

MADE NEW: New Lifeⁱ
Ephesians 2:1-10

INTRODUCTION:

Good morning, Trinity! It is so good to see you today. My name is Chris Wigley, I'm one of the pastors here at Trinity. If you are a first-time guest, we are just thrilled to have you with us today. We'd love the opportunity to get to know you a little bit. You can provide information to us by texting the keyword, TBCMP, which stands for Trinity Baptist Church Mount Pleasant, to the number 94-000. When you send that keyword, a link will be sent back to you and that will take you to a form that is less than a minute to fill out. When you click "submit," it notifies me, and I always look forward to following up with our guests each week.

If text messaging isn't your thing, please swing by our information center located in the fellowship area, right out these doors in the lobby. We have a gift there for you just as a way of saying thank you for being our guest today. Again, we are thrilled you have chosen to worship with us today.

FUN CAMP CELEBRATION:

Before we jump into this morning's message, I want to pause to celebrate something with you, Church Family. This past week was Fun Camp for our 1st through 6th grade students. We had 122 kids participate in the week's activities. 61 volunteers served as game leaders, color team leaders, snack preparers, bible story teachers, registration, and so much more. And I am fired up to let you know that we had ??? kids make a decision this week! Isn't that awesome?!

I am telling you, the advancement of the gospel through Fun Camp is not something we can do without the leadership of our Children's Minister, Alicia Hill, The Fun Camp planning team, the many volunteers that work feverishly to put on an event like this, and you who made it possible through your gifts and donations.

You know, our vision is to become a gospel-centered community redeeming brokenness through hope in Jesus Christ. I am telling you, we worked to achieve that vision this past week through Fun Camp! Thank you, thank you church family for being a generous, prayerful, servant-minded church. Thank

you to Alicia and her hard work. Kids met Jesus this week and that's what it's all about. God is good. Amen?

SERIES OVERVIEW:

We are working our way through a teaching series we have entitled Made New. Over the course of the summer, we are studying the New Testament book of Ephesians. And one of the reoccurring themes throughout the letter is the idea of living a new life found in Christ. So far, we have looked at how we have a new identity in Christ and a new focus through prayer. Today we are going to look at how we have a new life.

So, I want to invite you to grab your bibles and turn with me in your New Testament to Ephesians. We are going to be in chapter 2 this morning and work through verses 1-10 today.

OPENING ILLUSTRATION: Car Engine

About a year ago, our oldest daughter, Carsyn, called us and said that her car had died. Now, on that particular day, the rest of our family was out of town at a baseball game. A friend of ours had stopped by and tried to help her jump the car, but to no avail. Luckily, she was just at Dellwood Park, right across the street from our house. She was safe and able to walk home, so I thought I'll take a look at it the next morning.

Well, I was able to get it started, but it was making a horrible knocking noise in the engine. I managed to get the car to the shop where the news was not good. A bearing in the engine had gone out. It was going to need a new engine.

For those of you that have been there, you understand the weight of those words, don't you. I was thinking, "Well, how much is that going to cost? Is the car worth that much?" That was bad news.

But then, the mechanic called me and said, "I think I have good news for you. There is a recall out on the car for this issue. You should call Hyundai and see what they can do for you." So, I called and sure enough, the recall covered a new engine! And the service manager said that he would recommend changing all belts and hoses while they were installing the engine. So, I asked what the cost was and it was \$250. So, for \$250 we basically got a new car. We were fist pumping and celebrating like crazy. New life was given to that car!

Well, Paul teaches in the opening verses of chapter 2 of Ephesians that we have been given new life. And the new life we've been given in Christ should well up in us into wholehearted worship! So, this morning I want to share with you what I am calling 4 steps to a new life. We need to realize the problem, recognize the solution, receive the action, and respond to the outcome. That will serve as our outline this morning.

Let's begin by looking at the first step to a new life...

1) Realize the Problem.

Verses 1 through 3 highlight the dilemma that we all face. Let's read it together.

*¹And you were **dead** in the **trespasses and sins** ²in 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— ³among 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.*

It has been said that the first step to overcoming an addiction is to admit that you have a problem. Well, while we might not have an addiction, Paul follows that guideline here as he gets right to the point. He wants us to recognize our problem. He says we are dead, verse 1, and children of wrath, verse 3. That's a major problem. But the question is what is it that makes us this way? Well, he says, in verse 1, that it is the result of trespasses and sins.

