



Sermon – December 9, 2018

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Verses Covered

Ephesians 2:1 - 5

Slide over to the book of Ephesians. We're going to be in chapter 2 today. I appreciate you being here. There are two things evangelical Christians hate: water and cold. So when there's a combo, you don't expect anybody to be here. So I appreciate the crowd today. Ephesians is an easy book to understand the overview of. Chapter 1, we looked at the fact that who was responsible for changing our lives. And then we looked at a benefit of our life being changed. Which is the Trinity, the Godhead, has now allowed me the access to the Father through the blood of Jesus Christ, under the direction of the Holy Spirit. So I can pray in a way that literally impacts other people in my life. So we looked at a particular prayer that obviously God wants us to pray. It's written down in the scripture. So we looked at that over the last few weeks. Now we come to a passage that honestly most guys today that are planting churches are not going to read, much less preach from. Because now what he's going to do, he's going to talk to you about how all that happened in your life. So he's going to go back in these verses, 1 through 4, to where you were before Christ. So I want you to have your Bibles open. We're going to walk through phrase by phrase what he says because what he says is extremely insightful. It is not, for the most part, what people want to hear. We don't want to talk about sin. We don't want to talk about rebellions, we don't want to talk about all those things. But in point of fact, without understanding these verses, grace has no meaning. So to understand grace and mercy, you've got to understand these verses. So we're going to walk through phrase by phrase. Now one other thing before we get started. You're going to have to come to this with a belief that what is written here is correct no matter what you think or don't think. So you've got to throw that out because he's going to say something that's going to be a little bothersome, particularly in a climate that we live in in College Station and Bryan; of an intellectual climate. I remember a few years ago US News and World Report said the second largest per capita number of Ph.D.'s was inside this area. So we're in an intellectual climate. What he's going to say in this passage is not what generally you're going to hear at all inside that climate. As a matter of fact, what he says, and generally that climate's going to mock and laugh at. So you're going to have to make a decision today that this book really was written by the Holy Spirit and what it says in here is

absolutely true. And we're going to have to live with this. So listen carefully. Listen to where he starts. Chapter 2, verse 1.

¹[And you when you were dead,](#)

Now understand, every single time you read the word dead, it obviously never means to cease to exist. I want you to always think in your mind when you read the word death in relation to that, I want you to always think about the word separation. Because that's really what it means. Adam and Eve, once they blew it, were separated from God. Separated from a world that should have been their blessing. Separated from each other. And you're separated from yourself. You live in guilt. You live in shame. You live in embarrassment, depression, you struggle. We're separated in four areas. That's what death is. It is a separation. Now here's what he says.

¹[And when you were dead in your trespasses and your sins,](#)

In other words, it's your fault. Now he uses two words. One word means there's a line here. I'm not supposed to step over it and I do. That's the word trespass. Sin is a word that's used for shooting an arrow at a target and you miss it. So in other words, when God tells me not to do something, I do it. When He tells me to do something, I don't. Both of those, he says are the reason that I'm dead. I am dead because, now listen, and I'm telling you, this is not the sermon you're going to buy and listen to on Christmas day. We're dead because of rebellion. It's not that we're dead because we made a little mistake, we had a little problem, things haven't gone well, mom didn't like me. That's not why we're dead. We're dead, according to this, because of our own rebellion in two ways. What He tells us to do, we don't. What He wants us to do, we don't do. What He tells us not to do, we do. We are in a rebellion against the Creator. And therefore this world has become separated from a sovereign God. Now, OK, here we go. Now look in verse 2. Have your Bibles open.

²[in which you once walked,](#)

So we lived there. We lived there. We lived in our separation. Our homes are lived out in separation. Our work lives are lived out in separation. Our friendships are lived out in separation. We are living without Christ in a world that is separated. So talking about you, before you come to Christ, you lived in that separation. Now listen to what he says.

²[in which you once walked according to the age of this world,](#)

That's literally the Greek. It's a weird little phrase. But what he's talking about is the fact that the world has different ages, that is, different cultures. And so when probably early 1900's a culture would change maybe one or two generations, 20 or 40 years. The culture today changes in America every 5 to 7. But here's what he says. Back when you were separated, in your rebellion against the Creator, back when you were separated, you were not an independent thinker. Your culture controlled your life. And you were driven by that culture. We get our beliefs, our values, our truth, our right, and wrong; not from the Creator, we are in rebellion against. We get it from our culture.

