

# Ephesians 2:1-10

## *The Gospel To Us, The Gospel Through Us!*

Image Church // Compassion Weekend 2023

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### Intro

Well, good morning Image Family I hope you're doing well! Hey, this weekend is a very special weekend in the life of our church! It's **Compassion Sunday!**

*How many of you have been part of a compassion Sunday before??*

- *Awesome!*
- *Some of you have no clue what I'm talking about, and that's ok, I'm glad you're here- you're about to be part of something special!*

Listen, one of the things that we care about here at Image Church is *sending God's people to all people!*

And this morning I want to do is **expose** you to a tangible expression of one of the ways that we want to do that here at Image Church through a strategic partnership with an organization called **Compassion International!**

**Compassion International is a 60-year-old organization that's committed to *releasing children from poverty in Jesus' name!*** And the thing I love about them is that they do it all through the local church... More to come on all that in a little bit!

But the thing that excites me so much about what we're going to be talking about today through our partnership with **Compassion International** is how it brings together so much of God's call on His church...

Y'all listen, we serve a global God with a global mission that He's called His church to engage in... What we see over and over again in Scripture is that Jesus didn't come for **a people, He came for all people!**

And the beauty of the church *is that it was established by Jesus to be a continuation of His ministry...*

It's why the church is called the **Body of Christ...** Because it's designed to put Jesus on display for the world!

We say this all the time here, but you saved from something to something the church!

- And as the church, we're called to embody the mission of Jesus **not just** locally but **also** globally!

***This morning we want to lay, what I believe, is the foundation for us being a church that really cares about the nations...***

- It's easy to sit back and say *somebody else will do it...*
- To think that international missions is for certain people like the **Cobbs** who have a call to go...
- International missions isn't just for a select few, it's the call for all who follow Jesus...
- So the question is not ***if you're going to live this out, the question is how are you going to live this out!***

This morning I want to give you some handles to hold onto that keep you tethered to God's call on your life...

***So, if you have your Bible go ahead and turn to Ephesians 2...***

What we're going to do is start at the root, our hearts, and then move to the fruit, ur actions that should come from it...

- *I want you to see work of the gospel to you, and I want to challenge you to let it flow through you...*

## Ephesians 2:1-10

**1** And you were dead in your trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world,

You were **dead in your sin**...

- Not knocked out, not asleep, not passed out dead... No spiritual life...
- *BTW: this is why it's biblically impossible to say that you've always been a Christian...*
  - Might have known about God, but you were not surrendered to Him...
  - Might have believed **that** Jesus died on the cross for your sin... But were not believing **in** Jesus as the Savior and Lord of your life...

...according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient.

So not only were you **dead in your sin**, but **you were living according to the ways of Satan who was at work in you**...

- You're in-line with His rebellion, and under the influence of Him... That could be doing this *directly* or *indirectly* through his power and dominion...

Wrap your mind around that... Satan is the one at work in those who are apart from Christ...

- For those not in Christ, the enemy has you...
- This is a bad place to be, he doesn't want your good, he wants your destruction...

**BTW:** let me say this, the enemy is still working... **Eph 6.** our wrestle is not against flesh and blood...

**We just dropped a PODCAST on Friday** about demons and the unseen war around us on our Living beyond Podcast that we have called *How should we deal with the unseen world in the 21st century?*

Here's the thing, I think if we really got this, and understood this was a real war it would change our prayer life, our commitment to the church and our commitment to the mission Jesus has given His church...

Here's **WHY** in **Matt. 16:18**, Jesus says that the *gates of Hell can not prevail against the church*...

- What I want you to understand is that the church is on the **offensive, not the defensive**...

This is why what we're talking about this morning is so important. The mission of Jesus for His church is to be on the offensive, to be proactively pressing back the darkness in Jesus name... That's what we're going to be doing with **Compassion International**...

Alright, so not only were we dead in your sin, but we were living according to the ways of the devil and he was at work in us...

**Verse 3,** <sup>3</sup> We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also.

*This is Paul's reminder that no one was exempt from he's been walking through...*

We **all** lived out our fleshly desires... We did what we wanted to do when we wanted to do them, how we wanted to do them with no regard for God...

And the result is that we are, notice the language: **children under wrath**...

- Not children of God... Children under wrath...
- **IOW:** God's wrath is aimed at us...
  - *His wrath comes as a result of our rebellion*... This is the **Justice of God**...

**Justice** flows out of the character of God... Because he is perfect, He must execute **perfect justice**... If He didn't, then He wouldn't be perfect...

- Justice must be served, this is what the wrath of God is aimed at us...

So everything that Paul's laid out here is our default reality...

- We tend to think we're not that bad...
- This shows us that we are...
- Not only that but you're under the influence of Satan...

