

But God

Բայց Աստուած

Ephesians 2:1-10

Our theme:

In, By, and With His Grace. Անոր Շնորհքին Մէջ, Անոր Շնորհքով
IN His Grace—We can be confident. We are a MASTERPIECE. That is how God sees us.
BY His Grace—We have been SAVED. We can't earn it.
WITH His Grace—We strive to LIVE, LOVE, and LEARN to be MORE LIKE JESUS.

Paul beginnings his letter with greetings of Grace and Peace (1-2)
Paul continues with a great benediction, a doxology (3-14)
Then with a great intercessory prayer (15-23).

-In the second chapter Paul will bring **vivid contrast** between
what we are in nature without Christ,
and what we can become in Christ, by His Grace.

Paul prayed that our eyes of our hearts will be enlightened. So we see Christ's power of resurrection in our daily lives. I prayed that during last week you did see **Immeasurable Greatness of God's power in your lives.** (I needed it so much)

2nd chapter is continuation of the prayer:

-Paul describes humanity's miserable condition:1-3

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in 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— ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (Eph 2:1-3 ESV)

1. Once dead, in trespasses and sins... once we walked like that.

The proverb of the prodigal son comes to my mind. "The son of mine was dead";

-Trespass: a false step, passing our boundaries, deviation from the right path

-Sin: missing the mark, falling short of a standard.

"It is a factual statement of everybody's spiritual condition outside Christ."¹

2. "Following Satan" (the prince of the power of the air) who lead us to become sons of disobedience. From the early days of creation, Satan's job was to deceive us.

(αἰμαίου ἔ)

Satan deceived Adam, Eve saying "you will be like God..."

3. Living according to the flesh, the desires of the body...we were children of the wrath of God.

What is the wrath of God? "It is God's personal, righteous, constant hostility to evil, his settled refusal to compromise with it, and his resolve instead to condemn it."² We were condemned.

Three things:

Worldly life, Satan, and flesh: two external powers, and one internal.

By the way those three verses in Ephesians are the first three chapters of Romans.

Does this look like a very healthy person?

I am following Paul's explanation why we need a savior, why we need Dr Jesus?

-We need Dr Jesus to save us from the corruption of sin

-We need Dr Jesus to free us from the captivity of Satan

-We need Dr Jesus to save us from the wrath of God

-People argue with me that deep down people are good. What? Where? Which culture?

I am tired of facing evil rulers and governments who can destroy people.

We need a savior.... desperately we need savior...

God never forgives sin.

God forgives the sinner. That is why he needed to send His Son, to carry all the sins on his shoulder. What a love that he adopted us to be his children.

But God

⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Eph 2:4-7 ESV)

-We were dead in sin, BUT GOD made us ALIVE WITH CHRIST

-We were dead in sin and captive of Satan, BUT GOD raised us UP WITH HIM and seated us with HIM

-We were doomed to be children of wrath, BUT GOD allowed His Son to take our wrath on HIS shoulder so that we can experience the immeasurable riches of His GRACE in kindness towards us in CHRIST Jesus.

Stott says three important verbs (concepts)

God made us **alive**, God **raised us up** with Him, God **seated** us with Him.

Resurrection, ascension, session. This is exactly what happened to Jesus.

Now Paul is writing about us, Christians. We will be alive, we will be risen, and seated...

Wow, this is so big and so important.

-So, what is our role?

Believe, have **faith**, accept Christ and be part of this new creation.

Faith, good but watch out. Before you have faith, God is doing something...

RC Sproul says:

“Regeneration and rebirth come before faith; it comes before anything we do.”

“Yes, we believe; yes, we respond; yes, we choose Christ; but not until God, the Holy Spirit first changes our souls and quickens us from the grave of spiritual death.”³

-We are utterly dependent on supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.

and

Paul is making sure that **no one** will take credit, or boast that he/she is saved.

-The emphasis is on the **Grace of God**...by Grace, and Only by grace alone: *sola gratia* by grace alone.

Grace means unmerited favor.

BY His Grace—We have been SAVED. We can't earn it.

We are saved not because we earned it or deserved it. It is a gift given to us.

Then what?

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

Jesus is sitting at the right side of God, and now we are invited to be with Jesus, seated with Him.

What kind of love and mercy God reveals here?

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.** (Eph 2:1-10 ESV)

Do you see how Paul is on fire?

Paul keeps running out of adjectives to describe the wealth of Divine Mercy.

-Finally, Paul tells us about faith:

“Paul is saying here is that the very faith through which you are justified; the faith by which you trust in Christ and receive the benefits of the work of Christ, **even that faith is a gift of God .**”⁴

Your faith is gift from God.

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.

-Paul brings a new term describing who we are: **Workmanship**

¹⁰ **For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them** (8b-10)

For we are his workmanship

God created us in his image. God is an artist. The word workmanship in Greek is poem. God created a piece of poetry, an art. But unfortunately, we destroyed it.

Paul here gives new meaning to our creation. **For we are God’s workmanship.**

God recreated us through Christ. It is regeneration, it is redemption, it is the renewal of fallen humanity.

What is the role of this newly created person (workmanship)?

created in Christ Jesus for good works

Watch out, there is an important preposition here: **FOR** good works.

And NOT **BY** good works... No, we are created in Christ **FOR** good works.

I want to be IN JESUS... to BE

I don’t know why we spend so much time in doing things and forget being at the feet of Jesus. (Martha and Mary)

Let me show you this chart one more time:

Eph 1-3

Our position
Being (Who We Are)

Eph 4-6

Our Practice
Doing (How We Live)

Identification with Christ	Imitation of Christ
Our Calling	Our Conduct
Being	Becoming
Divine Sovereignty	Human Responsibility ⁵

Paul's **priorities** are in the right place. **Being; who we are!** Identification in Christ.

We are God's Workmanship

We are God's Handiwork Մենք Աստուծոյ Ձեռագործն Ենք

We are God's Masterpiece

You Are Important in God's Grand Plan

Do you see the center is God, Jesus, Holy spirit.

I will command you to do GOOD WORKS.

But first know that you are who you are because you belong to Jesus.

Make sure you are grounded in JESUS.

Application:

I read a story about a Professor Rev Paul Gibson who was retiring in Cambridge University. A portrait of him was unveiled. "In expressing his thanks, he paid a well-deserved compliment to the artist. He said that in future he believed people looking at the picture would ask not 'Who is this man?' But rather 'Who painted that portrait?'"⁶

Today we had 10 verses. It started:

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked,

It ended:

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Either you walk in darkness

Or you walk in light.

-We were dead in sin, BUT GOD made us ALIVE WITH CHRIST

-We were dead in sin and captive of Satan, BUT GOD raised us UP WITH HIM and seated us with HIM

-We were doomed to be children of wrath, BUT GOD allowed His Son to take our wrath on HIS shoulder so that we can experience the immeasurable riches of His GRACE in kindness towards us in CHRIST Jesus.

Let us approach the table!

1. John R.W. Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today, The Message of Ephesians*, P 48

2. John R.W. Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today, The Message of Ephesians*, P 52
3. R.C. Sproul, *Book of Ephesians: But God*. <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/book-of-ephesians/but-god>
4. R.C. Sproul, *Book of Ephesians: But God*. <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/book-of-ephesians/but-god>
5. Ken Boa, *Bible studies series on Ephesians*.<https://kenboa.org/biblical/ephesians-1-the-blessing-of-the-father/>
6. John R.W. Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today, The Message of Ephesians*, P 58