

Ephesians 2:1-10

~ The God of Rich Mercy ~

Introduction

"I want to tell you my secret now..." said the young boy to Dr. Malcolm Crowe...

The doctor replied: *"Okay..."*

Tears began to well up in the young boy's eyes as he hesitated to say those haunting and frightful words:

"I see dead people."

"In your dreams?" asked Dr. Crowe...

The young boy shook his head... *"No..."*

"While you're awake?" asked the doctor...

"Yes!"

"Dead people like in graves & coffins?"

The young boy answered: *"Walking around like regular people. They don't see each other. They only see what they want to see. And they don't even know that they're dead."*

This is the story of Ephesians 2:1-10

I was only 9 years old when this 1999 hit movie released on the scenes of Hollywood... a movie titled “The sixth sense...” it’s a movie about a young boy and his ability (or shall we say curse) to see and to experience dead people walking around in the world like regular people...

Now what is perhaps most astonishing in all of this **is the description** that the young boy gives in regard to these dead people:

1. They only see what they want to see
2. They look just like regular people
3. And they don’t even know that they are dead

Brothers and sisters, this is the **exact scenario** and **description** that Paul the Apostle paints here on these pages in Ephesians chapter 2...

See here in Ephesians 2, Paul lays out the very **real scenario** of what the fundamental condition is of all men and women born in this world...

This **isn’t** a Hollywood movie says Paul...this is real life!

Main Point:

And so the overarching message of this portion of God’s word is clear, Paul says:

You were dead in sin! But God...is rich in mercy! So walk in this grace!

Outline

And we're gonna see this in 3 points here tonight:

Verses 1-3 Dead in Sin

Verses 4-7 Alive in Christ

Verses 8-10 Walking in Grace

Dead in Sin - 1-3

Now in verses 1-3 Paul lays out (as we said) the spiritual reality that we all face in a life outside of Christ:

“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 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; among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind...”

How much more clearer can he be?!?!

Paul says that we:

- Desire what we should not desire!
- We crave what we should not crave!
- We seek what we should not seek!
- We walk how we should not walk!
- We love what we should not love!

This is the, **irrefutable, undeniable, objective** spiritual condition of **everyone** sitting here tonight who **do not** seek God, who **do not** care for God; **do not** desire God; who **do not** love God! In 3 simple words this is your condition:

DEAD IN SIN!!!

There is no other way to put it says Paul!

Paul labours this 3 different ways

The very fact that Paul labours this one reality here in 3 different verses, demonstrates just how serious this condition truly is!!!

One preacher has put it like this:

In verse 1: we are **dead** in our sin!

In verse 2: we are **enslaved** in our sin!

In verse 3: we are **condemned** in our sin!

We are **not** sick... we are **not** debilitated... we are **not** disabled in our sin; WE ARE **DEAD** in our sin!!!

Sinning as easy as breathing

But get this...**not only** says Paul, are you **dead** in your sin... but you are **also** very much **walking** in a way that demonstrates, you are **enslaved** in your sin!

Verse 2:

You were once “*following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience...*”

Now let’s consider this phrase for a moment...

Paul gives the illustration that Satan is:

*“The prince of the power of the **air!**”*

Where is air located?

For us...Air is located all around us... air is everywhere!!! Between heaven above and beneath the earth below air is located all around us...which is **also** the location of all humanity; who needs air to breathe!

You know we often say things like: "There's an excitement in the air tonight..." And what we mean is that excitement seems to be gripping all people everywhere; its influence is so widespread that it must simply be in the air.

And so Paul says that the power spoken of in verse 2 here, is a power that is so widespread, so universal; so global...that it is able to affect all men and women at all places; at all times!

And so what is Paul’s point?

Paul says: That as natural as it is for mankind to breathe air into their lungs; so too as natural as it is for the sinner to indulge in their sin!

That as natural as it is for us to breathe air into our lungs; so too as natural as it is for you and I to rebel against God!

