

From Old to New

Ephesians Chapter 2 Introductory Points:

1. In the first part of this chapter Paul explains how and why we are so blessed being related to Jesus Christ.
2. Paul will explain to us God's grace and what motivated God to expend His grace on us.
3. Then we will learn what God wants from us, that what we have rescued us from sin and death.

Outline of Chapter 2

Verses 1-4 A survey or presentation of the world under Satan & Sin
Verses 5-9 Grace under God: free from the word and sin under Jesus
Verses 10-22 Purpose under the Church

Outline of Verses 1-4:

Verse one: Grace found us spiritually dead
Verse two: Found us under the control of Satan
Verse three: Found us under the control of our sin nature
Verse four: God moves in to change us!

The first part of this chapter is so important to realize just how great it is to be a member of the body of Christ; to be a member of the Universal Church; to realize how vitally important it is and how great it is and how phenomenal and how wonderful it is to be a member of The Biblical Church. We ought to be so happy to a member of the Church.

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Ephesians 2:1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, (And you were dead this refers to every person who are changed now in Christ.)

Romans 6:23 **for the wages of sin is death**—this is spiritual death, physical death and eternal death.

This explains why Jesus was conceived without a human father and was born of a virgin. He was born outside of the sin of Adam. This made Him without the inherent sin of Adam. He lived His life without committing any sins, thus qualifying Him to redeem all. He did not sin, He had to live sinless, for if He were guilty of just one sin He could not rescue others who are guilty of sin. A slave cannot buy another slave or for that matter a slave cannot purchase his own freedom. A free person has to free a slave.

But what we are concerned with in this text is *spiritual death*.

1. The word *death* is important, but what is important to us is the adjective describing this kind of death. There are seven types of death in the bible, this is the most important death. The word death occurs in several passages referring to *spiritual death*. Our study in Ephesians 2:1 but also

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all mankind, because all sinned—

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive

2. The word *death*.

Physical death is the Greek word *nekros*. But there is a very important second word for death.

Lets look at the Greek word *thanatos*. First, from the “English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature” by William Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich start defining the Greek word *thanatos* on page 351, and on page 352 under figurative use of the word, the first thing mentioned is **spiritual death** to which everyone is subject.”

Secondly from the Greek Lexicon “The Complete Biblical Library” (six vol) in vol. 3, page 69:

“*Thanatos* in classical Greek includes ‘the act of dying.’ “It also refers to nonphysical death (perhaps spiritual or mental).” Then on page 70: “The moment Adam defied the commandment of God, he sinned and ‘death’ was introduced. This does not mean that he died physically, although this came about later. Instead he was separated from God, though he did not cease to exist. This spiritual death Adam has passed on to all mankind. This condition of death is the curse passed on to all mankind. This condition of death is the curse of humanity (Ephesians 2:5), and by nature all men are spiritually dead (cf Ephesians 2:3). As was true with the first man, all are separated from God by a high and insurmountable wall or fathomless gulf. This separation is the essence of ‘death’.”

Then in a few paragraphs down, this lexicon writes:

“Man is an organic unity of body, soul, and spirit. The separation which brings spiritual death thus has a profound impact on the entire

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being. Therefore physical death is an inevitable consequence of the fall. Those who are spiritually dead can be awakened to spiritual life (Eph. 2:1) and the physically dead to a bodily resurrection (1 Cor. 15:21,22). However, those who die without Christ are eternally dead and have no hope of a future resurrection to life; their destiny is final and unchangeable. The Bible refers to a “second death” (Rev. 20:14) from which no one will be resurrected.”

Next, in “The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology Vol. 1, edited by Colin Brown. Under this discussion of *Thanatos* he talks about *spiritual death*, where he explicitly says: “*Spiritual*” death and “*physical*” death inextricably bound up together, constitute the reality of a life in sin.”

Relating the death Jesus Christ died on the cross and the imputation of all the sins of the world on Him while on the cross, results in the spiritual death of Jesus Christ and **then** the physical death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

While Hermann Cremer in his “Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek does not mention spiritual death under his discussion of *thanatos* he does give an excellent brief description of spiritual death. Especially in saying: “The essence of death, accordingly, does not consist in the extinction of the man, but rather in the fact of its depriving him of what he might have had in and through his life, and thus in forming a distinct antithesis to life, so far as life is to the man a possession and a blessing.”

