

MEMBERS MEETING (8:45 only)

THANK ERIC & ANNE SHELLY

INTRODUCE

Well, if you have your Bibles, and I hope you do,

- please grab them and turn to Ephesians chapter 2.
- You can open a phone or a tablet to Ephesians 2,
- or you can use one of the hard-backed black bibles
 - under every single chair.
 - You'll find Ephesians 2 on page **976**.

INTRODUCTION: WHAT HAPPENED?

What happens to sane, educated, intelligent human beings

- that would make them suddenly decide
- to wake up early
- on one of their days off
- and come to church?

What is it that clicks in a person that makes them come...

- and sing out loud,
- or raise their hands,
- or get on their knees,
- or pray,
- or take notes,
- or weep?

What is it that happens to sane, ordinary human beings...

- who one day are normal...
- and then something switches in us,
 - breaks in us,
 - unleashes in us...
- and all-of-a-sudden we have a passion
- that drives our lives
- for a God we've never seen?

What happened to us?

What happened to me?

- Listen, I wasn't a church kid.
- I didn't grow up in this.
- What happened to me?
 - I was a normal 16-year-old kid...
 - minding my own business.
- I did normal 16-year-old kid stuff.
 - I talked like a normal kid.
 - I hung out with normal friends.
 - I was normal...

And then the summer before my junior year something happened to me...

- and I became this freakshow!
- I went from being the Homecoming King,
 - to being labeled the Bible boy,
 - cause I was bringing my Bible to school with me.

- I went from being at every party every weekend,
 - to needing a whole new set of friends,
 - cause I just couldn't do what I used to do!
- I went from a respectable, normal kid...
 - to something totally different.

What happened to do all this to me?

- Just minding my own business...
- when all of a sudden something switches in me...
 - and I gotta have him.
 - I gotta know more about him.
 - I gotta share about him.
 - I gotta worship him.

What happened to me?

- What is it that clicks in us
- that God becomes the ultimate thing
- in our affections...
- and we just have to worship him?

ILLUSTRATION

That's what our text answers this morning.

Today, I want to show you HOW a WORSHIPPER of God is created.

And let me just tell you,

- Ephesians 2:1-10 is probably
- my favorite section of text
- in the entire Bible.

God has used these verses more in my life than maybe any other passage!
As I told you, I got saved at the end of high school, and that was real, yo.

- Listen, I was in!
- But a few years later,
 - as a sophomore in college at CCU,
- I was sitting in a little Baptist church
 - when the preacher taught the book of Ephesians,
 - just like we are doing at Fathom this Fall.
- And as a 19-year-old guy,
 - I heard him preach this passage...
 - and it broke me.

And listen, I was saved before that day...

- but if there was any questions in my mind,
- this broke it...
 - and I know it's not correct theology,
- but I got saved again...

19-year-old dude...

- with some friends from college,
- and I'm just weeping in a pew.

TRANSITION

So, what happened?

- Well, a worshipper of God was created.
- And this text tells us how.

Now, today our text really has two parts:

- the bad news
- and then the good news.

And I want us to spend a good deal of time with the bad.

Ephesians 2, starting in verse 1.

EPHESIANS 2:1

[1] And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

POINT: DEAD

So, Paul starts by reminding the Ephesians who they used to be.

And here's the bad news.

- He's like, *"Don't you remember who you used to be?"*
- *Don't you remember who you were when God saved you?*
- *You were dead in trespasses and sin."*

And that's my first point: **SLIDE YOU WERE DEAD**

This text teaches us that what Jesus came to do was not tweak us.

Right?

- We weren't immoral people who needed to get moral.
- We weren't sick people who needed to get better.
- We weren't bad people in need of a life-coach.
- We weren't pretty good...
 - and we just needed Jesus to come in...
 - and push us over the edge.

No! **We were dead people. And we needed to be brought back to life!**

This wasn't,

- *"There's still some good in him...I know it."*
- Yo, that's Star Wars...
- that's not the Gospel.