We don't need to think about breathing; it is merely a part of our very nature!!!

We are all born into this world; bent toward sin and chaos...shaking our fist at the very One who gives to us life, and breath, and all things...

This is universal & in every part of us

Now lest you think that this condition of sin is simply for those back in Paul's day; like somehow we aren't as bad as those people back then... Paul humbly includes himself and explicitly includes the entire world in verse 3:

*Among whom **we all** (both Paul, both Jew, both Gentile) we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind and were by nature children of wrath; **like the rest of [all of] mankind!***

This is universal!!!

Universal and absolute

But **not only** is this condition of sin universal...it is absolute!!! (Says Paul) Sin affects every aspect of the human soul!

Paul says, that whether **you breathe** the air of rebellion (verse 2); whether **you live** in the desires of **your** body (verse 3), or whether **you**

carry out the desires of **your** mind...(verse 3) we are all objects of God's holy wrath!!!

That whether you breathe, whether you think or whether you act; every aspect of your soul is condemned!!!

There is **NOT** one good thing **inside of you** that is pleasing to God!!!

There is **NOT** one good thing inside of you **that can fix** this spiritual condition!!!

You are **not** sick; you are dead!

And this condition is universal...& absolute!!!

The problem is God's Holiness

This is the seriousness that sin presents to us in light of the seriousness of God!

See God is holy!!! He is set apart in His perfections so that He is completely unlike us in nature!!!

He is perfect; unique; and set-apart in all of His ways!!!

And this is the exact reason as to why Paul tells that we are all objects of His wrath!

Because God must punish that which is **contrary** to His nature!!!

God's holiness is the sinner's biggest problem

When was the last time you thought about the fact that our biggest problem in this world is **not** poverty, it is **not** war; it is **not** crime and violence; but God!!!

God is the sinner's biggest problem!

God's holiness is the sinner's biggest problem! Says Paul!

Because God is holy; He must punish that which is opposite His very nature...that is us...

Do you feel the weight, the seriousness, the urgency of this text!!!

Sinners in the hands of an angry God

If not...then just listen to the words of what one pastor has said concerning this spiritual condition of ours:

*The Wrath of God is like great Waters that are stored up (like a dam stores up its water) for the present; they increase more and more, & rise higher and higher, until an Outlet is given, and the longer the Stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is it's Course, when it is let loose!!! It is true that judgement against your sin has not yet been executed; but your Guilt (before God) in the mean time is ever increasing, and you are treasuring up more and more wrath every single day! The Bow of God's Wrath is bent, the Arrow made ready on the String, and Justice bends the Arrow directly toward your Heart, and **it is nothing** but the meer Pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, that keeps the Arrow one Moment from being made drunk with your Blood.*

Jonathan Edwards; sinners in the hands of an angry God...

Who in the world would want that guy as their pastor?!?!?

But he's right; he is absolutely right!!!

This is the serious offence that our sin is before God!

John Piper - Sin

And so lest we think, that **we don't really sin** as much as Paul makes out that **we do**... let me give you another slide and a helpful definition to understand **the seriousness of our sin before God**, and **how often** we commit it!!!

This is a great definition of sin (and what it is) by Pastor John piper...

What is sin: Sin is:

- *The glory of God is not honoured.*
- *The holiness of God not revered.*
- *The greatness of God not admired.*
- *The power of God not praised.*
- *The truth of God not sought.*
- *The wisdom of God not esteemed.*
- *The beauty of God not treasured.*
- *The goodness of God not savoured.*
- *The faithfulness of God not trusted.*
- *The promises of God not relied upon.*

- *The commandments of God not obeyed.*
- *The justice of God not respected.*
- *The wrath of God not feared.*
- *The grace of God not cherished.*
- *The presence of God not prized.*
- *The person of God not loved.*

That is what sin is... and that is how serious God sees your sin!!!

If you are here tonight and this description of sin doesn't move you... if it doesn't convict you here tonight...then maybe **you are** the dead person that Paul is describing here?!?!

