

Welcome

Good morning Greenbriar Church! My name is Brandon and I am one of the pastors here. If you are new here, we just want to say “welcome” to you. We are so glad that you are here. We would love to connect with you, and would invite you to fill out the Connect Card in the chair back in front of you and drop it in the offering basket at the end of service or by the Connect Desk in the lobby, and we will have a gift for you.

The reason that any of us is here this morning is Jesus. He is what brings us together. He offers hope and rest for our souls. Maybe this morning you have come in weary, beaten down, running on empty, desperate, sad, hopeless. Well, I have good news for you. As we worship Jesus this morning we are invited into relationship with him and this is what he says about himself:

Matthew 11:28-30 | 28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. **29** Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Let me pray for us as we stand to sing together.

Corporate Prayer

Slide #1

Ephesians 2:1& 4-5 | 1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins...**4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

- Lord, would you make _____ alive with Christ.
 - “Me” - if you aren’t a follower of Christ, but want to be.
 - “Insert name” - for anyone that you desire for God to do a saving work in their heart.

Slide #2

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- Pray for the people to your right and left. Pray that the Lord would:
 - Help them to discover the good works that the Lord has prepared for them
 - Pray that the Lord would empower them to walk in those good works.
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Sermon

Ephesians 2:1-10

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins **2** in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— **3** among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. **4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— **6** and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **7** so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Intro:

In **Matthew 13:44** Jesus tells this parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field” — In this story, the man finds something that is so much more valuable than anything he owns, or even the field that it was in. He had no issues with losing everything that he had ever gotten or gathered because what he was getting was so much more. What we receive in Christ Jesus is infinitely more beautiful, wonderful, and valuable than what we have outside of him. It's worth losing everything to gain what we get in him. Our main passage today, in Ephesians 2:1-10, shows us what it looks like to be brought into a relationship with Jesus, leaving behind our old selves, being made new, and the great treasures that we gain right now and forever.

I want to emphasize the term that I used, “great treasures.” For so many of us, salvation was usually framed as something God did for our afterlives. That if we follow Jesus, one day we will get something great, in heaven, after we die. Well, rest assured, that if you are in Him you will have an amazing eternity with him in Glory, but one of my big

hopes for you today is what the Lord has for you right now. I wanted to call this sermon “treasure hunting” but I was told that it was cheesy, but I pray that as we walk through this well known passage of Scripture, that you would gain a more clear picture of the treasures that are offered to you in walking with Him

Illustration: Lots of nights before bed, I will pull up an app called the Bible App For Kids, which is this cool way of getting the kids clued into the stories of Scripture. It includes games and videos that travel through various Bible stories. In each story there will generally be 2 or 3 of these sparkling diamonds, hidden in the scene, called Bible Gems and when my kids see them they FREAK out, because they want to be the first one to press the Bible Gem. This morning as we walk through this passage, I hope that the Lord puts excitement in your heart as we pull out precious gems of truth all along the way.

If you know this passage, you know that the first 3 verses aren’t very beautiful, but they are necessary for us to understand the beauty to come. Hopeful you are there, but if not it will be on the screen.

Ephesians 2:1-3 | **1** And you were dead in the trespasses and sins **2** in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— **3** among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

- **You were dead** - Paul is talking to Christians in Ephesus, and by extension all Christians who would read or hear this, and telling them where they came from. They were dead. We were dead. Physically alive, but spiritually dead. If you aren’t a follower of Jesus this is still you. You are physically alive, and spiritually dead.
- **What does that “deadness” look like?**
 - Walking in trespasses and sins
 - Trespass - stepping over the lines that God has put out for you
 - Sins - missing the mark of God’s good design
 - There is a continual walking in these things believing that is better, more fulfilling, more able to save, more purposeful than what God has for you.
 - Following the course of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.
 - This started in the beginning, Genesis 3, when Satan came to Adam and Eve in the garden and asked things like “Did God really say...?”

or said things like “you won’t surely die.” In John 8:44, Jesus describes Satan as the father of lies, because that’s what he does and he has been doing it a long time and is really good at it. He wanted Adam and Eve to believe that God was keeping something good from them, that he would not do what he said he would do, that he was a liar. He presented them with a false gospel, and that’s what he still does today. Every step away from God is a lie believed. Every cultural ideology under the sun that purports to give us a better world outside of belief in the gospel of Jesus is a lie, every addiction is worship of a false Saviour, every lie is an attempt to be our own Saviour, every hateful thought is belief in the lie that our enemies are unloveable. Every time we covet we believe the lie that Christ is not enough for us. We could keep going but you get the picture.