You weren't a bad person in need of some help;
you were a dead person in need of a savior!

ILLUSTRATION: LIFEBOAT

You may have heard that illustration about salvation...

- that we were drowning in the ocean,
- and Jesus was in the lifeboat,
- and he rescues us from certain peril
- by pulling us into the boat?

Cute story.

Not the Gospel.

Why? Because the truth is...

- we aren't out in the water treading water,
- hoping to be rescued!

Think the movie Titanic.

- We aren't Rose...
 - just floating there on that door,
 - selfishly watching Leonardo sink.

- We are face down.
- We have drowned.
- Fish are already starting to nibble at our remains.
- We are at the bottom of the sea!

And Jesus brings us back to life!

Dead people can't do anything to alleviate their deadness, right?

- You've never seen a dead person grab those paddles
- and go "clear!"
- and bring themselves back to life.

No, we can't do anything about our deadness.

EXPLAIN: DEPRAVED

This is who we were...before.

- Back in high school
 - I was a totally normal kid,
 - doing normal things,
 - minding my own business...
- But what I didn't know
- was that I was, in fact, dead.

Y'all, this is the doctrine of Total Depravity.

- You were dead in your sins.
 - Every part of your life tainted by sin...
 - Unable to revive yourself...
 - Depraved...

And the doctrine of Total Depravity teaches that...

- sin is not so much an ACTION...
- as it is a CONDITION.

Alright?

ILLUSTRATION: SICK

So, you don't have COVID...

- because you cough
- or sneeze
- or have a fever.
- You cough and sneeze and have a fever
- because you have COVID.

So too, you aren't a sinner because you sin...

you sin because you're a sinner.

- It's your dead condition.
- We are depraved.

EXPLAIN: PUSH BACK

Now, some push back, saying,

- *"That makes it sound like we aren't capable of anything good...*
- *like we're all a bunch of moral monsters.*
- *And I know that's not true.*
- *I've done plenty of good."*

And you probably have!

Listen, being totally depraved doesn't mean...

- we are all as bad as we could be...
- or that we commit all sin all the time...
- or that non-Christians can't do "good" things...

But it does mean we are dead!

ILLUSTRATION: CORPSES

John MacArthur uses this illustration:

Say you have 20 dead corpses on a battlefield.

- Some may look worse than others. Right?
 - Some may be severely damaged,
 - barely recognizable anymore.
 - Others may show little to no signs of damage.
 - Some may be advanced in the decay process;
 - others may not be.

But in the end, it doesn't matter if they look okay.

The important detail is, they are all dead.

TRANSITION

To quote the great philosopher, Jerry Seinfeld:

"You can't over dry your laundry. Same reason you can't over-wet. You see, when something's wet, it's wet. Same thing with death. Like, once you die, you're dead. Let's say you drop dead and I shoot you. You're not gonna die again, you're already dead. You can't over-die, you can't over-dry."

You were, in your nature, already spiritually dead, and you were rotting:

- You may smell ok for a while,
- and you may even learn to cover up the areas of stench
- in your life with
 - religion
 - or manners
 - or culture,
- but you were dead.

That's the first part of bad news.

But there's more. Verse 2:

BLANK SLIDE

EPHESIANS 2:2

[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—

POINT: DEVIL

Ok, who is the prince of the power of the air? Who is it?

- Yeah, it's Satan.
- It's the devil.
 - You once walked,
 - following the course of this world,
 - following the devil!

SLIDE YOU FOLLOWED THE DEVIL

Now, when we think of those who follow the devil...

- we've always got this picture in our heads
 - of a weird guy...
 - out in the forest...
 - with a tattoo on his head...
 - killing animals.

Like, if I told you to draw me a picture of a worshipper of the devil, that's what you'd draw. Someone spooky like that.

But the Bible just told us we have ALL been there!

- YOU WERE DEAD...and
- YOU FOLLOWED THE DEVIL

This is part of your depravity!

Now, you like, "*surely not me!*" But listen,

- every time you told a little white lie...
- every time you knew the right thing to do but didn't do it...
- every time you said in your heart,
 - "*I'm gonna go my way. I'm gonna do it my way.*"

That is being in league with the enemy. All of us have done this!

EXPLAIN: WEIRD

Now, as I was studying this section of scripture this week, I thought,

- Man, if you're a guest with us,
 - especially if you are new to Christianity...
 - or maybe not a follower of Jesus,
- this could be weird!

The prince of the power of the air...

The sons of disobedience...

The devil....

- *“Do y’all really believe this stuff?”*
- *This sounds more like Stranger Things...*
- *than the Bible and church!”*

Like, do we really believe this stuff?

- Yeah, we do.
- But it just doesn’t look like we tend to think about.
- It’s not that creepy guy in the woods killing cats.

Cause, listen, Satan is smarter than that!

- He doesn’t need to do those spectacular things...
- because he’s not trying to get you to believe in that!

Satan’s main objective...

- is capturing the loyalties of men and women
- and diverting them away from the worship of God!

He wants to get you to worship something other than Jesus, and he’s won!

- He wants you to love something other than Jesus...
- and that thing will ultimately kill you!

TRANSITION

YOU WERE DEAD.

YOU FOLLOWED THE DEVIL.

One more.

Anyone like, “Gosh, I wish I had skipped church today?”

- Don't worry...
- one more piece of bad news,
- and then we come to the good...the best news!

Verse 3:

EPHESIANS 2:3

[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.

POINT: WRATH

- YOU WERE DEAD
- YOU FOLLOWED THE DEVIL
- And now **SLIDE** YOU DESERVED WRATH

Did you know that apart from Christ, you and I were Children of wrath?

- You don't hear that a lot in church anymore.
- It's not super popular.
- You don't hear worship songs about it, right?
 - “Your wrath, O Lord...
 - burns me to a crisp.”
 - Lifting your hands to that?!? NO!

And listen, if you're my age or younger, this idea is actually offensive.

You're like,

- *"Pastor, you shut up!"*
- *I'm a rainbow.*
- *I'm a snowflake.*
- *My momma told me that I was unique and special...*
 - *just like everyone else."*

No, you're just like everyone else!

- Because of our sin,
- and because of our rebellion against God,
- we all deserve wrath.

APPLICATION

Before we go on to verse 4, we've gotta let this sink in:

We deserve the wrath of God.

- And we've forgotten this.
- We've forgotten it.

You see, a lot of times—I think—we try to jump right to the good news of the gospel without grappling the bad news.

- *"Just get to the part about Jesus.*
- *Stop dwelling on this."*

But every doctor knows...

- that if you misdiagnose the disease,
 - you'll mis-prescribe the cure.
- If you don't really understand the problem,
 - you'll never really embrace the cure.

The great preacher, Charles Spurgeon said:

SLIDE *“The reason we think too lightly of the Savior is we think too lightly of sin. Only he who has stood before his God...feeling the rope of God’s judgment about his neck, will be the man to weep for joy when he is pardoned, to hate the evil which he has been forgiven of.”*

BLANK SLIDE

TRANSITION

As evangelicals,

- we get so geeked out on the good news,
- that we sometimes forget the bad news.

But 20 years ago,

- in that little Baptist church,
- when I heard this text preached,
- and I realized how helpless and hopeless my situation was...
 - that I was totally depraved!

And then I heard what comes next...

- worship EXPLODED in my heart!

So, look at verse 4. Gah...I love these verses!

I’m gonna read the whole bit

EPHESIANS 2:4

[4] But God,

Wait...stop.

The great theologian, John Stott, calls those...

- the greatest two words ever spoken!

But God.

- All of that stuff was true.
 - You were dead.
 - You followed the devil.
 - You deserved the wrath of God.
- You were totally depraved...

BUT GOD...