Perhaps you only see what you want to see... and you don't even know that you are dead!

For news to be good you it has to invade bad spaces

Now why am I laboring the point of this? Why am I being such a morbid preacher in stressing our condition of sin before a holy God!!!

Well, quite simply brothers and sisters; for news to be good you first have to hear what the bad news is... You don't get excited over someone giving you medicine unless you know that you're sick... a treatment for cancer is only good news when you realize how bad the cancer truly is!

Wearing a life jacket is stupid... unless you're in the middle of an ocean; drowning...you get the point...

For news to be good, it has to invade bad spaces!!!!

And Paul knows this...

Paul knows this; which is why Paul labours this fact for 3 long verses!!!

Why has God not killed us yet?

He tells us that our sin in light of God's holiness is the most dangerous reality that threatens our very existence!!!

And that God being just, right, and holy must punish that which is opposite His nature...

But here's the thing; **God hasn't killed you yet!?!?**

Why?!?!

What could possibly cause a holy God to withhold His judgment against your sin and NOT take the life that rightfully belongs to Him?!?!

Alive in Christ 4-9

Well this leads us into point 2 here tonight: Alive in Christ

Laura Hatch

On October 2nd 2004, a young American citizen miss Laura Hatch went to a local party one night but did not make it back home to her parents...the next morning her parents had notified the authorities, and they had organised a large group of volunteers to begin a search party for

Laura throughout the state of Seattle...after 8 long days of searching, a lot of prayer meetings at her parent's church, and the divine mercy of a gracious God, Laura was found in the back seat of her smashed up Toyota Camry, 45 meters below an embankment in Northeast Union Hill Road in Redmond...

When the paramedics had found Laura, they said that she was so disillusioned, she thought she had been in the car for only a matter of hours... but 8 days later, they had found her with multiple injuries and without any water in her system...which that in itself should have killed her... but upon further examination at the local hospital they had also discovered a severe blood clot that had formed in Laura's head that was nearing her brain... but because Laura was so dehydrated the blood clot was not able to spread in her body to kill her... and so the authorities had noted this one fact in their report: **What should have killed Laura; had actually saved her life! X2**

But God

And so Paul begins this section here in verses 4-7 with that very mind-set!

He uses 2 words here that explain to us why the holy God of this universe has NOT killed us!!!

2 words as to why what should have killed us... has actually saved our lives...

Verse 4:

But God... X2

Doctor Martin Lloyd Jones said that in these 2 words alone contain (in one sense) the fullness of the Gospel!

But God!

These 2 words are the only 2 words that explain to us how a wicked sinner can turn from their sin; and into the light of Christ!

And Paul knows this truth... Paul sees this truth... and so he begins this section of the chapter:

*But God, being **rich** in mercy, because of the **great** love with which he loved us; made us alive together with Christ!*

Rich in Mercy

I've said this before (brothers & sisters)...that when you're reading the bible; don't miss those small words that are used in the text to amplify the point!

God isn't simply a merciful God, but "*God is **rich!!!** In mercy!*"

God **isn't** just a loving God...Paul says, He has **great love!!!**

Don't miss the point that Paul is making here!!!

It is **rich mercy!!!**

It is **great love!!!**

God is like a rich man spending everything He has! Like that of a rich man who doesn't care about the price he pays for a priceless artifact, he will buy that one object because of its beauty, value, and worth...no matter what the cost...

Except!!! The difference between a rich man purchasing a priceless object, and God lavishing mercy upon us?!?!

PAUSE

Is that God **doesn't** get a priceless object... He gets us... sinful... wicked...broken...us...

And He loves that!!!

And He loves that he gets the worst... God loves the fact that He gets you!!!

Verse 5:

“Even. When. We. Were. Dead. In. Our. Trespasses...God made us alive”

Even when we hated God...

Even when we rebelled against God

Even when we were slaves to our sin...

God loved us!

God, Christ, & us

And Paul expresses this richness and this greatness in 3 different ways...

