

HTPC— Fall, 2017 Sunday School

“Ephesians: The Beauty of Christ and His Blood-Bought Bride”

Week 2: “Before and After: Individual Salvation (2:1-10)”

I. Review

- A. Ephesians a “circular” prison letter of Paul to Asia Minor which extols Christ and his church; revisits and advances message of Colossians (“the cosmic Christ”).
- B. Ephesians 1:1-23: “Every Spiritual Blessing in Christ: High Theologizing and Humble Prayer”— God’s predestinating will, **Christ** and prayer for the church.

II. “Before” of Our Individual Spiritual Condition— “Dead in Trespasses and Sins” (vv.1,5)

- A. Totality of Christ’s lordship/kingship (cf. 1:9-10, 19-22)
- B. Totality of Satan’s opposing lordship— “the prince of the power of the air” (2:3; cf. 6:12,16)
- C. Cross-reference— Colossians 1:18-20; 1:12-14
- D. Though Christ has been made head over all things for his church (Eph 1:21), we were once still literally subjects of Satan and so in rebellion against Christ the king.
 - 1. Who?
 - 2. In what way?
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 - 3. A first-order tension!
 - a. Election (1:4-5,11)
 - b. Children of wrath (2:3)

III. "After" of our Individual Spiritual Condition— "Alive Together with Christ" (vv.5,6)

A. Christ's resurrection and our resurrection

1. Christ's resurrection and ascension to heaven (1:20)

2. Our present resurrection with Christ (2:5-6)

a. How? By grace through FAITH in Christ (2:8; cf. 1:12-13,15,19)

b. Why? 2:4— "**But God**, who is rich in mercy"

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B. Results? A contrast in "walk" (2:1-3, 8-10)

C. Reminder!

"The apostle says, by way of parenthesis, *by grace are ye saved*. The gratuitous nature of salvation is one of the most prominent ideas of the context and of the epistle. The state of men was one of helplessness and ill-desert. Their deliverance from that state is due the power and the unmerited love of God. They neither deserved to be saved, nor could they redeem themselves. This truth is so important and enters so deeply into the very nature of the Gospel, that Paul brings it forward on every fit occasion. And if the mode in which he speaks of our deliverance, does not of itself show it to be gratuitous, he introduces it parenthetically, lest it should be for a moment forgotten." (Charles Hodge, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians*) BOOM!

"Consider carefully what [non-Christians] were like before they were converted, and then you will be in doubt no longer on this matter. Then let us bring forward what Paul reports about the Ephesians: God displayed his mercy towards them, not when they stretched out their arms to welcome him, but when, dead in sins and trespasses, they served in Satan's army; when, sunk in their evil desires, they paid allegiance only to the flesh and to the world; when they were by nature children of wrath, just like the rest; when they lived apart from Christ and apart from God... I would only like to learn from Pighius why God cherished the Ephesians rather than anyone else. If he cites to me their grief, their good thoughts, their devout desires, Paul's words leave no room for any such thing. Indeed, to prevent such a foolish idea from anyone's mind, he also explicitly shows that they had been entirely like others, from whom nevertheless they had been distinguished and separated by the undeserved favor of God. By nature you were children of wrath, he says, just like the rest. As if he were saying that since all shared a common condition and an equal status, God did not find any reason in you to distinguish you from others, but he derived it from his own mercy." (John Calvin, *The Bondage and Liberation of the Will: A Defense of the Orthodox Doctrine of Human Choice against Pighius*)