EPHESIANS 2:4-10

[4] But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, [5] even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—[6] and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

POINT: ALIVE

- You know why worship explodes from the Christian?
- You wanna know what happened?
- You wanna know what happened to me...
 - just minding my own business...
 - and then BAM,
 - a different Chris,
 - wrecked for the Gospel...
- what happened?
- This happened!

Let me give us three counterpoints to the bad news from this text.

Remember the bad news:

- YOU WERE DEAD...
- you were dead, but now, verse 5,
- **SLIDE YOU'RE MADE ALIVE**

GOSPEL

On the cross Jesus became our sin.

- He died a sinner's death.
- He was treated by God like he was
 - a follower of Satan,
 - a son of disobedience,
 - a child of wrath.
- He bore OUR sin in OUR place,
- So that WE could be made alive!

Remember, dead people can't do anything about their deadness...

- But when Jesus died on the cross,
 - he undid our deadness...
 - he paid for the damages...
 - to make us alive!
- He lived the life we were supposed to live,
- and then died the death we were condemned to die.

Jesus did not merely die FOR us; he died INSTEAD of us.

So, YOU WERE DEAD but YOU'RE MADE ALIVE.

POINT: CHRIST

Second, YOU FOLLOWED THE DEVIL.

But now, verse 6, **SLIDE YOU'RE SEATED WITH CHRIST**

Now, notice something here.

- In verse 6, notice the verb tense...
- he raised us up with him and SEATED us with him.
 - It doesn't say he WILL seat us.
 - It says we already ARE seated.

Actually, this entire passage seems to be in the past tense...

Now, this needs a theological explanation.

EXPLAIN: POSITIONAL SANCTIFICATION

So, just for a moment, let's do some theology work.

- When we talk about sanctification...
 - the process that begins when we get saved,
 - and ends when we die
 - when we are made perfect in Christ.
- That in-between process is called sanctification.

But sanctification has two dimensions to it.

- We talk about PROGRESSIVE sanctification,
 - day by day,
 - slowly,
 - over the course of a lifetime,
 - growing up to maturity in Christ.

But the second dimension is called POSITIONAL sanctification.

- And that's what Paul's talking about here.
 - POSITIONALLY...
 - when Christ saved me,
 - I was seated with Christ.
 - I am not there yet
 - as I progress in this life,
 - but positionally,
 - it is like I am already there!

What that means,

- is that in the instant that God saved me...in God's eyes,
- I was then seated with Christ
- at the place of honor around God's throne.

APPLICATION

Why does this matter?

Well, it means I cannot earn any more of his favor.

- Not if I gave a billion dollars...
- or prayed 4 hours every day...
- or read my bible cover to cover...
- or managed to go a whole decade and not sin once!

I am already there, positionally sanctified...

- This means I don't move up or down
- in God's affections
- based on my performance.

ILLUSTRATION: GOOD WEEK/BAD WEEK

It's easy to think our position with God is determined by how we're doing!

Like, when I've had an awesome week:

- I just read my Bible every day...
- And I shared Christ with three people...
- And I was super-nice to my wife,
 - even when she was a jerk to me...
- And I was really patient with my daughter...

It was just an awesome week. And I can think,

- oh man God must be so pleased with me right now...
- I mean just look at my week!

But then I can have a bad week...

- Like, I didn't even pick up my Bible...
- And I didn't share Christ,
 - in fact, I cussed one guy out while driving
 - and probably drove him further from Christ
 - cause I've got a Fathom sticker on my car...
- And I was a jerk to Maryse...
- And I just blew up at Harper...

Listen, it's easy to think that when I've had a bad week...

- I'm down a few notches...
- God's displeased and disappointed with me...
- I'm less in his grace than on my awesome weeks.
- I can think that.

TRANSITION

But all this means is I don't understand the Gospel.

- You WERE seated with Christ.
 - This means that you were put in that position
 - BEFORE you did anything to earn it.
- You aren't seated with Christ based on your record!
- You're only there based on HIS record.
- And that means, you are secure.

POINT: GRACE

And that all moves to my last point.

