

Blueprints for the Believer: The Meaning of the Church

Session 2.1: The Congregation's Role

Chosen While Still Dead in Sin

Key Verses: Ephesians 2:1-5

1. *"Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins."*
2. *"You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God."*
3. *"All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else."*
4. *"But God is so rich in mercy, and He loved us so much,"*
5. *"that even though we were dead because of our sins, He gave us life when He raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)"*

: Before we were spiritually alive, God chose us. This reflects His grace and mercy, choosing us not based on our merits but solely on His love.

Interaction Question: Reflect on what it means to be chosen by God while still dead in sin. How does this understanding impact your view of God's grace?

Understanding Life in the Spirit vs. Life in the Flesh

Key Verses: Ephesians 2:1-3

1. *"Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins."*
2. *"You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God."*
3. *"All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else."*

: Paul contrasts our former state of being "alive" in the flesh but "dead" in the spirit with the new life we have in Christ. The transformation of our desires is central to our new identity in Christ.

Interaction Question: How has your appetite for spiritual things grown since coming to Christ? What desires have shifted in your life?

Sonship of Disobedience and Wrath

Key Verses: Ephesians 2:2-3

1. *"You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God."*
2. *"All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else."*

: Before knowing Christ, we were "sons of disobedience" and "children of wrath," deserving God's judgment. Through Christ, we are now adopted as children of God.

Interaction Question: What does it mean to you to move from being a "child of wrath" to being a "child of God"? How does this change your identity?

Made Alive, Raised, and Seated with Christ

Key Verses: Ephesians 2:5-6

5. *"That even though we were dead because of our sins, He gave us life when He raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)"*
6. *"For He raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus."*

Summary: In Christ, we are made alive, raised up, and seated with Him in heavenly realms. This speaks to our spiritual transformation and position in Christ.

Interaction Question: How do you see your life as being "raised up" and "seated with Christ"? What does this mean for your daily walk?

We Are God's Masterpiece

Key Verses: Ephesians 2:8-10

8. "God saved you by His grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God."
9. "Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it."
10. "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago."

: As God's masterpiece, we are created anew in Christ Jesus to do the good works He planned for us. Our lives are a reflection of His creative power and purpose.

Interaction Question: In what ways do you see yourself as God's masterpiece? What "good works" do you feel God has prepared for you?