

Children of Wrath

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

Ephesians 2:2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Ephesians 2:3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest

Chapter 2 explains why we are so blessed being related to Christ.

Paul reminds the readers that they are no longer what they once were; they are no longer connected to sin and its eternal consequences.

We were unbelievers and under the penalty of sins, personal sins and inherent sins! We were descendants of Adam and his subsequent fall. We received inherent original sin. Here is something every one of us should never forget: we have a sin nature from our human fathers and we should be ever so aware of being under the Holy Spirit and therefore able to resist sin. Even though we are in Christ by faith, we still have a sinful nature that is prone to committing sin so we need to fight against it all the time under the power of the Holy Spirit.

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.

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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 falls 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.

Now even though we are born in Christ, even though our sins are paid 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.

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 nouns, 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 sins. 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.

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Ephesians 2:1 And you were spiritually dead in your trespasses

Now in what way is our being spiritually dead manifested? By trespasses and Sins! Trespasses means to violate divine laws. Sins means to miss the mark of God's Laws.

Ephesians 2:2 in which you formerly walked...

in which you formerly walked. This refers to time before you were saved. It refers to the pattern of your life, referring to how you lived before your life was changed. This is used to speak of how the groom found us in our early life. As **spiritually dead in our trespasses and sins**. In other words, our groom found us in the gutter! And He came to us in grace! Not only in the gutter but with the one who was an enemy of the groom, the Devil. This is the way we were found before salvation.

Ephesians 2:2 in which you formerly walked...

There are three words in the Greek in the New Testament for walking and all three are translated "*walking*." Two of them are here in Ephesians 2:2-3.

1. The word in verse 3 is translated **among whom also we all formerly lived**. The King James translates this word with "conversation:" **we all had our conversation in times past**. It was translated this way because in social life people would talk to one another. The word here means to conduct one's life in this way or that.
2. Then in our study in Ephesians 2:2 we have the familiar word "walked." The word is often used by Paul to refer to the life style of the Christian.

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3. The third word used, says “to walk in a rule of life,” or “to walk by rule.” It means to follow a definite course of action. As in Philippians 3:16 *to which we have attained (walked)*.

Summary:

1. Conversation
2. Formerly walked
3. To walk according to a rule of life

Ephesians 2:2 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of air,

This is a reference to the Devil. The Devil is the leading fallen angel. He seeks to rule the world. He is opposed to freedom among humans. But believers are above the devil.

In Colossians 2:9-17 Christ was in authority over the Devil and those who believe in Jesus Christ are over the Devil. Isaiah 14:12ff makes it clear that the ruler of sin is the Devil, for he was the first to sin against God.

Ephesians 2:2 also makes it clear that the Devil is the leader over disobedience of every unbeliever on earth.

Ephesians 2:2 ...of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Believers are constantly seeking to devour everyone. The origin of sin was a simple act of disobedience. First of Satan himself in Isaiah chapter 14 and then of Eve in Genesis chapter 3.

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But not only did the Devil lead us into sin, Grace also found us under the control of the Sin Nature of mankind.

Grace found us spiritually dead in verse one. Grace found us under the control of Satan one in verse two. Grace found us under our own sin nature, verse three.

Prior to our conversion to Christ, we used to walk and live according to the standards of:

1. The course of this world, the standards and values of unregenerate humans.
2. The prince of the power of the air—Satan is the author and promoter of sin.
3. The desires and lust of our flesh and wrath of our flesh.

**Ephesians 2:3 among them we too all formerly
lived in the lust of our flesh**

1. Every believer was once among unbeliever type lust and wrath.
2. This is where God's grace found each one of us.
3. Every unbeliever has rejected the gospel so that a vacuum is now created in his soul.
4. Every unbeliever is now controlled by his (her) sin nature.
5. What is so important and fearful in not believing in Jesus Christ and staying in your sins. You take the consequence of eternal death which is eternal torment. Luke 16:23-28 and Revelation 14:9-11, in which verse 11 says **and the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever**. Also Revelation 20:10-15.

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Among them we too all formerly lived in the lust of our flesh. This word “formerly” is an important *Aorist Passive Indicative*. The Greek word is interesting. It generally means “to turn or to turn back,” but here it means “**to conduct in living ones life.**” “Christians once lived their lives selfishly like the rest of the world. Now, however, in Christ they conduct themselves in a way appropriate to living in fellowship with the Holy God” the Complete Biblical Library, Vol. 1 page 248. This is so important to everyone of us. We are to strive to live our lives in a way that is glorifying of Christ. The *passive* voice means that we receive over a period of time to live a certain way. This is used to describe a pattern of social life, to live in the sense of practicing certain principles, it means to have a pattern of behavior or pattern of conduct. Everyone of us should live in a life pattern that comes to us from our living for Christ. This is the pattern we receive from the Holy Spirit. The *indicative* mood is the reality of our life pattern or life style under the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 2:14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing.

Philippians 2:15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world.

Ok, everyone who believes in Jesus Christ is blameless and innocent before God, **but** believers can live their lives as though they are not blameless. You want to live your life as *proving* that you are blameless and innocent.

One verse I love, about you and I and our relationship with God is:

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Isaiah 42:16 I will lead the blind by a way they do not know, In paths they do not know I will guide them, I will make darkness into light before them And rugged places into plains, These are the things I will do, and I will not leave them undone”

Ephesians 2:3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lust of our flesh.

This refers to the sin nature’s lust pattern. The lust pattern of our sin nature.

