



Sermon – December 16, 2018
Chris Osborne

Verses Covered

Ephesians 2:5 - 7

Romans 8:15 - 16

It's always interesting to me that even when you walk through a book of the Bible, it can be seasonal. And so we come today to the perfect scripture for Christmas. Now we're walking through the book of Ephesians. We say in chapter 1 that he, he discusses our position that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit created for us. Then he went into one great benefit of that position. That we have the ability to pray and impact lives as we pray what He directs us to pray. Then we came last week, he takes you back to where you were prior to Christ. That you were in your sins, you were separated from God, you lived in that, that's why when the Bible says death, it's always the idea of separation. So you're separated from God. You're dead. There's no connection there. You live in that. You're controlled by your culture. And your culture's controlled by Satan. The result of that is you live under God's anger. That He's furious with where we are because of what we've done. But that He sent Jesus who takes God's wrath on the cross so it's removed from us and there's a reconnection that occurs. Now that's what he walked us through. But I want you to listen. He's going to recapitulate some of that. But the end thing he says explained something for me that I never could quite figure out. So listen to what he says beginning in verse 5. He says,

⁵We were dead in our trespasses and He made us alive together in Christ (by grace you're saved),

Now he reminds us that our death is our fault. It's our bad. We're not dead because God made us dead. We're dead because we sinned and therefore we separated from Him. So you have to understand, right, you can't be reconnected until you understand that. I was amazed. I love James Dobson and Franklin Graham; so many of those guys. But they were the ones saying that Donald Trump has become a Christian. The problem with that statement is Donald Trump has been very clear; that he does not need forgiveness. So understand is you don't think you need forgiveness, you cannot be a Christian. You have to come to the place where you understand it's my bad. God and I are broke and apart and it's really on me. And then he says,

you're dead in your sins but you're made alive together with Christ, by grace you are saved.

Grace. God does it for you. We saw that in the first chapter. God authorizes it. Jesus accomplished it. The Holy Spirit applies it. He does it for us. I'm saved by His grace alone. So it's not anything you do. You can go to church all you want. It's not going to reconnect you to God. You read the Bible every day, it's not going to reconnect you to God. You can be a nice person; it's not going to reconnect you to God. There's nothing you can do to reestablish that connection that's been lost by your sin. But here's the great thing about what he's saying is I created the disconnection, He creates the reconnection. I caused the problem. He has the fix. And so there's what he's saying. My bad. He reconnects me. And now listen to what he says. Listen carefully. Have your Bibles open. Ephesians 2 beginning in verse, we were looked at verse 5. Now we're going to read verse 6. Now listen to what he says. Verse 5.

You were dead in your trespasses, He made you alive together in Christ (by grace you're saved), ⁶and He has raised you together with Him, and He has sat you together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.

Now here's what's happened to you. Now I want you to understand this today. When you are reconnected, Jesus wipes away your sin so well that the Holy Spirit is able to come and indwell you. When the Holy Spirit indwells you, remember first chapter, you're sealed until the end. He stays in there permanently. What He does is He raises you up into a realm that you live in that those without Christ do not live in. And it doesn't just say that He's raised you. It says He sat you down in that realm. That is, you are in there permanently. You're not just standing around and you come in and out. No, no, no, no, no. He's resurrected you and then He sits you in that realm permanently. You're locked down there. So you live in a realm that those without Christ cannot live in. And so the separation in my life has been changed into a reconnection by virtue of being put in the realm where He lives.

And so several things are now changed. Number one, He and I are reconnected. Listen to Romans 8. We've looked at this a million times. But I still want to pay attention. Listen to what he says in Romans 8. He's very precise. He talks about the fact that we have now a new and deep relationship with Christ that is totally different. He talks about the fact that now, he says in 8:15,

¹⁵You did not receive the spirit of adoption leading to fear, but you, I mean spirit of slavery, but you've received the spirit of adoption in which we cry out loud, "Abba! Father!"

Abba, everybody knows, the Aramaic word for Dad.

¹⁶And His Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we're the children of God.

