

=FAVORITE BIBLE CHAPTERS=

Lesson 53

Ephesians 2

INTRODUCTION: Ephesians 2 is a beautiful chapter which deals with salvation. For the lesson today, we will go through Ephesians 2:1-10.

I. WHAT WE WERE. Read Ephesians 2:1-3. Notice the first four words of verse 2, "Wherein in time past." This deals with the state of the unconverted man, what he actually is. The world says that it really offers "the great life." The world says that its way brings "joy and happiness." Let us see what it really is.

1. We "were dead." See Ephesians 2:1. The world says that it has found "life." God says that the unconverted life is death. The Apostle wrote I Timothy 5:6, "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." The simple truth is that the life before salvation is not life at all; it is death!

2. We walked "according to the course of this world." Notice Ephesians 2:2a. The word "world" here is the word "cosmos," which means "world arrangement," "world order" or "world system." It does not necessarily mean sinful in the sense of being wicked, such as drunkenness, murder, etc. It simply means we picked up the habits of the world. We used the language of the world. We fashioned ourselves after the world. We did not want to be different from the world.

3. We walked "according to the prince of the power of the air." See Ephesians 2:2b. Notice also John 12:31 and I John 5:19. The prince of the power of the air is Satan. He was our lord; he was our god. The unconverted man has a god. His god is the god of this world, which is Satan. All people have a god. Our god is either Satan or the true God revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Everybody walks according to one of these two.

4. We were "children of disobedience." Read Ephesians 2:2c.

5. Our conversation was bad. In Ephesians 2:3a notice the words, "we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh." Now this does not mean that the conversation was necessarily vulgar, though it could mean that. It could mean, and in some cases does mean, the conversation is vulgar which has to do with the lusts of the flesh. We associate this, of course, with sex. It goes far beyond that, however. The "lusts of the flesh" refers to eating, drinking, sleeping or fulfilling any appetite of the flesh which would, of course, include sex but would not be only sex. It means that the natural man talks about the desires of the flesh. He talks about wanting rest, he talks about wanting food, he talks about wanting sex, he talks about wanting to do things that his body and his natural appetites crave, even though they may not all be sinful.

6. We fulfilled "the desires of the flesh." See Ephesians 2:3c. The conversation here does not deal just with wicked things; it deals with fleshly things. We were wrapped up in natural conversation. One place the Bible calls it, "buying and selling, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage." So much of our talk is just plain "people talk." God wants us to rise above that and talk of Him and of His things, spiritual things.

II. WHAT WE ARE NOW.

1. We are "quickened." Read Ephesians 2:5. The word "quickened" here has to do

with the new birth. Here is the pivotal thing. We were children of wrath, but we have been “quickenened,” born again. (Teacher, explain this to the class.)

2. We are “raised up.” Notice Ephesians 2:6a. What does this mean? This means we have been raised higher than the appetites of the flesh. Oh, yes, God still wants us to eat, but He does not want us to live to eat; He wants us to eat to live for Him. We still have the fleshly appetites, and within God’s boundaries they are not wrong to satisfy. It is wrong, however, for us to major on them, to make this our conversation and to live our lives around the fleshly appetites. They are a part of life, but they are not life. They need satisfying, but this satisfaction is only incidental, for the great bulk of our lives should be wrapped up doing things for Him and talking about Him.

3. We sit together “in heavenly places.” Read Ephesians 2:6b. Ah, this is wonderful! God wants us to sit together in heavenlies. He is contrasting the heavenlies with the lusts of the flesh in verse 3. We associate the word “lusts” as being bad. This is not necessarily so. God is talking here about our dwelling on different things. We sing about different things. We go to different places. We enjoy different things than do those who have not been “quickenened.”

4. We will always show “the exceeding riches of His grace...through Christ Jesus.” See Ephesians 2:7. This means that our lives are no longer just material, carnal or natural. We are not here just to make a living and to feed ourselves and our families until we die. We are here now and will forever live to show the goodness of God, to show Christ in our lives.

III. HOW IT HAPPENED. Notice Ephesians 2:8-10. What made us change from what we were to what we are? Of course, we have already mentioned that this is by being born again. Verses 8-10 show us how we are to be born again. It is by grace through faith. Notice the things that it is not.

1. It is “not of yourselves.” See Ephesians 2:8b. There is nothing we can do to get born again, that is, by works or good deeds.

2. It is “not of works.” See Ephesians 2:9a. Man cannot work his way to Heaven. He puts his faith in Christ, and Christ performs the miracle of regeneration and makes him from what he was to what he is. Man cannot make himself change that way.

3. It is “not of blood.” Read John 1:13a. This means that you cannot inherit salvation. Your father can be a Christian; your grandfather, a Christian; your great-grandfather, a Christian; your mother, a Christian; your grandmother, a Christian; your great-grandmother, a Christian; and all your ancestors can be Christians, but you must decide for yourself! It is not of blood.

4. It is not “of the will of the flesh.” See John 1:13b. In other words, there is nothing that the flesh can decide to do to make it saved. God does all the saving in response to our faith in Christ.

5. It is not “of the will of man.” Read John 1:13c. Nobody else can make you a Christian. No one can baptize you and make you a Christian. No one can give you communion and make you a Christian. No one can let you join his institution and make you a Christian.

CONCLUSION: Now, teacher, find out from the pupils where they are living—if they are living according to the lusts of the flesh, that is, the desires of the flesh, or if they are

living in heavenlies with Christ. Explain to them the difference. Teach them how they may change from one to the other by grace through faith.