



Ephesians Week 3 - Ephesians 2:1-10

Sept. 24, 2023 - Pastor Jason Carter

Review:

Ephesians 1:19-22 Focus on v. 22 **"And God placed all things under his feet..."**

We have to personalize this. Every lie, every bondage, every trauma, every ounce of pride, and every loss is under the Lordship and power of Jesus; therefore, we must turn to Him and trust Him in all things. We can ask Him to meet us in everything.

- What do you need to ask Him to meet you in? What area of your life do you need to remember that you have the power of God active in you to meet?

Ephesians 2:1-10

Paul is addressing 2 things: **The supremacy of Christ and our position in Christ**

Paul is doing a Jesus flex. Jesus represents:

- The most gracious thing that has ever been done, the most powerful, the most selfless, the most sacrificial, the most complete thing that has ever been done
- It is done
- Jesus died for our sin, entrusted Himself to the Father, and was raised to life again
- **Our faith in Him positions us to receive all he has done**

Ephesians 2:1 NIV **"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,"**

No one needs to tell most of us how we have blown it or sinned. We remember.

"You were dead"—when we are spiritually dead, we are

- Separated from God due to Sin, sick/sinners ([Mark 2:17](#)), lost ([Luke 15](#)), lovers of darkness ([John 3:19-20](#)), blind ([2 Corinthians 4:3-4](#)), slaves to sin ([Romans 6:17](#)), under the power of darkness ([Colossians 1:13](#))

Ephesians 2:2a **"...in which you used to live"**

Paul is reminding them how they used to live.

This was the state of our being and doing. It involves our thinking, desires, reactions, and pursuits.

Next, Paul shows there are two major influences to our disobedience:

Ephesians 2:2b "when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient."

(We will cover this more in Ephesians 6)

1. **Demonic:** We are all influenced by the spiritual realm but everything is not a demon or demonic

If you are not a Christian, you do not have the Holy Spirit convicting, prompting, reminding, or warning you.

Ephesians 2:3 "All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh^[a] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath."

2. **Our own desires:** We are fallen and live in a fallen world with fallen people and systems. Every country, every era, every race, every nationality.

Ephesians 4: 17-19 NIV "So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. ¹⁹ Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed."

- Remember Mark 4 and our 'soils of the heart' discussion? How does that fit here, in regards to their hardened hearts?

We have to recognize we can still have desires that do not align with God's will and God's ways. We will always have a battle on our hands in this life.

Many of us have lived in this for a long time. We came from this behavior; we grew up in it. It became normal, our habit. Paul is saying this is no longer who we are. Read Colossians 3:10.

However, we do not have to be ruled by the demonic or by our own selves or influences around us. Even though we may work in live in environments that lack God's values.

This is why we must daily pursue being with God. This is why we pray, read the Bible, spend time with God, and must be in Godly community.

The more we get to know God and His word, the more we know these practices are wrong (sin). It takes time to renew our minds and change our desires.

- How has your mind been renewed? How have you seen a desire changed in you because of Jesus?

Eph 2:4-5 NIV "But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved."

God does not have an ego that life is all about Him. He just wants us to know how good He is towards us and live in the fullness of His love and grace.

What is grace? Unmerited or unearned favor

A definition of the word *favor* is "demonstrated delight." The favor of God can be described as "tangible evidence that a person has the approval of the Lord."

- Do you believe that you are His delight? Even in your imperfect condition?
- Do people see tangible evidence in you that you have the approval of the Lord? Why or why not?

God in His grace desires for us to experience who He is and what He has. He delights in our discovery of Him.

- Grace has nothing to do with how loveable we are, but with how incredibly loving God is.
- God saw us coming alive in Christ while we were still lost in our sin (spiritually dead) and it brought Him such joy!
- **You have been saved by grace.**
- Here the Greek word used means that the object had nothing to do with the saving. It was accomplished from the foundations of the world

Grace has nothing to do with how loveable we are, but with how *incredibly loving* God is.

- Have you experienced someone having a discovery in anything in life (not just spiritually)?
- Share a recent discovery you have had of God. How did this discovery happen?

