



IN CHRIST (EPH 1-2) - WE WERE DEAD

(from 4/9/17 sermon - Spencer Teal)

I. **OPEN** - See if anyone wants to share a short testimony, or if there are specific praise updates to begin CG.

II. **PRAY**

III. **READ ALOUD Ephesians 2:1-10**

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins **2** in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— **3** among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. **4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— **6** and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **7** so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Q - Sermon takeaways from those who were in attendance?

IV. **REFLECT**

Ephesians 2 is probably the Bible's strongest contrast of humanity's grave moral inferiority and God's tremendous rescue. From chapter 1 to chapter 2, Paul has moved us from God's view of salvation to humanity's point of view of salvation. And the glimpse is pretty bleak. And so, in this passage, Paul does two things: 1) He explains in abundant detail that we are all dead and we are dead because of our sin. And 2) he shows, sadly, how we eagerly and voluntarily embrace this sinful lifestyle.

Q) Why do you think that God chooses the word "dead" to describe our condition before Christ? **Q)** What are the characteristics of someone who is dead? What things are they not able to do? **Discuss.** **Q)** What does that have to do with our salvation?

Verses 2-3 show us the contrast of being physically alive but spiritually very dead. It's a bleak picture. Our stories are different and the sins we struggled with are different, but our stories are otherwise pretty much the same. We followed the enemy and gave in to sin regularly. We lived and breathed, but we were spiritually dead. One of the things we must realize is that dead people have no ability to revive themselves. One who is

dead cannot suddenly come to life. This was our condition before Christ. This is the condition of everyone in this world who is currently without Christ. This is one of the reasons we want everyone to make a concerted effort to invite the lost to the Easter service. People need to know that they are dead before they can realize how desperate they are for life.

Look at the first two words in v. 4. These two words...*"But God"*...are two of the most powerful words in all of the body. Think back to your pre-salvation days when you were among the walking dead. **Q** - What is your *"But God"* moment that you'd like to share. You were dead...but God. But God what? Take time to share and rejoice together at the God who chose to bring life to us when we were dead and without any hope in the world. **Share.**

Look at the remainder of verses 4 - 5. We see the a) WHO: God who is *"rich in mercy,"* b) the WHY: *"because of the great love with which He loved us"* and c) the WHAT: He chose to give us live *"when we were dead in our trespasses."* So how did He accomplish this? Verse 6 says He *"raised us up with Him"* and *"seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* And to make sure we understand that we had nothing to do with it, He reminds us in v. 8 that our salvation is *"by grace"* *"not your own doing; it is the gift of God."* Eph 2 is a beautiful depiction of the Gospel.

Practice time for sharing the Gospel - In Eph 2:1-9 we clearly see the Gospel...the good news of Christ loving us and coming to save us...presented. We were dead, "But God" sought you out and brought you back to life. Look through this passage and use it as a guide to share the Gospel. Remember, the Gospel only makes sense if we help people to see that they are dead spiritually...separated from God and without any hope on their own. **Q)** How can you use these verses to help someone who is dead to understand the Gospel and to share how He saved you. **Have 2 individuals volunteer to share the gospel using this passage as a guide.** Others are to take notes and to provide feedback afterward.

V. FURTHER APPLICATION -

Even though we see in this passage that salvation is completely of God and that as dead people, we contributed in no way whatsoever, yet in our daily walk with the Lord as Christians we often find ourselves trying to add to this free gift by our good works and proper choices. There is nothing wrong with walking in a manner worthy of the Gospel. In fact, we are instructed to do so. However, if we think for one second that we are in any way contributing to the finished work of Christ then we are deceived. It is the Gospel alone that saves us. Period. Let's learn to rest in His finished work and simply thank Him for His grace.

VI. CLOSE - Final thoughts?

VII. LOOKING AHEAD -

This is the week before Easter. Who will you invite to church next week. Or, who do you know who is dead in their sins that you will commit to praying for each day? Let's head into next week expecting Jesus to breath life into our dead friends and family members, and let's remain steadfast in prayer.