

NOON BIBLE STUDY: EPHESIANS 2

EPHESIANS 2:1-3 - WHO WE USED TO BE

- HOW WE WALKED (LIVED): ON THE "COURSE OF THIS WORLD" (THIS AGE), INFLUENCED BY "THE PRINCE OF THE POWER OF THE AIR" (SATAN) AND ACCORDING TO THE "SPIRIT WORKING IN THE SONS OF DISOBEDIENCE." LIVING IN THE LUST OF OUR FLESH, INDULGING IN THE DESIRE OF THE FLESH AND THE MIND."
- BY NATURE CHILDREN OF WRATH" = OUR NATURAL CONDITION (STOTT, PG. 77), OUR MAKEUP AND DEFAULT SETTING.

WHAT IS THE "FLESH"? - INNATE AND INNER DESIRE WITHIN US TO LIVE, ACT AND THINK IN OPPOSITION TO GOD'S WAYS AND HEART. "FLESH MEANS NOT THE LIVING FABRIC WHICH COVERS OUR BONY SKELETON BUT OUR FALLEN, SELF-CENTERED HUMAN NATURE. ITS 'PASSIONS' ARE FURTHER DEFINED AS 'DESIRES OF THE BODY (FLESH) AND MIND...THE FLESH IS OUR FALLEN NATURE TWISTED WITH SELF-CENTEREDNESS." - JOHN STOTT ("THE MESSAGE OF EPHESIANS" PG. 74-75)

EPHESIANS 2:4-6 — WHO WE ARE NOW & WHAT GOD HAS DONE

V. 4 - MERCY: MERCY IMPLIES NOT GETTING WHAT YOU DESERVE.

- THE RESULT OF GOD'S MERCY & LOVE = MADE **ALIVE** TOGETHER WITH CHRIST (RATHER THAN STAYING "DEAD IN OUR TRANSGRESSIONS")
- **AFTER GOD'S MERCY**: RAISED UP WITH CHRIST, SEATED IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST JESUS
- MANY OF THESE PHRASES SEEM ODD. IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT PAUL IS TALKING ABOUT SPIRITUAL REALITIES AND WITH A SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE. WE WEREN'T LITERALLY DEAD PEOPLE, BUT SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING WE WERE. WE AREN'T REALLY SEATED IN HEAVEN BUT SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING THAT IT OUR NEW STAND WITH GOD (NOT SEPARATED)

EPHESIANS 2:7 - WHAT WILL BE

- **FUTURE**: IN AGES TO COME HE MIGHT SHOW US THE SURPASSING RICHES OF HIS GRACE IN KINDNESS TOWARD US TOWARD CHRIST JESUS
- "EPHESIANS 2:7 ANSWERS THE QUESTION OF WHY GOD LAVISHED SUCH LOVE UPON HIS PEOPLE: SO THAT THEY WILL MARVEL FOR ALL OF ETERNITY OVER THE INCREDIBLE KINDNESS AND LOVE OF GOD. IT WILL TAKE ALL OF ETERNITY TO FATHOM GOD'S LOVE, AND THOSE WHO ARE SAVED WILL NEVER PLUMB THE DEPTHS OF IT." (ESV STUDY BIBLE, EPH 2:7)

EPHESIANS 2:8-10 - GRACE, FAITH, WORKS

SAVE: TO KEEP (SOMEONE OR SOMETHING) SAFE : TO STOP (SOMEONE OR SOMETHING) FROM DYING OR BEING HURT, DAMAGED, OR LOST. TO STOP (SOMETHING) FROM ENDING OR FAILING : TO MAKE (SOMETHING THAT IS IN DANGER OF FAILING) SUCCESSFUL. TO KEEP (SOMETHING) FROM BEING LOST OR WASTED (MERRIAM-WEBSTER DICTIONARY VIA M-W.COM)

- TO CONSIDER:
- (1) IN THIS CONTEXT, WHAT ARE WE SAVED FROM?
 - (2) WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT SALVATION IS "NOT OF YOURSELVES..."
 - (3) IN WHAT WAY IS SALVATION A GIFT?
 - (4) WHAT IS THE *DIFFERENCE* BETWEEN FAITH AND WORKS?
 - (5) WHAT IS THE *RELATIONSHIP* BETWEEN FAITH AND WORKS?

