

Life Without Christ

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Title: What it means to be a Sinner

Text: Ephesians 2:1-3

Ephesians chapter 2. ^{I want to} ~~We~~ are looking at the first three verses on ^{The Subject} WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A SINNER? I thought we might have a testimonial meeting and we could answer questions. I don't know about you but I have never had anyone force that upon me. To tell me that I was a sinner. I have always known that quite well. But, every now and then you run into someone who doesn't believe or know that they are a sinner. Paul certainly answers that question.

I think it is also a great danger in the christian life when we assume that we no longer have a problem with sin. That is a tremendous danger. And I think you will find either as a believer or as one who is seeking, that this passage speaks to the needs of our hearts.

(Read Ephesians 2:1-3)

Let's prayer

^{I want you to} ~~We are going to~~ look at what it means to be a sinner, ^{according to the} ~~in just three B.S.L~~ simple ways. ^{And I want to look at this in three simple ways}

In Vs 1, we see that in the condition that we are already in because of sin.

And secondly, we are going to look at the conduct of our life in Vs 2.

And finally, in Vs 3, we are going to look at the consequences that we face. And in all three areas we will find out what the Bible means when it says that we are a sinner. And we are in need of the Lord's grace and mercy

(1) ^{First of all} In looking at Vs 1 ^{I want you to notice} and ~~examining~~ the condition that we are in, ^{according to Vs 1} there is really a reason given there ^{For that Condition, and} ~~as well as~~ a result given.

Some of you may have the word "quicken" or "made alive" there. ^{that} ~~They~~ really occur down in Vs 5. The simple statement is: "YOU ARE DEAD IN- or, "by means of" your trespasses and sins."

The reason I am in my condition is because of two things: Trespasses and sin. And the result is that I am dead.

Now, to ~~face~~^{force} that upon our minds a little bit, let me share with you what "trespasses and sins" are!

The word "trespass" appears some 23 times in the N.T. ^{And it} simple means "to fall beside", or "along side of". It means that you are walking along a path and you stumbled and fell. It's main teaching in the N.T. is that it is an "offense" or a "fault" against other people.

For example: in Matthew chapter 6 our Lord taught us that ~~if~~^{if} we would not forgive others of their trespasses, then our Lord will not forgive us.

Or, in Matthew 18 when Peter said to Jesus, "How often should I forgive my brother when he trespasses against me? 7 times? And Jesus said, ^{NO} 70 times 7!".....And later on in that passage Jesus said, "If you will not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you."

out Another example of it usage is Galations 6:1 where it says, "You, who are spiritual, when we see someone who has a fault(same word Trespasses) a fault against another, we are to try and restore that person in the spirit of meekness."

out Another example would be James 5:16 where it says "confess your faults one to another and pray one for another that you maybe healed."

So, Rooted in the ~~idea~~^{word} trespasses is the idea of forgiveness. Forgiving one another for the many times that we fail to live up to the standard that a lot of us except.

There is a great application, here
~~And let me say this at this point.~~ If you except your christian friends to always live up to what you believer a believer ought to be, you are in for a big disappointment. Many of us feel hurt and resentment and bitterness because a christian friend that we may have trusted has failed us miserably. Acturally, we should not be surprised. We should realize that it was going to happen. Instead of looking at each other as some one up on a pedlstal. We should see each other, including ourselves, as ~~rather deprived~~ sinners. And wonder how any of us could live for the Lord. ~~Instead~~, we often have the attitude that we are alright. I mean, after all, we have been forgiven by Jesus. And we are here now. And all of our problems are solvaed. ~~And these~~

int And those sweet shinning faces all around you would never let you down. Would they? Are you kidding! ~~Just give them a chance.~~ *FOLKS* We are sinners, ~~folk~~

That is what this passage is all about. One of the reasons behind our condition is because we do fail each other. We have faults against one ~~another~~ another *and we do stumble and fall*

an! Tom Paul When ~~he~~ said "~~that~~" "sinned"; He used a word that means to ¹¹ miss the mark. It is used 270 times in the N.T. It is like shooting arrows at the tarket and missing the bulls eye. Primarily that is towards God. For all have sinned, says Romans 3:23, and come short of what?....The glory of God.

It is moral perfection. And we can never measure up to it. ⁵⁰ Trespasses and sins give us the reason. *Error condition* But the result is that I am dead....Dead... Total unable to respond.

I would like to impress that upon your mind. I have had the opportunity to conduct many funneral service. Many of you have attended one or many funeral services. And I have notice that in those services the person in the coffen is dead...Right?....Dead!.....

And you know, it would be dumb of me to believe that I could get any responses out off that body. To go over to that casket and preach to the body inside. And then to except that body to respond....Dumb!....The person in the casket is dead...No responses....

Now, folks, apply that truth to spiritual things. We try to motivate people to sbme how respond to God when they are spiritually dead. There is no way that any one of us can respond to God, if it were not for God's intervention. *it's our lives!* And some of us forget that!