- When we believe these lies, we are following the course of this world, and I want you to know that that course is relentless. We believe small lies and pile up and pile up and all of a sudden we are swept away on this course that is so powerful that we keep moving in it.
 - **Illustration:** If you’ve ever been whitewater rafting what do they tell you to do if you fall out? They tell you not to put your feet down, because your foot could get caught in rocks and the rushing water could pin you down to drown you. Instead you are supposed to sit back and float with your legs up. You stay in the flow going downstream, tossed to and fro, hitting rocks and other things until someone rescues you. This is us outside of Christ. Dead, helpless, following the course of this world seeking comfort in false saviours, and false gospels and we need rescue.

Ephesians 2: 4-5 | 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

- **But God** - I’ve heard it said that these are two of the greatest words in The Bible. Why? Because dead things can do nothing to fix their situation. If we were dead in our sins, then we, in our own strength, would have stayed dead.

- While we were floating down the tumultuous river of sin, the world, and the devil, God reached in and rescued us.
 - We were dead...But God, we were following the broken culture of the world...But God, we lived and served the passions of our flesh...But God, we were following the prince of lies...BUT GOD.
- **Rich** - Our God is rich in all things, he owns everything, the Bible tells us he is love, the embodiment of love, and here we see that he is rich in mercy.
 - **Mercy** (Merriam-Webster) - compassion or forbearance shown especially to an offender or to one subject to one's power
 - God has deep pockets and they are full of the stuff that it takes to show compassion on one who deserves punishment, and that's everyone in this room this morning. He is SO merciful.
- **Because** - Mercy compelled by what? **great love with which he loved us**
 - Listen, if you have ever wondered if you are loveable, here is your answer. Here is your YES to that question. You are not unloveable. The Lord has GREAT love for you.
- **Even when we were dead...made us alive together with Christ.**
 - God looked at us, and he is looking at some of you right now, in our dead state, and he said "I love them and I want them" and he said to our hearts, what he may be saying to some in this room right now...the words he spoke to Jairus's daughter in Mark 5, "arise" or what he yells to Lazarus in the grave in John 11 "come out." He is the only one who can give life to the dead, and he did it in the most humble way possible. He came and died the physical death we deserved so that we wouldn't have to, and he was raised to life again, conquering the grave once and for all, and allowing us access to follow him in that resurrection. Which is exactly what we see here in Ephesians 2 that He **made us alive together with Christ.**
 - **Romans 5:6-8 & 10 | 6** For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— **8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us....**10** For if **while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son**, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.
 - Paul describes our dead state as not just spiritual death, but we are actually, but our actions, enemies of God. Christ died for His enemies. Who would do that?! He has deep pockets full of mercy and grace, no matter what you've done or has been done to you, he wants you. You are not too far gone, you have not been damaged

beyond redemption, this man pays the price for his enemies. Praise God!

- **By grace you have been saved**

- Grace - unmerited favor

- Much like mercy, in Jesus you are granted good things that you don't deserve. You've been saved by grace, by God choosing that he will lavish his saving power, his favor, his mercy, his love on you!
- But that's not it...I want you to see that there is more to this death to life thing. As I mentioned at the beginning, we have grown almost numb to the idea that Jesus died for our sins and that means we get to live eternally with him, WHICH IS AMAZING NEWS, BY THE WAY! The best news! But this also means something for you RIGHT NOW. It means several things for you now in this life. I'm going to give those to you like a good preacher with three alliterated points.

Position

Ephesians 2:6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

- **In Christ**

- **Colossians 3:3** For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

- The old, walking-dead version of ourselves is gone. Death has been put to death.
- Our new identity is wrapped up in Christ. In him we have been set free from the chains of sin. Death is no longer our fear, but is simply a butler ushering us into eternity with him. We are sons and daughters of the King of the universe alongside Jesus. If you remember back when we covered Romans 8, we are told that we are fellow heirs with Jesus.

- **Raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places**

- There's a Kings Kaleidoscope song called *Grace Alone* that says "You have raised me so high above my station. I'm a child of God by grace, and grace alone" and that's exactly what he has done. He has raised you higher than anything you deserve, thought or imagine. If you are in Christ, you are royalty and if you are not, this is what is offered to you today. To walk through this life as a citizen of heaven in a land that is not your home but where you get to live as an ambassador. **Philippians 3:20** says that our citizenship is in heaven, so Christian, if it feels like the world around you is

strange, its because its not yours, but boy do we want our eternal home to be full of people who have been brought from death to life.

Prosperity

- **Ephesians 2:7-9a | 7** so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
 - There is a reason why I used that word “prosperity” and it’s not the way that our culture typically uses it. We base prosperity on possessions. We say that a person is prosperous when they have a lot of money, or success, or things, or relationships, or popularity, or I could keep going...but God lavishes us in something far more valuable than worldly goods that are going to fade, rot, deteriorate, and stay behind when we die. He lavishes us with his grace. Paul speaks of it as riches! Riches that we receive through faith. We don’t have to work for them, he did that, we don’t have to buy them, he did that, they come to us through faith, which is also a gift from God.
 - What is faith?
 - **Hebrews 11:1** Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
 - Faith is a belief that God is who he says he is and does what he says he will do. Real faith leads to actions, and while we can invest in our relationship with the Lord through things like prayer, Scripture reading and gospel community, we can create our faith. God gives that to us. It is supernatural.
 - God saves
 - The picture we are getting here is that we are given a massive fortune of something greater than any riches this world has to offer and is more beneficial to our lives than anything, and it is given freely to us, not because we earned it but because he chooses to give it to us.