- Remember, YOU DESERVED WRATH...
- but now, **SLIDE YOU'RE GIVEN GRACE**

Verses 8 and 9 once again: [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Gosh, this is exactly what we said in week 1 of Ephesians.

- It's God who saves you.
 - He chose you
 - and he called you
 - **YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED!**

It certainly wasn't you who saved you.

- It wasn't even kinda a cooperation,
 - like God reached halfway down,
 - and you reached out and met him halfway.
- No. **This is not your own doing!**

You know why this is so important?

The text tells us... **so that no one may boast.**

- If you saved you...
 - or you even played a part in saving you...
- you've got something to boast about.

You can stand before God, and he ask you,

“Why should I let you into heaven?”

- And if YOU did it, you can legit say to him,
 - *“Well, let me tell you why, God...”*
 - *I did this...and I did that.”*

But the problem is that no one does that when they get in God’s presence!

No one in the Bible ever comes to God with a swagger!

No matter how awesome they are!

ILLUSTRATION

The prophet Isaiah,

- one of Israel’s greatest prophets,
 - Pretty legit, right?
- when he is confronted by God,
- falls on the ground and says this:

SLIDE ISAIAH 6:5

[5] And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”

He doesn’t go,

- “You seen that prophesizing I’ve been doing down there?”
- You like that?”

The Apostle John,

- who was nicknamed “the one who Jesus loved,”
 - Now, he was only called that in the Gospel of John
 - Which was written by...yeah, John...
- But in Revelation chapter 1...
- John has Christ appear before him...
- in all his glory...
- and the text says that John...
- falls on the ground like a dead man.

That's the response of the sinner saved by grace...

we become worshippers!

CONCLUSION **BLANK SLIDE W/PADS**

You see,

- when you see the bad news,
 - that you are depraved!
 - Utterly dead,
 - lost,
 - and helpless!
- And then you see the good news!
 - the beauty of what God did for you...
 - when he saved you...
 - when you see that...
 - it changes everything!

When that becomes real in you...it turns you into a very odd human being.

You leave the world of normalcy and you go,

- *“God, you are good,*
- *You are good!*
- *I just want to sing.*
- *I just want to pray.*
- *I just want to be near you.”*

It's the heart of a worshipper.

- It's what happened to me...
- it's what's happened to so many of us here.

And some of you feel it happening to you,

- even this morning...
- him squeezing on you...

That's what happened to me more than 20 years ago...

- He was waking me up...
 - to my total depravity...
 - And his great love with which he loved me!

And here's my confidence from this text.

- If that's happening to you...
- If you want God to save you...
- if you have that desire in your heart...
- that's proof that he's already at work in your heart.

Because...

- the one who is dead in trespasses and sins,
- and following the prince of the power of the air,
- and is a child of God's wrath...
- isn't capable of having affections and a longing for God.

So, even that longing is evidence that he's working in you!

And if you're hearing this and you like,

- *"Oh gosh, I've made such a mess of my life..."*
- *I've got so many issues..."*

And you start feeling guilt...

- That's not God guiltning you!
- That's the good gift of conviction from the Holy Spirit.

That's God lovingly saying,

- *"Give those things up!*
- *Come to me!*
- *Let me heal...*
- *let me fix...*
- *let me show you my great love."*

Guilt only remains for a moment.

What happened to me?

- I saw my depravity...
- AND I saw God's great mercy and grace for me.
- And I've never been the same.

This drives my worship. What about you?

Let's pray...

BAPTISM

RESPONSES:

Well, every week at Fathom we respond in 4 ways:

- COMMUNION – THE LORD’S SUPPER
- GIVING TITHES & OFFERINGS – fathomchurch.org/give
- PRAYER - fathomchurch.org/prayer
- SINGING

So, I’m going to read the Words of Institution from the Apostle Paul, we’ll take communion, and then we’ll sing:

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 – WORDS OF INSTITUTION

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[25] In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Love you church, let’s stand and sing together.

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