And ~~we~~ say, "Well, I am not so bad. I don't sin that much." *Hay!* Whether one sin or a thousand, the Bible says, the consequence is spiritual death. We are dead. Isa. 59 says "our sin has separated ^{us} ~~ourselves~~ from God. So that he will not hear."

~~John~~ Psalms 66:18 says, "if I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear." He will not respond. *Spiritual dead.*

The Bible teaches that when the Holy Spirit comes into my life He quicken or makes alive my ^{dead} spirit. So that I ^{can now} respond to God. And ~~if~~ it were not for God's intervention in my life, I would never respond to Him in any way, shape or form.

3E) Let me just share with you three things about the dead... ^{about} ~~Unbeliever~~

(1F) According to the Bible if you are dead, you have absolutely no ability to respond to God. This is what we have been talking about.

out In I Timothy 5:6 we find a classic usage of the word "dead." It says of a young widow who decides to go out and live it up. The Bible uses the phrase "wanton pleasure". And the Bible says "she is dead even while she lives."

~~It is a well known fact even from the OT in Proverbs that continue sexual immorality produces in later life~~

And what the verse means is that she is dead ~~sexually~~. She is unable to respond to God because of what sin had done ^{to her life}

(2F) Secondly, the Bible teaches that we ~~have an inability to see~~ ^{cannot see}. This means understanding. Seeing things spiritually.

Look over to Ephesians chapter 5. Ephesians 5:13=14...(Read)

Obviously the light, when it comes makes things visible. And Christ needs to shine on the individual. He needs to awake from the dead in order to see things ^{spiritually}

The issue in the context is sin. And I thought how easy it is to ~~a~~ justify our sin and to defend it and not see it as God sees it. Spiritually dead. Unable to see things correctly because of sin.

(3F) ^{God the} The Bible also teaches that when you are dead you are unable to produce.

James 2 says "that faith without works is what?".....dead.....It cannot produce the works that God is looking for in our lives. Because we are dead.

When I studied this through I said, "This is true of every unbeliever." It is true of every person outside of Christ. They are unable to respond to Jesus. They are unable to see correctly. They ~~are~~ are unable to produce effectively for God.

only But you know, friends, it doesn't end there. This is also true of believers.... ^{There is a very application for Believers}

According to the Apostle James, when sin is in the life of the believer, it is leaning towards death in what ever area you are talking about. When believers continue in sin, without repentence and getting right with God, they will find their hearts ~~going~~ growing cold towards God. Unable to respond to the Lord as they once did because of sin. (PHASE)

When sin comes into the life of the believer he is unable to see things correctly. And his vision is hindered. He starts saying things that are not really true. And he is not following Biblical principles anymore...WHY?... Because of sin. He is not able to see things from God's view point. And we start justifying and defending ourselves in areas that God says are wrong.

I find that it is also true that Believers who are sinning are not producing for God. They are spiritually bear. There is no power in that life where sin is entertained.

Through we are secure from eternal separation, yet, we experience in the temporal sense in this life, death. And un-productive life. All because sin is being entertained in ones life.

50. Our condition ~~is~~ towards God reminds us of what it means to be a sinner.

(2) Now, let's come to the matter of conduct. In verse 2 of Ephesians chapter 2, Paul says, "in which", meaning "in the trespasses and sins," "you formerly walked."

You know, when you come to Christ there should be a change. There should be a difference. "You formerly walked."

That word "walked" is used 97 times in the N.T. And it simply means, "your life style". Paul is talking about "a life style" "a conduct." He is saying that that is important what you believe. But, it is also important that that has an effect in your life.

And the point is: that unless our belief changes our lives, it really is worthless, of no value. You may have all the correct doctrines about Jesus Christ. But, friends, if that doesn't change your life style, it is worthless.

with the world's system of a

unbeliever

Now, Paul goes on to say in Vs 2 that we are walking in our life style according to three things. (1) One, the course of this world. (2) Two, satanic authority; and (3) the lust of our flesh. The "world"...the "devil" and "our flesh." This is all the ~~sphere~~ sphere that I am living.

Every unbeliever is already in that sphere. But when you come to Christ, positionally you are taken out off it. But, you still live within it. You are not of the world, but you are in the world. And that is our problem.

So, what Paul is saying here greatly effects the lives of the believer. Let's take a look at the conduct of our life.

(1) First, as it relates to the worldly atmosphere. I don't think anyone of us knows how serious this problem is. I certainly don't. And I doubt ~~where~~ whether anyone here could really fully analyze the power of the world in our lives. We know from 1 John 2:15-16 that we are not to love the world. It is not talking about mankind. It is not talking about "things." It is talking about "the lust of the flesh," the lust of the eye" and the "boastful pride of ones means of livelihood." Worldly security.

It is something that is inside of everyone of us of which the whole world's system is a constant temptation and draw.

