

The Pearl of the Epistles – Ephesians

Out of the Graveyard

Ephesians 2:1-3

Ephesians 2:1-3 *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2*
Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the
prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:
3 *Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh,*
fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of
wrath, even as others.

Introduction

Reviewing the first chapter, considering the plan of salvation, we found that; God the Father Planned it, God the Son Paid for it and God the Holy Spirit Preserves it. This is the most important “*spiritual blessing in heaven.*”

As we move into the second chapter, Paul continues teaching on the theme of salvation. In the first ten verses of this chapter, he delivers a very strong argument that salvation is attributed to God alone and no other.

Note: Salvation as presented so far is being saved to something; *spiritual blessings in heavenly places*. Today we will focus on a different aspect of salvation; being saved from something. In this case it is the old life.

In verses one through three we are reminded by Paul of five points about the condition of the Christian before salvation.

We were DEAD

We were DECEIVED

We were DISOBEDIENT

We were DEFILED

We were DEPRAVED AND DOOMED

We Were Dead

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

This chapter is so connected with the previous that in my opinion, it should not have been separated until the eleventh verse. We were introduced to God's power and that power was manifested in raising Jesus from the dead. Paul likens the raising of the Lord Jesus as in the quickening of the Christian.

"*And you hath he quickened*" – in these five opening words we presented with the active participant in the salvation of man, God the Father. The "*he*" is God. It is God that has quickened (meaning "made to live"). We are to remember what God has and continues to do in the heart of those that believe on Jesus. It is a key to living a victorious life. Let us remember that the readers of this letter are the church at Ephesus. Paul says it is "*you*" that God has brought out of the graveyard.

"*...who were dead in trespasses and sins*" – they were spiritually dead; unable to understand and be grateful for the blessings that God had for them in heaven if they would just believe in Jesus.

As you drive along the highway, you will see large billboards that advertise some product that you just can't do without. That billboard announces for all to see the product it advertises. That is what our trespasses and sins do for all those around us. They advertise that we are dead to God and His blessings.

Our transgressions amount to sin. Sin is simply defined as "any act against God or breaking His commandments." It is sin that separates us from God. In Paul's letter to the Romans he said:

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

God told Adam, "*But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" (Genesis 2:17). But Satan the deceiver said, "*Ye shall not surely die.*" Man believed the lie of Satan and there are consequences.

The transgression of Adam in the garden was applied to all man. Sin entered the world and now man is dead in sin. But the Apostle Peter said of Jesus part in the plan of Salvation:

1 Peter 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

We Were Dead

We Were Deceived

***Ephesians 2:2** Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

First, the spiritually dead are dominated by the things of the world. Since the time in the Garden of Eden, Satan has been deceiving mankind. He isn't called the Deceiver for no reason. Since he was cast out of heaven, he knows what is in store for him in the end and in his hatred of all things of God, he wants to destroy as many of God's creations as he can.

Those believers in the church at Ephesus, "*in time past ...walked according to the course of the world, according to the prince of the power of the air*" (Satan). Paul was reminding them that at one time they were deceived by the Liar!

We Were Dead, We Were Deceived and

We Were Disobedient

***Ephesians 2:2** Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

Secondly, the spiritual dead are dominated by Satan. Not only were they dead in their sins and deceived, but they were disobedient to the ways of the LORD. The Apostle John in his Gospel message wrote:

***John 8:44** Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

I believe that Christians give Satan way too much credit for the problems in their lives. Satan is a created being and as such is not omnipresent. He cannot be everywhere at once as God can. Satan may not be personally at work in the unbeliever, but the world has his value system. And since man is in that

system they tend to follow his lead. John clearly said that we fulfill the lusts of Satan in our own lives because we lust. Man chooses to be disobedient which is one of the key sins in God's eyes. Disobedience is rebellion.

The prophet Samuel told King Saul;

"1 Samuel 15:23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king."

Rebellion caused King Saul to reject the word of the Lord and that resulted in his loss of his kingdom; God was going to replace him. God hates rebellion and will not withhold His judgment concerning those that do.

It was the rebellion of men which caused Jesus to leave heaven and come to the earth as the *"Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."* (John 1:29)

We Were Dead, We Were Deceived, We Were Disobedient and

We Were Defiled

Ephesians 2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Thirdly, Paul says that the spiritually dead are dominated by their flesh. Notice that the Apostle changes from "ye" to "we" in this verse. He is associating his past life with that of the readers. In this case I believe we could all be included in the "we" of this verse.

The word "conversation" is defined as "manner of life." So this verse can read: *"...among whom we all once lived in other passions of our flesh"* (ESV). The life we lived before was driven by our passions and desires. That is all we could think about.

We Were Dead, We Were Deceived, We Were Disobedient, we were defiled and

We Were Depraved / Doomed

***Ephesians 2:3** Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

To be depraved means to be morally corrupt, or perverted. To be doomed means that destruction is inevitable. That is the path for the unbeliever. Unbelievers are worthy of judgment of God because they are the children of wrath. Their rebellion is against God and later to Jesus will seal their punishment.

Those that know Jesus escape this judgment, not because of anything good that they have done, but because Jesus paid it all.

Conclusion

Those without Christ are spiritually dead and under the sway of:

The World – v. 2

The Devil – v. 2

The Flesh – v. 3

And

You are DEAD

You are being DECEIVED

You are DISOBEDIENT

You are DEFILED

You are DEPRAVED AND DOOMED

But there is a way out:

***Romans 6:23** For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Robert C. Crowder