

November 5, 2017
(Foreign to Familiar Series: Ephesians 1-3)
“Before and After”, Ephesians 2:1-10

In **Ephesians 2:1-10**, Paul gives us a word picture of “before and after” becoming believers in Christ. It is meant to remind us of our changes, give us hope, encourage us to become even more like Christ, and help transform us into grateful, humble children of God.

I. Our spiritual condition BEFORE we came to Christ:

- A. **Dead.** Eph. 2:1 “..you were dead in your transgressions and sins”. We All begin as sinners: broken, corrupt, and fallen. Although still made in God’s image, as unbelievers we were unresponsive before Christ and could not do what we were created to do.
- B. **Dominated.** Eph. 2: 2,3 “..you followed the ways of this world..the ruler of the kingdom of the air [Satan]...the cravings of our flesh [our sinful nature].” Most people do not consciously serve the world, Satan, and the flesh, but this dark side dominates/affects everything they do as they live independently from God.
- C. **Doomed.** Eph. 2: 3b “..we were by nature deserving of wrath”. The undertone of living our lives independent of God is that it makes us worthy of God’s eternal wrath and punishment, eternally separated from Him.

If we rely on anything else other than God’s mercy in Christ, Paul says we are dead, dominated, and doomed.

II. Our spiritual condition AFTER we came to Christ:

- A. **He made us alive together with Christ.** Eph. 2:5 “alive with Christ even when we were dead in our transgressions”.
- B. **He raised us up with Christ.** Eph. 2:5. We now have new, resurrection life (now and eternally) in Jesus Christ and the presence of His Spirit, which frees us from the dominance of the world, Satan, and the flesh.
- C. **He seated us with Christ.** Eph. 2: 6b. Through faith in Christ (not our works), God promises us an eternity in His Kingdom, which will delight and suit each one of us.

III. The impact on our lives: Creation of three attitudes within us.

- A. **Gratitude toward God.** The reminder of the ugliness of our lives independent of God calls us to be grateful/thankful for God’s grace. We stand in awe of His love and provision for us.
- B. **Humility toward those outside of Christ.** We love others outside the Kingdom with patience and compassion (not pride or personal judgment) because we too were once in their place. In humility and gratefulness, we recognize we are still tempted by darkness, but now we have the Spirit’s power to overcome it when we turn to God.
- C. **We should be urgent toward the gospel.** It is truly good news that we have a Savior with a new way of thinking other than the world, a new Ruler to live for, and a new presence inside us to give us hope and victory. We HAVE to tell others how to settle the critical issue of their spiritual condition.

Discussion Questions:

1. If you are a believer, did you accept Christ as your Savior primarily out of gratefulness for what He did for you or out of fear of God’s wrath? How might this affect your sharing the gospel with nonbelievers?
2. What does it mean to be “alive in Christ”? (See Eph. 2:5 and Romans 6:1-14). Does it excite you?
3. Describe God’s grace according to Ephesians 2:4-10. Keep it simple.
4. Even as Christians, we still have the dark side (world, Satan, flesh) pulling at us. How do we live with that?

5. When and how have you recently thanked God for your salvation? Is humbly sharing the Gospel with others the ultimate form of gratitude?