



Becoming a People Who... Live for a Change "in Him"
"Alive and Reconciled"
Message Notes, January 20, 2019
Ephesians 2:1-22

For the next 4 weeks we will be in a sub-series: ***Live for a Change***. We will be examining the book of Ephesians – Paul’s pastoral letter to the 10-yr-old church at Ephesus that he himself began.

- Our self-centered bent, when examining problems is to say that “The problem is with *him/her/them*.”
- We rarely see our own fault or need. Paul directly confronts this *bent* in his letter to the Ephesians.

vs. 1-3: “YOU were dead in your transgressions and sins.” (not him or her or them, but YOU!) We are all spiritually dead because of sin; we follow the ways of this fallen world; we succumb to the enticements of the evil one, and consequently we deserve the “wrath” of our Holy God. BAD NEWS.

Vs. 4-7: “**But GOD**,” rich in mercy and out of his great love, made us alive with Christ, saving us from sin, and even seating us with Christ in the heavenly realms.

- These verses reveal the *velvet darkness* of our sin & brokenness, serving as *the background* that highlights the *diamond brilliance* of his glorious grace towards us.

Vs. 8-10: We are saved by (His) grace, not by (our) works.

It is a gift of God, not by our own efforts. There is no room for our boasting.

We are his beautiful “handiwork” (*poema* ... as in poem/poetry).

We are not saved BY works, but we are saved FOR “good work.”

to join him in his glory – sharing his love, telling his gospel, helping others experience his saving grace.

Vs. 11-12: there is a shift at this point in Paul’s letter - he addresses their FORMER status as Gentiles: foreign, separated from God, excluded from the covenant promise (that God had with the Jews), excluded, without God and without hope in the world. Again – BAD NEWS.

Vs. 13-16: “But NOW, in Christ, you who were once far away have been brought near.” You are now INCLUDED. You have been *invited in* to the new covenant of grace through Jesus. The separating wall of religion and culture (symbolized in the temple courts by an actual restrictive wall of stone) has been destroyed in the cross of Jesus. GOOD NEWS once again!

- The former (exclusive) purposes of the Jewish law & sacrificial system have been **fulfilled** (Matt. 5:17) in the perfect sacrifice of Jesus. These separating laws & ordinances are now “abolished”, and Christ has created “one man (people) out of the two (Jews & Gentiles), reconciling ALL to God through the cross.”



- Another selfish bent in us is to erect “walls”, to judge and separate others from ourselves. This is not the way of Jesus. He is all about “destroying barriers and dividing walls.” We, his people, need to be about this as well.
- Tomorrow, we celebrate the life of Dr. King, a barrier-breaker! In honoring his work, we honor the heart of God and commit ourselves to the kingdom work of tearing down any and all walls that separate people.

Vs. 17-22: The fruit of God’s grace through the cross of Jesus: We have Peace. We have been brought near. We have access to the Father. We are members of His household. We are fellow-citizens. Part of His holy temple, built on the foundations of the written and proclaimed Word, around the cornerstone of Jesus, built together to become a dwelling in which the Holy Spirit dwells.