GOD HAS DONE THIS "WORK" TO MAKE US NEW (EX: HIS PLAN OF SALVATION, PROMISES, JESUS' DEATH & RESURRECTION, ETC). WE ARE WHAT HE HAS MADE AND THE FUNCTION OR PURPOSE OF WHAT HE HAS MADE US TO BE (SAVED, CHILDREN, REDEEMED, ETC) IS THAT WE WOULD DO GOOD WORKS. THAT IS THE FUNCTION OF WHAT WE HAVE BEEN MADE THROUGH CHRIST. JUST LIKE IF SOMEONE MAKES A CAR, THE PURPOSE OF THE CAR IS THE DRIVE ON THE ROAD. IF THE CAR IS USED FOR SOMETHING OTHER THAN THAT PURPOSE, OR IT IS NOT USED FOR THAT PURPOSE AT ALL, IT'S CREATION IS WASTED. THE CAR (DRIVER) IS UNABLE TO MAKE ITSELF, THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE. BUT ONCE IT IS MADE, IT IS MADE TO FUNCTION ACCORDING TO IT'S PURPOSE. SIMILARLY WITH THE SAINTS. WE CAN NOT MAKE OURSELVES RIGHT WITH GOD, OR HOLY, OR FORGIVEN. BUT ONCE WE HAVE BEEN MADE THAT WAY, WE LIVE IN ACCORDANCE TO THAT PURPOSE. IN THIS CASE, THE PURPOSE IS TO DO "GOOD WORKS"

EPHESIANS 2:11-13 - THINGS FOR THE GENTILE CHRISTIANS TO REMEMBER

- IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE CONVERSATION ABOUT GRACE, FAITH & WORKS, PAUL WILL SPEND V.11-22 IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WORDS "THEREFORE" (V. 11), "REMEMBER" (V. 11, 12), "BUT NOW" (V.13), AND "SO THEN" (V. 19). THESE WORDS ARE DESIGNED TO GET US TO SEE HOW THE FIRST PART OF EPHESIANS 2 (YOU'RE SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH) CAUSE SOMETHING TO HAPPEN THAT SHOULD IMPACT US (IN THIS CASE IT IS THE FACT THAT THE NON-JEWS (AKA GENTILES) HAVE BEEN PUT INTO RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND GIVEN A HOPE.
- IF IT WAS NOT FOR GOD'S GRACE, THOSE WHO ARE NOT BIOLOGICAL DESCENDANTS OF ABRAHAM ARE NOT INVITED TO THE PARTY. WITHOUT GOD'S GRACE, WE ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE PEOPLE OF GOD, STRANGERS FROM GOD'S PROMISES, HAVE NO HOPE AND ARE WITHOUT THE TRUE GOD. (V. 12). BUT HE HAS EXTENDED HIS GRACE AND THOSE THINGS ARE TRUE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE HAD FAITH!
 - WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS? IS IT HARD TO GRASP THESE TRUTHS SINCE WE DO NOT OFTEN THINK OF OURSELVES AS NOT-ENTITLED TO GOD? HAS THE WIDESPREAD GRACE OF GOD BECOME COMMONPLACE TO US?
 - (IF SO, REMEMBER WHAT IT COST FOR US TO BE "BROUGHT NEAR" - V. 13 - THE BLOOD OF CHRIST)

EPHESIANS 2:14-17 - PEACE WITH GOD, PEACE WITHIN FAMILY OF GOD

PAUL'S MESSAGE TO THE GENTILE CHRISTIANS IS "HEY ADOPTED CHILD, YOU'RE JUST AS MUCH OF A CHILD AS MY BIOLOGICAL CHILDREN - DO NOT THINK OF YOURSELF AS ANYTHING DIFFERENT." AND HIS MESSAGE TO THE JEWISH CHRISTIANS IS "HEY BIOLOGICAL CHILD! YOUR ADOPTED SIBLINGS ARE JUST AS IMPORTANT TO ME AS YOU ARE, AND YOU NEED TO ACCEPT THIS VIEW YOURSELVES TOO.."