3 different ways that Paul displays the **rich** mercy and the **great love** of God here in these verses!!!

Source

Firstly says Paul consider the **source** of this great Love: verse 4:

*But, **God** being rich in mercy!*

That is: the reason why it is such **rich** mercy, the reason why it is such **great** love is because of the **source** from whence it comes!!! It comes from a rich and merciful God!

Object

Secondly says Paul consider the **objects** of this great love...verse 5:

*Even. When. **We**. Were. Dead. In. Our. Trespasses, [God] made **us** alive together with Christ...*

That is: the reason why it is such **rich** mercy, such **great** love is because of the **objects** who receive it!

The action

Thirdly... says Paul consider the **action** that is displayed in this great Love... verse 5:

*“Even when we were dead in our trespasses; **God made us alive...** together with Christ; by grace you have been saved...”*

That is: the reason why it is such **rich** mercy, and such **great** love is because of the **action** (because of the price) that is displayed in the death of Christ!

God gave to us what we did not want

Now... what is incredible to note here, is **NOT** only did God give to us that which we could **not** earn...but that God gave to us **that which we did not want!**

- While we hated Him; Christ died for us!
- While we rejected Him; Christ died for us!
- While we rebelled against Him; Christ died for us!

Romans 5:7-8:

*“For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—⁸ but God shows his love for us in that **while we were still sinners**, Christ died for us...”*

Sovereign Grace

This is why it is called sovereign grace!

Because it takes the sovereign hand of a gracious God to do what we could not!!! In the words of Paul; it takes a God who is **rich in mercy & great in love** to do this!!!

So that:

“What God required of us, God has provided to us!” X2

God has done what we could **NOT**!

That’s the good news!

There is nothing in you that was lovable to God!

You were dead!

You were a slave!

And God made you alive...

The Gospel is an announcement

See here’s what we need to understand about the Gospel!!!

The Gospel is **NOT** a command for us to do anything!!!

The word Gospel simply means good news!

The word evangelist in the New Testament comes from the same Greek word for Gospel!!!

See an evangelist was someone who would bring the good news of announcing victory on the battlefield!

So the evangelist would come, and he would get word and he would go back to the city and he would announce that the battle is over and that the victory has been won...

He would come and announce the victory to all those in the city who have done absolutely nothing to earn that victory!!!

So the gospel is **not** a command for **us** to do anything... The Gospel is actually an announcement that Christ has already **done it!!!**

So what does that mean for us!?!?

Well it means that if you look to Jesus Christ on the cross, and you see His death as being the one thing (nothing else but that!!!) as the only thing that is able to satisfy the wrath of God we see here in verse 3, then you are according to the word of God; guiltless!!!

You are announced and declared:

- Perfect
- Righteous
- & complete

There is **nothing** more that you can do!!!

It means that the determining factor in your relationship with God and how much He loves you is based exclusively upon:

- Jesus' work for you, **NOT** your work for Him...

- Upon Jesus' performance for you, **NOT** your performance for Him!
- Upon Jesus' obedience to the father, **NOT** your obedience to the Father!!!

It means that Jesus **not** only died a perfect & sinless death in your place, but He **also** lived a perfect & sinless **life** in your place!

So that Christ has done what you could NOT do!!!

How many of us here tonight are obsessed with how we are doing for God?!?!?

How many of us look to ourselves, we look to our performance; we look to our obedience?!?!?

We think to ourselves: "Well if God is **really going to love** me, I had better do something!!!

I had better get involved in the music, I had better get involved in the worship leading, I had better get involved in a small group, in Sunday school, DP, sound, greeting; on and on we go trying to earn God's approval of us!!!

There is nothing to make us focus on ourselves

I mean there is **nothing** in the Gospel that should cause us to focus on ourselves...

There is **nothing** in the Gospel that tells us to look to how we are doing... nothing!

That's not what Paul does!!!

He doesn't tell us to look to ourselves!!!

We're dead!

What are we gonna do?!?!

