

Ephesians

Chapter 2

Salvation is in the Church

Eph 2:1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

- were dead- They were (*past tense*) spiritually dead, meaning these were converts. They were taught the message of the gospel and were now being addressed in such condition (*1:1*). Then the apostle goes on to state the reason for their past state. Sin is what separates man from **God**.

Isa 59:1 Behold, the **LORD's** hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or **His** ear dull, that it cannot hear; 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.

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Eph 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--

- once walked- Again, a past tense statement thus reminding the Ephesians of their present condition. They no longer behaved after their former manner **Paul** termed as being according to the course of this world. They formerly couldn't be distinguished from anyone else in Ephesus. Why? They used to follow a certain prince (*Gk. 758-ruler*) who had the power (*Gk.1849- mastery*) of the air. This is the region (*i.e., atmosphere*) on earth wherein **Satan** (*here referred to as the prince*) has a sort of demonic influence over the non-Christian (*as a mob boss in prison has rule over the mob from his cell*).

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and **Satan**, the deceiver of the whole world--**he was thrown down to the earth**, and his angels were thrown down **with him**.

- It is a presently existing spirit realm which is not seen with the naked eye but is all around us and can only be understood with a true spiritual heart.

1Co 2:14 The natural person does not accept the things of the **Spirit** of **God**, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are **spiritually discerned**.

All this happened after **Christ's** ascension and coronation in **Heaven**, and **Satan**, as he did in Job 1 and 2, once again tried to accuse the saints before their **Advocate**.

Rev 12:12 Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has **come down to you** in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!"

- now at work- **Paul** warned them, that even though they were no longer under the influence of the devil and his angels, that influence still existed (*and still does to this day*). Such influence will continue until "the thousand years are ended" (*Rev 20:7*).

- sons of disobedience- All those who are outside the protection of God's grace. This includes even those we might think of as being good people. They are all what can be termed as the offspring of Satan (*Gen 3:15*) who have yet to be bought back with the blood of the New Covenant.

Act 13:9 But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him 10 and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord?"

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Eph 2:3 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.

- we all once lived- Paul included himself in this statement. Whether or not he was of a righteous upbringing, sin is sin and God makes no distinction as to which is greater than the rest.

1Pe 4:2 so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God. 3 For the **time that is past** suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.

- by nature- We only conducted ourselves as we were being taught while growing up, by being exposed to what was going on in the environment around us. Such didn't exist "in the beginning" (*Gen 1:1*) so none of us have "sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression" (*Rom 5:14- KJV*).
 - children of wrath- As products of our environment, we become whatever we've been exposed to. We seem to follow the pattern set before us, whether of godliness or of sin. We become like the rest of mankind unless there is some sort of intervention where we follow a different path and enter into a covenant relationship with Christ.
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Pro 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

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Eph 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us,

- God abounds in compassion for His creation (1:7). Being rich more often than not, a person has no desire to give to others who are less fortunate. God, on the other hand, has so much mercy, compassion and grace that He freely gives it to "those who hear the word of God and keep it" (*Lk 11:28*). Hear in the Greek (*Gk.191*) is to understand. Keeping (*Gk.5442*) God's word has to do with obedience to it.
 - great love- From two Greek words (4183/26) meaning "much affection or benevolence". God loves us so much, as a parent loves their child, that He was willing to show it by sacrificing the One Who was most precious to Him in order to make us "qualified... to share in the inheritance of the saints in light" (*Col 1:13*) so that He could then make "us alive together with Christ" (v. 5).
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Eph 2:5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ--by grace you have been saved--

- A loving parent loves their child at all times, even when they misbehave. God didn't stop loving His creation when Adam and Eve sinned against the very first commandment. Yes, He destroyed the earth with water but was willing to save any and all who had the faith necessary to enter Noah's ark. God has given man every opportunity to be saved since He is "not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (2 Pet 3:9). To be dead in our trespasses means that we were apart from God during the time of our sin filled rebellious existence.

- Rising from being immersed for the remission of our sins, God made us alive together with Christ.

Rom 6:4 We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be **united with Him in a resurrection** like His.

Rev 20:5 ... This is the first resurrection.

- Ultimately we are saved by God's "graciousness; especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life" (Gk.5485). It is "as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ" (Rom 3:24). Such cannot be found in any of the multitude of world religions, only in Christ! God did His part, and if we do ours, He will give us His grace.

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Eph 2:6 and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

- raised us up with- Gk.4891- *to rouse* (from death) in company *with*, that is, (figuratively) *to revivify* (spiritually) in resemblance to. Revivify (*Webster*)- to put new life into, to revive. Again, Rom 6:4 along with Col 2:12.

Col 2:12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also **raised with Him** through faith in the powerful working of God, Who raised Him from the dead.

