

THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

INTRODUCTION

- A. Thoughts on Ephesians 2
1. Harold Hoehner, *In 2:1–10 Paul discussed how sinners who deserve nothing but God's wrath can become trophies of His grace.*
 2. John Stott, *Against the sombre background of our world today Ephesians 2:1–10 stands out in striking relevance. Paul first plumbs the depths of pessimism about man, and then rises to the heights of optimism about God...For what Paul does in this passage is to paint a vivid contrast between what man is by nature and what he can become by grace.*
 3. Robert Wilkin, *The natural condition of fallen people is that they are subjects of God's wrath. No one can save himself from this horrible condition. But God intervened.*
- B. Grammatical notes on verses 1-7
1. Construction
 - a. In the Greek text verses 1-7 are one sentence.
 - b. The subject of the sentence is God (verse 4).
 - c. There are three main verbs: *made alive* (verse 5), *raised up* (verse 6), *seated* (verse 6)
 - d. The object is *us* in verses 5 and 6.
 2. Significance
 - a. Verses 1-3 are subordinate to verses 4-7.
 - b. What we were before trusting Christ (verses 1-3) is subordinate in importance to what He would accomplish by grace (verses 4-10).

EPHESIANS 2:1-10, *FROM DEATH TO LIFE (Part 1: 1-3), FROM DEATH*

- A. Gentile believers were spiritually dead and followed the satanic world-system and the desires of their fallen natures (1-2)
1. They were spiritually dead because of their sins (1), ***And you were dead in the trespasses and sins***
 - a. Introductory notes
 - 1) *and*
 - a) Paul's prayer in verse 1 which declared God's great power over all things, continues in chapter 2 with the conjunctions *and*, then *but* in verse 4.
 - b) Stephen Fowl, *These verses (1-10) focus on how Christ's superiority over all things enables him to free the Ephesians from their bondage to sin.*
 - 2) *you*
 - a) Paul spoke of Jewish believers in verse 11 and then included Gentile believers in verse 13. He emphasized the fact that everyone comes to Christ by faith alone.
 - b) Here, Paul speaks of the condition of the Gentiles in Ephesians before salvation but will declare in verse 3 that Jewish believers were in the same condition before coming to faith.
 - c) John Stott, *Paul is not giving us a portrait of some particularly decadent tribe or degraded segment of society, or even of the extremely corrupt paganism of his own day. No, this is the biblical diagnosis of fallen man in fallen society everywhere.*
 - b. The reason for spiritual death is sin.
 - 1) Believers were spiritually dead, separated from God, and unable to have fellowship with Him.
 - a) Ephesians 2:5, *even when we were dead in our trespasses...*
 - b) Ephesians 4:18, *They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.*
 - 2) *trespasses and sins*
 - a) *trespasses*
 - 1] It means a *false step, blunder.*
 - 2] It might refer to special acts which are reckless and wilful.
 - b) *sins*
 - 1] Literally, it is *missing the mark; to act contrary to the will and law of God.*
 - 2] William Barclay, *It is the failure in any sphere of life to be what we ought to be and could be.*

