

**Title:** But God...

**Passage:** Ephesians 2:1-10

**Introduction:**

Theme: "Look at what God did!"

- as read and consider the passage

**Passage:** Ephesians 2:1-10

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 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— 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. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

**Context:** Jesus conversation with Nicodemus (John 3)

John 3:3

Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

John 3:5

Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

- Key point: one must be "born again" to see and enter the kingdom of God

**Overview:**

- I. Our problem/condition apart from new birth
- II. God's provision/remedy through new birth
- III. God's purpose for the new birth

**I. Our problem/condition apart from new birth**

Ephesians 2:1-3

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 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— 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.

***"Dead in the trespasses:***

- The condition of ungenerate sinners, apart from Christ.
  - Dead because of your sinful nature (not because of what has been done)
  - apart from God: we are all dead in our sins/trespasses.
- All are dead apart from new birth in Christ.
  - The only difference among sinners is the degree of their decay.
- Death = inability to respond to stimulus, unresponsive

- The person will not be responsive to anything of God unless God moves their heart.

#### Ephesians 4:18

They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

#### John 6:44

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

#### John 3:19

And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.

#### Romans 6:17

But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,

#### ***“following the course of this world”***

- “world” = today’s ideologies to which we were in bondage

#### 1 John 2:16

For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

#### ***“following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience”***

- We were enslaved to the enemy apart from Christ.

#### Ephesians 6:12

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

#### ***“prince of the power of the air”***

- references Satan

#### John 8:44

You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

#### John 14:30

I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me,

#### John 16:11

concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

#### 2 Corinthians 4:4

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

- Satan: enemy whose purpose is to destroy us and to continue to deceive

***“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.”***

- our enslaved sinful condition apart from God’s redemption of us.

Romans 7:18-20

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

## **II. God’s provision/remedy through new birth**

Ephesians 2:4-6

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

### ***“But God”***

- New spiritual birth comes only from God.
- You will not fully experience the fullness of God’s grace to you unless you see and understand your former condition. In God’s grace and mercy, He made you alive!

### ***4 key provisions: mercy, love, grace, kindness***

#### ***“being rich in mercy”***

- mercy (definition) = compassion shown toward someone whom it is within one’s power to punish

Psalms 103:10

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

Luke 15:15-16 (Parable of Prodigal Son - state of son)

So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

Luke 15:20-23 (mercy seen in father)

And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate.’

#### ***“because of the great love with which he loved us”***

- the raising of the dead belongs to God alone

John 11:43-44

When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out.” The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

Matthew 10:28

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

John 5:27-29

And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

***“by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him”***

Romans 5:6-10

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Romans 6:4-7

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin.

### **III. God’s purpose for the new birth**

Ephesians 2:7

so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

- Reason for our new birth: for God’s glory
- Analogy: one appreciating a painting of a portrait will appreciate not the portrait itself but rather the *painter* of the portrait.

Revelation 7:9-10

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

- grace and saving faith comes only from God

John 1:12-13

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

- faith is a gift from God, granted by God alone in His sovereignty and goodness

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- God created us and saved us for His purposes.

#### Revelation 4:11

“Worthy are you, our Lord and God,  
to receive glory and honor and power,  
for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

#### **Application**

##### Psalms 29:2

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.

##### Psalms 121:1-2

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

##### John 15:5, 7-8

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing...If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

##### Psalms 86:11

Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.

##### Psalms 36:7-9

How precious is your steadfast love, O God!

The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings. They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights. *For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light.*