Now here's what he says. He doesn't say that when I get into this realm, that I can talk to Him. That's not what he says. He says, when He sits me down in this realm, it's a realm where He talks to me. The connection has established for me the ability to hear His voice. We're not separated anymore. Those down here that do not know Christ cannot hear His voice. But I've been reconnected. I've been sat down in a heavenly realm where He is. I can hear Him speak. In Acts 13 you have the church at Antioch. They're in the middle of a worship service. God's Holy Spirit speaks to them and says, "Listen, I want you to take two guys, Paul and Barnabas. Take them out,

pray over them, and they're going to be missionaries." And so the church heard that and sent them out. They're on a missionary trip when God speaks to them and says, "Look, I know you want to go this way, but I don't want you to go that way. I want you to go here. I don't want you to take the gospel back to Africa. I want you to take the gospel into Europe." And so the Holy Spirit speaks to them there. He spoke to Paul because when Paul and Barnabas were getting ready to go on the second missionary journey, Barnabas' cousin, John Mark, had quit on the first one. And they're getting ready to head out and Paul says, "He's not going." And Barnabas says, "Oh, yeah, he's going." And the Bible's pretty clear. They have a major fight. But at the end of his life, when he's in prison in Rome about to die and he's writing to Timothy to come see him, he said, "Bring John Mark because he's beneficial to me in the ministry." Holy Spirit at some point spoke to Paul and said, "You were wrong. Barnabas was right. Pull him back in your life." He speaks to us. So let me be real clear here. I was preaching on this in Midland, Texas one time and a guy came up to me after the service. And he said, "Preacher, I've been a Christian 25 years and I have never heard the voice of God." I don't understand that because you are sat down in the realm where He lives for the purpose of you being able to hear Him. He can hear you from this realm, but you can't hear Him from this realm. So He sits you down in a realm where you're reconnected and you can hear His voice to you. So if you haven't done that, you've never heard His voice, then here's what I would do. I would go home and I would read this text to the Father. And I would say, "Father, You have put me in this realm. And so I want You, in whatever way You have to, to let me live out Romans 8 and that Your Spirit breath with my Spirit that I'm Yours and that You become my Father in as intimate way as it can possibly happen short of heaven."

Second thing He's done. He's fixed you where you have the ability, we're separated from each other, but in this realm, we have the ability to forgive, show mercy, show grace, and love each other. It's an easy thing to do to forgive someone because I understand that the One that put me in this realm forgave me. So it's easy to let everybody else's stuff go. People that are not in this realm, can't do that. All you've got to do is Google, the other day, 30 minutes of Trump, Pelosi, and Schumer. You Google that 30 minutes. Those people, all three of them, so I'm not attacking either part. I don't care anymore. But I'm telling you. Those 3 people cannot get along. They don't like each other. They hate each other. They despise each other. They can't even in 30 minutes carry on a casual conversation. Listen, I can sit down with an Auburn graduate and carry on a conversation. I don't even need Jesus to do that. I can't go more than 30 minutes without Jesus, but I can do 30. But when you're not in this realm, you're separated from each other. You can't offer each other forgiveness. You can't offer each other mercy. You can't offer each other grace. Stephen, deacon, preaching a great sermon, and the Jewish leadership can't take it. So they go over to a guy who writes 13 books of our Bible and they drop their coats on and said, "Hold these for a minute." They get rocks and they go over to Stephen and they chunk the rocks until they kill him. Last thing he says, "Father don't charge them with this sin." How do you have that kind of heart? Because you're in a realm where you're no longer separated from each other. This is why when we get to Ephesians 5 and it talks about a marriage and a covenant. It's going to talk about it in the sense that the home demonstrates the church. That the home is a place where you demonstrate the ability not to be separated, but to be connected. You have two people that marry. A man and a woman. Different love languages. Different personalities. All those issues. When you live down here, you either divorce or you stay in misery. But if you're sitting in this realm, you have the capacity to connect to someone that's totally disparate from you so that over time you demonstrate the bride in Christ in the home. That's its purpose. It's not just for you to have

fun. It is the purpose that God wants to display His glory and that we are no longer separated from each other. We have the ability to love each other because we have the ability to offer mercy and grace. Where those without Christ can't.

And that we're not separated from ourselves. When I live in this realm, I understand two things about me. Number one, no matter what I do, I'm forgiven. If that's not true, then you've got to worry that you're repentant before you die. But I don't have to worry about that. I'm automatically forgiven. It's a permanent deal. That forgiveness is settled on me where God's wrath used to be settled on me, now His forgiveness is settled on me. I'm OK. No matter what I do I am forgiven. Number two, I have the power not to do what He doesn't want me to do. I have the power. So I'm forgiven. And then when I do mess up, I have the power to get back on the road and not do that again. Romans 8: by His Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body. I have the ability. So I don't have to live in shame, and guilt, and embarrassment, and the depression that comes with looking at my sin. I can understand that I'm forgiven and that I don't have to keep doing what caused His forgiveness.