- IF YOU ARE A GENTILE CHRISTIAN, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?
- IF YOU ARE A JEWISH CHRISTIAN, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?

PEACE WITH GOD, PEACE WITHIN FAMILY OF GOD

FORMERLY SEPARATE...BUT NOW, YOU WHO WERE FORMERLY FAR OFF HAVE BEEN BROUGHT NEAR... (V. 13)

PEACE (V. 14)

BOTH GROUPS INTO ONE (V. 14)

BROKE DOWN BARRIER OF THE DIVIDING WALL (V. 14)

ABOLISHING...THE ENMITY (V. 15)

MAKE THE TWO INTO ONE NEW MAN (V. 15)

ESTABLISHING PEACE (V. 15)

RECONCILE THEM BOTH IN ONE BODY (V. 16)

PUT TO DEATH THE ENMITY (V. 16)

PREACHED PEACE TO THOSE FAR AWAY AND THOSE NEAR (V. 17)

- HOW WAS THE LAW THE DIVIDING THING BETWEEN JEW AND GENTILE? (IT WAS THE WAY THAT ISRAEL KNEW AND HAD ACCESS TO GOD AND HOW THEY COULD BE MADE RIGHT WITH HIM)
 - WHAT REPLACES THE LAW IN THIS CASE? (FAITH IN JESUS THE MESSIAH AND OBEDIENCE TO HIS WORDS AND ACCESS TO GOD, THROUGH JESUS VIA THE SPIRIT.)
- REMEMBER, THE CONTEXT OF V. 11-22 IS IN LIGHT OF THESE THINGS THAT GOD HAS DONE FOR US INSPIRING US TO LIVE FOR THE PURPOSE THAT THESE THINGS HAPPENED - "GOOD WORKS" OUT OF AN ETERNALLY GRATEFUL HEART! THOSE OF US WHO HAVE ACCEPTED GOD'S GRACE THROUGH FAITH SHOULD WALK AWAY FROM EPHESIANS 2 WITH GRATEFUL HEARTS REFOCUSED ON LIVING "TO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORY"
 - THOSE OF US WHO HAVE MAY NOT YET RESPONDED TO THE GRACE OF GOD THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST SHOULD REALIZE THAT OUR CURRENT SITUATION IS THE ONE DESCRIBED BY THE WORDS "FORMERLY"...MEANING THESE PEOPLE ARE "WITHOUT HOPE, WITHOUT GOD, SEPARATE FROM CHRIST ETC..." AND ALSO THESE PEOPLE ARE STILL DESCRIBED BY EPHESIANS 2:1-3 (DEAD BECAUSE OF OUR SIN, TRICKED BY THE DEVIL'S INFLUENCE, LIVING BY OR EVIL DESIRES, BY NATURE CHILDREN OF WRATH ETC.). [IF YOU ARE THAT PERSON - HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT AND WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU SHOULD DO?]

EPHESIANS 2:18-22 - NO LONGER STRANGERS, NOW CITIZENS AND SAINTS

- THE RESULT OF GOD'S PLAN AND PROMISES IS THAT NOW ANY AND ALL WHO TURN BACK TO HIM AND ACCEPT HIS MERCY THROUGH FAITH ARE MADE RIGHT WITH HIM AGAIN AND PART OF HIS FAMILY. AND AS SUCH ARE NOW THE PLACE THAT GOD'S PRESENCE DWELLS AND WHERE HIS GLORY IS ON DISPLAY.
- WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS ON YOUR LIFE OF BEING THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD?