

## Wednesday Evening Bible Study

February 28, 2024

Series - The Life and Writings of the Apostle Paul

*Introduction to the Prison Epistles*

*Introduction to Paul's Letter to the Ephesians*

*Ephesians – Chapter Two*

Memory Verse - Ephesians 2:1

*"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;"*

### Introduction

After reminding the people of Ephesus (and us) of his authority as an apostle (1:1 – 2), he then explains God's sovereign plan for the church, which He had in His mind before the foundation of the earth. (1:3 – 14) He concludes the first chapter by telling them that he prays for them that God would give them understanding regarding His calling, His inheritance, and His power which was demonstrated through the resurrection of Christ from the dead. (1:15 – 23) He begins this chapter by stating that we were given life by that same power. As a result of this power, we now have new life. Paul contrasts in this chapter what we are now from what we used to be before Christ.

*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2Corinthians 5:17)*

#### I. We Were Dead but Are Now Alive (vs. 1 – 10)

##### A Dead (vs. 1 – 3; also see Romans 6:11 – 18)

- 1 We walked according to the course of this world
- 2 We walked according to the prince of the power of the air
- 3 We had our conversation ... in the lusts of our flesh
- 4 We fulfilled the desires of the flesh and mind
- 5 We were by nature the children of wrath

##### B Alive (vs. 4 – 10)

- 1 Because of His love (v. 4)
- 2 Because of His power (v. 5)
- 3 Because of His grace (vs. 5 – 8)
- 4 Through our faith (vs. 8 – 9)
- 5 Ordained for good works (v. 10)

## II. We Were Distant but Now Have Access (vs. 11 – 22)

The comparison is made here between the Gentiles and the nation of Israel. This passage does not teach us that the Church is the same as the nation of Israel. However, it does instruct us that we as Gentiles were not in the same place of blessing as the nation of Israel was.

### A Distant (vs. 11 – 12)

- 1 Without Christ
- 2 Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel
- 3 Strangers from the covenants of promise
- 4 Having no hope
- 5 Without God in the world

Again, this is not teaching us that Israelites were automatically saved. They needed to come to God through faith in Christ just like the Gentiles. However, they were in a special place of blessing. They had the Scriptures, and they were the original group that had access to the Saviour. Plus, they were in a covenant relationship with God. It is almost like a child today that grows up in a Christian home. They are in a place of blessing and advantage over a child that grows up in a godless environment.

### B Access (11 – 22)

- 1 By the blood of Christ (vs. 13 - 15; 1:7)
  - a He is our peace
  - b made both one

Note – the reference to “the middle wall of partition” - a wall that separated the court of the Gentiles from the area where the Jews could go.

- c abolished in his flesh the enmity
- 2 no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens
- 3 built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

Note the references in vs. 19 – 21 regarding the “*household of God*” and “*an holy temple in the Lord*”. In the Old Testament, the Lord dwelt (not exclusively – see Psalm 139) between the Cherubim in the Tabernacle and Temple. In the New Testament, the Bible speaks of God’s Spirit indwelling individual believers (Ephesians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 6:19 – 20). However, the New Testament also teaches that the Church is the house of God. (1 Timothy 3:15). Here as in Ephesians 1:10 and 22, I believe the corporate Church is in view rather than just the local church at Ephesus. The Church is not complete and is not yet entirely visible or gathered.