- c) Harold Hoehner, *Both suggest deliberate acts against God and His righteousness and thus failure to live as one should. The plural of these two nouns signifies people's repetitious involvement in sin and hence their state of unregeneration.*
- c. Spiritual death occurred before physical birth.
- 1) Human beings are not sinners because they sin. They sin because they are sinners.
 - 2) Our sin natures were received through the first man, Adam, Romans 5:12, *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned-*
 - 3) It might seem unfair that humanity was separated from God by Adam's sin, but, is it fair that through the second Adam, man may be restored? Romans 5:19, *For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.*
- d. Spiritual death is separation from God.
- 1) Isaiah 59:2, *but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.*
 - 2) Warren Wiersbe, *The unbeliever is not sick; he is dead! He does not need resuscitation; he needs resurrection. All lost sinners are dead, and the only difference between one sinner and another is the state of decay.*
 - 3) Cadavers don't need exercise.
 - 4) John Stott, *They are blind to the glory of Jesus Christ, and deaf to the voice of the Holy Spirit. They have no love for God, no sensitive awareness of his personal reality, no leaping of their spirit towards him in the cry, 'Abba, Father', no longing for fellowship with his people. They are as unresponsive to him as a corpse. So we should not hesitate to affirm that a life without God (however physically fit and mentally alert the person may be) is a living death, and that those who live it are dead even while they are living. To affirm this paradox is to become aware of the basic tragedy of fallen human existence. It is that people who were created by God and for God should now be living without God. Indeed, that was our condition until the Good Shepherd found us.*
2. They lived according to the godless world-system under the control of Satan (2)
- a. The manner in which they walked was following the godless ways of the world (2a), ***in which you once walked, following the course of this world,***
- 1) A Christian formerly lived a sinful life.
 - a) *in which* looks back to verse 2:1, *dead in the trespasses and sin.*
 - b) Colossians 3:7, *In these you too once walked, when you were living in them.*
 - c) Titus 3:3, *For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.*
 - d) Stephen Fowl, *Thinking of oneself as dead outside of Christ already presumes that one knows something about being alive in Christ. Thus Paul is offering an account of their past, but one that really only becomes intelligible from the perspective of being in Christ.*
 - 2) An unbeliever follows the godless ways of the world.
 - a) This is the philosophy that seeks to eliminate God from every aspect of life.
 - 1] John 15:18, *If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.*
 - 2] John Stott, *Wherever human beings are being dehumanized...by an outlook that is secular (repudiating God), amoral (repudiating absolutes) or materialistic (glorifying the consumer market), by poverty, hunger or unemployment, by racial discrimination, or by any form of injustice—there we can detect the sub-human values of 'this age' and 'this world.'*
 - b) It pressures everyone to conform to the world system.
 - 1] Romans 12:2, *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*
 - 2] William Barclay, *It is life lived in the way this present age lives it. That is to say, it is life lived on the world's standards and with the world's values.*
 - 3] Charles Hodge, *They walked in sin. They were daily conversant with it, and devoted to it. They were surrounded by it, and clothed with it.*
 - 4] Stephen Fowl, *...it (course of the world) is a reference to living in accord with the standards of this current world, a world that has yet to become subject to Christ, a world that could not abide the presence of the obedient Son of God and nailed him to a cross.*

- b. They followed Satan who rules the kingdom of the air (2b), *following the prince of the power of the air*,
 - 1) Satan seeks to control mankind.
 - a) 1 John 5:19, *We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.*
 - b) 2 Corinthians 4:4, *In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*
 - c) Max Anders, *This does not mean that non-Christians realize that their values are created and energized by Satan. In fact, most would probably deny it. Nevertheless, Satan, in his craftiness, places the things in front of us that we, in our sinful condition, find attractive, and, therefore, pursue as though they were our ideas.*
 - 2) He controls those powers who influence the lives of unbelievers and attempts to influence believers.
 - a) Ephesians 6:11-12, *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*
 - b) Warren Wiersbe, *Unlike God, who is omnipresent, Satan cannot be in all places at one time.*
 - c) H. D. M. Spence, *The term (power of the air) seems to denote that evil spirits, who have some power of influencing us by their temptations, have their abode in the atmosphere, or at least haunt it, being invisible like it, yet exercising a real influence on human souls, and drawing them in worldly directions, and contrary to the will of God.*
- c. They were sons of disobedience controlled by a godless system (2c), *the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience* -
 - 1) *the spirit* refers to *the power of the air*.
 - a) This spirit is the impersonal force or atmosphere which is controlled by Satan.
 - b) It is the spirit of the world as opposed to the Spirit of God, 1 Corinthians 2:12, *Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.*
 - c) Max Anders, *Satan's kingdom encourages us to have ungodly values, attitudes, and actions, much the same way a spirit of enthusiasm at a ball game might encourage us to embrace the attitudes and actions of a sports fan. We cheer, yell, jump up and down, and otherwise act in ways that we would not if we were not under the influence of the spirit of enthusiasm. Under the spirit of Satan's kingdom we act in disobedient ways we would not normally follow.*
 - 2) *the sons of disobedience*
 - a) Thomas Constable, *"Sons of disobedience" is a way of saying people marked by disobedience, as a son bears the traits of his parent. Unbelievers resemble Satan in their rebellion.*
 - b) Harold Hoehner, *The word for sons has the idea of a distinctive characteristic. "A son of disobedience" is one who is a distinctly disobedient person... It suggests conscious and active rebellion and opposition against God.*
 - c) Stephen Fowl, *This is not simply a failure to keep God's commandments. Rather, their lives reflect active and comprehensive turning away from God. As it turns out, "children of disobedience" are quite obedient. They simply are not obedient to God...Satan has captivated them; they are under Satan's dominion.*