In summary: when Adam sinned he died spiritually, immediately. And then, **later** he died physically. Both spiritual and physical death are a **result** of sin. “the wages of sin is death.” So, on the cross, Jesus Christ first died spiritually, as did the first Adam, and then He died physically.

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3. Spiritual death is a judgment.

It is a judgment from God on every member of the human race at the point of birth. We were all born physically alive but spiritually dead. Spiritual death is being born into the devil's kingdom. People, the devil is real and he works all the time to destroy our relationship with Jesus Christ. The devil, since the fall of Adam has been the ruler of planet earth. Since we were born, we immediately became citizens of his dark kingdom. So all of us get two citizenships at birth. We were born a citizen of some nation and we were born a citizen of the devil's world. It is spiritual death that qualifies us for the kingdom of Satan. When Jesus said to the Pharisees, "you are of your father the devil," He was referring to their earthly citizenship. He was recognizing the principle of spiritual death and applying it to this religious group of people.

We are all born in spiritual death.

I mention this one first because this is the one that Romans 1-4 is all about. We are all born spiritually dead. The only way of getting out of this citizenship under Satan is by a new birth. A spiritual birth breaks spiritual death.

4. Five points on spiritual death and spiritual life.

- A. There is great failure to realize total depravity and the magnitude of spiritual death.
- B. If you realize that spiritual death means just that! You are Dead! Then you begin to realize that there is absolutely nothing a dead person can do for anything from God.
- C. All production/works even, morality etc. all are classified as dead works because they come from a dead person.

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- D. Therefore there is no system of Law from man or God that can make alive, outside of faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation, that is the Gospel, is not a matter of good or bad, moral or immoral, sinful or sinless. The issue is dead or alive: spiritually dead or spiritually alive! by being born again in Christ.
- E. The only hope of life is to believe in Jesus Christ and be born again and become spiritually Alive! which means we are spiritually alive forever. By the way, physical death is not related to sin, except for the fact that since you were born spiritually dead, and you die, because of the judgment of sin. Jesus said to Martha *"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies."*

- 5. The second type of death is physical death. Physical death is fairly easy to recognize in the Scripture and is well recognized by everyone, though they will not necessarily understand physical death.

Jesus gave one of the most interesting points on physical death to a believer in

Matthew 8:22 But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me; and allow the dead to bury their own dead."

This is what Jesus Christ thought of a funeral for the unbeliever. Jesus asked a believer to follow Him, to which the believer replied, *Lord, I have to go to a funeral, I can't go with you right now* to which Jesus replied, *you come with me now, and let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead*. In other words, the funeral of the unbeliever means nothing to the unbeliever. The only thing that can

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be accomplished at the funeral of an unbeliever is to challenge those who are alive to believe in Jesus Christ.

However the death of the believer is special:

Philippians 1:20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Also: John 11:25; Rom. 8:38; Job 19:25-26; Psa. 23:4; John 19:30.

Physical death is the separation of the soul from the body. The soul departs to either heaven as in the case of the believer, or Hades as in the case of the unbeliever.

6. The third type of death does not occur until eternity begins. The third type of death is called the second death. It is second death after spiritual death. It refers to the final judgment of the unbeliever in which the unbeliever is passed into the Lake of Fire, forever. It is eternal *separation* from God.

So that which breaks up spiritual death for us is regeneration. We are born again. That means we are out from under spiritual death immediately. It also means no second death, ever. So we are through with the judgement types of death. Only the unbeliever is not through with judgment. This is why Hebrews 9:27 says **and inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once**—that is physical death—but **after that the judgment**’ The ‘judgment’ of

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Hebrews 9:27 is the second death. They were judged with the second death, Revelation 20:12-15.

