

Ephesians Chapter 2

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[0 : 00] All right, well, if you've got your Bibles open to Ephesians, Ephesians is a book of blessings, and what a book.

I mean, Ephesians has always been my favorite book of the Bible. I love all the Bible, but Ephesians has so much meat in it. And also Romans, well, all of them do, right? They all do, but I don't know, Ephesians just always had a way to grip me, and I just appreciate Ephesians so much. And it starts in chapter one, it talks about, you know, we've been chosen by God.

And I think, you know, Ephesians is an amen type of book, I think. You read a verse and say, amen, right? And we've been chosen by God, and we can't say anything but amen upon that. We've been predestined by God. And some people, they try to make a big thing out of predestination, and really it's not that complicated. You know, God, from his love, said, I've predestined anybody that comes to me to have life in me.

[1 : 08] And it's for everybody. We're not special. He didn't predestine, hey, Ron, you're predestined for greatness. No, that's not what we're talking about. He's talking about the whole world of everything that he's created.

He is predestined. He is predestined to be with him. And that's what he wanted. That was his whole idea. So we've been predestined.

Verse seven says, we have been redeemed. Wow. Amen to that? We have a charge against us. We went to the court, and the judge says, not guilty. And the only reason is because of what Jesus Christ did at the cross.

He paid that debt that we owe. So what a thing that is. And then it goes on to the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of his grace. What more can you say to that?

[2 : 06] Amen. We've been forgiven completely. All these things he lavished upon us. We have an administration suitable to the fullness of times.

The times. The times. The times right now is the mystery. We've been given new life through this mystery. The Old Testament was for the Jews.

And God is dealing with them. He dealt with them. He's going to deal with them in the future. But the times right now, the administration is administration of grace. And we're going to get into that. We see in chapter two. We'll talk a lot more about that. But verse 11, we have an inheritance. And that's great.

You know, everybody thinks about inheritance. You receive inheritance when parents and grandparents and all the people die. But God has given us an inheritance. And that is another amen.

[3 : 07] Because when we die, we know that there's something new is going to happen. And we're going to be with the Lord. So, that is great. But, chapter, or verse 13.

I love these verses. In him you also have listened to the message of truth. The gospel of your salvation. You have also believed you were sealed in him with the Holy Spirit.

The message of truth. This book. You've read it. You believe it. And you accept Jesus Christ in your life.

And he puts a seal upon you. Now, that is an amen. And a lot of our country today, people just cannot get that concept.

They can't get it. I know I've been saved. But, I'm still sinning. I've lost my salvation.

[4 : 13] I've got to go back and I've got to do this over and over and over. And it's got to be a frustrating life. But, the blessings to know that once you accept Christ, when you say, Lord Jesus, come into my life.

He did it. He sealed that heart. There's nothing going to take it away from you. What a blessing. What a blessing. Verse 14.

Who is given as a pledge of our inheritance with a view to the redemption of God's own possession to the praise of his glory. So, he's given us a pledge.

Verses 13 and 14. This is a great message. Having also believed the time of sealing can cease at the time of our believing. The seal indicates possession and security.

The guarantee of security of our salvation. Guaranteed. Now, the pledge it's talking about here in 14 is a down payment of good things to come.

[5 : 21] And, of course, we know what those good things to come is. As we go ahead and read through the rest of the New Testament and then the Revelations, that pledge is that eternal life.

We have new life in Christ right now. Now, when he comes at the second coming, there's a whole new thing that's going to happen. We'll meet him in the air and have that life and be seated with him.

When he comes into tribulation, we will be with him. And when things are over, eternal life. Holy eternal life. What a blessing that is.

So, now let's get to chapter 2. That's what I really want to deal with today. And chapter 2 starts out by saying, We are dead in our trespasses and sins in which you formerly walked according to the course of the world and the prince of the power of the air.

Satan. We, too, all formerly lived in the lust of our flesh and were by nature children of wrath. Were we?

[6 : 30] Yeah. Yeah, we were. We all have that old life that we had before. Some bad, some not so bad. But no matter how bad, when we accept Jesus Christ into our life, it's been done.

It's a done deal. I've ministered at prisons before. And this is a hard concept for those guys to understand.

They say, but Ron, you don't understand what I did. Well, you're right, because I don't understand how you could do what you probably did.

But, are you telling me today that you believe what this scripture says? Are you telling me that you're accepting Jesus Christ into your life today?

And if they actually do that and turn to Christ and accept him, I say, guys, it's a done deal.

