

Made Alive in Christ

Ephesians 2:1-9

Series: Easter Topical

1. Introduction –

- a. Throughout the years, it is possible that many of us have heard the preaching on the necessity of Christ for salvation. As Americans, we believe that we are well versed on what it means to be a Christian.
- b. Unfortunately, as Americans, we have an erroneous concept of Christianity and more importantly, we have a wrong concept of Jesus the Christ.
- c. Put simply, to many Christ was/is:
 - i. A good teacher
 - ii. A good prophet
 - iii. A good moral example
 - iv. One way in many to find a higher consciousness or deity.
- d. It is tragic that the truth of the cross and the stunning work of cross have been lost to us.
- e. Today, by the grace of God we will endeavor to study and truly understand the Gospel.

2. So what is the gospel?

- a. The gospel is the good news of God. It is the message of forgiveness and penal substitution. It is the message of righteousness and the message of atonement.
 - i. Let me explain the Gospel to you and please listen intently; as if your live depended upon the information presented.

3. Verse 1 – Man’s Eternal Condition Without Christ – And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

- a. Here we encounter the most incredible truth ever. In his natural condition, man is a trespasser and sinner.
- b. In other words, man is naturally imperfect and defiled. This presents the deepest of problems because God is by nature, perfect and immutable.
- c. Here then lies the great conflict – man cannot and is not, in his natural condition, pleasing to God.
 - i. **Romans 8:7-8** For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. (8) Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

- ii. **1 Corinthians 2:14** The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.
 - d. God cannot and will not, by virtue of His just character, excuse man's sins and rebellion.
 - e. If heaven is perfection, than man in his natural condition is not welcome and may not enter in.

- 4. Verses 2 and 3 – Man's Captivity Without Christ – ...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 body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.
 - a. **...in which you once walked** – Any person that is not in a saving relationship with Jesus Christ is by nature a sinner walking in sin. For all the good that you might have done, will you not also truthfully admit that that you have done much wrong. Will you not admit that you have sinned against God and His holiness repeatedly? You have lied, cheated, coveted, lusted, acted immorally, acted in anger, cursed, dishonored others, thought only of self and the list goes on. You have, sought your own comfort and life and in the process, you have forgotten to live for the most holy God.
 - i. The unregenerated man deals exclusively in the business of sin and has no forgiveness for these sins.
 - b. **...following the course of this world** – Any person that is not in a saving relationship with Jesus Christ behaves just like every other unregenerated person around them does. We follow the course of this world. Because everyone around us is seeking after the same thing, we excuse ourselves from our duty to God; thinking that our sinfulness is normal and excusable.
 - i. I'm better than most but not as good as some
 - c. **...following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience** – Without Christ man follows Satan himself.
 - i. We are sons of disobedience and not sons of God.
 - ii. Notice that this same demonic spirit is still working in all unregenerated man; here called the sons of disobedience. This is your activity; your truth.

- d. ...**among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh**,
 - i. We, believing ourselves to be free, do not see that we are enslaved to our own sinful nature and to the devil.
 - ii. We are led by our own passions – desires to be fulfilled, actualized, happy, at peace and so on. We are in relationships with others because of the way they make us feel. as a species, we truly are self-centered.
- e. ...**carrying out the desires of the body and the mind**
 - i. We are addicted to our own pleasures and mindsets.
 - ii. We are so arrogant that we believe we have all the answers.
 - iii. We define spirituality in such a way as to believe ourselves to be spiritually acceptable; denying what the scriptures say about us and our nature.
 - 1. God surely will accept me, we say. I am a good person.
 - 2. To have this mindset is to call God a liar. He says that we are sinner, sons of disobedience, and sons of wrath, destined for eternal separation in our natural state.
 - 3. His affirmation of these facts is all that matters and our lofty opinions about ourselves are empty.
- f. ...**and were by nature children of wrath**
 - i. The truth of the matter is that the sons of disobedience, if they remain in their defiance to God and His glorious Gospel, are naturally children of wrath and they will face the God of just judgment on the last day.
 - ii. God’s perfect character, His holiness, hates the sins that we commit. He will not excuse us, accept our rationalizations, or turn a blind eye to our rebellion and sin.
 - iii. God is love, but He is also a just God and sin must be punished.
 - iv. This should scare you because as far as you have not repented of your sins, there hangs above you the wrath of God. Flee this certain doom and run to Christ.
- g. ...**like the rest of mankind** – We end this portion with the way that we began it. This is true of every unconverted man. If you have never truly repented of your sins and surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, this is true about you. You can argue against, object to, dismiss, or even ignore the idea of your own perilous eternal position but it does not make the truth of where you stand any less real. You are in DANGER!
 - i. You are “like the rest of mankind.” You are no more special or no more exempt than everyone else is.

