

From Death To Life

Ephesians 2:1-7

Pastor John Miller

As we've gone through Ephesians 1, we've learned that you can't enjoy what you don't know you have. Looking back in eternity past, Paul describes the blessings of Ephesians 1:3 that are ours in Christ and delineated them as: 1) God the Father has chosen us before the foundations of the world; 2) God the Son has redeemed us by His substitutionary death on the cross; 3) God the Holy Spirit has sealed us unto the day of redemption. That's a quick summary of the first twelve verses of Ephesians 1. Paul wanted us to know that we're chosen, we're redeemed, we're indwelt and sealed by the Holy Spirit, and then he moves from our appropriating that by praying for us, verses 15-23, (we looked at that last Wednesday and tonight as we move into Ephesians 2) that we might appreciate what is ours. Paul wants us to know our blessings, appropriate them by faith, and then he wants us to appreciate them. To do that, there's a transition in Ephesians 2:1-7. By the way, verses 1-7 are again one long sentence in the Greek. Basically, from Ephesians 1:3-2:7, they're really only three long sentences in the Greek translation.

Tonight, Paul is going to give us how Christ saved us in our sin and raised us to be seated and united with Christ. Tonight's division is very, very simple. There will be a lot of sub-points, but it's basically divided like this: In verses 1-3, we see the depth of our sin; in verses 4-7, we see the height of God's love.

Just as a quick reminder, it's always great to take Scriptures in context. The main theme of the book of Ephesians is that we are formed into one body of which Christ is the head. What he's going to do, he's talking in chapter one about God saving us by His grace. In chapter two, he's going to talk about how He's raised us up, united us together, made us sit with Christ in the heavenlies, and that we are the body of Christ, the Church, and Christ is the head. At the end of chapter two is some of the grandest, most glorious, clearest teaching on the body of Christ in all of the New Testament talking about God has made both one, Jew and Gentile, and formed the body of Christ of which He's the head and we're united to Him. This is preparatory for us understanding God's new humanity; that is, the Church, taking Jew and Gentile, no longer distinguished by being Jew or Gentile, and making one new man (that's the concept of one new humanity), that we're one in Christ of which Christ is the head.

Paul talks first of all, verses 1-3, about the depth of our sin so that we will appreciate the grace of God, the mercy of God, the love of God in reaching down to save a wretch like me. Follow with me in verses 1-3. Paul says, "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," that word "conversation" in my King James translation literally means your manner of living, "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 is painting a picture of man without God. What Paul does in these verses is certainly contrary to the popular opinions, views, cultural ideas of mankind, it's God's view of man. What we want to do is think biblically. Before we can actually diagnose a cure for the problem, we have to properly diagnose the malady. We're going to see man's malady, man's problem, is sin, that we are fallen and living in rebellion with God. It's so important for us to understand that.

We see in verses 1-3, as we just read, the picture of all humanity. What this is describing is all human beings before salvation—all mankind, all humanity, B.C., before Christ. Paul says four things about us in our past. In this passage tonight from verses 1-7, and I'll bring it out as we go through, he's going to describe our past, our present, and our future. Tonight I'm going to give to you that are believers your past, I'm going to describe your present, and then I'm going to talk about your future.

Write down these four things that Paul says about the depth of our sin. First of all, he says, verse 1, that we were dead in trespasses and sins. He says, “And you hath he quickened,” that phrase “hath he quickened,” in your Bible, if it's included there, is italicized (it is in mine). That means that it doesn't really belong there, it's just put there for continuity of thought. I do believe that it's best to take it out. It doesn't appear in the text until you get to verse 5 when he talks about that he's “...quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved.)” You would read it without that statement. Go back to verse 1. “And you, who were dead in trespasses and sins,” not until he gets down to verse 5 does he actually say he's quickened us.

In verse 1, it starts with, “And you.” That takes you back into Ephesians 1:20-23 where Paul the Apostle is talking, in his prayer, about what God has done in raising us up and sitting us with Christ in heavenly places. Go back to Ephesians 1 and look at it with me in verse 20. He said, “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,” there we are introduced to the concept of the church. The word “church” is the Greek word *ekklesia*. It simply means called out assembly. It's the first time that word appears in the book of Ephesians, and he'll describe the formation of the church at the end of Ephesians 2.

Verse 23, “Which is his body,” another picture for the church, “the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” Then, with no break or skip, “And you...who were dead in trespasses and sins.” Paul talks about we were dead in sins and trespasses, and He has actually caused us to be raised up, united with Christ, and seated in the heavenlies. He first talks about our sinful state as being dead in trespasses and sins.