[7 : 36] You're saved. Read those verses in verses 13. You've been sealed. You've been sealed.

Nobody's going to take that seal away from you. And that's a hard concept. It's even a hard concept for us out here today. For some of us to believe that even though I'm a sinner, I can give that up.

God will take it. Because we go on to the next verse. And what's the first word there? We were dead in our trespasses.

And the sins in which you formerly walked, attorting to the course of the world. But, that is a small word. And God uses these small words to make a big, big difference when we're reading the Bible. Because he's talking about how bad we are. We were all sinners. We went along with Satan and the things of the world.

[8 : 42] But, but, God being rich in mercy because of his great love, which he loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ.

By grace you have been saved. We've been reconciled. We've been brought back. God created us with a relationship.

We lost that relationship all the way back there in the Old Testament. Adam and Eve, they ruined that. That fellowship was lost. But when we are reconciled, that fellowship, we gain that fellowship back with God.

And it's great. And that's, that's definitely an amen. I know this is not an amen crowd.

It never has been. Some of the churches too, man, they would be, amen, amen, brother. And we're not that. I realize that. And I've never been that way myself when I'm sitting in a crowd.

[9 : 48] Yeah. Sometimes I feel like saying amen, but I don't. Why don't I? I don't know. I've been to a lot of churches. Well, especially the black churches.

Yeah. And they get excited. They get excited. And sometimes I'm thinking, well, why, why don't we get that excited? I don't know. Anyway, there's nothing wrong with, with it, with enjoying the Lord and saying amen when it's necessary.

Yeah, there you go. But like I said, I'm not that type either. I'm, I'm kind of laid back and, uh, I say it in here, but I don't say it.

I don't say it out loud. So we've been reconciled. We've been brought back. The problem with reconciliation is, is not on the Lord's side. I mean, he's not the problem.

Who was the problem? Yeah, we are. So the two words, but God shows, uh, show where the initiative was in the product, the providing of the salvation, the rebellion and rejection.

[11 : 04] That was on our side. God is doing his job. He's offering us reconciliation. Reconciliation. And, uh, we have to take it. But because he was rich in mercy towards us and had great love for us, he provided a way for us to return to him.

Again, wow. In Romans chapter five, verses six and eight, the extent of God's love is shown in the fact that Christ died for men in whom there was nothing that invoked that love.

we, we, we were away from God. We'd fallen. There's nothing that we could do that would invoke that love that God wants the way we were.

We had to have that reconciliation and that had to mean we had to see ourselves as a sinner. And man, that is tough. Hey, I'm as good as anybody else.

What are you talking about? So, the verse reads, for a while, uh, the verse is read, for while we are still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly.

[12 : 10] And that while we were sinners, Christ died for us. And that's a hard concept to understand also, isn't it? Why would he do that? Absolute love.

Absolute love. God had a plan. Though we greatly offended and sinned against God in his rich mercy and great love offered forgiveness and reconciliation to us, he does not ever, uh, he does to every repentant sinner.

He does that. If we repent of our sins, he's merciful. He accepts us. My laws, God's laws, and judgment against you have been satisfied when you accept Jesus Christ into your life.

It's all new. Many times in life we offend someone with sin and we try to confess and make up for what we did. But many times we hit a roadblock.

No matter how much we might try to restore that relationship, we cannot produce reconciliation.

And why is that? The only, the only one, only the one that offended can do that because he has to, what?

[13 : 31] He has to forgive you. and that's tough. So only the offended can offer forgiveness and only total forgiveness can bring reconciliation because that's what the Bible says.

When we accept Christ, he has forgiven us of all our sins. All of our sins. this is what God did for us through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Above all else, a spiritual dead person needs to be made spiritually alive. That is what salvation gives, spiritual life. So to encourage believers who doubt the power of Christ in their lives, Paul reminds them that if God was powerful enough to give us a spiritual life, he is certainly able to sustain that life, to be able to provide us to live in this Christian life, to read the Bible, to grow, to be sanctified, and to continually grow.

And it's an ongoing process. We're not there today. I know I'm not. It's something that comes each and every day. Paul calls this walking in newness of life in Romans 6.4.

We can now understand spiritual truth and desire spiritual things because we now have God's nature. We now can seek Godly things from above rather than things that are on the earth in Colossians 3.2.

[15 : 05] Because we now have God's nature. That's an amen too, right? We didn't have God's nature before. We had our old worldly nature.

And where did that get us? So Paul calls this walking in new life in Romans 6.4. We can now understand the spiritual truth and desire spiritual things because now we have God's nature.

