

Made Alive In Christ
(Ephesians 2:4-7)

Introduction: A rich man who we have publicly loathed and detested bails us out of jail, adopts us, and makes us heirs of all his riches. We would say, why on earth would anyone do such a thing. Why indeed?! And yet this on an infinitesimal scale is what God did for us. And what I want you to see this evening is that,

Though you were a child of wrath walking in darkness, dead in your sins and destined to perdition, God in His rich mercy made you alive in Christ and saved you from His coming wrath.

I. You Are United With Christ in His Resurrection.

A. You Were Spiritually Dead. (*And you were dead in your trespasses and sins*)

1. As we saw this morning, you were born dead in sins.
 - a. The result of Adam's sin.
 - b. You were **by nature** the objects of God's just wrath.
2. You were corrupted in the whole man.
 - a. Every part of your being was marred by sin.
 - b. There was no part which remained unaffected.
3. You were unable to do anything about your situation.
 - a. There was no power within you to do good.
 - b. You could do nothing to commend yourself to God.

B. But, God Infused New Life into Your Soul. (**But God,**)

1. You were unable to change your situation.
 - a. The text does not say, "But we."
 - b. Rather, "**But God.**"
2. God gave you spiritual life, i.e., the new birth. (*Even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ*)
 - a. "Make alive," or "to impart life" in the NT is almost always the impartation of Christ's life.
 - b. This is regeneration, i.e., being born-again.
 - c. It is a change from spiritual death to life.
 - (i) Spiritual death: includes condemnation (judicial death), pollution, and misery.
 - (ii) Spiritual life includes justification, regeneration, and blessedness.
 - (iii) Here it refers to the impartation of life, not the whole of salvation.
 - d. It is the sovereign work of the Spirit.
 - (i) John 3: The Spirit blows where He wills.

(ii) **When you were dead, He made you alive.**

- e. It is a change in the inclination of the will.
 - (i) Before you had no desire for God.
 - (ii) Now, your will is inclined towards Him.
- f. It happens below the level of consciousness, so that one may not even perceive the change.
- g. Before you were dead to the things of God, now they are your chief delight.

3. It is the result of your union with Christ.

- a. Christ merited this change for you by His life and death.
- b. The Spirit unites you to Christ wherein are **all** the blessings, including the new birth [Ex: Vine & Branches).
- c. And notice each of these is in the past tense. Christ accomplished them all and sat at His Father's right hand <2 Cor. 5:14, 15>.

C. He Raised You from Death. (**And raised us up with Him**)

- 1. This act of God and the following is an amplification of being "made alive" with Christ.
- 2. Christ was raised by the power of God (cf. 1:19-23).
 - a. Christ was crucified, dead, and buried.
 - b. He continued under the power of death for a time.
 - c. But God raised Him from the dead on the third day
- 3. This power also raised you from spiritual death.
 - a. Paul prays that you may know the surpassing power of Christ's resurrection.
 - b. He raised you to spiritual life, from spiritual death.

D. He Seated You with Christ. (**And seated us with Him in the heavenly places**)

- 1. Christ was exalted to the place of honor and rule.
 - a. He is at God's right hand.
 - b. He is exalted above all rule and authority.
 - c. He is given the name above every name.
- 2. By virtue of your union with Him, you are seated with Christ as well.
 - a. You are united to Christ as He now is: exalted.
 - b. Within Him is the power of the new age.
 - c. Within Christ is the new creation.
 - d. That is why "in Christ" you are made new creatures.
 - e. But you still live in this world, this age.
 - f. But already the power of the coming age is at work within you.
 - g. In the future, you will rule and reign with Christ.

- h. You are citizens of the kingdom of God. You may dwell in the lowest regions of it, but you are in it.
 - (i) You belong not to the earth, but to heaven <Phil 3:20>.
 - (ii) You are under its laws.
 - (iii) You have in Christ title to all its privileges and blessings.
 - (iv) You possess (in a humble measure) its spirit.
11. You Are in Union With Christ Because of the Rich Mercy of God. (*But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, v. 4*)
- A. It is Grounded in the Love of God.
- 1. There has been no condition mentioned.
 - a. There is no condition man could meet. He is dead.
 - b. The instrument of that union is faith (2:8).
 - c. But even faith is the result of your union with Christ
 - 2. It has been conditioned by the unmerited love of God.
 - a. Our union with Christ is rooted in the mercy of God.
 - (i) *God being rich in mercy.*
 - (ii) *Because of His great love with which He loved us.*
 - b. You must not look within yourself to find the cause.
 - (i) He didn't love you because you were so attractive.
 - (ii) He didn't love you because you were so gifted.
 - (iii) He didn't love you because you had faith in Christ; you didn't.
 - (iv) He didn't love you because you were more holy than anyone else; you weren't.
 - c. Rather, the cause is found within God Himself.
 - (i) The text says, "*But God,*" not, "But man."
 - (ii) God set His affection on you.
 - (iii) The love originated within God <1 John 4:10, 19>.
 - (iv) It is purely by His grace, i. e., gratuitous.
- B. It Was to Demonstrate the Riches of His Grace. (*In order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus*)
- 1. God's purpose was to display His grace.
 - a. *The surpassing riches of His grace.*
 - b. It is inconceivable He would do this even for a sinless being.
 - c. But that He would demonstrate such love to sinners, staggers the mind.
 - 2. Throughout all eternity. *In the ages which are coming.*
 - 3. In kindness: this is *how* He displays His grace.
 - a. Love in action.
 - b. Personal pity.

4. This blessedness is yours "in Christ."
 - a. There is no blessing except through Christ's mediation.
 - b. Again and again Paul emphasizes our union with Christ as being the source of these blessings.

5. **Why would** He do this? It is purely of grace (2:5; 8)

Conclusion:

- A. You don't deserve God's grace; no one does.
- B. You could never have earned it; no one can.
- C. But God gives it to you freely, you who were formerly blasphemers and idolaters.
- D. Don't trade upon God's grace; but rather, use your freedom to serve and honor Him throughout all time. Amen. Let us pray.