Now, I find it interesting that Paul chooses to use both of those words. The word trespass is used 106 times in the Bible.ⁱⁱ The word "sin" is used over 400 times.ⁱⁱⁱ It is rare in the Scriptures that both words are used together. We understand trespasses and sins to be synonyms. But in communicating the problem we face, Paul uses both and I think Paul is being intentional here, not just repetitive.

By using the word "trespasses," Paul is referring an action taken, our offenses. But in using the word, "sins," I think he is referring to a holistic approach to who we are. Whereas trespass means a false step, sin is a word that means to miss the mark.^{iv} We are sinners by nature and therefore we trespass against God. In other words, it's not that we do sinful things and that makes us sinners, but rather, we do sinful things **because** we are sinners.^v And in light of that truth, we are dead and the rightful objects of God's wrath. This is the problem.

Now, we have a tendency to detach ourselves from this assessment. We tend to think that Paul must be talking about someone else. Someone that is outside the church. But Paul makes it clear that the problem of spiritual death is everyone's problem. In other words, it is all of our realities.

He says in verse 2, "*²in which **you** once walked,*" and then again in verse 3, "*³among whom **we all** once lived.*" This is true to Paul's other teachings. In Romans 3:23 he says, "*²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*" And also, Romans 3:10, which says, "*None is righteous, no, not one.*"

But you know, we have a tendency to think, well this couldn't be talking about me. I mean, to be spiritually dead and the object of God's wrath is a little harsh. Sure, I've told a lie, but I'm not a terrorist, or a murderer, or a pedophile. I'm a decent person, I help my neighbor and I'm a rule keeper. But here's the problem with that, we have somehow gotten to the point to where some sin is more acceptable than others. But Scripture only has one definition for each of us, that we are all sinners. That's the only distinction.

And before we go too far down the road of placing higher value on some sins over others, let's not forget Acts, chapter 5, where Ananias and Sapphira's lives were demanded of them. And for what? A lie. Yes, sins have differing consequences from an earthly perspective, but sin is still sin. And so, from a biblical perspective, **the heinousness of our sin is not gauged by what we do, but rather by Whom we offend, Almighty God.** And in understanding that, we come to realize that we are all in the same boat facing the same problem.

This is important because there are those that would suggest that since they are not all that bad that God will look on them with some sort of acceptance. People believe that because they are good enough, God will let them into Heaven. But there are none that are good.

I heard one pastor say that the lie of there being good people is the modern-day equivalent of Satan deceiving Adam and Eve in the Garden.^{vi} Listen, we all have sinned and are damaged and destroyed by sin. We are utterly depraved, disobedient, and doomed. That's the problem that we all must realize. And apart from realizing that problem, we would never understand our desperate need for a Savior. So, Paul urges us to realize the problem. The second step to a new life is to...

2) Recognize the Solution.

Let's pick back up in verse 4. The two most powerful words in the entire bible.

4But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—6and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

We all face a massive problem, BUT GOD. Don't you love that? God steps into the middle of our mess, even when we were dead in our trespasses, verse 5, and makes us alive. How? In Christ Jesus.

Now notice how Jesus changes everything. He solves the problem. We go from dead to alive. We go from disobedient to raised up with Him. We move from destruction to seated with Jesus in the heavenly places.^{vii} Jesus, in going to the cross, flipped every problem we have. Jesus is the solution. When we couldn't solve the problem, God did in Christ.

Paul even tells us the motive that God has in providing the solution. Verse 4. *"being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us."* God is glorified in showing us mercy which comes as a result of His great love for us. When we come to understand the mercy of God, we are prompted to respond in worshiping God. But also, in view of God's mercy toward us, we are compelled to show mercy to others.

In verses 4 through 7, Paul makes mention of mercy and grace. While these two words are closely related, they are not the same thing. Mercy is not getting what you deserve. Grace is getting what you don't deserve. What we deserve for our sin is death. Therefore, we live daily by God's mercy. We don't get what we deserve. But God's grace gives us what we don't deserve, salvation.