We now seek God to the things from above rather than the things on earth. Galatians 2.20 says, I've been crucified with Christ and there's no longer the I who live but Christ lives in me.

In the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and delivered me upon myself. So it's no longer I that live.

That seems kind of strange, doesn't it? Now if it's not I who live, who is it? Well, it's a new it's a new me because of what Jesus Christ did.

[16 : 13] And when people accept Christ in their life they do it in a different way. Some people, man, it just hits them and they man, they're just so they're just so full of life they want to go out on the street and praise God and tell everybody what just happened to me.

If you just accept Jesus Christ and they get out on the street and people look at them and go, whoa. Other people they accept Jesus Christ in their life and they know there's a change and sometimes you can't tell the difference right off.

Right off you can't tell the difference. But sometimes your old friends they're going to notice the difference.

so a lot of times the crowd that you used to run with it's going to be a gradual thing where you're not going to be running over that crowd because the more you get into this Christian life the more you get into the Bible the more you see what Christ has done for you wow what was I doing with these people?

maybe I need some new people maybe I need some people like you guys all you nice Christians but we do need we do change and we start changing the people we run with we talk with we go to church we need new people and that's how friendships start right?

[17 : 52] you're out doing something and you meet people and when you come to church you need new people and hopefully when you come to church you meet people who are true Christians and they can lead you into that sanctification that we're talking about which is growing in the Lord okay he has raised us up together Ephesians 2 6 he has raised it up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus he has raised us up we just saw in verses 4 and 5 that God mercifully gives us life together with Christ we need we now see he raises us up with him raises us up out from among those who were spiritually dead in trespasses and sins this is spiritual resurrection of the believer in Christ Colossians 2 12 having been buried with him in baptism in which you were also raised up with him through faith in the working of God raised him from the dead when

Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead the first instruction was unbind him and let him go John 11 44 a living person cannot function while wrapped in the trappings of death now because of our new citizenship through Christ we are no longer of this present world we're no longer wrapped up in it in the sphere of sinfulness and rebellion we have been rescued from spiritual death and given spiritual life Colossians 3 1 since you have been raised with Christ keep seeking the things above where Christ is seated at the right hands of God we have been raised to live a new spiritual life together with him and the power of the Holy Spirit we are also seated with him after Stephan finished his sermon what did he see in

Acts chapter chapter seven before the Sanhedrin they were cut to the quick and they began gnashing their teeth at him but being full of the Holy Spirit he gazed intently into heaven and saw Jesus what was Jesus was he standing or sitting at that point he was standing Jesus was standing at the right hand of God as though he was pleading with outstretched arms for his chosen people Israel to repent and believe in him so that he might come back and establish their millennium kingdom but instead of repenting and show their hatred for stoning Stephen to death he was standing as a priest who was sustaining Stephen at that point and that was the job of the priest they stood in that tabernacle for the nation of Israel there was no terror in there there was nothing in there except the things of

God's tabernacle that priest could come in once a year there was nothing there to sit on so they stood and they pleaded to God for the nation of Israel and they did that on a yearly basis and all the references to his position in heaven have him sitting or seated at the right hand of God his seated position is an indication that his work of redemption is finished it's done right those priests it was not done it was done on a yearly basis kept going and going and going Jesus now is seated in the heavenlies with God his job is done all we have to do is believe it and not only believe it which is faith but faith is no good without action you can have all the faith in the world but if you don't act upon that faith it's not like having faith at all

I go out there this afternoon and drive my car and I have faith that that car will stop when I pump on the brake I know it will but if I don't push on that brake it's not going to do me any good so faith requires action show the surprising riches in Ephesians 2-7 in order that in ages to come he might show the surpassing riches of his grace and kindness towards us in Christ Jesus believers will be an internal display of the grace of God God's going to use us wow what an awesome thing that is it's also an awesome thing for us to think about that God is going to use us is that a good thing how do people see us when we're out

[23 : 21] I know how they see us here this morning all of us see each other as Christians we're good people we love each other but how about Monday when I go to work what's my co-workers

going to see in our family what's our children going to see what's my wife going to see so we're on display God uses us but we have to be usable we have to be usable this verses eight and nine these are not blessings to speak but they're statements of fact that we need to look at we just can't skip over these verses these are great verses I mean these these verses have been repeated how many times probably these verses and John 3:16 are the most popular verses that you're ever going to hear but does people really believe what they're saying verses eight and nine are by the grace you have been saved through faith and not that of yourself it is a gift of