B. Jewish believers followed their sinful desires which resulted in God's punishment (3)

1. They followed the desires of their fallen natures.
 - a. Jewish believers' manner of life was also under the control of that same spirit that controls unbelieving Gentiles (3a), *among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh*,
 - 1) The atmosphere controlled by Satan in which Gentile Christians once lived was the same atmosphere in which Jewish Christians lived.
 - a) The spirit or philosophy of the world is pervasive.
 - b) John Stott, *People tend not to have a mind of their own, but to surrender to the pop-culture of television and the glossy magazines. It is a cultural bondage. We were all the same until Jesus liberated us.*
 - 2) The word for *lived* is different that the word used for *walk* in verse 2.
 - a) Here, the emphasis is on the manner of life, especially in a moral and religious aspect.
 - b) It is normally tied to a description of the behavior.
 - 1] Here, it is tied to *passions*.
 - 2] Note Hebrews 13:18, *Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things.*

3) *passions of our flesh*

- a) *passions* means to covet, to lust after evil desires, Note Galatians 5:16, *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.*
- b) Thomas Constable, *The term “flesh” when used metaphorically as here refers to the sinful nature that everyone possesses. It is our human nature that is sinful. The unbeliever characteristically gives in to his or her fleshly desires and thoughts whereas the believer should not and need not do so.*
- c) Matthew Henry, *The carnal mind makes a man a perfect slave to his vicious appetite.*
- d) Such passions are contrasted to the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:16-24, *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

b. Everyone indulged their flesh by obeying its desires and thoughts (3b), ***carrying out the desires of the body and the mind,***

1) *desires of the body*

- a) *Flesh* is translated *body* in the word’s second usage here.
- b) Note 1 Peter 4:1-2, *Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.*
- c) H. D. M. Spence, *The life indicated is a life of indulgence in whatever natural feelings may arise in us—be they right or be they wrong.*

2) *the mind*

- a) It can also be translated *thoughts*. Note Luke 1:51, *He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;*
- b) Harold Hoehner, *The “thoughts” suggest that even unbelievers’ reasoning processes (or calculations formed by a thinking mind) are perverted.*
- c) Romans 1:21, *For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*
- d) H. D. M. Spence, *... the waywardness of our thoughts seems to be denoted, the random roaming of the mind hither and thither, towards this pleasure and that, sometimes serious, sometimes frivolous, but all marked by the absence of any controlling regard to the will of God.*

2. They were under God’s wrath for the same reason as the Gentiles because of their sin natures (3c), ***and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.***

a. Everyone was born *a child of wrath*.

- 1) Psalm 51:5, *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*
- 2) Romans 5:19, *For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.*
- 3) Warren Wiersbe, *Why does a sinner behave like a sinner? Because he has the nature of a sinner. This sinful nature the Bible calls “the flesh.”*

b. The meaning of *children of wrath*.