If we don't get this, if we don't see this as the la of the land, then we won't see the incredible beauty of what comes next...

**Praise God for verse 4!** *If there is one time that's appropriate to say I like big butts, it's here!*

<sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, mercy is not getting what you deserve, the wrath of God... And then look at why God did this... because of his great love that he had for us, ... This is remarkable to me... God would choose to love us when we didn't love Him... <sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You were dead, you have been made alive... *HOW?* Watch this:

**You are saved by grace!**

*Grace* is getting what you don't deserve... *What we see here is the beauty of the combination between the **mercy** and **grace** of God...*

- Jesus took on the wrath of God for us... And gives us what we don't deserve...

Watch this! **Verse 6:**

<sup>6</sup> He also raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might display the immeasurable riches of his grace through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Jesus gives us access to God, we are seated with Him in the presence of God...

And God does it out of His kindness, and so that His kindness would be put on display!

<sup>8</sup> For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—<sup>9</sup> not from works, so that no one can boast.

Jesus came and lived in our place, died in our place, and rose from the dead, and ascended to the right hand of the Father so that we could sit with Him...

And the way that we're able to experience the salvation Jesus provided is through **faith**, not works... If it were works then you could boast in yourself...

Because we can't work this out on our own, we can only boast in Jesus... We can only surrender to Him, We can only worship Him!

And here's the thing, **this changes everything for us**...

- I want you to see the implications this has on those that were dead and have been made alive...

**Verse 10:**

<sup>10</sup> For [Purpose] we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.

So watch this, you are not saved by works, but you are saved for works that God has prepared ahead of time for us to do...

**Where do we look to find those prepared works?? What are they?**

- These good works have been shown and shaped for us through the life and ministry of Jesus...
- **IOW:** The good works God's created us for were prepared ahead of time for us by Jesus!
- We walk in this by looking to Jesus to shape how we live!

Now, jump down to **verse 18** I want to show you one other thing as Paul brings all this together... **He says:**

...<sup>18</sup> For through him [Jesus] we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

Remember earlier, at the beginning of **chapter 2**, we say that we were not children of God... *What we see here is that through Christ, not only do we have access to God, but we become part of God's family! We become children of God!*

**Here's what I want you to see...**

- Before Jesus, we were spiritually poor to the greatest degree...
- We were spiritual orphans...

But through Christ, we get to experience the **immeasurable riches of His grace (verse 7)**... And we who were once orphans **have become children of God**...

This is the incredible nature of the gospel...

- Some of you need to embrace it today for the first time...

**But here's where all this comes together:**

**The way that you live out the good works that God has prepared ahead of time is by following Jesus and being to others what He has been to you!**

- We want what Jesus has done for us, to flow through us...
  - ***The gospel to you, the gospel through you!***

This is the dynamic shift that happens when you become a Christian... ***You become about the things of Jesus, and you become the things of Jesus to the world!***

**IOW:** the reason why we want to *rescue children out of poverty* is because Jesus has rescued us...

- Someone you didn't know (Jesus) stepped in and provided a way out for you when you didn't have one!

And if that's not clear enough... *Not only did Jesus **model** this for us in His life, but He also **taught it in His message!***

*I need you to track with me here...*

In **Luke 10**, Jesus holds up **the parable of the good Samaritan** as a model for *who our neighbor is and what it looks like to love our neighbor*...

I want to show you His model for what it looks like that He gives in His parable... **Verse 33** <sup>33</sup> **But a Samaritan on his journey came up to him, [This is a man that had been robbed, stripped down, and beaten] and when he saw the man, he had compassion. <sup>34</sup> He went over to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on olive oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him. When I come back I'll reimburse you for whatever extra you spend.'**

What Jesus shows us here is that, literally, everyone is our neighbor, this Samaritan didn't know this guy on the side of the road...

And then Jesus also shows us what it looks like to be **neighborly** here, that it is intentional loving care of those in need...

Jesus would take this even further in **Matthew 25**, where He tells **the parable of the sheep and the goats**...

- This parable is a "word picture" of the final Judgement where Jesus will separate those who **have** truly trusted in Him and those who **haven't**...
- And that those who **have** trusted in Jesus, respond by loving *the least of these*, It's evidence of heart position because what breaks Jesus' heart also should break the heart of those that follow Him...

And you can look at what we talked about toward the beginning of our time in Luke this year, in **Luke 18:16**, where Jesus says:

**16 ... Let the little children come to me, and don't stop them, because the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.**

Jesus models tenderness, compassion, and kindness towards the most vulnerable... He welcomes them to himself...

We see the heart of Jesus here for children and His desire for nothing to hinder them from coming to Him!

We want to be about getting children to Jesus, esp those with little access!

\*I could go on and on... I shouldn't have to convince you of the call, It's clear... I just want to want to just give you handles to live it out!