- ii. There is no exemption for you.
- 5. Verse 4 – Man’s Only Hope – But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,
 - a. The condition of man is without remedy. There is no hope for man outside of God. Man cannot help himself in any way. It is utter futility and ruin to try to earn salvation on your own. You can’t because of your nature.
 - b. This is where we encounter the Wonderful God of Scripture. He intervenes, and sends the Son of Glory.
 - c. He does so because of two reasons:
 - i. He is rich in mercy
 - 1. Mercy – not treating us according to what we deserve.
 - 2. Mercy is escaping the punishment that we deserve as men.
 - ii. Because He loves His elected people greatly.
- 6. Verse 5 – Man’s Need – ...even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—
 - a. God saves man and He does so while man is in his natural condition – **even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ**
 - i. He does not ask us to clean up our act or to start walking in holiness (we cannot do these things).
 - ii. While we were dead spiritually, here we encounter the resurrecting love of God in the Son Jesus Christ.
 - iii. Christ’s death, according to this verse, is the source of that resurrecting love. The source of the newness of life. A life forgiven, redeemed, reborn, and sanctified for His Glory.
 - iv. It is in union with Christ that man “**is made alive together with**” Him.
 - b. Because it is God’s rich mercy and His great love through Christ that saves us, this salvation is a work of grace and grace alone.
 - i. Grace – treating us better than what we deserve.
 - ii. Grace is receiving sonship, adoption and the joys of heaven when these and other incredible blessings are undeserved.
- 7. Verses 6 and 7 – Man’s Immeasurable Gain in Christ – ...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.

- a. What happens when a man is saved? What does man gain from salvation?
 - i. ...**and raised us up with him** – We are raised up spiritually with Christ. His resurrection is our resurrection and will be our resurrection on the last day.
 - ii. ...**and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus** – We are seated and will be seated to a place of honor in the heavenly realm. We are elevated from sinner to saint, from son of wrath to sons of blessing. We are elevated from darkness into His marvelous light. What joys are found in God’s mercy and Grace? What incomparable riches we find.
 - iii. ...**so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus** – This blessed current and future state will be lavished upon His people throughout eternity. The grace of the kindness of God will be ours because of Christ.
8. Verse 8 – Man’s Inability Without Christ – 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.
- a. **For by grace you have been saved through faith** – Here we close our thoughts on salvation by recapping these incredible truths. Man can only be saved through grace (a gift). That grace can only be received through genuine biblical faith and faith alone.
 - b. **And this is not your own doing** – You can add nothing to the work of salvation. You cannot earn it, demand it, expect it, nor deserve it. Salvation is not your doing.
 - c. ...**it is the gift of God** – We reiterate that salvation is a gift and must be received with all the gratitude appropriate. It must be received in humility, with all eagerness, and with eternal gratefulness.
 - d. ...**not a result of works, so that no one may boast** –
 - i. We have no room to boast. We have no ability to pat ourselves on the back or puff out our chests.
 1. We have not worked for it; we could not.
 - ii. Man, often wants to work for his salvation. Every major and false religion in the world expounds the idea of earning salvation. It is only true Christianity that comes and says to every man, you can’t work. You are not good enough, smart

enough, right enough, clean enough, nor spiritual enough. You must come in through the narrow door of faith and surrender to Jesus Christ.

9. Conclusion of the Matter –

- a. Come to Christ today. Do not wait! Do not work! Do not argue!
- b. Salvation is yours in Christ if you were to repent.

10. Benediction –

- a. **Romans 10:9-13** because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (10) For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. (11) For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” (12) For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. (13) For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Public Reading of Scripture –
Romans 10:1-15