Our Sin Nature

(this comes from R.B. Thieme; Lewis Chaffer; The complete Biblical Library; Zane C. Hodges; Hal Lindsey)

1. Every human being (except Jesus) is born with a sin nature.
2. The mind set on what the flesh desires is controlled by the sin nature, while those who set their mind on the Holy Spirit set on what the Spirit desires. The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to what God desires nor can it do so.
3. The Bible calls us with sin nature by different nomenclature.
 - A. The flesh Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 2:3 and many other passages.
 - B. The old man Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:9.
 - C. The word ‘carnal’ Romans 7:14; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3.
 - D. The ‘heart’ Jeremiah, 17;9 Matthew 12:34-35; Mark 7: 21-23.

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4. The desires of the flesh, include many activities of the sinful nature in Galatians 5:19-21
5. Human Nature refers to the desires of humans. While sin is the breaking of the Laws of God, breaking the laws of God are called transgressing or right out sin. The flesh cannot obey God.
6. The sin nature is that part of the essence of the soul acquired originally by Adam's fall, and subsequently acquired by us at the point of physical birth. It is the center of the soul's rebellion toward God.
7. Sin is described as rebellion against God.

Jeremiah 28:16 therefore thus says the Lord, 'Behold I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This year you are going to die, because you have counseled rebellion against the Lord.'

8. Sin is described as disobedience to God.

Romans 5:19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

Also Ephesians 2:2-3.

Ephesians 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Colossians 3:5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to

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immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

Colossians 3:6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience,

Hebrews 2:2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience receive a just penalty,

9. **Sin is described as unbelief** Hebrews 3:7-19.

Hebrews 3:19 so we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief

10. Sin can prevent prayers from being heard by God. Jeremiah 7:1-16
Psalm 66:18-19, Isaiah 1:10-15.

1 Peter 3:7 You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

11. The sin nature is that aspect in man that makes him rebellious against God. When we speak of the sin nature we refer to the fact that we have a natural inclination to sin; given the choice to do God's will or our own we will naturally chose to do our own thing. Mankind is naturally sinful. Sin is part of our very fiber. Everyone has a sin nature and it affects every part of our being. Think about it:

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no one has to teach a child to lie or to be selfish! But we go over and over to teach our children to tell the truth and to put others first, to be good and honest. Every child has a sinful nature. David regretted that he was born with a sin nature.

Psalm 51:5 Behold I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.

And

Psalm 58:3 The wicked are estranged from the womb; these who speak lies go astray from birth.

12. This is the doctrine of total depravity. Everyone of us has gone astray. Isaiah 53:6. Paul's trouble is that he is all too human a slave to sin. Romans 7:14; He was by nature a slave to the law of sin Romans 7:25.

1 John 1:8 if we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us

13. We do not practice to sin, it is not a theory to sin it is by our nature. It is our very fiber to sin!
14. The question: Where did the sin nature come from? First Scripture says that God created humans in the image of God, without a sinful nature.

Genesis 1:27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

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But, man and woman disobeyed God. They made a decision to go against God! When they made a decision to disobey God, this was the making of sin. The result to disobey God resulted in three things.

First they died, spiritually;

Second then they immediately began a sin nature, and

Three they sinned against God.

Genesis 2:17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat from it, for the day that you eat from it dying you shall die.

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

We each acquire the sin nature through birth. Psalm 51:5; 1 Timothy 2:13-14—this is why man is born spiritually dead. When they had children, Adam's sinful image and likeness of sin was passed along to his offspring. From generation to generation the sin nature was passed down to all members of humanity race by means of the males.

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

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

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Then

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

15. Two other consequences of the sin nature are developed.

First: mankind has hostility toward God

Second: mankind are ignorant of the Truth of God. These are told to us in

Romans 8:7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God , for it is not even able to do so,

Romans 8:8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

16. Basically the essence of the sin nature is in four parts.

First: We have an area of weakness. The area of weakness produces all personal sins. Three types of personal sins come from our sin nature: (1) mental (2) verbal (3) overt.

Second: The sin nature has an area of strength. The area of strength produces human good, which is in contrast to divine good. Isaiah 64:6 and Romans 8:8.

Third: There is a lust pattern in the sin nature. Romans 7:7; Ephesians 2:3. You have approbation lust as the basic concept, this is the basic motivation of life power lust, materialist lust, sex lust, etc.

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17. The sin nature has trends. Antithetical trends toward Lasciviousness and asceticism. One is as bad as the other.
18. The only person in history who did not have a sin nature Jesus Christ. This is because of His virgin birth which caused Him to be born without a sin nature. He did not commit one sin, therefore He was able to go to the cross and pay for the sins of the world. He was the only one who lived Holy and righteous to pay for the cross.

Acts 3:14 but you disowned the Holy and Righteous One.

He was then qualified to pay for every person in history.

2 Corinthians 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

19. Divine judgment solves the problem of the sin nature. This was in judgment from God the Father on Jesus Christ on the cross, where Christ is judged for our sins on the cross. The sins of all members of the human race are poured out on Jesus Christ on the cross and judged. 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:23.

There is phase 2 judgment in our Christian lives where when a believer sins, he can judge himself and go back to faith in the Holy Spirit 1 Corinthians 11:31; Galatians 3:1-3; Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 2:5.

20. Sin was paid for on the cross, but mankind is still not ready to be saved. Righteousness was required by God for salvation. There is no works that can make one righteous. The only way to gain Righteousness is by God; by faith alone in Christ alone.

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Ephesians 2:8 for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves,, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

21. We are now saved, we are now with God's righteousness but we do not lose our sin nature even though we are saved. We still sin, but now we have the power of God by the Holy Spirit to allow us to stay away from sin.
22. The sin nature is not found in the resurrected body of the believer.
1 Corinthians 15:56; Philippians 3:21; Colossians 3:4;
1 Thessalonians 5:23

Romans 6:11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.