When I was a kid in Colorado, there was a young man in our school named Martin. We were all leery of him. Martin and I went a couple times to race, we used to have these indoor racecars and Martin and I went a couple times, but it was always weird for me. And it was weird for every other kid in the class. Not because there was anything wrong with Martin, but because he was the only kid in the class whose parents were divorced. Nobody else. And so we looked at Martin a little askance. We were a little what's wrong here. So we were troubled by him because he was the only one divorced because, in that day, the viewpoint of the culture was you don't divorce. The viewpoint of the culture was you stayed together no matter how bad it is. You fast forward, our culture is different today. But that was the direction of the culture. And so as a result of that, Martin was the only kid in the class. You can hardly teach a class where virtually every child isn't touched somewhere by some sort of divorce. We're a whole different day. But in that day, that culture had no idea, but it was controlled. It controls people's marriages. Now, so the culture ran us. And here's the problem. And as a matter of fact, when you come to today, our culture's the opposite. Our culture today is take it on and off. You don't like somebody, take it off. Find another deal. Or where our culture's moving to today, is don't wear it. Because our culture today is beginning to say, "What's the point in marriage? Why do you get married? It doesn't mean anything. You're going to divorce anyway. So why do it? You're just creating legal problems for your life. So don't marry at all." And so that's now our day. We are now, even in our churches at times, now controlled by our culture rather than the covenant under a holy God. So the culture drives us when we're separated. And here's the real problem.

according to the age of this world based on the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit who is now working in the sons of disobedience.

So listen to what he says. You're separated. Your rebellion. You walked in it. You were controlled and you lived out the direction of your culture. And here's the real problem. That culture is controlled by the enemy who despises the Father. Now you need to understand you tell that in class at Texas A&M tomorrow, they're going to go, "Yeah, right." When Paul preached at the Areopagus, the intellectual headquarters in Athens, they were into what he was saying until he made this statement. He said, "And Jesus, God, was raised from the dead." Then they threw their hands up and went, "You have got to be kidding." When you even mention the idea that there is a significant being named Satan who has being under his control who is opposed that the Creator of the universe and thinks still that he can overthrow Him and he's doing everything he can and that he controls the direction of the culture, they'll laugh you out of class. So you have to decide. I do know this. In Matthew 4, Jesus, after 40 days and 40 nights had a prolonged conversation with a being He called Satan. He is there. He is alive. He has other beings under him. 1/3 of heaven fell with him. He exists and according to the Spirit in Ephesians 2, he drives the culture. You say, "No wait a minute. You just said that the culture you came up in nobody divorced. If people aren't divorcing because they're controlled by the culture, and the culture's controlled by Satan, why in the world would he want people to stay married?" Because that's what the Bible teaches. You stay married no matter what. That is not ever what the scripture teaches. What the scripture teaches is that two people come together out of that rebellion, forgiven in Jesus Christ, and inside the home, you build a replica of the church. That's why when you read Ephesians 5, when we hit the 5th chapter, he's going to wander back and forth between the church and the home because the home is the place where two people come together

in Christ, under the power of the Holy Spirit, they love each other in spite of their differences, they raise their children to love Christ, to present godly offspring, they stand with Jesus, and they build a richness and a fullness inside a confined home that you cannot find in this culture except in a Christian lifestyle. Now that's what the Bible teaches. That when you marry and I put this on, she's the only woman I ever look at. She's the only woman I touch. Other than Jesus, she's now the second most important thing in my life. She submits to that love. And we build a treasured home in the power of the Holy Spirit. That is not what Satan did to the culture. What he did to the culture is he had the culture believe you stay together no matter how bad it is, and now we have a culture that grew up seeing parents live in an absolute miserable stance for the rest of their life because they couldn't get divorced and they don't want that. And now we don't want to wear this at all. It was brilliant what he did. Carly Simon, pop-culture singer in my day, wrote a song. And in the song, she talked about the fact that a man wants to marry her. But in the song she discusses that at night her mom's in one room, her dad's in another room, there's no communication, there's no relationship, everything's done. And at the end of the song, this guy says, "I want you to marry me." She says, "Ok." That was brilliant of the enemy to say, "I don't care how bad it is. You stay together." And we've created generations of people who've seen parents who despise each other, but hang in there because a divorce shouldn't be done. And that culture created a persona of marriage is awful. Don't do it. The Bible says it's the second, it's the greatest thing God gives you other than rebirth in Jesus Christ. And here's what drives me. In that culture, the church should have said what I just said to that culture. But what the church said was, "Don't divorce. And if you divorce there's something wrong with you." I remember that was my persona in my very first church. And I had this lady and her husband come in. And they sat down. She's got two little girls at home. She's tearing up. And she looks at me and she says, "He wants to leave me." And I will never forget this as long as I live. I think it was the sovereign hand of God to put them in my office to teach me. Because this guy looked at me straight in the face and he said, "Let me tell you something. She's a great wife. She's a great mother. Great person. Great Christian. But I'm gone." Got up, walked out the door, filed for divorce, left her. And all that the church did was scream about how wrong it is to be divorced when we never offered the antidote which is a holy marriage inside the person of Jesus Christ under the direction of the Holy Spirit, implementing this book in your home. It wasn't until James Dobson came on the scene that we finally began to address marriage. We did not stand against the Satanic culture. We lived under the same direction of that culture. We must never as a church be driven by the culture. We're to stand independently in the person of Jesus Christ.