- 1) *wrath* is the wrath of God as noted by John Stott, *It is God’s personal, righteous, constant hostility to evil, his settled refusal to compromise with it, and his resolve instead to condemn it.*
- 2) John 3:36, *Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.*
- 3) H. D. M. Spence, *“Children of wrath” denotes that we belonged to a race which had incurred the wrath of God;*

- A. God gives life to those who were dead in order to exhibit His grace given to those in Christ Jesus (4-7)
1. God's actions are based (means) on His great mercy and love to spiritually dead people (4), *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses,*
 - a. *But God*
 - 1) The great contrast between the condition of the unbeliever and that of the believer is emphasized with *But*.
 - 2) God is the subject of verses 1-7.
 - a) In verses 1-3 picture the unsaved as those under the wrath of God.
 - b) In verses 4-7, those in Christ are under the grace of God.
 - 3) John Stott, *It is essential to hold both parts of this contrast together, namely what we are by nature and what we are by grace, the human condition and the divine compassion, God's wrath and God's love.*
 - b. Paul described God as *rich in mercy*.
 - 1) *rich*
 - a) It may be translated *abundant*, note James 2:5, *Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?*
 - b) Paul speaks to how rich Christians are in Ephesians.
 - 1] Ephesians 1:7 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,*
 - 2] Ephesians 1:18, *having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,*
 - 3] Ephesians 3:16, *that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,*
 - 2) *mercy*
 - a) It means *to show undeserved kindness or concern for someone in serious need.*
 - b) It is God's attitude toward those in distress.
 - c) 1 Peter 1:3, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*
 - d) Psalm 51:1, *Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.*
 - c. The reason God shows mercy on spiritually dead people is because of His great love for those He saves.
 - 1) This love of God is *agape* which *seeks the highest good in the one loved.*
 - a) Romans 5:8, *but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
 - b) 1 John 4:10, *In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*
 - c) 1 John 4:19, *We love because he first loved us.*
 - 2) Harold Hoehner, *Since sinners are spiritually dead toward God, they have nothing to commend them to God. This is why Paul described this love as being "great."*
 - 3) Warren Wiersbe, *It was at Calvary that God displayed His hatred for sin and His love for sinners.*
 - 4) Johann Bengel, *Mercy takes away misery; love confers salvation.*
 - d. Paul reminded Ephesian Christians of their former condition before receiving God's loving mercy.
 - 1) They were spiritually dead, Ephesians 2:1, *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins.*
 - 2) Spiritual death is separation from God, Isaiah 59:2, *but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.*
 - 3) Spiritual death occurred before spiritual life, Romans 5:12, *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned-*
 - 4) Paul spoke of Ephesians as being spiritually dead in verse 1, *you*. Here, Paul emphasizes that such a condition is universal as he uses *we* in verse 5.