There are **2 types** of people in church every Sunday: those who do not believe things can be changed, and those who don't want to change.

Grace reaches both of these worlds.

2 components of Grace:

1. Grace as a Pardon- We have been forgiven

Romans 3:24 NIV ²⁴ "and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." (justified: governor's pardon)

Our faith in Jesus allows Jesus to cover us in His rightness (righteousness).

2. Grace as Power

2 Cor 9:8 NKJV ⁸ "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may have an abundance for every good work."

2 Cor 12:9 NIV ⁹ "But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."

God's power that comes in our need.

Grace is enough for us to handle what we are going through.

Sometimes we want out of the situation but God wants to give us something to go through it and grow from it.

1 Corinthians 15:10 NIV "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder [that was the effect of grace] than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me."

There are 131 uses of *grace* in the ESV – 124 in the New Testament, 86 of which are from the apostle Paul, which means 2/3 of all the uses of the word *grace* in the Bible are by one author: Paul. Paul wants the church to get this truth!

Grace is the Power to save. Power to walk it out. Power to be free.

This does not mean you can just go sin and claim grace. Sin will cost you.

As a Christian, you will be miserable if you sin consistently.

- In what area of your life do you need God's grace? Do you need it as pardon OR power?

God loves you in spite of what you do at times. When you know this, you can be honest and can rest in His grace and be confident and empowered to overcome through His grace.

Paul reminds them that they have received position in Christ:

Eph 2:6,7 NIV ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Remind yourself of what you have in His grace and the position you now hold. Remember where your true home is. Our identity, our hope, our love is from above. We have access to something more powerful. It is not based on our performance but on the finished and perfect work of Jesus.

- What do the incomparable riches of his grace look like in your life? What does this mean to you?
- What comes to mind when you think of the kindness of God in your life?

Ephesians 2:8-10 NIV ⁸“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Some people mess up and say, “I made a mistake and its part of my story.” While another may say, “I messed up and it will destroy my life. I might as well quit.” Paul is wanting us to see how Jesus redefines our life and our story in the context of the grace He supplied, the grace His sacrifice purchased.

V. 8b “it is the gift of God.”

- What is the gift of God? What are you doing with this gift?
- What thoughts do you have about the gift? How do you treat it?
- Do you believe He really gave it to you?
- How are you thanking God about the gift?

V. 9- “not by works so no one can boast.”

- What would we be tempted to boast about?
- Why can we not boast about this gift?

V. 10- “handiwork (Greek: ‘poiema’ [poem]), created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

We are God’s living poem to our world, His written expression to the world around us. We each have good works to do because of God’s grace so that we can each do them the unique way He made us to.

Paul wants us to see what Jesus did, how He met us at our worst, to make us treasures and a display of His grace.

- Where we put our focus will determine what type of poem we will become. What does this mean?

How you think about you must match how God thinks about you in order to live out the good works He has for us. He already decided them before you were even born. He needs us to accept His grace and do them.

Our lives tell a story that either reflect this world or reveals another. There is something different about you. Don't undercut God by talking and focusing on the wrong things and being negative.

- What will you do for God with what you have been given, with what you have?
- What will your life say? How are you using your testimony?
- What have you discovered about God that you consistently share?
- How do you serve and invest in others as a Christ-follower?
- What does your faith compel you to do on behalf of another?

He is glorified in your trust, in your getting back up again to repent. He is glorified through you when you share what you know of Him and when you use whatever you have in service to Him and others.

Up/In/Out. Pray through: **Ephesians 2:8-10 NIV** ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Additional Questions:

- For those who have been saved a long time, will you re-engage God in fervency for the promises of God?
- For those who, for whatever reason, secretly believe God's grace can't touch or reach the area of your need, will you ask God to show you how His grace can meet you?
- For the person who refuses to allow God's grace to change you in order for you to obey or overcome. What will you do with God's grace that awaits you?
- For the person who has spent their entire Christian life on the sideline for whatever reason...what will you do to walk with intentionality this life with God's grace?
- How long will you allow the excuse to tell you what you can't do?
- How long will you allow yesterday to determine your tomorrow? And what does grace have to say about it?
- What will we do with this grace?