



The Gift of Salvation

Ephesians 2:1-10

Sermon by: Stephen Herrod, Pastor

MESSAGE:

THE GIFT OF SALVATION

PASSAGE: EPHESIANS 2:1-10 ESV

¹And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in 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— ³among 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. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

MESSAGE GOAL:

The goal of this message is to explain the significance of salvation as both deliverance from spiritual death and the enslavement of sin, while also emphasizing the purpose of being saved for a life of worship and relationship with God. It contrasts the state of spiritual death—separation from God, idolatry, and enslavement to worldly desires—with the transformative power of salvation in Christ, which brings spiritual rebirth, freedom, and a new identity centered on following Jesus. The message calls on believers to live in the freedom Christ has provided, resisting the temptation to return to sinful ways or spiritual bondage.

SERMON NOTES

The idea of being saved also carries the meaning of deliverance and freedom—or liberation. To be “saved” naturally implies that you are being rescued from something harmful, dangerous, or life-threatening. In the context of this chapter, Paul is helping believers understand that we have been rescued from something incredibly harmful, very dangerous, and life-threatening, and that is spiritual death and separation from God, and sin is the root cause of spiritual death and separation from God. In verse 1-3,



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Paul says, “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 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— 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.”

To be “dead” in sin means to be spiritually separated from God, unable to experience the true life God intended for you. Sin cuts you off from the source of life, who is God, and leaves you spiritually lifeless. Jesus reinforces this truth when He says, “Apart from Me, you can do nothing” (John 15:5). When you are cut off from God, you are cut off from your true purpose, leaving you to prioritize your own will over God's will. You start looking to other things—people, possessions, status—to give you meaning, fulfillment, and identity, which only leads to brokenness and despair.

Beloved, you were created to worship God in the beauty of holiness. But when you are spiritually dead, you are not following God's way, which leads to life. Instead, you are a dead man or woman walking toward a dead end, following the path laid out by the prince of the power of the air, who is none other

than the devil. This points to the deeper truth: the root of being spiritually dead is sin, and the root of all sin is idolatry! When we follow the ways of this world, designed by Satan, we sink into idolatry and death, becoming like what we worship, spiritually dead and lifeless.

And that's why, apart from a true relationship with God in Christ, you feel so empty! You feel lifeless because you've become enslaved to sin. You are bound by things that are not life-giving, but life-draining. You worship things that ultimately cannot give you life, love, joy, or peace. To be dead in your trespasses and sins is to be separated from God, and to be enslaved to a life trapped in cycles of despair, discontentment, fear, addiction, brokenness, not knowing how to love or be loved, and harmful habits. You are boxed into a world of despair. You're left to figure everything out on your own, which, if you're honest, only leads to frustration and repeated failure with no lasting success.

You are left with the empty pursuit of wealth, success, and pleasure—only to find that even when you achieve those things, they still leave you feeling empty. You're shackled by where you come from spiritually. You're shackled by what you've done. You're confined by your environment and your circumstances.



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You have no power or control over yourself—over the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, or the lust of the eyes. You have no true and lasting power over negative thoughts, fits of anger, envy, drunkenness, demons, or even the devil. And you know there are things in your life that aren't right, but you can't break free from them. These things live with you every day. They keep you boxed in. They clothe you in shame. You never feel good enough.

You often find yourself stuck in negative thinking. You want to change, but you don't have the power to change—because if you did, you would have done it by now. You know that the darkness surrounding you in this world has seeped into you, and your longing for a different world, free from oppression and injustice, reflects your longing to be a different person, free from your own bad habits, anger, insecurities, and doubts.

This is what it means to be dead in your trespasses! You are enslaved by a system of Satan that separates you from God, keeps you living a life of sin, and shackles you to worship false gods, and these false gods offer a life of despair and darkness, leaving you divorced from God and disconnected from your true purpose.

But let me tell you about the gift of salvation!

I come to you with glad tidings

I come to you with good news.

God has provided a way out of no way!

God has provided a way out!

God has provided a way of escape!

God has provided yet another exodus!

He has sent another deliverer, and the message He carries is the same one He gave to Moses when Moses went to Pharaoh, and that message is:

"Let my people go, so that they may worship me!"

Let my people go so that, instead of being disconnected from the Father and connected to the world, they will be disconnected from the world and connected to their Father!

Let my people go so that they may truly live, for following the world is not truly living!

Let my people go so they will know that their Heavenly Father accepts them, loves them, and forgives them—no strings attached!

Let my people go so that the chains of their past can be broken!

Let my people go so that the chains of sin can be broken!