There are several different ways that our culture views mankind or humanity. Some basically teach that all human beings are intrinsically good and that basically all we need to do is have proper education, proper instruction, proper environment, that we have a spark of divinity even

within us and we just need to fan that flame, and we will all live good lives. They think that man isn't really dead, that he just needs improvement, he needs help, he needs education, food, water, clothes, a good environment and everything will be okay. Obviously, that has not alleviated man's problem. It's interesting to look at mankind throughout history, his heart has not changed. The same lusts, the same hatred, the same sins, the same violence, the same wickedness has existed in the heart of man all the way back to when Cain slew his brother Abel. Nothing has changed. The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart. I'm all for education. I'm all for feeding people, clothing people, fixing up their environment and taking care of people, but that will not change the heart of man; that will not solve the problem of the sinful heart of man. There are others that say, "Well, men have problems. They are sick, but they just need help. They need some psychology, some understanding, counseling." They try to improve man's status with education, environment, or these other things, that man isn't good but he just needs help and can overcome his wickedness.

Thirdly, the Bible's view of man is that man is dead. Let me make it perfectly clear, as it is in the text and I'll point it out, we are dead spiritually. It's not talking about physical death, it's using death as a metaphor of the fact that we are separated from God. Notice, verse 1, it says, "who were dead in trespasses and sins," and I'll talk about that in just a moment. I want to point out that the word "dead," and you can do your own research, its etymology literally means separate or separation. When you die physically, your soul and spirit leave your body and there's a separation. When you die spiritually, it only implies a separation from God. The Bible teaches that every single human being born into this world is born spiritually dead and separated from God.

A week ago, we were in Hawaii seeing our new grandson, and what a cute little guy he is. It was so blessed to hold him, but I've raised four kids, and I now have seven grandkids. I've been a father and a grandfather, and I know well that those little children grow up with a natural bent toward evil, right? You say, "You want to talk about your grandson that way?" Well, it's biblical. When you grow up, we never have to tell our kids, "Look, when you're in a tight spot, I'm going to instruct you in this thing called lying, okay? I'm going to teach you how to lie, and I'm going to teach you how to be deceptive. I want to teach you something else, everything's yours. First, and most important, word you'll ever learn is 'mine.' Say, 'mine.' Come on, say, 'mine.'" We don't have to do that, right? It just flows naturally. "Mine." "No."

We had our other little grandson a few weeks with us. His name is Hans. I guess he's four years old, something like that. I don't know how old my grandkids are, but he's a picky eater. He loves macaroni and cheese, but wanted a very specific kind. My wife called our daughter to find out what that kind was, but she didn't really get the exact right kind. She makes up the macaroni and cheese and sets it before little Hans. He looks down at it and takes one little nibble and says, "Nana, you got the wrong kind!" Then, he continued to say, "You got to get the right kind." His mom was horrified, and we started laughing.

We just have this natural bent like, "Mine. This is what I want, and this is the way we're going to go," so we have to kind of train a child in the way that he should go so that when he's old he will

not depart from that. This is the key: At one point in time every one of them must reach a time when they must decide to trust Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and be born again. It doesn't matter if you're a pastor's kid. It doesn't matter if you're a pastor's grandkid. It doesn't matter if you're raised in church or you go to Sunday school. It doesn't matter if you've been confirmed or baptized. It doesn't matter if you've been dedicated to God. One day, you must open your heart and trust Jesus Christ as your Savior and be born again.

This section is describing all humanity, so it's really reinforcing that truth, we must be born again, which we're going to read about when we get down to verse 5, being "quickened," or regenerated. We are not just intrinsically good, we're sinners separated from God, and we are dead in our trespasses and sins.

What does Paul mean by dead? He means that we are spiritually dead and separated as a result of Adam and his sin in the Garden of Eden. We are separated from God. Be careful, this is just a little footnote for you Bible students, of what I call an over literal interpretation of the concept of dead to where the hyper-Calvinist says, "Because you are dead in sins, you literally have no ability to respond or believe in Jesus Christ." That's why they teach that regeneration comes before faith or belief, that God must regenerate you in order for you to believe, and God gives you the gift of faith to trust Him and believe. They interpret Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith," as God giving you faith as a gift to believe and to be saved. I don't believe that's what the Bible teaches. It doesn't teach that being dead in trespasses and sins... though I do believe that men are totally depraved, but it doesn't mean that you don't have the ability as the Holy Spirit convicts and draws you to either resist God and exercise of your own will or surrender in faith and believe in Christ.