Purpose

- **Ephesians 2:10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
 - I love this last verse so much. The entire verse reads in a way that says that, in Christ, we are not just people going to heaven, which again, is amazing, but that there has been a creation that has happened where God

is laying out our path and it is full of good and important things for us to do.

- **2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
 - We are reborn in Christ.
 - He has forgiven us for our sins against him.
 - He has given us a new identity which is “in Christ” and a child of the King
 - AND He has given us a new purpose which includes the ways that he is inviting us into His work. God was never for us being lazy. Even before the first sin in Genesis, the Lord gave Adam and Even work to do that was good for them and brought glory to him. He does the same for us now. This is one of the points that I’ve felt led to dive into the most this morning. **What is this purpose and what are these good works?**
- **Good works:**
 - **Matthew 22:36-39 | 36** “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” **37** And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. **38** This is the great and first commandment. **39** And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.
 - First of all, everything that God has called us to do can be filed under these two most important commandments, to love God and love others.
 - I want to be careful not to be too specific here, because we can walk in good works every day in a wide variety of ways. We can choose the God-glorifying paths in our everyday interactions, how we approach our work, how we treat our alone time, and so on, so don’t feel boxed in here, but this is a snapshot.
 - **Abiding in him - John 15:5** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.
 - This is broad, but often begins with speaking to and hearing from God, having an active prayer life, spending time in God’s Word, meditating on Scripture.
 - These are the power station for abiding in him in the everyday things of life, as we walk, doing things with high character, seeking to serve others, wanting to be a living witness to what we believe.

- **Vocation** - we all work in some way. Some of us go into a workplace each day, some of us work from home, some of us work in the home and don't necessarily get a paycheck for it. *Hear me clearly: you are not just working for the Lord when you are doing ministry related things within the local church context.* For the Christian, all of our vocations and daily work can be holy. When you clock into your job, you are not just anyone clocking into that job. You are a Holy Spirit empowered and indwelt child of the Living God, who is clocking into that job, and you have the chance to use your work to serve your neighbors, you have the chance to carry out your work with godly character, you have opportunities to both share the gospel and live like you believe it. You spend a large percentage of your life at work in some way, don't section that off as something that God doesn't touch. He doesn't see it that way, and neither should we.
- **Daily Ministry** - Gospel ministers are not just those who have been ordained as pastors or commissioned as deacons. Every believer has been given a ministry. **Ephesians 4:12** says that church leaders are to equip the saints (every believer is a saint) to do the work of ministry. We have all been given a circle of influence into which we are able to take the soul saving gospel both in word and deed, and in Christ we can have boldness to be able to do that even when it isn't easy. We have also been called to serve the local church. That same verse, **Ephesians 4:12**, and its surrounding context tells us that we all are to pitch in to build up the body of Christ.
 - I want to end with this before we land the plane. Throughout the history of the church, the Lord has called his people to follow him into uncomfortable situations. Situations that require boldness and courage. Jesus told us that the world would hate us because of him. NOT BECAUSE WE ARE JERKS, but because the gospel pushes against, what we talked about at the beginning, the course of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, people will not

always be receptive to what we have to say, but we can take heart because he has overcome the world.

- This is highlighted with what we have seen recently with Charlie Kirk. I know there are a ton of opinions about him, but primarily what I witnessed was a man dying for speaking out about his beliefs which were mostly influenced by God's Word, and who took every chance he could to preach the gospel. The way he did that was his calling, and we all have our own calling, full of opportunities to take the gospel to people who need it, and as suffering will come in various ways, Christians are emboldened to speak all the more. I'm not sure if you have felt that with this, but I have. Christian history is full of martyrs, whose attackers thought that they would stamp out the flame of Christ, and instead it only grew. Over the last week and a half a passage has continued to come to my mind from Acts 5, after the apostles encounter conflict from the religious leaders:
 - **Acts 5:41-42 | 41** Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. **42** And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

- To close I want to recap:
 - Outside of Christ we are dead and following the hopeless way of the world.
 - Christ offers us rescue and new life in him
 - Our new life in Christ doesn't begin at death, but right now. In Him we have
 - A new position as an adopted child of God and citizen of heaven
 - A new prosperity being lavished with the riches of his grace
 - A new purpose to walk in his ways and take the life saving gospel to as many people as we can.

Community Group Questions:

- Have you been brought to life in Christ? Please share some of that story.
- How have you seen the evidence of new life as you have walked with Jesus?
- What are some of the good works that he has given you to walk in?
- Take time to pray that the Lord would make you aware of the good works that has for you to walk in.