2. The results of God's mercy and love.
 - a. Christians are made alive in Christ (5), *made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—*
 - 1) From death comes life.
 - a) It is the gracious act of God, John 5:21, *For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will.*
 - b) Max Anders, *Why give us life when we deserved death? Because we earned it? Surely not! We deserved the death we got. We are alive because of God's grace,*
 - c) Thomas Constable, *The only way a dead person can have any fellowship with the living God is for God to give him or her new life.*
 - 2) Spiritual life is the result of being *made alive together with Christ.*
 - a) The word for *made alive* is used only here and in Colossians 2:13, *And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,*
 - b) Christians are *made alive together with Christ* because of God's gracious mercy as noted in verse 4.
 - c) What does it mean to be alive with Christ?
 - 1) It is a life where God has become heavenly Father with separation removed.
 - 2) It is a quality of life that flows from Christ.
 - 3) It is union with Christ confirmed by Jesus' gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit.
 - 4) It is an eternal life which will include a future resurrection.
 - 3) Spiritual life is a gift of God's grace.
 - a) Paul interjects his declaration that Christians have been saved by grace.
 - b) He will spend more time on this important fact in verse 8 but here it seems like he couldn't keep it in. It is so important that it has to be proclaimed.
 - c) *Have been* is in the perfect tense which means ongoing permanent condition or a *present permanent state as a result of a past action.*
 - d) Stephen Fowl, *...the Ephesians' transfer from the realm of sin to the realm of Christ is accomplished by God through God's overflowing mercy, great love, and grace.*
 - e) H. D. M. Spence, *Grace in opposition to human merit is at the root of the whole arrangement; free, undeserved mercy. It is not anything that God is bound to by the necessity of his nature. It is the result of his will, not of his nature. Had it not been for his good pleasure, salvation had never been.*
 - b. Christians are raised up with Christ (6a), *and raised us up with him*
 - 1) This describes the spiritual condition not the physical which takes place in the future as noted by Warren Wiersbe, *Our physical position may be on earth, but our spiritual position is "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."*
 - 2) Christians have been raised to a new type of life, Colossians 3:1-2, *If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.*
 - 3) Stephen Fowl, *In Ephesians, Paul stresses that the Ephesians' salvation is as full and complete as it could possibly be. They have been raised with Christ and seated with Christ. Nothing, in principle, stands between them and union with Christ. God has given them nothing less than what God gave Christ.*
 - c. Christians are seated with Christ (6b), *and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*
 - 1) A Christian's citizenship is in heaven, Philippians 3:20, *But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,*
 - 2) Max Anders, *To be seated with Christ in the heavenlies is a figure of speech meaning God considers us worthy and destined to be seated with Christ in heaven when we get there. God has decided to do it, and it is as good as done. We just have to wait for a few years until it happens.*
 - 3) Robert Wilkin, *This is a position of privilege and power. Paul wants the believers in Ephesus to see themselves as seated with Christ in a position of heavenly power and authority.*

3. The reason for such mercy and love is to exhibit God's grace and kindness to those in Christ (7), ***so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.***
 - a. *coming ages*
 - 1) *ages* refers to a unit of time or particular stage of history.
 - 2) Matthew 12:32, *And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.*
 - 3) The *coming ages* will include the Millennial Kingdom, new heavens and earth, and whatever lies ahead under the direction of God's grace.
 - b. God's ultimate purpose is to glorify Himself by what He accomplished in believers through His son.
 - 1) Robert Wilkin, *This points out an amazing contrast between the past (being dead in sin, living by the world, and being children of wrath) and the present (alive, raised, and seated with Christ) and the future (in which believers will forever demonstrate the exceeding riches of God's grace in Christ).*
 - 2) Max Anders, *In the same sense that an artist might display his canvasses to reveal his skill, so God displays his redeemed children to the universe to demonstrate his grace.*
 - 3) John Stott, *There will indeed be display in heaven. Not self-display, however, but rather a display of the incomparable wealth of God's grace, mercy and kindness through Jesus Christ.*
- B. Salvation is the work of God's grace alone so that there can be no boasting in a believer's new life or works (8-10)
 1. Those saved come by grace through faith which is a gift of God (8), ***For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,***
 - a. The basis of salvation is the grace of God.
 - 1) *Grace* is *unmerited favor.*
 - 2) Romans 11:6, *But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.*
 - 3) John 1:16-17, *For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*
 - b. The means by which grace is received is faith in Christ alone.
 - 1) Galatians 2:16, *yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.*
 - 2) 1 Peter 1:5, *who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*
 - 3) Faith is not a work of man but a gift from God.
 - a) Philippians 1:29, *For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake,*
 - b) Thomas Constable, *Faith is not an act or work that earns merit with God that He rewards with salvation. When a person puts out his hand to take a gift that someone else offers, he or she is doing nothing to merit that gift. The giver gets credit for the gift, not the receiver. Likewise faith is not a meritorious work.*
 - c) Harold Hoehner, *Faith is not a "work." It does not merit salvation; it is only the means by which one accepts God's free salvation.*
 - c. Salvation is not the work of man but the gift of God.
 - 1) *It* refers to salvation.
 - 2) Paul enforces his previous statement by declaring that salvation is a gift from God.
 - 3) Stephen Fowl, *Humans neither deserve salvation, nor does saving us fulfill some lack or need in God. It is pure gift. Moreover, it is a gift that believers can never hope to reciprocate.*
 2. It does not come by human effort so there can be no boasting on the part of those who have been saved by grace (9), ***not a result of works, so that no one may boast.***
 - a. The basis of salvation is the grace of God and the means of reception is faith in the Son of God alone.
 - 1) Romans 11:6, *But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.*
 - 2) 2 Timothy 1:9, *who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,*
 - 3) Titus 3:5, *he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,*