If you reject Jesus Christ, you have no one to blame but yourself. If you've accepted Christ, and you're born again, you have all praise and all glory and all honor to go to God. You say, "Well, how do you reconcile that?" I don't, but I believe that's taught in the Scriptures, that we are responsible to believe and to repent and trust Christ. Dead in sin doesn't mean that you can't respond to the grace of God or believing in Jesus Christ, it means that you are basically separated from God.

There's an interesting thought about being dead in sin is that we are, verse 1, "...in trespasses and sins." The word "trespasses," in verse 1, means that we are rebels at heart. It means a willful, deliberate disobedience. I believe that given time every one of us do disobey God. The Bible says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The Bible says, "There is none righteous, no, not one." At one point in life at our time, we have disobeyed God or violated His commandments and we have become trespassers.

There's a different Greek word translated "sins," the word hamartia. It means to miss the mark. It has more the concept of failing or falling. It doesn't mean that you willfully, deliberately disobey, but in weakness you stumble or fall. It carries the idea of missing the target or missing the mark. They would do archery and shoot their arrows. They actually said that if you didn't hit the mark on the target, you were hamartia—you were a sinner, you missed the mark. That

word has carried over in our Bibles to be used for sin. All of us have transgressed, we're rebels. All of us has sinned, we're failures; we have missed the mark. Sin means that we have been condemned by God, for the Bible says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and "...the wages of sin is death."

Notice the second thing in our description in verse 2, we were disobedient. It says there, "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." First, in our pre-converted state, before we were born again, we were dead in our trespasses and sins. Secondly, we were living in disobedience. Notice we "...walked according to the course," or pattern or guides "of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." We were basically following the world.

The world is the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Apart from regeneration, we follow our fleshly appetites. We follow the lust of the eyes, the desire to possess, and then we have the pride of life. It describes mankind again apart from God—following the flesh, living for the desires of the flesh, following the passion of wanting possessions, and the proud heart of man being an abomination to God—so we are walking according to this world.

Notice here we have our past, "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world," and you were also under the influence of "...the prince of the power of the air." This is the devil. We're introduced to the world, all that's in the world—the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, the pride of life—and then we are introduced to the devil. He is called here, verse 2, "...the prince of the power of the air." There really is a devil. Satan is real. Not only do you have the world to influence you, you also have the devil to influence you as well.

Then, notice we also have, verse 3, that we were depraved. First, we were dead; second, we were disobedient; and third, we are depraved. It speaks of the flesh in verse 3. He says, "Among whom also we all had our conversation," or manner of living, "in times past," there again is our past, "in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind," stop right there. We have the world, we have the flesh, and we have the devil. Before you were converted, that's where you lived—the world, the flesh, and the devil; the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life—Satan controlling you.

I remember when I got saved, just right out of high school as a young man, I thought I was free. I thought I was doing my own thing. When I came to Christ I realized I was a puppet on strings. He was pulling the strings, and I was following the lusts of my flesh. I wasn't free. Christ sets us free. Amen? The Bible says, "...if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," and "if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." That's what sets us free. I just had this image in my mind that I'm like a marionette on strings. The devil is the one who is pulling the strings taking me over here and over there, and he's just in control. It wasn't until I came to Christ that those strings were cut—"old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"—and I became a new creation in Jesus Christ.

Notice, as I read in verse 3, the statement, "...lusts of our flesh," and "...desires of the flesh." In context there, the flesh is not talking about your physical body. It's not talking about your physical skin. It's talking about a sinful, Adamic nature. Again, I realize that these are theological concepts, Paul delineates them a lot in the book of Romans, but we were dead, separated from God. We were walking "according to the course of this world," we were under the influence of "the prince of the power of the air," and then we were following "...the lusts of the flesh," the power of our sinful Adamic nature.

A good way to think about the flesh is to realize that it's inherited from Adam at birth and that it's a capacity and a propensity. Mankind, human beings, left to themselves apart from God basically gravitates toward sinful behavior. That's man's natural propensity. Because man is made in the image and likeness of God, and the fall has not taken away that image and likeness, even unregenerated people can be philanthropists, they can be kind, good, they can show love to others. Sometimes we know unbelievers that seem to be more like Christ than believers, so it doesn't erase the image of God that is there in man but still it's fallen and tainted and influenced by that sinful nature which Paul describes as the flesh. The theological term is the Adamic nature because we inherit it from Adam. We need to understand that we are under the influence of the devil and we are depraved.