But here's the other problem. Now listen. OK. He's talking about us before Christ. We're in rebellion. We're separated. We're driven by our culture which is controlled by our enemy. And here's the next thing. In which also, verse 3;

³we all lived then in the lusts of our flesh doing the wills of the flesh and its desires and we became children by nature of wrath as the remaining are.

Now let me tell you, I'm holding the Greek in my hand. There are a couple of Greek words for anger. One is *thumos*. It means a momentary anger. I've experienced that on the golf course time to time. I have some clubs that have experience *thumos*. I went to the Caymans on the frequent flyer mileage of my 5-iron one year. So there's some *thumos* there. You'll catch that when you get home. There's some *thumos* there. It's not the Greek word here. The Greek word

here is *orgés*. Now listen. *Orgés* is an anger that never stops. It's translated generally wrath. But it's an anger that's on me from the Creator that I can't get rid of. Now understand, OK. I'm separated. I'm in rebellion. I lived under my culture. Satan directed my life through the culture. And the end result is that there's a wrath on me that is settled and final and finished and I can't get rid of it. And that wrath will follow me into eternity so that the separation that I experience here will never end. That's the scripture. We don't like that. We don't want to read that. We don't want to talk about that. But if you believe John 3:16, He loves you, you've got to believe that part too. So what do we do? Why doesn't He just remove the wrath? Because He can't. We rebelled. We didn't just make a mistake. We didn't just stumble. We didn't just fall. We're in rebellion and that rebellion has brought a settled anger on us that He can't let go because we violated His holiness. That rebellion has caused a wrath He can't let go. We are caught. So what do we do? Can't do anything. You can come sit in this building every day of the week. It's not going to remove His wrath. You can pray 20 times a day, it's not going to remove His wrath. You can read this Bible all the time, it's not going to remove His wrath. You can be a nice guy, it's not going to remove His wrath. Look.

⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love by which He loved us, ⁵when we were dead in our trespasses, He made us alive together in Christ by grace you are being saved,

You know what He did? He took His Son and He took my, that settled anger, and He moved it over and He settled it on Jesus. That's why when you read the seven statements on the cross; first one, "Father! Forgive them they don't know what they're doing." Last one, "Father, in Your hands I commit My Spirit." Right in the middle, "My God! My God! Why have You forsaken Men?" Why? Because He took that settled wrath that's on me because of my rebellion and He put it on, Jesus. It took Him six hours, from 9 to 3, but He put that on Jesus. You say, "Well how do you know it's legitimate?" Because He came out of the grave. Jesus, why did He do that? Because His love drove His mercy. That's why. So here it is. I'm not just a poor guy; I'm a rebeller against the Creator of the universe. It's caused me to be separated in every way possible. Because of that, I'm controlled by my culture which is controlled by His enemy which has resulted in the place where His anger is settled on me and I can't get rid of it. But He got rid of it for me. So when you go home today, gentlemen, if you're the head of your home, tonight before you go to bed, you get your wife and your children and you kneel. And you thank Almighty God for His love and His mercy and removal of His wrath from you and your family. You thank Him for that.

Number two, now listen to me, he says under the wrath like the rest. We have a tendency as a church to hate the rest because they don't walk like us, they don't believe us, and right now the rest in America hate us. Listen we do not hate them back. We should ache and grieve over them. Because when they die and I die, you know where I go? I go to a personal dinner with Jesus. He said, when He took the Lord's supper, he said, "I will never drink it again until it's new with you in the kingdom." I go into a dinner with the Son of God who took off the wrath, serves me the last understanding of His body and His blood. But the rest go to a line where they have to wait until their name's called. And the Bible says there is a book opened and God says, "Is his name written in there?" And you look in there and your name's not there, and you spend eternity, now listen, under that wrath. Which means you never see Him. You never see another

person. You live in a world that's horrible. And you live for eternity with the understanding you could have come to Christ, but you didn't. So you've got a choice between a line or a dinner. And we should not hate those that are standing and waiting for that line. We should love them and do everything we can to let them know if they want to, they can go to the same dinner we're going to. It's the same way with the same offer. Our job is to let them know about the dinner. Not to hate them because they're standing in that line. It's time we breathe the name of Jesus outside these walls and inside these walls, we praise Him for who and what He did.

Let's pray.

Father, thank You for the amazing truth that we bought into the lie of the enemy, but You still chased us down. Thank You for that truth. Thank You that even in our rebellion, You still loved us and You still offer us mercy through what You did on Your Son 2,000 years ago. And so Father I just ask You today, there's even one person in here who's in the line, but not going to the dinner, Father let them find Your Son and make a ticket for the dinner. Father for those of us that are going to the dinner, don't let us leave here without thanking You and don't let us get out of these walls without asking You for an opportunity to share that dinner with whomever You put in our path. Lock that down. I ask You that in Jesus Christ name because He's the one that made all this possible.