- b. There is no basis for boasting in human effort concerning salvation since it is a gift from God.
 - 1) Romans 3:27, *Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith.*
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 1:28-29, *God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.*
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 1:31, *so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."*
 - c. Comments
 - 1) John Stott, *We shall not be able to strut round heaven like peacocks. Heaven will be filled with the exploits of Christ and the praises of God.*
 - 2) Warren Wiersbe, *One sacrifice—the Lamb of God—has finished the great work of salvation. God did it all, and He did it by His grace.*
 - 3) Robert Wilkin, *Many have thought that by their works or religious activities they are somehow earning a relationship with God. Paul makes it clear that salvation is not of one's own doings; it is a gift of God.*
3. Those saved are God's workmanship and were created in Christ Jesus to do good works (10), ***For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.***
- a. A Christian is God's creative work.
 - 1) *For* underscores verses 8-9, that salvation is not from man or by his works.
 - 2) The word for *workmanship* may be translated *we are what He has made*.
 - a) Romans 1:20, *For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*
 - b) Psalm 100:3, *Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.*
 - c) Thomas Constable, *"Workmanship" means a work of art, a masterpiece. The Jerusalem Bible translates it "work of art" here. As a master worker, God has created us in Christ Jesus. The word translated "created" here describes only God's activity and denotes something He alone can produce.*
 - 3) God's creative work did not end at salvation but continues as we are being conformed to the image of Christ.
 - a) Romans 8:29a, *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son,*
 - b) Ephesians 1:4, *even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him...*
 - c) Thomas Aquinas, *...all that we have done, you have done for us.*
 - b. A Christian was created in Christ for good works prepared specifically for him.
 - 1) God has prepared a plan for those who come to faith in Christ alone.
 - a) Philippians 2:13, *for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.*
 - b) Harold Hoehner, *...God has prepared a path of good works for believers which He will perform in and through them as they walk by faith.*
 - c) Thomas Constable, *Good works are not the roots from which salvation grows but the fruit God intends it to bear.*
 - d) Warren Wiersbe, *The unbeliever walks "according to the course of this world," but the believer walks in the good works God has prepared for him. Note Ephesians 2:2, 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—*
 - 2) Doing the works God has prepared for a Christian is a choice.
 - a) It is part of the process of sanctification, doing who I am.
 - b) It is a daily choice of obedience or disobedience.
 - 1] Romans 12:1, *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.*
 - 2] Titus 3:8, *The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.*
 - 3] 1 Corinthians 15:10, *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.*

CONCLUSION

- A. A Christian was a spiritually dead person made spiritually alive by God through Jesus Christ.
- B. Christians were separated from God by sin but were made alive, raised up and seated with Christ.
- C. A Christian has the privilege to walk a good path prepared for him by God.
- D. Warren Wiersbe, *As we read God's Word, understand it, meditate on it, and feed on it, the Word goes to work in our lives to cleanse us and nourish us. As we pray, God's Spirit works in us to release power. And as we suffer, the Spirit of God ministers to us. Suffering drives us back to the Word and prayer, and the cycle is repeated.*