You don't need the devil to sin, you can sin just fine without the devil. When you sin, you don't necessarily have to blame the devil. Remember Flip Wilson? (All you old people, all the people that will be at the fellowship on Tuesday) "The devil made me do it!" Remember that? Blaming the devil for this and for that? You know, you don't need the devil to sin. Sometimes I think the devil is saying, "It wasn't me. It wasn't me." You can sin just fine without the devil. How true that is. I heard the story of a little girl named Sally who kicked her brother and pulled his hair. Her mother asked, "Why did the devil make you kick your brother and pull his hair?" She said, "The devil made me kick him, but it was my idea to pull his hair." You can't blame the devil for all that you do because we have a sinful nature.

First, we're dead; second, we're living in disobedience, and again this describes everyone; third, we were depraved, walking according to the lusts of the flesh and the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and here's the fourth, at the end of verse 3, we are doomed. "...and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." If you stopped at verse 3 and said, "God bless you, have a great week. Hope you enjoyed your time here tonight." That'd be kind of depressing to leave at the end of verse 3, right? Is there no hope? Is there no hope for us apart from Christ? Has God not rescued us by His grace and His mercy? The answer is yes, we'll get there in verses 4-7, but we were doomed and notice, "...were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," in other words we are under the judgment of God. Here's a direct reference in the Bible to the wrath of God. Again, it's not a popular subject. It's not something people like to think about, preach about, or talk about, but it is in the Bible. I'm talking about you and me, before salvation.

If there is anyone here tonight that's not a Christian, you're still living in verses 1-3. You are still dead, you are still living in disobedience, you're still depraved, and you are doomed. You are going to face the wrath of God. You are headed for the judgment of God. In John 3:36, it says,

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” God’s wrath is His holy displeasure against sin.

You might say at this point, “John, this is a really pessimistic view of man.” What I’ve preached so far tonight, I can actually already feel it even in this room. Some people are saying, “This is so negative. This is so pessimistic. This is so depressing.” By the way, I’ve never heard Joel Osteen do an exposition of Ephesians 2:1-3. He just avoids this passage. Read it in different translations. Read it in modern versions. I don’t care what version or translation you want to read it, this is God’s description of all mankind. Because of the fall, we fell all—all humanity—so the impetus and the need for evangelism and for people to be born again.

Every day we get disappointed with our politicians and with our elective process, and with the leaders of our country. How is it we think that we’re going to be saved by the politicians? Our hope is not in man, is it? Our hope is not in government, especially not our Californian government. Our hope is in God. You can educate them. You can try to bring social justice, equity, and fairness. I’m all for those things. I’m all for just laws, righteous laws, and all those things, but none of that will change the heart of man. You can legislate all the laws that you want, and it will not change the sinful heart of man. Nothing that man can do can remedy the malady of being dead in trespasses and sin. Man’s greatest need is for the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the greatest need of the church is to preach the gospel and to evangelize and tell others about Jesus Christ because that’s what changes men’s hearts and lives.

Paul says nothing here about the image of God, even fallen man still retains. Paul says nothing about the different degrees of man’s sin. There are degrees of sin, but the death that we’re in is our standing in Adam. There’s no degrees. You know, it’s interesting that there are no degrees of death, you’re either dead or alive. You’re not kind of dead. You’re not sort of dead. You’re either dead or you’re alive. The same thing is true in the spiritual realm—you’re either a Christian or you’re not; you’re either a saint or you ain’t; you’re either born again or you’re not born again; you’re either a child of God or you’re not a child of God. There is degrees of decay. We’re all sinners. We’re all dead, but some are further along in their sin and more decayed.

It’s interesting that Jesus raised three people from the dead in the gospel accounts: Jairus’ daughter, the widow’s son of Nain, and Lazarus. All three of those are actual miracles of dead people that Jesus brought back to life, not in a new glorified body but in their old bodies and they would have to die again. Each one of them had been dead a different length of time, and they illustrate that we are dead in sins but some have fallen deeper into decay. Let me explain it. When Jesus raised Jairus’ daughter, she had literally only been dead for a few minutes. She had just died, He was on His way. He arrived with Peter, James and John into the room. He takes this little 12-year-old girl and utters, “Talitha cumi,” little lamb, very endearing terms, and reaches out His hand. The 12-year-old girl sits up in her bed. Can you imagine how joy-filled her parents were?

