

THEN AND NOW
Ephesians 2:1-10
4/25/10

1. The Way We Were 2:1-3

a. We were dead in our trespasses and sins. v. 1

We were not just sick, we were spiritually dead.

We were unable to understand and respond to the things of God

1 Corinthians 2:14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

We were physically alive, but spiritually dead.

b. We walked according to the course of this world. v. 2a

We were slaves to pop culture.

Its opinions, values, aspirations, and impulses

Its way of thinking about what's important and what's not

Its styles and moral standards

Its way of thinking about what is okay and what is not

We were willing to rationalize and compromise God's standards in order to fit in with our culture.

Yet the Bible tells us that this world is in rebellion against God.

John 15:18-19 If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.

2 Timothy 3:12 Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

c. We walked according to the prince of the power of the air. v. 2b

This is a reference to Satan.

He is called the ruler of this world. John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11

He is also called the god of this age. 2 Corinthians 4:4

He blinds the minds of unbelievers. 2 Corinthians 4:4

He is the author of false religions. 2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15

He rocks the world to sleep. 1 John 5:19

He sets this world's standards

“There is no absolute standard of right and wrong.”

“Tolerance is more important than truth.”

“Right and wrong are determined by your feelings rather than what God says.”

We were duped into living according to the lies of Satan.

d. We lived in the lusts of our flesh. v. 3a

According to our own feelings, passions, and desires

Galatians 5:19-21 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that

those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

e. We were by nature children of wrath. v. 3b

We do have a natural predisposition to anger and bitterness.

But this phase is a Hebraism which means that we deserve God's wrath.

We have rebelled against God and deserve His judgment.

Verses 1-3 describes the way we were apart from Christ.

Verses 4-5 describe what God is like

2. The Way God Is 2:4-5a

a. God is rich in mercy. v. 4a

Psalm 103:10-13 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. ¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. ¹² As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. ¹³ Just as a father has compassion on *his* children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.

b. God loves us. vv. 4b-5a

Romans 5:8

3. The Way Things Are (For Believers) 2:5b-7

a. God made us alive together with Christ. v. 5b

We were dead in our trespasses and sin, but God caused us to be spiritually born again.

John 3:3-6 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." ⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be

born, can he?"⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."⁶ "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Bullfrogs and butterflies

b. God saved us by grace. v. 5c

It is a gift

We don't get the punishment we deserve, but we do get the salvation we don't deserve.

c. God raised us up with Christ. v. 6a

Eternal life

d. God seated us with Him in the heavenly places. v. 6b-7

We will rule and reign with Christ through all eternity

We will be eternal exhibits of God's grace and kindness

4. The Way Of Salvation 2:8-9

a. Salvation is by grace. v. 8a

Titus 3:5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy. . .

b. Salvation comes through faith. v. 8b

There are several common misunderstandings of what faith is.

Biblical faith is not simply a subjective feeling.

It is not simply accepting something as true because you want it to be true.

Biblical faith is not simply optimism or positive thinking.

Biblical faith actually has two elements

1. Knowledge- Biblical faith is based on reality and facts.

God's existence, provisions, and promises

2. Commitment- A humble acceptance of the facts and a choice to trust Christ as your Lord and Savior.

c. Salvation is not of ourselves. v. 8c

2 Timothy 1:9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

Romans 11:6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

d. Salvation is a gift of God. v. 8d

e. Salvation is NOT as a result of works. v. 9

We have nothing to boast about or be proud of in our salvation.

Romans 3:28 For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

Not by keeping God's law, baptism, church membership, helping the poor, etc.

Salvation is not a two winged aircraft made up of faith and works.

Romans 4:4-5 Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due.⁵ But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,

Galatians 2:21 "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness *comes* through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

5. The Way We Should Live 2:10

a. We should live for Him.

Do the good works that God has prepared for us to do.

Titus 2:14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

Use the gifts, talents and opportunities that God has given you to honor God and bring others to Him.

Matthew 5:16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

1 Peter 2:12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.

But remember that you can't live the Christian life in your own strength.

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

b. We should praise the glory of His grace.

Thank Him for His wonderful grace!!!