And lastly, I'm separated from this world, but the world can't overcome me. It can sting me, it can hurt me, but inside this realm, the Bible says in the book of Hebrews that Jesus intercedes for me daily. Bible says in the book of Romans that when I don't know how to pray that the Holy Spirit prays for me. So that good things happen. So what it means is when I live in this realm, I have Jesus and the Holy Spirit praying to the Father for me. This world can sting me, but it cannot overcome me. Nothing can overcome the prayer of the Spirit and the intercession of Jesus Christ in your life. And those that are not in this realm don't have that. So the world overcomes them. You say, "Well I've been stung really hard." Absolutely. I get that. But I love the way Paul phrases it in 2 Corinthians. He says, I'm knocked down. But I'm not knocked out.

So I'm sitting in a realm where I hear Him, I can forgive and love people, I'm forgiven, and the world, no matter what it does to me, can't conquer me. Now, now listen, because what he says next finally answered the question I never could peg. Watch this. He raised us, He sat us together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. Watch this.

[⁷so that He might show in the coming ages the surpassing riches of His grace in goodness on us in Christ Jesus.](#)

Now listen. So we can put this whole thing together. I messed up and I'm separated. My fault. I live under control of my culture and under the control of Satan because he runs the culture. The result of that is I'm facing God's wrath. But He took His Son and put His wrath on His Son so it could be removed from me. And if I accept that statement from the Holy Spirit and I believe that, then what happens is He raises me, He sits me in a realm where I can hear Him, I can build a relationship with other people, I'm forgiven and I have the power not to do it again, and the world can't kill me. Why did He do all that? So that in the coming ages, that is when this is all over, and there is coming to be an end, and it will not end until He comes back. But He's coming back. And when He redoes this, and He burns up the earth and He burns up the heavens and He recreates this universe and He recreates everything and a new Jerusalem comes down from Heaven, when God puts all this together for all eternity, He takes us and He uses us to demonstrate for eternity, we demonstrate, what does he say? The riches of His grace and goodness upon us in Christ Jesus.

I never could understand as a kid particularly. We have models back in the day when the glue that you can't have today, we had in excess. Which could explain the baby boomer generation. We did all these models, planes, cars, all sorts of stuff. Now inevitably, they were cheap, and inevitably you get some model that, no matter how much you paid for it, didn't fit together. No matter how much glue you sniffed, it did not fit together. And so you would take it and just break it, smash it, or if you had a plane, you'd put lighter fluid on it and light it. But we'll just not go there. But you'd smash it and you'd go to the store and get another one and start over. So when I read in the Bible that we had sinned and that we had blown it and that God put His Son on the cross, I never could fathom that because I'm thinking why in the world would He put His Son on the cross? Just start over. Just take Adam and Eve and go, "Sorry." Just flick them into oblivion and start over. Jesus would not have had to die. But if He does that, He demonstrates His sovereignty and His power. But if He puts His Son on the cross and takes the wrath off of us and redeems us and puts us where He lives so the connection is reestablished and when I die, He take me home, Hebrews 10:31, it's a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the Living God. But John 14, He will come and get me. I don't fall into His hands. He comes and He brings me home. And then He takes me and for eternity the cross that gives me His goodness and grace, it's not a demonstration of His power, it's a demonstration of His heart. We, for eternity, it obviously indicates there are other parts of this creation we don't know anything about. We know there are cherubim, seraphim, and angels, but we don't know what else is beyond that. But there's obviously a massive creation that He's made. And when He redeems all this, for eternity His recreation shows His power. But His redemption shows His heart. We for eternity demonstrate the heartbeat of Almighty God. So when you sit down at Christmas and you read the story, you remind your kids it's not just a story of His power and His creation, it's a story about His heart for those He loves. What a tremendous truth.

Father thank You. I will never fathom that love. I just can't put it together. But I'm glad I don't have to fathom it. I just am privileged to live in it. Father I just ask You for those here that may know about it but don't experience it, let them today discover who You are. Open us up and thank You for the clear, convicting, blessed truth out of Your book. In Jesus Christ name.