This story has always touched my heart because I have three daughters, and I know how precious they are to me as a dad. I think that this guy lost his 12-year-old daughter, and Jesus

shows up and raises her back from the dead. She had only been dead for a few moments.

The second raising was the widow's son of Nain. He had been dead for a couple of hours because in the middle east at that time when someone died they buried them within a few hours. They actually had the funeral and buried them immediately because they didn't have any way to preserve the body. They would decompose quickly, so they would go rapidly to their burial. Jesus stopped the funeral procession and actually raised the boy from the dead. He had been dead for a few hours.

The third is that of Lazarus. When Lazarus died, Jesus was down by the Jordan River. He got word, and tarried for another day. It took a day to get there, He tarried another day, a day to get back, and when He gets to the graveside at Bethany, how long had Lazarus been dead? Three days. When Jesus said, "Roll away the stone," his sister Martha said, "Lord, by this time he stinketh," that's the King James. The King James says, "...he stinketh," and Jesus said, "Didn't I tell you that if you believe, you'll see the glory of God?" They rolled away the stone and Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth," and Lazarus came out of the grave. He had been dead for three days.

There are those that are dead in sins, but maybe they don't quite stinketh yet. There are those who sin just a little bit more than the other person, but they're still dead; and then there's those that are dead to the point where they stinketh, they're really corrupt. But Jesus has the ability and the power to raise us from the dead, not only physically but spiritually. All three of them were pictured of Christ raising the dead in regeneration and salvation.

Now we move, verses 4-7, to the good part, the height of God's love. We see the depth of our sin, and now we see the height of God's love. This is an intended contrast. It takes man all the way down to the pit, doomed, and now Christ comes and lifts us all the way up into the heavenlies, verse 4. "But God," many Bible scholars believe that this is the greatest "But God," in all the Bible. No matter how dark the background, nor how deep the sin, there's always God; and He is rich in mercy, and He has great love wherewith He loved us. Verses 4-6 are your present; verses 1-3 are your past. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins," here it is, "hath quickened us," an old English concept for gave us new life or made us alive. We were dead, He gave us life, "...together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" which is going to be the theme he picks up. We'll get it next Wednesday in verses 8-10.

What has He done, verse 6? "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come," that, by the way, is now your future, "he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." You have this very dark picture of man dead, depraved, doomed, disobedient, living in rebellion against God; and then you have this beautiful, marvelous picture of God's mercy, love, kindness, and grace in saving us. The "But God," is an intended contrast. Now comes our redemption and our hope.

This is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—the God and Father of

our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the God of the Bible. There's only one true and living God, and He's manifested in three Persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. There's only one God, and that's the God of the Bible, the God of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus is God, and the Holy Spirit Himself is God. Man's only hope is God.

What we were by nature, verses 1-3, and verse 4-7 what we are by grace, God has taken the action to rescue us. I know it sounds simple and it seems simple, and it might seem simplistic, but I love the concept of God rescuing us, God coming to save us. I don't know about you, but I don't know where I'd be right now if it wasn't for God, if it wasn't for Christ reaching down and saving me by His grace.

Christians are often criticized for being morbidly preoccupied with their sin and guilt, but it's only we who face the facts about ourselves that we can fully appreciate, that's the point, the mercy, love, the grace, the kindness of God toward us through Christ.

Here's one of the problems in the modern church: If you don't see how sinful man is, you don't see what a great Savior He is. John Newton, the man who wrote the song, "Amazing Grace," when he was older and up in years, he would basically just constantly repeat, "All I know is, I'm a great sinner, He's a great Savior." What a great perspective that is, "I'm a great sinner, He's a great Savior." Here's the issue. Many times, if you've walked with God for many years, you sometimes have a tendency to forget how sinful and lost and in darkness you were.

I remember when I first got saved how fresh it was! I had just been pulled out of a life of sin, and the chains had been broken, the weight had been lifted, and it was so exciting, so fresh. After many years of walking with Christ, sometimes there's the tendency to forget what a pit I was in and how He reached down and saved me, brought me up, and put me on a rock. He put a new heart in me, and put a song in my heart! When I was running from Him, He was running after me. When I was in rebellion toward Him, He was reaching out in love toward me. The initiative is God's. There's no one that seeks after God. God must first draw us and woo us by His Spirit and convict us of our sin and our need for Him. The Holy Spirit is called the hound dog of Heaven. It's not in the Bible, that's just an old expression we have. He chases us and pursues us. I remember just before my conversion I was just miserable, totally miserable because the Spirit of God was convicting me. A person living under conviction is the most miserable human being on planet earth, and you won't be happy until you give your heart to Jesus Christ. Stop running. Stop fighting, and just yield to Him. Let Him save you by His grace. I love that, "But God," and we need to remember where we came from so we'll appreciate what God has done.

