

CHRISTIAN WARFARE

DEAD IN SIN

Today's Passage: Ephesians 2:1-3

For the week of May 19th

MAIN POINT

Until you see the gravity of the human condition, you will never see the greatness of the gospel.

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

Use these questions to learn more about others in your Life Group.

Have you or a loved one ever been unexpectedly close to death, such as through an automobile accident or some other event?

What impact, if any, did this event have on the person's outlook on life?

Traumatic events like car accidents or natural disasters have a way of "waking us up" to life's frailty and brevity. It was always true that life is short, but the events make that truth all the more clear. This is similar to what Paul's message in Ephesians 2 regarding mankind when he reminds us that we dead in our sin. His direct words are meant to startle us to a reality that is already true so that we will believe the gospel.

SCAN HERE FOR ADDITIONAL
COMMENTARY ON TODAY'S LESSON



GROW TOGETHER

What do you think is the common understanding of “sin” in the world at large right now?

How have you seen that perception change over the course of your life?

What about you? How would you define sin?

Why is having a right understanding of sin necessary to truly understand the gospel? What happens to our understanding of the gospel if we miss what sin truly is?

We live in a day and time of moral relativism. The highest virtue in our society is tolerance, so even a discussion of sin can feel outdated and judgmental. That’s part of the reason why many miss the gospel—they fail to realize the seriousness of sin. But in Ephesians 2, Paul clears up any doubts we have about the nature of sin and the nature of humanity.

Read Ephesians 2:1-10 (ESV).

2:1 “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 do verses 1-3 help us understand what sin is? How do they show us that sin is not just a bad choice, but a condition in which we live?

Why is it important that we understand humanity, apart from Christ, to be dead and not just bad?

How does that understanding change the way we view the good news of the gospel?

As Paul said, we aren't sinners because we sin; we sin because we are sinners. We were born into the way of this age, and the entire cosmos has been distorted and infected by sin. That means the default condition of the human heart is a bent toward evil. This frames our understanding of the gospel because it helps us see that Jesus didn't come to make bad people a little better; He came to give life to those utterly without hope in their deadness.

Paul referred to his audience in past tense terms because this was how they once were. Why, even as Christians, is it helpful for us to remember our condition before Christ?

How does doing so change the way we view others apart from Christ?

How does it change the way we approach God on a daily basis?

Paul was not morbid; nor was he obsessed with bad news. He understood that if are to truly appreciate the greatness of our salvation in Jesus we must understand the gravity of our situation. For the Christian, then, it's a healthy practice to revisit the sinful nature of humanity. Then we can look on others not in judgment, but in mercy, knowing that apart from the grace of God we, too, would still be dead in our sin.

MAKE AN IMPACT

Discover how you can apply today's lesson to your life so you can impact the world.

What is one way you can remind yourself of who you were before Christ without feeling a sense of judgment or condemnation?

Who is someone in your life that you have judged but instead need to look on with mercy?

How does understanding the gravity of the human condition change the way you are going to approach sharing the gospel this week?