Let my people go so that the mind of Christ Jesus will also be in them!

Let my people go so that they can receive a new heart and a new spirit!



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Let my people go so they will no longer be enslaved to the things of this world!

Let my people go so they may experience true love, true joy, and true peace!

Let my people go so they will be free from needing validation from others, free from allowing people or things or evil spirits to have power over their lives and destiny!

Let my people go so they may be free from turning to lust and other sinful desires to cope with life!

Let my people go so they can be free from addictions—addictions to drugs, pornography, and the devices of this world!

Let my people go so their outlook is no longer one of despair, but of hope!

Let my people go so that their portion will be love, joy, and peace!

Or to sum it all up: Let my people go, so that they may worship me!

God has seen us in our dead state. He sees the impact that devoting ourselves to this world has on our lives.

He sees the toll that worshiping idol gods and trying to figure things out on our own takes on us.

He sees the effects of our lack of control over the flesh.

He sees how following the course of this world, living hurried and anxious lives, weighs us down.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loves us, offers us a gift—and that gift is the gift of life!

That gift is to be made alive!

That gift is to be made alive in Christ Jesus!

Beloved, you CAN be made alive in Christ Jesus!

I can hear the Lord Jesus saying:

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* (Matthew 11:28-30)

Friends, this gift of salvation, this freedom, is not something you have to earn—it cannot be earned. You don't have to work for it, nor could you ever work for it. It is a gift! It is God's unmerited favor to you through the merited work of Jesus! Jesus earned for us what we could not earn. Jesus has done for us what we could never do.

Now watch this: Salvation is just the starting point! Receiving the gift of salvation is not only about being saved FROM something, but also being saved FOR something. You have been saved from spiritual death and separation from God, and you have been saved to worship God!

Let me remind you of Ephesians 2:10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ



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Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

You see, God has already prepared a life for us in advance. Receiving the gift of salvation means being saved from spiritual death and separation from God. This separation manifests itself in a life of following the course of this world and being under the influence of the prince of the power of the air. But when you receive the gift of salvation, you are made alive in Christ Jesus. Notice how Paul says we have been **CREATED** in Christ Jesus! Here, Paul is using the language of creation to signify that receiving salvation means being created anew!

As 2 Corinthians 5:17 says: “If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation; old things have passed away, and behold, all things have become new!”

You see, this spiritual rebirth transforms how we engage with the world. To be made alive in Christ Jesus is to be born again spiritually, and this spiritual rebirth changes everything.

It means you are an entirely new person.

You may not look different physically, but you are a new person spiritually!

It means you no longer follow the course of this world or the prince of the power of the air.

You have a new walk, A new way of life where you follow the path of God’s Word and the Lord Jesus Christ, obeying His teachings. And this is what produces the good works that Paul talks about!

To be born again spiritually is to take on a completely new identity, one marked by the teachings of Jesus Christ.

It changes how you define love, joy, and peace.

It changes how you understand yourself.

It gives you a new purpose.

It transforms your mind to think according to the teachings of Christ and to live differently by those teachings!

There are countless books and ideas out there that will try to tell you what your purpose is. But I’m here to tell you that since the beginning of time, you were created to worship Him! That is your purpose!

Your purpose in life is to worship God!

Satan has come into this world to entice us with sin, drawing us away from worshiping God and toward worshiping idols.

But God, in Christ Jesus, has provided a way to freedom! That’s my whole sermon in a nutshell!

In closing, I want to challenge those of you who have already received the gift of salvation.



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After receiving such a wonderful gift, why would you put the shackles back on by not following God's Word?

Why would you entangle yourself again in sin, lust, perversion, anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness?

Let me remind you: God did not set you free just to set you free! He did not set you free for you to return to bondage. Christ has set you free FOR FREEDOM!

Christ did not set you free for you to continue worshiping idols!

Christ did not set you free for you to still be following the world!

Christ did not set you free to go back and get entangled in lust and fornication!

Christ did not set you free for you to remain unchanged in heart!

Christ did not set you free to entertain evil spirits!

Christ did not set you free for you to continue living as though you were dead!

Christ did not set you free for you to befriend the world again!

Christ did not set you free to be controlled by your flesh rather than His Spirit!

There is no true liberation apart from worship! Christ has set you free so that you may worship Him! So that you may obey Him!

My dear brother out there, don't go back to Egypt! Don't go back to slavery—live in freedom!

My dear sister out there, don't go back to Egypt! Don't return to slavery—stay free by worshiping Him!

I leave you with the words of Paul recorded in Galatians 5:1: "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."