- God is the One Who does all this because of our obedience to the Son of His love. We are then seated with Him in the heavenly. (See notes 1:3)

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Eph 2:7 so that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

- so that- Here is the purpose that answers verses 4- 6 as to why God did what He did at the expense of His Son. God has immeasurable (Gr.5235- *to throw beyond the usual mark, that is, [figuratively] to surpass*) riches of His grace that He would like to show toward us who are in Christ Jesus through His kindness (Gk.5544- *moral excellence*) throughout this Messianic period we now exist in until Christ comes again.

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Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

- “By mere favor” (*Albert Barnes*) we have been “delivered... from the power of darkness” (*Col 1:13*) because of our reliance on **Christ** for salvation to the point of obedience. Salvation is the gift of God. If faith were the gift here, it would beg the question, why didn’t **God** give it to everyone? Is there then such a thing as ‘limited atonement’? Does **God** show partiality? Not according to scripture. We all have free “will” (*Rom 7:18*) to choose (*Jos 24:15*). Since salvation comes from **God** then it is not [of our] own doing. Only those who obey receive it.

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Eph 2:9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

- Works such as visiting “orphans and widows in their affliction” (*Jas 1:27*) or any other that is “done by us in righteousness” (*Titus 3:5*) will not save anyone. They would only exacerbate a person’s pride. Morality cannot exist outside the realm of **God**. **His** moral law supersedes the **Mosaic** which in turn bore witness to it.

Rom 3:20 For by works of the (*moral*) law no human being will be justified in **His** sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

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Eph 2:10 For we are **His** workmanship, created in **Christ Jesus** for good works, which **God** prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- Man was created to serve **God’s** purpose and not the other way around as many might believe.

Ecc 12:13 The end of the whole matter let us hear: --`Fear **God**, and keep **His** commands, for this *is* the **whole** (*Heb.3605- the whole; hence all, any or every*) of **man**. (*YLT*)

- **God** created us for a purpose (*Col 1:16*) which is to be in **Christ Jesus** since that’s the only place where one can be saved in order to do good works, works that add to our “**treasure in heaven**” (*Mk 10:21*) and are for the benefit of keeping our salvation.

2Co 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is **in Christ**, he is a **new creation**. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

- These works were prepared beforehand, meaning they were “**fit up in advance**” (*Gk.4282*) when “**He** chose us in [**Christ**] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before **Him**” (*1:4*). Our purpose in life is to walk (*Gk.4043- to live*) in them (*1 Jn 1:7*). They are the good works that will keep us in that covenant relationship with **Christ** as long as we continue to do them.

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Eph 2:11 Therefore remember that at one time you **Gentiles** in the flesh, called “the **uncircumcision**” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands--

- Paul here is addressing the Gentile Christians and their former lives while in the flesh, i.e., while they lived according to human nature. He's reminding them of their past sinful lives in order to show how grateful they should be for where they are now. They were termed such by the Jews who felt anyone who was not a Jew was inferior to the Jewish race. The Jews Paul was addressing here were those who were circumcised in the flesh and not in the heart as all scriptural, N.T. Christians truly are (*Rom 2:28-29*).

Col 2:11 In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God, Who raised Him from the dead.

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Eph 2:12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

- Reminding these Gentile converts of their past condition, Paul explains how they weren't in Christ then, they had yet to be baptized into Him and were thus separated from Him. And so were the Jews but for the fact that they were God's chosen people through whom Christ would come. They (*the Jews*) were not alienated from the covenants of promise but had hope as part of God's chosen.

Rom 9:4 They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises.

- commonwealth of Israel- Not being a citizen of a country means they didn't enjoy the freedoms of citizenship. They had no rights to its promises but lived as strangers who were without God in the world. Except, of course, those who "by nature [did] what the law [required]" (*Rom 2:14*).

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Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

- But- Now their condition has changed since having "put on Christ" (*Gal 3:27*) in baptism.
- far off- Gk.3112- *at a distance*. The only thing that could bring them even close to being part of spiritual Israel was the blood of Christ.

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Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, Who has made us both one and has broken down in His flesh the dividing wall of hostility

- peace- Gk.1515- *prosperity*. Everything (*spiritually and physically*) a Christian prospers in has its source in God Who gave Jesus as a peace offering "through Whom we have now received reconciliation" (*Rom 5:11*). Our peace originated in His blood "through Whom we have now received reconciliation" (*Rom 5:11*). That we are His brothers comes from the "love of the Father... that we should be called the sons of God" (*1 Jn 3:1*).

Act 17:28 for "'In Him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, "'For we are indeed His offspring.'

- us both- Jew and Gentile. There always existed a barrier between these two parties. Partly because God demanded it of His people the Jews in order to have a pure nation through which He would send the Messiah.

1Ki 8:53 For You separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to be Your heritage, as You declared through Moses Your servant, when You brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD."

But now that Jesus gave His flesh in which "all (*Jew and Gentile*) should reach repentance" (2 Pet 3:9) that dividing wall has been broken down.

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

- Some have taken the word neither to promote the idea of no separation in roles of the church between men and women. This passage has nothing to do with roles as much as it has to do with qualification for salvation. Once in Christ there is no distinction between brethren as it pertains to the soul's salvation.