ILLUSTRATION: Getting Pulled Over

Let me see if I can illustrate the difference between mercy and grace for us today. I have been known to, on occasion, have a lead foot. And there have been times that I have gotten pulled over by the police. But I have been very fortunate. Many of the times that I have been pulled over, I have just been given warnings. I say this now and my luck is going to run out. But getting away with just a warning is an example of the officer showing mercy on me. I

deserved to get a ticket, but I was just given a warning. Thank The Lord for merciful police officers! So, you see what mercy is.

Grace would be me getting pulled over and not only getting away with a warning, but the officer saying, "You know, I'd like to reimburse you for all the traffic tickets you've ever had to pay. If you'd just tell me that amount, I'll write you a check right here, right now." In that case, which would never happen, I not only didn't get what I deserved, I received something that I didn't deserve. That's grace. Do you see the difference between the two?

So, God is rich in mercies. In fact, God's mercies are new every morning. Thank you, Lord, for your mercy. But not only is God rich in mercy, He also has, verse 7, immeasurable riches of grace! But listen, because God is perfect and just, His mercy and grace came at a price. Verse 7 tells us that God's mercy and grace are the byproduct of what Jesus did for us.

2 Corinthians 5:21 says this perfectly. *"21For our sake [that's mercy] he [being God] made him [being Jesus] to be sin who knew no sin [How did He do that? On the cross. Why?], so that in him [in Christ] we might become the righteousness of God [that's grace]."* The mercy of God, fueled by His love for you and me, demonstrated grace by putting Jesus on the cross to pay for our sin.

Paul says that we need to realize the problem and recognize the solution. The third step to a new life is to...

3) Receive the Action.

Look at verses 8 and 9 of Ephesians 2. *"8For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9not a result of works, so that no one may boast."*

When I say that we must receive the action, I mean that the active agent in salvation is God, we do nothing, but by faith receive what God has done for us. It is a gift. Freely given but received by faith in Jesus as Lord.

Prior to new life in Christ, Paul says we are dead in our sin. The dead cannot do anything. We cannot be good enough. You can't do enough good works. We owed a debt we could not pay. But He paid the debt He did not owe. Salvation is not found in our doing, but by receiving what has already been done. If we

could somehow earn our salvation, then Jesus died in vain. But the truth is that because we are sinners, we can't earn salvation, so God in His grace did it for us in the person and work of Jesus Christ. By faith we receive the salvation Jesus purchased on our behalf. This is what Paul is saying.

ILLUSTRATION: Faith and Airplanes

You know, getting on an airplane requires a certain degree of faith. Even if you know about lift and drag and air speed and aerodynamics, you place your faith in the pilot every time you get on a plane.

Now, I know people that will not fly. Even though they have heard the testimonies of airplanes flying, and they have seen airplanes fly in the sky, they lack the faith to get on a plane.

Well, the same is true when it comes to salvation. Faith is expressed in trust. We may know all about Jesus, be able to speak about Jesus, but until we fully rest in Jesus by faith, we are not saved. Because of God's grace, He gifted us salvation, but we respond to that gift by placing faith in Jesus as Lord.

So, we must realize the problem, recognize the solution, receive the action, and the fourth step to a new life is to...

4) Respond to the Outcome

Salvation produces an outcome. Look at what Paul says in verse 10 of Ephesians 2. ***10For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.***

A few key phrases to point out here in verse 10. First, the word, "workmanship." The word in the original language is poiéma, where we get the English word, poem. It carries the idea of a masterpiece. And this workmanship, Paul says, is created in Christ Jesus. In other words, we were created by God, in His image, when our physical life began at conception. However, we were re-created, that is, made new, given new life, called a masterpiece, in Christ Jesus. We become God's workmanship when we are given new life in Christ.

ILLUSTRATION: Car

Let me illustrate this by bringing my opening illustration full circle. I made mention of how Carsyn's car was given new life. But notice that the new life given to the car was not fixing the current engine. No, it required a new engine,

and new belts and hoses. When we come to Christ, we are not just overhauled. We become a new creation. The old has gone. We have been given new life. This is what God does when we become His workmanship.

But notice further. We are given new life for a purpose. We are God's ***workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.*** In other words, we are saved for good works. If the point was just to be saved, then The Lord would take us to Heaven when we got saved. But that's not how it works. We are saved and then made servants in God's Kingdom.