God not as a result of works that no one should boast relative to salvation these two verses along with John 16 again are probably the most quoted verses salvation is of the Lord from the beginning to the end we had nothing to do with it with thinking it up with providing it or with putting it into operation all I had to do was confess as found in Romans 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you shall be saved keeping the Ten Commandments no living by the Sermon on the Mount no taking communion no matter of fact if you're not a

Christian you shouldn't even take communion because what's communion for yeah it's our remembrance of what Christ did for us so if we're not a Christian don't take communion that's that's difficult too I mean okay I grew up in a Methodist church and a Methodist church had communion quite a bit and you know it's very difficult to be sitting in that church you went up to the pew and you sat down and the deacons of the church would come and give you the wine and the bread it's very difficult to sit out there in the audience and they say now it's time for communion all those come up and I'm sitting there by myself whoa so you take communion I took communion all my life and didn't really know what it meant I didn't know what it meant until I was sitting right here in

Grace Bible Church and Pastor Marv said that same thing I just said hey if you don't know Jesus Christ don't do this because it's not going to do you a bit of good this is a remembrance of what Christ did for you so don't take that communion it's not going to be a bit of good church membership ah that's a good thing huh a lot of churches they're talking about church membership you got to join a church you have to do these things to be a good Christian no that's not going to do it baptism wow that's a thing to get into isn't it but a lot of churches have baptism some churches believe hey you're not going to have salvation unless you are baptized other congregations we know that baptism is not what saves you but you need to come and be baptized because that's what it said in Acts chapter two so it's probably not going to work if you don't get baptized okay so I you know that's not going to work giving giving going to do it no giving is not going to do it God doesn't want your money he wants your heart to be willing to give but he's not there counting and seeing who's giving what is that well I'm glad we don't pass a plate here that always bothered me too sitting in the congregation and that plate comes zipping by you you know somebody looking to see how much I put in that plate that this has nothing to do with salvation or your life in the Christians so all these things the only thing a person can do that will have any part in this salvation is exist exercise faith in what Jesus

[29 : 02] Christ has done at the cross and that's everything that we repeatedly say here at grace obviously if salvation is all of grace it is therefore not as a result of works from us is it our effort has nothing to do with it Romans 3:20 says because you by works of the law no flesh will be justified Galatians 2:16 says knowing that the man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ all boasting is eliminated in salvation there's nothing to boast about hey you can't say hey I gave up all these things ah no that's not going to you Romans 3:27 says when there is boasting we we can't we are not in control when we're boasting we're not in control of this thing we think we are but we're not in 1

Corinthians 1:31 says let him who boasts in what the Lord if you want to boast boast in the Lord Jesus Christ has done this for me for me nevertheless good works does have an important place as Paul is quick to affirm in verse 10 and what a verse this is we are created for good works Ephesians 2:10 for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in him wow wait a minute we just read chapter verses 8 and 9 it said it's not of works all right now I'm confused okay we were created for good works the Greek word workmanship used only here in Romans here and in Romans 12:0 what has been made denotes a work of art or mastership this is something that only God can do this differs from the human works in Ephesians 2:9 we are God's workmanship because we were created in Christ Jesus as seen in verses 6 and 7 the purpose of this creation is that believers will do good works

God's workmanship is not achieved by good works but is the result of in good works there's a difference there a skilled workman can select a piece of scrap metal from a junk box chuck it in his lathe and turn out a vital part for a machine he is constructing and well I can only think one thing when I see that and

Joyce and I was up in Amish country here for our anniversary in July we went to a place called Werther Museum and this man over the years had a whole museum of nothing but locomotives on display this man had a little carving knife that's all he ever used some of these trains had over 2,000 pieces made out of all kinds of hardwood and ivory and the ivory was the wheels the cylinders that was on these locomotives and they actually moved what a creation that was what a thing that this man and we seen things you know what he made one of these trains out of this train was probably that long locomotive and the thing behind it the coal car showed a picture what he made it out of and it was a stump that he dug out of the ground

Mike Elfers and I was in Amish country years ago I'm sorry I shouldn't talk about Mike this morning but we had a scrap yard wood scraps and Mike saw this thing sitting over there and he saw that and he said what are you going to do with that old piece of scrap I mean it had knobs on it and you know how old skirly stumps are he said nothing we're going to throw it away burn it probably Mike said can I have it he said Ron can I put it in your trunk I said sure Mike six months later Mike came to my door he had this big plaque two frogs facing each other on lily pads he carved that from that piece of junk just like that guy did he had a vision he looked at that thing and said