Paul tells us what God has done and why He has done it. Now, again, I don't want to tarry on these points. I probably belabored it too long already, and I'm just going too slow. I want you to write them down. There are four things that God has done in saving us. First of all, He loved us, verse 4, His great love. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us." If you mark your Bible, you want to underline, "But God;" you want to underline, "rich in mercy;" you want to underline, "great love;" and at the end of verse 4, "loved us." Even though

we were sinners, even though we were dead, disobedient, doomed, and living in rebellion toward God, God actually loved us. The love of God, how great and how marvelous! The God that we offended actually loved us even in our sins, that's because, verse 4, "...rich in mercy," and "he loved us."

Secondly, notice in verse 5, He gave us life. "Even when we were dead in sins," here it is, "hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)." In verse 4, loved us; verse 5, quickened us. This phrase "quickened," I'm reading from the King James translation, basically means given new life. It is the theological concept—listen carefully—of being born again or regenerated. He gave us new life. We were dead, and He quickened us, He gave us life. What happens when you get saved is basically the title of my message, we went "From Death To Life." We were walking dead people. We were spiritual zombies walking in sins and trespasses, and God regenerated us by the Holy Spirit and gave us new life. The moment we were saved we become the children of God—we're indwelt by the Spirit, we are sealed by the Spirit, and God made us His own by adoption. He gave us new life.

Notice it speaks of it "...together with Christ," and then refers to his soon topic, "(by grace ye are saved;)" or literally by grace you have been saved. In the Greek that statement is a perfect participle which means you have been saved, you are saved, and you will always be saved. That statement actually affirms the security of the believer.

Here's the third thing that God did for us, verse 6, "And hath raised us up." He loved us, verse 4; He quickened us, regenerated us, verse 5; and then verse 6, "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," notice twice he repeats the word "together." The minute you were regenerated, you were taken out of Adam and placed in Christ; and together with Christ you identified with Him, and you were raised up together. Verse 5, "us together with Christ," and verse 6, in His death and His resurrection, in His ascension and His exaltation. This is your identification with Christ. Together is the key concept, "...and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Where are you as a believer right now? You're seated with Christ in Heaven.

Here's the fourth, and last, it's in verse 7 and launches us into the future, He will show us. First, He loved us; second, He gave us life; thirdly, He raised us up; and fourth, verse 7, He will show us, "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." In verses 1-3, you have your past; verses 4-6, you have your present; and if you're a Christian, verse 7, you have your future. In your future, all throughout eternity, God is going to be unveiling and revealing and showing you the riches of His grace and His kindness and His mercy in Christ. The veil will be torn away. We will see clearly all things. We will see Him as He is, we'll be like Him, and we'll understand His marvelous grace and His marvelous mercy.

This future display will demonstrate the exceeding riches of His grace. I love that concept of "exceeding riches," and "...his kindness toward us," all coming "through Christ Jesus." All the blessings that are ours in God come in, by, and through Jesus Christ. Apart from Christ, none

of these are true. When God the Father raised Christ and exalted Him, we see His power; but when God raised us with Christ, we see His (look at it with me, verse 4), "...mercy...great love," verse 7, "...his grace...his kindness toward us."

I'm always touched by that thought: God's grace, God's mercy...God's grace is God giving us what we don't deserve; God's mercy is God not giving us what we do deserve, but the idea of God's kindness. Do you know that God has actually been kind to you? Not only merciful and gracious but kind in how He reached out to you in your rebellious state. God has brought us from death to life, from bondage to freedom, from the tomb to the throne. No wonder in Ephesians 1:3, Paul said, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow." All the blessings of heaven are ours in Jesus Christ.

Without skipping a beat, we'll get into it next week, we're only going to look at three verses, "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. 10 We are his workmanship," His poiema, His work of art. God took this sinful, sinful rebellious lump of clay and showed mercy and kindness and grace. He raised us up and saved us by His grace and works in our lives to make us His trophy of grace, His poiema. Amen?