

MADE ALIVE TOGETHER IN CHRIST

Summary of what we will learn: In these verses we see the biblical doctrine of Original Sin, Conversion, Salvation by Grace, and the place of Good Works. Each of these could be a whole separate study, or even a series! Sometimes it is helpful to zoom out and take them all together. Doing this we see the whole forest: Naturally born we are dead in sin, by God's grace alone we are made alive in Christ (converted from dead to alive), living in Him good works flow necessarily.

Ephesians 2:1-10 – Exhortation or Teaching

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— 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. 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.

How are the spiritually dead known to be dead?

Dr. Winger on “spiritual death”- “Spiritual death means that man is completely unable to make a move toward God. Such death is not figurative, but ‘nonliteral’ only in the sense that it is different from the kind of death we normally ponder (of the body); it is actually a more profound and real kind of death, being ‘alienated from the life of God’ (4:18), embracing or leading to physical death as its inevitable consequence.”

What does Paul mean by using the word “walked” for the sins and transgressions committed?

Who is “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience” and what does this phrase mean?

How are the “passions of the flesh” and “desires of the body and the mind” evil?

“Like the rest of mankind” – Who are the sons of disobedience and children of wrath?

Verse 4 marks a major transition, Dr. Winger compares it to a trumpet blast in battle, “But God!”

How is God described in v. 4?

The Question of Conversion- what was our condition and our ability to participate?

“—By Grace You Have Been Saved!” appears to be an interjection

vv. 6-7 show us the “now and not yet” nature of salvation- what we have now in Christ and not yet in its fullest revelation- the immeasurable riches are ours, although we shall see them revealed more clearly in the age to come after His return in Glory.

Dr. Stoeckhardt “The wretched are the object of mercy. Our wretched condition, in which, because of our birth and nature, we were held captive by Satan and the world, touched and moved God to pity. This love of God was grace. The object of God’s grace is the sinner. It was the grace of God which induced Him to translate us from the death of sin, which had made us children of wrath, into a new, holy, godly life. The fact that we now have in Christ the redemption through His blood, namely, the forgiveness of sin, the removal of our guilt, all that is the manifestation of the rich grace of God.”

vv. 8-10 may be the most loved by us Lutherans! Just be careful not to omit verse 10 to our shame.

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.*

-by grace- the Cause of God’s act of saving us is not something *in us*, but in Him: Grace
-you have been saved- perfect passive, meaning past tense, it’s been accomplished and not by you
-through faith- faith does not cause salvation, it receives it. Faith is a receptive organ

How does the repetitious “exclusive particle” work?

What place to good works have?

Dr. Stoeckhardt- “This new creation is identical with the quickening of which Paul spoke before. The new spiritual life in and with Christ is first pictured as life in contrast to the former death, and then it appears as something entirely new, of which there was not a trace before.”

Dr. Stoeckhardt on the Doctrine of Conversion- “Conversion is an inward change and transformation of man...After conversion, man continues to have the same rational soul, the same mind and will which he had before his conversion. Conversion is rather the thorough change of his moral condition and his habitual behavior, it is a change in his understanding, will, and heart. Through conversion man’s mind and will is given a changed attitude, direction, and focus.”

We go from being Sons of Disobedience and by nature Children of Wrath, to being God’s Workmanship.