What are the good works that Paul is talking about? Well, I think it can be many things. But certainly, among those things are letting our light shine so that God is glorified. Jesus said that when others see our good deeds, they will in turn glorify our Father in Heaven.

Good works are also growing in spiritual character. Paul says elsewhere that we are to work out our salvation, we are to become more like Jesus in all we do and say.

Good works would also include gathering with God's people and serving the church. Right now, we have a team in Guatemala serving the children of Eagle's Nest Orphanage. But we also have a ton of people serving here locally by teaching our children, welcoming guests, and leading small groups.

Good works are expressed in giving to the Kingdom of God and the advancement of His Kingdom. This is done through our time, talent and treasures.

But simply put, good works is the outcome of salvation. I heard one pastor says, "It is how we prove we are spiritually alive."^{viii} Good works do not do the saving, but they are evidence that we are saved.

Finally, Paul says that we should walk in those good works. We should walk in a way that reflects our new life in Christ. I am confident that is most expressed by the way we love others. In fact, Jesus said that people will know that we are His disciples by the love that we have for one another. We should walk, be defined by, the good works that God prepared for us to do.

4 steps to a new life: Realize the problem, recognize the solution, receive the action, and respond to the outcome.

CONCLUSION:

As Jared and the team comes to lead us in a time of response, I want to ask you, do you have new life in Christ? Which step are you currently on. Have you realized the problem that you face. Have you come to an understand that we are dead in our trespasses and sins? That's step 1.

Maybe you're here today and you are beginning to recognize the solution that was provided for you. That Jesus went to the cross to solve your sin problem. That's step number 2.

Maybe you are here this morning and you are at the point by which you need to receive the action. That is that you need to express faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. You might ask, "How do I do that?" Well, you simply pray and tell Jesus that you realize you are a sinner and that He died for you. And then express to Him that you desire for Him to be the Lord and Savior of your life. Confess Him and Lord. And the Bible says that whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. If that's you this morning, our elders will be here at the front and would love to visit with you.

Maybe you are on the 4th steps. You know Jesus but you are not walking in that new life that he has created in you. If that's the case, then your response today is one of repentance. We all like sheep have gone astray, but Jesus stands ready to forgive and redeem and put us back on the straight and narrow.

4 steps to a new life. What step are you on? How is The Lord prompting you today? In a moment, I'm going to pray, we will stand and sing, but most importantly, let's respond to that prompting on our hearts. [PRAY]

ENDNOTES:

ⁱ Works consulted in preparation for this message: John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Ephesians*, Moody Press: Chicago, 1986; Klyne Snodgrass, *The NIV Application Commentary: Ephesians*, Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1996; Andrew T. Lincoln, *Word Biblical Commentary: Ephesians*, Word Books: Dallas, 1990; J.D. Greear, “Embrace The Mystery: But God,” sermon preached at Summit Church, North Carolina, February 14, 2010, accessed online: <https://summitchurch.com/message/but-god-ephesians-21-10>; Vance Pitman, various sermons preached at Hope Church Las Vegas, accessed online: <https://hopechurchlv.com/messages/saved-week-1-ephesians-21-4/>; Jack Graham, “Much More: Saved to Serve,” sermon preached at Prestonwood Baptist Church on February 18, 2020, accessed online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXdBCoyjRgQ>; Michael Youssef, “Discover Your Treasure House: Discover Its Benefits,” published by Leading The Way, April 7, 2013, accessed online: <https://www.ltw.org/watch/teaching/series/discover-your-treasure-house/part-3>; Michael Gossett, “Ephesians Living in Christ: Alive in Christ,” sermon preached at Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, TX, January 23, 2022, accessed online: <https://www.gabc.org/episode/alive-in-christ>.

ⁱⁱ Knowing Jesus, <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/words/Trespass>.

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.reference.com/world-view/many-times-sin-mentioned-bible-17e7ef3effc077c5>.

^{iv} Strong’s Concordance, 3900, paraptóma, and 266, hamartia.

^v J.D. Greear.

^{vi} Michael Youssef.

^{vii} Pointed out by Chip Ingram.

^{viii} Jack Graham.