



## Joy: A Study of Ephesians

### JOY of Life with Christ

Ephesians 2:1-10

*Summary:* Every individual is dead because of sin. God's wrath against sin will condemn a liar, a murderer and the unbeliever alike. We can have joy in all things at all times because God's love, mercy and grace provide the only way to be saved from the punishment for sin which is death through the power at work in Christ Jesus to those who believe. The believers in Ephesus and Christians today need to be reminded of these truths for the strengthening of their faith, the motivation to share the good news of Jesus and the recognition of the joy available to all who believe.

*Scripture Overview:* In this week's passage, Paul first delivers a clear and thorough description of those who, though living, are dead in their sins. He paints a picture so as to remind Christians of their past and sinners of their current condition. Paul's purpose, at least in part, is to highlight and contrast the power of God unto salvation and the terrible grip of sin. Paul portrays God's great love for sinners with his rich mercy to give them life. Individuals deserving death because of their sin will live because of His grace delivered through Christ and His resurrection to those who believe!

#### Ephesians 2:1-10 NLT

1 Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. 2 You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. 3 All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else.

### **I. All of us were once dead because of our sin and disobedience and subject to God's wrath and punishment!**

How many sins make you a sinner?

### **Ephesians 2:4-7 NLT**

4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, 5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) 6 For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. 7 So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.

## **II. Because of God's abundant mercy and love for us, even though we were dead because of your sins, He saved us by His grace and gave us life.**

Connect to Life in Jesus

Being united with Christ means that we are raised from the dead and seated with him in the heavenly realms.

### **Ephesians 2:8-10**

8 God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. 10 For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

## **III. God's salvation to us is a gift from Him.**

Have you received the gift of salvation?

Do you have the joy that comes with the gift?

Are you doing the good things He planned for you long ago?

### **Questions from Ephesians 2:1-10**

1. What were the Ephesians like before they met Christ?
2. What symptoms of being "dead in transgressions and sins" do you see in those you know who do not believe Jesus is the Son of God?
3. Before Jesus Christ set us free, we were subject to oppressive influences from both within and without. To what forces are non-Christians enslaved (vv.2-3)?
4. How have you seen these forces at work?
5. What does it mean to be objects of God's wrath?
6. In contrast to the desperate fallen condition of human beings, what things has God done for us?
7. What does it mean to be "made alive with Christ" (v. 5)?
8. What are the implications of being "raised up with Christ," of being seated with him "in the heavenly realms"?

9. Why does Paul work so hard to make it crystal clear that this salvation is by grace, not our works or human effort?
10. How does Paul move “salvation” from somewhat impersonal in verses 8 and 9 to being intimately personal in verse 10?

### **Life Application Sermon Guide**

1. Based on what you have seen in this scripture passage, how would you explain salvation to someone who did not know or did not believe? Family? Friend? Neighbor? Stranger?
2. What, if anything, hinders you from doing the “good things” God planned for you to do? (V. 10)
3. Spend a few moments reflecting on your spiritual journey and how far you’ve come. Take a moment to give praise to God for His continuing work of grace in your life.