He doesn't tell us to look to ourselves!

He says this:

- Verse 4: God was rich in mercy
- Verse 4: God is great in love
- Verse 5: God made us alive with Christ
- Verse 5: God saved us by His grace
- Verse 6: God raised us up with Christ
- Verse 6: God seated us with Christ
- Verse 7: God will display the riches of His grace
- Verse 7: God will display His kindness to us in Christ to all those in the coming ages

What does Paul do?!?!

He points us to Christ!!!

There is nothing in the Gospel that should cause **us** to focus on **ourselves!**

If you are looking to yourself, then where are you **NOT** looking?!?!)

At Jesus!!!

There is nothing in the Gospel proclamation that commands you to look to you!!! But only to Christ!

O if we could just get the Gospel truth sunk down deep in our hearts...

What a difference it would make if we actually believed that the Gospel had the power to not only save us but to keep us...

God sees Christ

God doesn't look at your performance; He looks at His Son!

And you know what he says:

- In Christ; You are perfect!
- In Christ; You are sinless!
- In Christ; You are free!

And raised us up with Christ

And this is exactly what Paul tells us here in verses 6 & 7:

And [God] raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. So that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus...”

Paul says all those who are in Christ, all those who believe and trust in the message of the Gospel; that their righteousness is complete and in heaven!

That their righteousness is found **solely in another Person**, and **NOT** in themselves!

- Even when we are weak: God treats us as if we are raised with Christ!
- Even when we doubt: God treats us as if we are raised with Christ!
- Even when we sin: God treats us as if we are raised with Christ!

He does not deal with us according to our iniquities nor repay us according to our sins; but as high as the heavens are above the earth so great is His steadfast love to all those who believe!!!

It is finished, it is complete, and Paul says; Rest in this amazing grace!

This grace that **not only** gets you in; but this grace that also keeps you in...

Grace not only saves you; grace retains you!

There is nothing you can do to earn your salvation; and there is nothing that you can do to lose your salvation!

Tim Keller says this:

The Gospel is not only the ABC's of Christianity; it is the A to Z of Christianity!

The Gospel is **NOT** only the power to **save** you and **get you in**; but it is the power to **preserve** you and **keep you in**!

John Bunyan

John Bunyan; author of the Pilgrim's progress, he tells of his testimony and the day when he first came to understand the Good News of the Gospel!!!

How he was one day walking through a field burdened by his sin, and then all of a sudden, he was hit with this reality:

*One day as I was passing along in a field, with some dashes on my conscience, fearing **yet that** all was **not** right, suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul, "Your righteousness is in heaven." [At that moment] I thought I saw with the eyes of my soul Jesus Christ at God's right hand. There was my righteousness. Wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me that I lacked His righteousness, for **that** was ever before Him. Moreover, I saw that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor was it my bad frame [of heart] that made my*

*righteousness any worse, for my righteousness was Christ Himself,
“the same yesterday, today, and for ever.”*

*“Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed. [Now] was I loosed
from my afflictions and irons, my temptations also fled away. From
that time those dreadful Scriptures of God quit troubling me; now I
went home rejoicing for the grace and love of God.”*

If you are in Christ, your righteousness is in heaven ever before Your heavenly Father!

What are you going to do now?

And so now... This is the question dear Christian!!!

This is the only thing that you need to ask yourself!!!

What are you going to do, now that you don't have to do anything!?!?!?

What are you going to do now, that Jesus has already done it!

Do you feel the freedom that question brings?!?! Do you feel the weight of your sin lifted off of you and onto Christ?!?!?

O the joys of the Gospel and what it brings!!!

See...you would expect that this kind of radical saving grace would lead a person's heart to consider more sinful living!!!

Think about it! If Jesus has paid it all, then it doesn't matter how I live because Jesus has already paid for my sin!!!...So what's the big deal?!?!?

For the newness of life (verse 10)

Well the big deal says Paul, is that; **this** is **NOT** where grace leads a person's heart... but grace leads us to obedience....