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Eph 2:15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that He might create in Himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace,

- Christ didn't abolish the moral law, only the Law of Moses. Speaking to Gentile Christians, Paul wrote that in Christ they received their circumcision once they were "buried with Him in baptism" (Col 2:12).

Col 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, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross.

- Jesus said He didn't "come to abolish the Law or the Prophets... but to fulfill them" (Mat 5:17). Paul here states that by abolishing the law of commandments (i.e., the Mosaic Law) all Jesus did at His cross was (Gk. 2673) *to render it entirely idle (useless)*. It was the only way to make peace between Jew and Gentile and create in Himself one new man in place of the two.

1Co 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

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Eph 2:16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

- Only through that one body (the church) can Jew and Gentile find a resolution to their differences. It was only through the cross that such hostility (Gk.2189- reason for opposition) could be destroyed.

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Eph 2:17 And He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.

- Jesus came and announced this good news of there being a ‘making of one’ again to both those who were far off (*Gentiles*) and those who were near (*Jews*). Gentiles having been aliens (*v. 12*) were estranged from God to Whom Israel was married.

Isa 54:5 For your Maker is your Husband, the LORD of hosts is His Name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth He is called.

Now that the church is the bride of Christ and both Jew and Gentile are its members this marriage of misfits is what constitutes the “pure virgin [of] Christ” that Paul said he “betrothed... to one Husband [Christ]” (*2 Cor 11:2*).

Rom 7:2 For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage.

Once the law was set aside through the blood of Christ, the O.T. Israel was free to move on and become part of the N.T. bride of Christ, spiritual Israel (*Rom 2:29*).

Rom 7:4 Likewise, my brothers (*fellow Jews who were once married to God through the Mosaic Law- v. 1*), you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to Another, to Him Who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.

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Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

- The Jew had access to God through the Levitical priesthood whereas the Gentile had none. But now through Christ both have access since the church is considered “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession” (*1 Pet 2:9*).
- in (by) one Spirit- This is “the Spirit of adoption” (*Rom 8:15*), Who gives both (*Jew and Gentile*) access... to the Father.

Rom 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit (*via the Word*) of God are sons of God.

1Co 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body (*the church*), whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit (*i.e., to consume His teaching*).

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Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

- That said, speaking to the Gentile Christians, whatever the Jew enjoyed under the Old Covenant, they both enjoyed under the New as fellow citizens (*Gk.4847- co-religionist*)

[fellow Christian]] with the saints (Gk.40- sacred [morally blameless]). They are now part of the household (Gk.3609- domestic, a relative) of God Who “shows no partiality” (Rom 2:11).

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Eph 2:20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the Cornerstone,

- Part of the foundation of the apostles was based on what Peter said concerning Jesus as being the Christ. If He wasn't the Messiah then the church has no foundation. That along with the other Spirit inspired writings and miracles they performed to validate their message (Act 2:42).

Mat 16:16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father Who is in Heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell (Hades) shall not prevail against it.

- the prophets- There are many O.T. prophecies concerning the Christ. His coming (Deut 18:15), His birth (Isa 7:14; 9:6-7), His abuse and death (Isa 53), His resurrection (Ps 2:7), His ascension (Dan 7:13-14), the very first prophesy being of His victory over the devil (Gen 3:15). Jesus reminded His disciples of what He had said to them during His earthly ministry with them.

Luk 24:44 Then He said to them, "These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

- Cornerstone- Gk.204- at the extreme corner, the corner foundation. (NEGC&L)

Isa 28:16 therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am the One Who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious Cornerstone, of a sure foundation: 'Whoever believes will not be in haste.' (1 Pet 2:6)

Psa 118:22 The Stone that the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone. 23 This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. (Mat 21:42)

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Eph 2:21 in Whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

- The church is the focus here as the whole structure. Her growth into a holy temple depends on her worship, her doctrines and her practices as have been dictated via Holy Spirit. Only as she remains in Christ will she find unity being joined together. Paul speaks of those who would “destroy God's temple” (1 Cor 3:17) but how is that possible since the church is not a physical structure?

2Co 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15 What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an

unbeliever? 16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, 18 and I will be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me, says the Lord Almighty."

Division, discord, outside false teachings and other such things can prevent the church from growth and holiness. Therefore...

1Co 3:17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you (church) are that temple.

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Eph 2:22 In Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

- being built together- In Him (Christ) each member plays a part in holding the church together since "there are many parts, yet one body" (1 Cor 12:20), and even "the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable" (v. 24). The reason that there's to "be no division in the body" is so "that the members may have the same care for one another" (v. 25). God is only able to dwell in the church, made up of imperfect people, who "were sanctified" and "justified in the name (Gk.3686- authority) of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor 6:11).

"All this is done by the agency (activity) of the Holy Spirit."
Albert Barnes

1Co 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

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