This is the beauty of what **Compassion International** does! It's not just about helping kids in need but pointing them to their greatest need which is Jesus!

- I told you they bring together so much of what we believe in here as a church when it comes to God's call...

#### ***Talk about Compassion International and what they do...***

- Partner with the local church... They are the middle-man, the liaison... Connecting kids to churches!
- They are about Holistic child development...
  - spiritual, physical, social, vocational...
- Partner with churches to establish CDC's for the sake of the flourishing of the next generation in places of extreme poverty...
- But the thing that I love is that they personalize it... Rather than just giving money to some org. You get the chance to specifically sponsor a child...

#### ***Here's the opportunity that sponsoring a child creates...***

- A relationship with a person...
- An investment in their flourishing...
  - People are not projects, not about feeling good, about ourselves, it's about the flourishing of image bears...
- An opportunity to engage with them through written letters where you can share about you, but more importantly, where you can share the gospel with them...
- And you can also go and spend time with the child that you sponsor...

And watch this, the kids that we are sponsoring are all in Honduras, where we already have our mission partners at blossom creek...

- You get to go invest in our mission partner and also get to visit your child!

#### ***What this can cultivate for your kids and your home and our church...***

- In your home, it's a foundation for missions, it's a relationship with a person that you get the chance to pray for and share the gospel with and even send gifts to...
- Missions no longer is an abstract idea for your kids... It's a real reality!
- It's a goal that you can set to go visit them...
  - First trip as a family!

For our church, it allows us all to be engaged with international missions...

- Not the finish line, but it's an incredible starting line...
- Cultivates a culture, jeeps it in front of you, reminds you to be praying for the gospel to advance in Honduras... Praying like Jesus said to send out laborers....

Here's the thing when it comes to international missions, you're either a **goer, or a giver... And we're all called to be prayers!**

**Ok, so last thing, what does it look like to sponsor a child?**

- \$38 a month... About \$1 a day...
- A CFA Diner for my family...
- For some of you, this is like 5 Starbucks drinks a month...
- It's nothing compared to the impact it will have **on you** and on them...

**VAMP THE CALL:**

So here's what we have, all around the back of the room are tables...

- You get the opportunity to see and pick out the child you want to sponsor...
- **HERE IS THE CHILD WE ARE SPONSORING...**
  - Picked out by my daughter...
- Maybe you want to do the same thing...
  - When we move in just a bit our teams are prepared for you to
- Here's what I want to ask you do...

As an act of worship, I want to ask everyone in just a minute to go to these tables and experience these children...

I want to ask that every home sponsors a child, for some of you, you need to sponsor 2 or 3...

- We have 90 packets back there- My goal is that we take care of over half of them together!!

But here's the thing in just a second, when we go back there...

Regardless of where you re on this, my ask is that you go back there, and I want you to look at these kids who are real people in real need, and I want you to either sponsor... Or, if for some reason you cannot, I want you to pray...

- Pray that God will bring someone else who can and will!
- It's important that we do this together!
- Maybe you start praying, and God lays it on your heart to sponsor- do it!

Once you have identified the Child or Children you want to sponsor, take the packet and bring it back to your seat here, and I will lead you through the sponsorship part....

We have time, so don't rush this...

**Ok, stand with me...** I'll pray, and then you go back to the tables, and then in a little while, meet me back here...

- Parents, if you want to go get your kids, our teams are ready for you, and then you can bring them in here to walk with you...

## Pray

## Band sings to bring us back together

Instructions on the packet... **Use my packet...**

There is a perforated part at the bottom once you open it...

- What we need for you to do is fill out that bottom part...
- So I want to give you a few minutes to do that in just a second...
- But we need this bottom part, if you take the packet and we don't get it the kid doesn't get sponsored...

There are only a few things on there and you can ee scan the QR code to do it from your packet all digital...

So take the next few min to do that...

## Close

Ok, here's the last part as you leave, all you have to do is drop the perforated part you're finished out in the offering boxes by the doors!

If you were not sure this week, we will have them here again next week for you as well... They will be on tables when you come in!

I am so excited about this and how God's going to use it!

We want to be about the nations here and today was a huge step for us as a church family!

I want to send you out with this...

***Would the same gospel that came to you be the thing that flows through you!!***

## Questions for Discussion

1. Why do you think Paul says that you were dead before Christ saved you?
2. How does a reflection on salvation lead to action towards others?
3. What does it mean to be a child of God?
4. How does the gospel to us activate through us?
5. Have you considered that our mission as Christians is not just local but it's also international?
  - a. What can your role be in that?
  - b. Have you ever been on a short-term trip? If not why?
  - c. If so what was the impact?
6. Are you sponsoring or considering sponsoring a child through compassion international?
7. How can we be more intentional as community groups to pursue missions?