

SEPTEMBER 8, 2019

RESURRECTED

Ephesians 2:1-10

INTRODUCTION

The resurrection is not simply an event that is to come. Christians have experienced the power of the resurrection in salvation and, as a result are called to live resurrected lives. Resurrection occurs when death gives way to life. Spiritually speaking, it happens when the old self is overtaken by the glorious redemption of God in Christ. The Lord's Supper is the visible reminder of what Christ saved us from (eternal death) and what He has saved us to (life eternal). We must always remember this dynamic in our lives. We were once dead and now we are alive. Paul is helping us to see the beauty of never forgetting the sinful depths from which Christ delivered. We are often prone to wander when we forget to remember His redeeming grace. The old adage is applicable here: *those who forget history are bound to repeat it*. Paul highlights our once spiritual death so that he might shine forth the grace of Jesus Christ. The beauty of grace is truly seen against the backdrop of sin.

ONCE DEAD (Ephesians 2:1-3)

Ever seen a dead man walking? Sounds strange, I know, but the truth is we see them every day. Paul says that we were once *dead in trespasses and sins* (Ephesians 2:1). In other words we were once spiritually dead and yet physically alive – *living* according to ways and ideas that were contrary to the Lord (Ephesians 2:2). Sin refers to missing the mark or living in a way that constantly fails to honor the moral commands of God. Paul lays out three sinful influences that kept us captive and are still able to constrict our growth: the world (Ephesians 2:2), the flesh and the devil (Ephesians 2:3). Before Christ we were not only willingly and naturally bound in our sin but we were subject to the penalty for sin: the wrath of God (Ephesians 2:3). The anger of God was over us, aimed at us and ready to inflict eternal judgment on us. This is what *used to* characterize us when we were outside of Christ. By faith, however, we have been repositioned in and protected by Christ alone.

NOW ALIVE (Ephesians 2:4-7)

Having stated what we once were, Paul uses a most powerful contrast with two words: "But God..." (Ephesians 2:4). What once was has now given way to what, now, is. We used to be dead, bound to this world and sin but now, in Christ, we have been made alive – spiritually awakened from our slumber in death (Ephesians 2:5). Our life, though physically present on earth, is now with Christ, seated in the heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6). The term *seated* refers to resting from labor. Grace has not only saved us, it has, in Christ, perfected us such that our life is hid with God in Christ...*right now* (Colossians 3:3). In Christ, we have become the Beloved of God! He has saved us to be trophies of His grace here on earth (Ephesians 2:7). Therefore, it is important that we always remember what we used to be and what God has made us in Christ so that we live to reflect His glory in every area of our lives. In this way our lives are testimonies to the world – those who still walk as dead men – of the transforming power of the gospel of God's grace.

THROUGH GRACE ALONE (Ephesians 2:8-10)

To know that we were once dead (Ephesians 2:1-3) and then miraculously made alive by the power of God (Ephesians 2:4-7) is to know that we had absolutely nothing to do with this. How can dead men respond? They can't! We were spiritually dead and the only reason we are now spiritually alive is not because of us or any good we have done. It is by grace alone (Ephesians 2:8-9). Grace is divine

enablement. We have been enabled to know and receive Jesus as Lord because grace has given us this ability therefore Paul says salvation is a gift. Salvation is neither what we earn or what we deserve. It is purely God's love and grace poured out on us in abundant mercy. Grace, however, is not only pardon, but power. With salvation God has called and empowered our ability to live our lives by His design though good works. Every believer has a calling and a path designed specifically for them in which God's glory is to be revealed. We are not saved to simply go to heaven. We are saved to walk before the world like the Lord (Ephesians 2:10).