is trying to put to rest the dispute between the Jews and Gentiles. No one has done anything to gain or merit salvation. The whole of salvation starts and ends with God.

- It is a gift, and that is grace!
- **By grace, through faith, we accept what God has provided through Jesus' death and resurrection.**

HIS WORKMANSHIP

There is no action or work we can do to obtain salvation; otherwise, we would be boastful.

Since we're created in His image and saved by His grace, we respond with acts of service.

Good works don't produce salvation. **Good works are the product of salvation. It is biblically inconsistent to say someone has been saved but has not changed.**

ONE IN CHRIST (EPHESIANS 2:11-22)

THE SEPARATION

Paul points to the division between the Jews and Gentiles and first explains that they all were once alienated from God.

- The Jews needed to know heritage and circumcision didn't make them acceptable to God. Gentiles needed to know there was no special achievement or knowledge that made them acceptable either.

SPIRITUAL PRIDE

Jews and Gentiles alike were guilty of spiritual pride. Paul points out that both were without hope. God didn't choose Israel to the exclusion of all other nations. God chose Israel as an evangelistic instrument to bring all nations to Himself.

- **We need to understand God's plan for His Church is to do the same.**

UNITED IN CHRIST

Paul states, "But now in Christ Jesus," there is no distinction. We are all one in Christ (Galatians 3:28). By His death on the cross, Jesus has torn down the wall of hostility between people and God.

- **We need to be people who love others despite their background, ethnicity, or past sin.**

"MEMBERS OF GOD'S HOUSEHOLD"

Paul lets them know those who were near (Jews), and those who were far away (Gentiles) have now been reconciled through Christ's death and resurrection. Since neither could be saved by good deeds or knowledge, both needed to hear about salvation through Jesus. Jesus destroyed the barriers and unified all believers into one family.

A HOLY TEMPLE

Paul concludes with a metaphor of how we're all being built together into a holy temple with Christ as the cornerstone. Where once the dwelling place was the temple in Jerusalem, Paul now describes every believer as the temple of the Holy Spirit.

- **We are to give an accurate picture to the world of what a Christ follower looks like.**

AN ASSESSMENT

- Do we understand our spiritual condition? **"The wages of sin is death"** (Romans 6:23).
- Have we accepted God's grace for salvation or are we still trying to earn it? **We are saved by grace through faith.**
- In His great love and mercy, God has given us the opportunity for true life. Are we willing to address the sin in our lives?
- Are we living by the ways of this world? We are His workmanship. We are wholly the work of God's creative, redemptive, and sanctifying work. **Our response must be worship and service.**
- Have we made Jesus the cornerstone (foundation) of our lives? **When Jesus is Lord of our lives, everything changes.**

A CHALLENGE

- **The way we live matters. How are we representing Christ to a watching world?** We must live in accordance with God's Word.
- **The way we love matters.** We don't get to choose who we love (Matthew 19:19).
- Keep growing. **Read the Word, pray,** get in a **Life Group,** and **serve,** because God isn't finished with you.