[34 : 32] I see two frogs it's amazing and Mike did that for me he also did for others here in the congregation he's made other things I know for other people in the congregation Mike had that ability he could look at something and make it I'm a craftsman I got a workshop over my house I make all kinds of things I can't look at something and say whoa I'm going to make that I got to have plans I got to have a ruler a measuring stick all these things but for somebody to sit down and just start carving and make something that's beautiful anyway that's off the subject I guess but we are his workmanship we are his workmanship so God can also take a sinner from the scrap pile of human humility and recreate him in Christ

Jesus to become a member of his glorious body we are not saved by works but we have been saved for good works which God has made beforehand he did this in order that or to the end that what it's no good if we don't do something with it so he created us for good works so that we would walk in these good works how do we do that now everybody walks how they walk and sometimes the things we do are the good works he is talking about but what are these good works well it's the rest of Ephesians wow chapter 4 is just loaded of things you accept crazy as Christ in your life now start doing something 1st Corinthians the same way chapter 12 what are you going to do about it start doing these things all the

Paul's writings is beautiful writings because he gives you the doctrine of salvation and he concludes it with now what are you going to do you've got this what are you going to do that's what the good works are so you can't measure the good works it's just something that happens and it happens from your heart and if I guess if we really knew the good works we were doing it would probably be the humility of it would put us under because wow I did that whoa and that's not what good works is about so if a person claims to be an artist but has never painted if a person claims to be an orator but has never delivered a speech or if one claims to be a musician but has never made music we have good doubt or good reasons to believe and doubt his claims if you got a guitar on your hand and you can't play it don't tell me you're a musician or a trumpet or anything else and the same thing applies here if one claims to be a new creation in

Christ Jesus created for the purpose of producing good works and never do anything we may have reason to doubt this salvation in first Corinthians 3 9 through 15 Paul talks about some work being done being good precious stones and others only being like wood and hay and stubble there will be tested at the judgment sheet we all will be tested and that's when God is going to say wood hay or stubble or precious stones so God has predetermined and provided good works which he wills to accomplish in and through the mature body of Jesus Christ and we're part of that body aren't we these are clearly listening in the following epistles in order to avoid fruitlessly beating the air we need to know the specific truths revealed to us regarding works and there's no other place that you're going to get it except right here you want to know about good works get into this because it's there it's there we believers are to be people zealous and engaged in good works this does not mean doing the work for

God instead it is God's performing his work in you and through you as seen in Philippians 2:13 for it is God who is at work in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure and 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 Paul talks about the spiritual gifts everyone receives we are to work out these gifts for common good to building up the body of Christ and we see the spiritual gifts not only in 1 Corinthians we also see it in Galatians here in Ephesians and a couple other Paul's writings we all receive spiritual gifts and wow I'm glad that they're not all the same I mean you receive a special gift do you use that spiritual gift you may not even have that spiritual gift but somebody else may come up to you and say hey

[40:28] Ron why aren't you involved in this because you have a spiritual gift I can see that spiritual gift in you why aren't you using it others can see something in you that you can't see maybe and other times we realize that we have a gift and we need to use that gift and whatever it could be and all those things are listed some people have the gift and personality to be and just greeting people and letting them know that they're loved all those type things other people have a spiritual gift in teaching orating whatever the gift is take it and use it because that's what he wants us to do so what are we to do with these good works we need just to we just need to work on them we need to do them Paul has a lot to say about our walking in Ephesians 4:5 and chapters 4 and 5 that you walk no longer just as

Gentiles also walk in the futility of your mind you were formerly darkness but now you are in light in the Lord walk as children of light there's a difference people can see if somebody is walking in darkness people also can see if you are walking in light I mean it shows it actually shows therefore walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called therefore be in timers of God imitators of God and walk in love just as Christ loved you and himself up for you that's a gift that people have therefore be careful how you walk not as an unwise man but as a wise man does people when they see you do they say wow there's a wise therefore being buried with him we were also raised with him so we might walk in the newness of life we were raised with him with a newness of life we've been born again amen that's a word that gets floated around also but man it's a powerful thing we were dead to trespasses and sin

God saw us as no good and now we have a new life in Jesus Christ God sees us just like he sees his son that is something that is so amazing and so hard to understand that God can now look at me as Jesus Christ and sees me that way and yeah he knows I'm going to fall but I love that picture with the sand the only only the one footprint that's because I am carrying you that's what he does so although good works has no part in gaining salvation good works has a great deal to do with living out our salvation salvation produces good works amen thank you