Coming to our final point here tonight:

Walking in grace!

We've seen the **guilt** that Paul lays out to us here in verses 1-3...

We seen the **grace** that Paul lays out to us here in verses 4-7...

And so now we turn to see the **gratitude** that is found in verses 8-10...

Read along with me (verse 8):

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Verse 10:

*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand, **that we should walk in them.***

Grace leads to obedience

See Paul anticipates that this radical grace and rich mercy of God will lead people into more sin!!!

Paul knows what the human heart is like! Paul knows that the human heart is prone to abuse the grace of God that is given to us in the cross....

And so what Paul does here, is he repeats the grace of God seen in the Gospel in verses 8 & 9; you are saved by **grace alone** through **faith alone** in **Christ alone**...

And then in verse 10, He nails down the fact, that this radical grace of God will **NOT lead a person's heart TO. MORE. SIN!** But **rather** it will lead a person's heart to love and good works...

Salli and me

I have been married for almost 2 years now and this is true!!!

Every time my wife and I argue and fight; which of course is very rare...(that was a joke)...but on the rare occasion that we do fight... (usually her fault... I'm kidding...always her fault)

Seriously though, on the occasions when we fight...whenever grace and mercy are shown in the after-math; it **always** leads her heart or my heart to respond in love and good works... every single time!

Think about it **X2**

The more I am assured of Salli's unconditional love and grace toward me, the more I want to respond in love and good works toward her... it is my natural reaction!

The more she responds to me with unconditional love, grace and, compassion when we fight; the more I want to love her!!! It **doesn't** make me want to abuse her, it makes me want to love her!!!

The more I know that whether I'm a good husband or a bad husband; whether I'm in a good mood or a bad mood; whether I'm being nice or not nice; and Salli responds to me with grace ... it makes me want to be nice to her!!!

The Gospel is the only thing that can set us free

And it's the same for us and God says Paul!

That this unconditional, radical grace seen in the Gospel in verses 8 & 9, should cause a person to walk in faithful obedience to God, **NOT** in sinful disobedience!!!

Which is why he says what he says in verse 10:

*For we are created **for good works**...*

Grace leads to obedience!

The Gospel is the only thing that can melt a human heart and cause us to walk in joyful obedience to Christ!

The **radical** grace and **rich** mercy of God; is the only thing that can melt a human heart, and set a rebel enslaved in their sin...**free!**

God bought us; to set us free

Years ago an Englishman had gone out to California and made his fortune in the gold fields...and he wanted to go back and live with his own people.

So he sent his money by check back to England and he came overland on the Santa Fe trail to Kansas City, down to Missouri and then the Mississippi and ended up in New Orleans and from there he was going to take a ship to New York and head back to England.

And as a tourist in New Orleans he did as most tourists did back then; and he went down to the old slave market. Only then in the early 1850's there were still slaves being sold.

And as he went into the market he saw a lot of men gathered there and one party of slaves were put on the stage and he heard these men as they were speaking about one particular slave woman...

And then **he** saw two evil looking men bidding for the woman quite heatedly...

And then he heard them say what they were going to do with her...and his heart just revolted against the whole swinish act.

And finally when they were bidding and the bidding prices were getting quite high, he just couldn't stand it anymore, and so he beckoned to the auctioneer and he said a figure which was exactly twice the last bid; ***utterly beyond anything that has ever been paid for a slave in that market before!***

He said "*Have you got the money?*"

The man came up and he said "*yeah I've got the money*"

And so the bill of sale was made out he went over to the block to take the woman that he had just purchased... and as she came down one step and stood just about level with his eyes she had made a mouth full of spit and she spat right full in his face and hissed through her clenched teeth "*I hate you!*"

He said nothing, with the back of his hand he wiped the spittle away, he took her by the hand walk down the street across this intersection through the mud down that street until he came to a little office building, she couldn't read, she didn't know what it was...

