

“He Made You Alive”  
(Ephesians 2:4-7)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. We’ve seen that if you are walking with the Lord now in faith and repentance, there are spiritual blessings you can know the Lord has given you in eternity.
  - a. You can know that He has always loved you – there was never a time when He didn’t.
  - b. And you can know that He chose you and predestined you to become like His Son that you might enter into heaven as last.
  - c. His choice of you – His election/predestination – should be seen as the outgrowth of His love – His love compelled Him to choose you and to send His Son for you that He might have you as His own child.
  
2. Again, the worth of this blessing can be seen more clearly in its alternative.
  - a. There are those He has not foreloved.
  - b. There are those He has not predestined to life.
  - c. These He foreordained to eternal damnation for their sins.
  - d. He has not given you what you deserve, but life instead of death.

B. Preview.

1. This evening, let’s consider one more spiritual blessing the Lord gave you before you even realized it: His calling – a resurrection from spiritual death to life.
  - a. Paul writes, “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, *He also called*” (Rom. 8:29-30).
  - b. Those whom the Lord loved in eternity, whom He chose to become like His Son, He also in time called with a calling that awakens, quickens and converts.
    - (i) We’re not talking here about the outward call of the Gospel – a call that is given to everyone.
    - (ii) We’re talking about the internal call of the Holy Spirit – something that is given only to the elect.
  
2. Let’s consider three things:
  - a. First, when you were still dead, the Lord called – or raised – you to spiritual life.
  - b. Second, the Lord did not call you to life based on what you did, but purely on the basis of His love.
  - c. And third, like election/predestination, the Lord doesn’t call everyone to spiritual life.

## II. Sermon.

- A. First, let's consider that when you were still dead, the Lord called – or raised – you to spiritual life.
1. We noted last week that when the Lord looked ahead in time to see which of you would choose Him, He saw that none of you would – apart from His grace – because you were all dead.
    - a. The Fall left you spiritually dead – not physically, at least not right away, but dead to the things of the Lord.
    - b. Paul describes what you were like in verses 1-3.
      - (i) You lived like everyone else in the world (v. 2).
      - (ii) Your allegiance was to the devil – “the prince of the power of the air,” “the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience” (v. 2).
      - (iii) You indulged the lusts of your flesh, the desires of your flesh and mind (v. 3).
      - (iv) And you were under God's wrath (v. 3).
    - c. In this condition, the last thing you wanted was God – that's why you never would have chosen Him if He had not intervened.
  2. But He did intervene with His sovereign call: “But God . . . even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus” (vv. 4-6).
    - a. He quickened you – He made you spiritually alive.
      - (i) He joined you to Jesus in a spiritual and vital union.
      - (ii) Being joined to His life, you were raised to life.
      - (iii) It was at that moment that you truly began to turn from your sins and trust in the Lord Jesus.
    - b. This call is different than the call of the Gospel.
      - (i) Jesus has commanded His church to issue the call of the Gospel to everyone.
        - (a) To tell everyone to repent and believe.
        - (b) That if they do, they will find life; and if they don't, they will remain dead.
        - (c) “And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned’ (Mark 16:15-16).
      - (ii) But there is another call – a call that has the power to convert.
        - (a) Not everyone who hears the Gospel call repents and believes; only some do.
        - (b) That's because the Spirit makes the Gospel the power of God to some (Rom. 1:16), but not to others.

- (c) We call this the inward call – the powerful call of the Spirit that raises from death, that brings with it the new birth.
- (d) This is the call Jesus has the authority to give: “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live” (John 5:25).
- (e) This is the life-giving call He called you with, if you are walking with Him this evening in holiness.
- (f) You were dead – and unable to respond to the Gospel – but when you were dead, He made you alive.

B. Second, let’s consider that the Lord did not call you to life based on what you did, but purely on the basis of His love.

1. We’ve already seen that the grounds on which He *chose* some was His love.
  - a. Paul writes in Ephesians, “In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will” (1:4-5).
  - b. This, Paul says, was to magnify His grace in Jesus Christ (v. 6).
2. It shouldn’t surprise you that His love is also the basis on which He calls you to spiritual life.
  - a. Again, it can’t be because He saw that you would choose Him: You were spiritually dead, in love with the world, under Satan’s control, and a child of wrath – you never would have chosen Him.
  - b. Paul tells us plainly that this call came purely from His love.
    - (i) “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)” (vv. 4-5).
    - (ii) The Lord is very clear on this point:
      - (a) He is the One who has saved you from first to last.
      - (b) He wants you to know this that you might give Him all the glory for it.
      - (c) It’s not what you have done – it’s all of Him.

C. Finally, to show you again how infinitely precious this gift is, let’s consider that like election/predestination the Lord doesn’t call everyone to spiritual life.

1. Let’s read Romans 8:29-30 again and try to follow Paul’s reasoning.
  - a. “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.”
    - (i) *If* the Lord foreknew/foreloved you from all eternity, He *also* predestined you to become like His Son.
    - (ii) And *if* He predestined you, He *also* called you.
  - b. Notice that it’s *only* those He *foreloved and predestined* that He *called*. He did not call everyone in this sense.
    - (i) Everyone is to be called by the outward call of the Gospel.

- (ii) But not everyone will be called in the way Paul refers to: with the effectual, powerful, life-giving, inward call of the Spirit.
  - (iii) He only calls those He has foreloved and chosen with this particular call.
- c. Notice also that only those who receive this calling, He justified; and only those who are justified, He will glorify.
- (i) Only those who receive this calling will reach heaven.
  - (ii) Does anything more need to be said about how precious this blessing is?
  - (iii) To have it is to be saved, not to have it is to be forever lost.
  - (iv) And so if you have it, rejoice.
- d. If you don't have this call, realize that only God can give it to you.
- (i) It's not something you can do.
    - (a) If He calls you, you can repent and believe.
    - (b) But if He doesn't, you can't.
  - (ii) The only thing you can do is pray and ask Him to send His Spirit to change your heart, to raise you from spiritual death to life.
  - (iii) You must come to Him because He can give you life: Jesus says, "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes" (John 5:21).
  - (iv) Come to Jesus and live.
2. In light of the fact that today is the day that is generally set apart to mark the coming of Jesus Christ into the world, let's not forget that He is the reason this call is given to anyone.
- a. God out of His immeasurable love sent His Son into the world.
  - b. And the Son through His work made this spiritual resurrection possible.
    - (i) He is the greatest gift the Lord has given – it's not your iPod, your iPad, your iTouch, your car, house, job or anything else you can think of.
    - (ii) He's not only infinitely precious Himself, but the gifts He gives are also immeasurably precious – God's love, His election, and His calling.
    - (iii) At this time of the year, as you give and receive gifts, and as you thank those who give to you, don't forget to thank the Lord for giving you His infinite blessings through Jesus. Amen.

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