



The following is the summary of the Sunday sermon that is sent to the body at Steadfast in an email called "The Weekly"

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

God's Transforming Grace: From Death to Life

### God's Transforming Grace: From Death to Life, 2:1-10

Consider these descriptive phrases: Cultural chaos; Toxic politics; Social dysfunction; Dehumanizing practices; Domestic abuse; Genocidal policies of foreign governments; Divisiveness in the church over non-doctrinal issues; Biblical Christians dividing over political issues and personalities; etc. Although these phrases do characterize the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, they summarize much of human history. They reflect the consequences of something deeper, something more dark; they reflect the depths of the human condition—sin and rebellion against God. Government cannot solve this problem. Income redistribution cannot solve this problem. Totalitarian dictators cannot solve this problem. Entertainment and social media cannot solve this problem. Only God can solve the problem of the human condition. This solution is what Paul addresses in Ephesians 2:1-10.

Paul contrasts the two dimensions of lost humanity—those who are spiritually "dead" and those who have chosen "life."

**Humanity's condition: Dead to God 2: 1-3.** The spiritually dead person lives according to three standards: the world, Satan and the "flesh" (the sinful desires and lusts that drive humanity). The consequence of this hopeless condition is judgment—we are "by nature children of wrath."

**The believer's new position: Alive to God 2: 4-10.** Only God could change this condition. What motivated God to offer hopeless humanity another way to live? Paul argues that God, "being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us," acted decisively and forthrightly in and through Jesus to rescue us and to save us from our sin. By His grace (His unmerited favor), He made us alive! Now, we have a new identity—identified

with Christ in His resurrection and in His enthronement at the right hand of the Father. This is the grand positional truth for the believer.

But how do we attain this marvelous new identity and new position? By grace through faith, "not of works so that no one may boast." We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus and His finished work. God offers us a gift, one for which we did not work and one which we did not deserve. But we must pick up that gift!

This by-grace-through-faith gift has two consequences for those who "pick up the gift:"

1. In the "coming ages," God will hold us up as trophies of His grace (v. 7).

2. We are now God's "workmanship" (His masterpiece; His *poema*), "created in Christ Jesus." We now "walk" in His "good works." God will do His work through us, which Paul then details in Ephesians 4-6.

**As you pray and meditate this week on Ephesians 2:1-10, ponder these questions:**

- Have you "picked up the gift" of salvation?
- Do you truly understand God's amazing grace? Thank Him for His grace, for His mercy and for His love.
- Do you fully comprehend your new identity in Christ and your new position in Christ? Meditate on the staggering work of God in your life.
- Do you see yourself as a trophy of God's grace? Nothing explains you and your new identity but the grace of our God.
- Are you open to be the channel of God's grace to others? As His "salt and light," are you willing to allow Him to use you as an instrument of His grace?

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