7. The fourth type of death is death in Christ. Through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, the Church Age believer is identified with Christ in His death. This death is in Romans 6:1-13; but mainly:

Romans 6:3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

Romans 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Colossians 2:12 **having been buried** This is every believer. in Jesus Christ, the flesh you, the carnal you, the old man you, died with Jesus Christ and buried **with Him in baptism**, (of the Holy Spirit) **in which you were also raised up with Him** (not the resurrection but New life as a believers.)

through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is not only the guarantee of our future resurrection but also a picture of our new life in Jesus Christ! Unfortunately, not many believers get to experience much of this new life for few walk by faith in the Holy Spirit.

8. Temporal death is the fifth type of death. Only believers can experience this death! This is separation from fellowship with God throughout your life, here on earth. What causes this death? When you stop walking by faith and sin results.

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James 1:15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

Romans 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace

And so many other passages: Romans 6:2, 5, 13; Romans 8:13; 1 Timothy 5:6. This death views a believer as sleeping in Ephesians 5:14 For this reason it says, "**Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.**" Revelation 3:1.

There is hope for this death—just get back to what you were doing before you died—walking by faith—faith in Holy Spirit causes Holy Spirit to put life into you—Romans 8:6. The Spirit is life in Romans 8:13.

9. Faith death! Or dead faith is the sixth type of death.

James 2:26 For just as the body without the spirit (breath of human life) is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

We have studied: *Is your faith the faith God is looking for?* Remember, that the object of faith is the merit of faith, the life of faith. And if your faith is in your works or in anything other than Holy Spirit—who gives life, then your faith is dead.

The James 2:26 passage should be accompanied by Paul's words in

Galatians 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith

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**expressing itself through love. Or faith
working through love!**

It is not only what we do in life that is important but how we do it... If we are not doing it in Spiritual Love then we are nothing. And how do we have Spiritual Love? As the Fruit of Holy Spirit—by Faith in the Holy Spirit.

Put your faith in what you are doing, or your faith is dead!

Put your faith in law, or in good works or in your morality or your knowledge or your service or your charismatic experience then your faith is Dead. It is the Holy Spirit who gives life!

10. Sexual death as in passage in Romans 4 is the seventh type of death. The inability to procreate Romans 4:17-21 and Hebrews 11:11-12. Both Abraham and Sarah were said to be “sexually dead.”

Now, back to our passage, the first verse of chapter 2.

**Ephesians 2:1 And you were dead in your
trespasses and sins**

Please note the two words *trespasses and sins*.

Trespasses is a word that signifies to revolt or refuse subjection to rightful authority. It is more often translated transgressions or rebellion against God. Disobedience against God. It refers to a deliberate violation. It refers to a deliberate violation of God's Word.

Now sins in this passage is in contrast to trespasses in that here the person, *misses the mark of truth*. And on the cross Jesus Christ paid for all these verbs, in all Past, Present and Future sins, they will ever commit.

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When we were unbelievers, we were under the penalty of our sins. This includes personal sins and *inherent*. Inherent sin refers to the fact that every human is born with a sin nature.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all mankind, because all sinned—

**Psalm 51:5 behold, I was brought forth in guilt,
And in sin my mother conceived me**

Because of our ancestry through Adam and his subsequent fall, we inherit his original sin.

This is why every child born, is born under the penalty of sin even though the newborn child has yet to commit a personal sin.

Every human being has a natural sin nature, inherited from our human parents dating all the way back to Adam, the first male in history.

This is why verse 1 states: **and you were dead in your trespasses and sins.** you were born physically alive but spiritually dead.

This is why every person has to be “born again” or “born anew” or “born from above.” This is why everyone has to believe in Jesus Christ in order to be delivered out from under the judgment of our sins. This is why Jesus had to spiritually die on the cross to pay for every ones sins.

Paul makes it clear in Romans 3:23 that all of us **have sinned and fall short of the righteousness of God.**

We will take it up later but even with sins paid for, no one is saved. You must have the Righteousness of God. And the only way that you arrive at the righteousness of God, you must have faith in Jesus Christ.

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Now even though we are born in Christ, even though our sins are paid for on the cross, and even though we have received the perfect Righteousness of God, we still have a sin nature that is prone to committing sins, we commit personal sins.