

Life Group Notes

Sunday 12th May 2024

Speaker: Scott Taylor

Title: Ephesians: From Death to Life

Passage: Ephesians 2:1-10

As we read this passage let's imagine the scene of a child running headlong towards a busy road full of fast-moving traffic, the mother observes this and rushes in to scoop up the child, she sets the child down in a different place and sets them on a different course.

Paul starts in verses 1-3 unpacking our state before knowing Jesus. He says that we were dead – physically breathing but cut off from the life and love of God. Dead spiritually to the things of God. This death springs from Eden and is attributed to us, but also we perpetuate the cycle of sin.

We do this by following various things: we follow the courses of this world which are the systems and cultures that we are born into. Where we are born, when we are born, to whom we are born will have a course and a bearing as to what we believe and how we live life.

We follow the prince of the power of the air – or the devil and his works, the spiritual realms. Paul is straightforward and matter of fact when speaking about the spiritual realm throughout this letter to the Ephesian church. He doesn't sensationalise, nor does he dwell on or give too much credit to the devil and his minions.

We also follow the flesh – selfish self-serving as it is, going after what our hearts and minds desire with little thought for anyone or anything else. Following these things, dead as zombies, staggering through this world, we run headlong towards that road.

BUT GOD!!!! He swoops in and he gathers us up in his arms. Why? Because of his mercy, his love and his grace. His mercy is not giving us what we deserve. And he is rich in mercy – there is an abundance, a bank balance that never runs out. This mercy is by his love – not love as we can so easily misunderstand it. He sets his love on us not because of our appearance, not because of our works, not because he has to, but because he chooses to. Why? Just because. It's an uncommunicable thing, it's covenantal, it's committed to working through problems and issues. It goes deeper than our works or how we are becoming more like his son. This is thrilling, it is awesome, it is amazing – if we let this truth sink deep within us.

He has made us alive in Christ – it's his decision, he does it, in our dead state, he breathes new life into us, so we become new creations. And all this by grace. We are given what we don't deserve as well as not getting what we do deserve. The debt gets paid on our behalf and then we get given the bank card to the account that has paid the debt.

And we are raised up and seated in the heavenly places. Jesus entered our world and our space and time, so we could enter his world and his space outside of time. WOW!!! And it's all by grace! As a gift – not earned so none can boast!

Although our spiritual and future position is raised up in Christ, we still physically live on this earth. No longer dead and following the world, the devil and the flesh, no, now God's workmanship (think carpenter or sculptor who spend hours delicately and intricately making something). We now walk in his image for his purposes with him as our guide so we can bring glory to him. All as a result of his mercy love and grace.

Suggested questions:

1. What did you hear at the weekend that was fresh or a good reminder?
2. Where do we see the deadness of the courses of this world, the devil and the flesh at work around us?
3. What issues can we have when thinking about the spiritual realms?

4. Why is the BUT GOD statement so powerful?
5. Why do you think we struggle so much with the concept of God's mercy, love and grace?
6. Share a time when you have been aware of something you have done that seems to be one of God's good works for you to do.