He went to the desk and began to speak, the man behind the desk began to protest he said "*I insist it's the law I insist*"

And finally he came back, paid some money and got a piece of paper

The gold miner walked over to the woman who was like a beast ready to spring on him, he handed the paper to her and said "*Here... Here are your manumission papers... You're free*"

She still hissed *“I hate you!”*

He said *“Didn't you understand... I said here are your manumission papers... You're free...”*

She said (stuttering) *“This.. I can't think... why would you... no!!!! You paid twice as much for me as they've ever paid for anybody in that market place, and you're giving these to me, I don't believe you.”*

He said *“Yes! These are your manumission papers”* and he put them in her hand, and he walked away...

And she said *“Stop! Mister! Stop!!! Do you mean to tell me that you bought me to set me free?”*

He said *“Yes! That's why I bought you, to set you free.”*

Tears came up into her eyes that hadn't known tears for a long time, they just spilled over, her face softened... And then she slid down on her hands and knees and she reached down and put her arms around that rough miner's boots...

And then she laid her cheek down on one of them and then through her tears she sobbed *“O you bought me to set me free... You bought me to set me free! You paid more than has ever been paid before just to set me free.”*

And then through her tears she looked up and she said to the man: *“O Sir, all I want in life is to be your slave... for you bought me to set me free!!!”*

Conclusion

Brothers and sisters when a person understands that their relationship with God...depends **NOT** on them; but on God...

When a person understands that they cannot set themselves free...

When a person understands the abundant grace and rich mercy of God, then it will make them want to do everything for God!

We are saved for a purpose... We are created in Christ Jesus for good works!

Which means:

- Everything you used to **love**; you now **hate!!!**

And

- Everything you used to **hate**; you now **love!!!**

That you now walk in a joyful obedience that demonstrates God as your number one joy and treasure in this world!

Because you are already perfect in Christ!

If you are a Christian here tonight, Ephesians 2:1-10 **is your story...**

Dead in Sin; alive in Christ; for the fullness of life...

And if you are **NOT** a Christian here tonight... then you are still stuck back in verses 1-3; dead in sin; slaves to sin; condemned in sin...

And my plea to you tonight is this:

That you would come and taste the rich mercy and grace of God seen in Christ!

My prayer tonight is that we would all see each other on the other side of eternity, and when someone comes up to you in heaven and asks: "*what is your story...?*"

That you would be able to say with Paul here tonight, with myself here tonight, and with all those who believe here tonight...

"That your story consists of only 2 simple words: BUT GOD..."

Let's Pray

Homegroup Questions

Ephesians 2:1-10

Q1. Paul lays out the spiritual condition of humanity in the first 3 verses. Do you think his assessment of all mankind is true?

Q2. Why does Paul repeat the same idea of mankind's depravity in 3 different verses?

Q3. Is Paul telling us that we are all as morally bad as we can be? If not, what he is actually saying?

Q4. Why does our sin offend God so much?

Q5. What is the significance of the first 2 words of verse 4?

Q6. How does Paul express the rich mercy and great love of God?

Q7. How do verses 6 & 7 play into our justification?

Q8. Is there anything in the Gospel proclamation that commands us to look to ourselves or our performance?

Q9. Why is verse 10 such a significant verse and how does it relate to the rest of the passage?

Q10. Is there any point in our Christian walk where we should move on from the Gospel?

Application Questions

- Q1. What are the sins you struggle with most in your life?
- Q2. What steps are you taking/should you take to get help with those sins?
- Q3. What steps does Paul take in showing us the greatness of grace?
- Q4. How often do you/should you meditate on the Gospel?
- Q5. How has the truth of Jesus' finished work on the cross helped you/should help you in fighting your sin?
- Q6. What do you think Paul means by "good works" in verse 10? Do you find yourself walking in good works or are you still struggling with the old ones?
- Q7. How has meditating on the Gospel helped you to overcome sin and temptation?
- Q8. How has mediating on the Gospel helped you to overcome your guilt when you do sin?
- Q9. What is it about the Gospel that is such good news to you personally?