Paul said, "we formerly walked according to the course of the world." We are influenced by the world's views. And this happens every single day. Whether it is through commercials on T.V., or attitudes of friends, we are constantly being influenced by the world system of things.

Paul is saying that unbelievers are in that system. They are totally dominated by it. Their whole life style is surrounded by it.

Obviously Christians because of the word "formerly" should be out-of that. And we should not be controlled by the course of the world even though we live in the world. And that again is our problem.

In Romans 12:2 Paul wrote to Christians and said "do not be conformed to this world." Obviously, Paul knew that it was going on in the lives of Christians. Christians who say that they know the Lord and they are not of the world anymore. Yet, the world is dominating and controlling their life. We call this "carnal ~~of~~ Christianity."

And Paul warns us to stop being conformed, ^{to the world} but to be transformed by renewing our minds daily in Gods Word.

The Spirit of God uses what I believe is a filter system. ~~What comes into our lives~~
~~What~~ What comes into our lives needs to be filtered - the good from the bad. ~~And~~ And that filter system friends is the power of God's word. We need to renew our minds daily.

There is a worldly atmosphere that we are breathing that is effecting our life. And according to the Bible the unbelievers walk right in the midst of it. They absorb it. ^{Because} And they have no filtering system. They accept it all.

(2) Secondly, Satanic authority. Vs 2 says "you formerly walked according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience."

In this verse Satan is called "the prince of the power of the air." 2 Cor 4:4 says that satan is the "God of this world." So, the god of this worldly system is blinding our minds.

Notice the connection. Paul first of all says "I am walking according to the course of the world. Secondly, according to the ~~prince~~ prince of the power of the air. The God of this world.

Satan, in other words, is using the world system to bate, to tempt, to mislead us. He is called the prince of the power. Literally "authority." He has authority over two areas: The air...and also the Spirit....

He is prince over the air. And prince over the Spirit. And this is very important to understand.

What does it mean when it says "prince over the air?" Several years ago when Moody Bible Institute had the first christian radio station. They received a volume of mail from all over the U.S. from christians who were rebuking them for going into the devils territory. Because the devil is the ~~prince~~ prince of the power of the air they were thinking of the air waves, the radio waves. So, you are now going into the devil's camp.

We look at that today and say, "We have come a long way since then."

But what is the meaning of "air." Well. the word "air" in the N.T. means "the air we breath." That which we breath....The air around us....

In Revelation 9:2 we find an interesting usage of this word "air." It is talking about the air being darkened. It is referring to the air that we breath, but it is not so clean. It comes to mean a spirftual truth. I believe any of us who has lived or travedled in the Southern california basin whuld have a word for this. How do people refer to their air down in Southern California?...They call it "SMOGGY AIR"....

And I believe you could translate it that way. "The prince of the power over the smog."

But, we are not talking about the smog in the literal air. We are talking about a spiritual truth. Now, we have already said that we are breathing the world system. And the devil is controlling this system. And he is the prince and power of air: the breathing system of this world. Paul is talking about what is wrong and who is behind it: the devil himself.

But not only is it a problem that the devil is behind the world system that we all got to face every day, but he is also running the spirit that is in the unbeliever. He is not only prince over the air, but he is priance over the Spirit. Not the Holy Spirit. But the spirit that is in man.

Now, man has a body, suul and spirit. Whether you are a believer or an unbeliever. If you are an unbeliever, the Bible teaches that the spirit is rendered inoperative because of sin. It is not functioning.

The Bible says that the soul is the personality. My mind, my emotions, my will.

I know what my body is. That is what I see. But the ~~spirit~~ spirit I can not see. But it is a controlling factor. It effects your personality and it effects your body.

^{You see} And according to the Bible when you were an unbeliever, the devil is ruling and controlling that spirit in man which he says, Vs 2, is "now working in the sons of ~~disobedience~~ ^{disobedience} ~~the~~ The Greek text has "the disobedience." The partiacular one. Not talking about disobedience in general. But in the sons, the product, the ancesters of the one act of disobedience. WHAT IS HE REFERRING TO? He is referring to Adam.

The word "disobedience" means "not ^{persuaded} persuaded". Adam was not persuaded that if he disobeyed God, ~~which he clearly knew what God had said~~ ^{He would suffer the consequences}. The Bible is clear on that. Eve was deceived, ~~but~~ Adam was not. He deliberately disobeyed. But Adam was not persuaded that what God has said as to the consequences of his actions would really take place. And ^{so} he disobeyed God. That one act of disobedience has resulted in all of us being born: sinners. ^{We have a sin nature}

And a lot of people fight that ^{Truth} one. They don't want to believe that. I shall never forget what happened once with a couple who just had a new little baby. You know, new born babies always look great. Have you ever noticed that? If we could only remain babies. So sweet...so lovable.... And when this couple showed me their new baby I just said in joking: "Boy, it is amazing that that sweet little ^{baby} babies is a ~~not~~ dirty, rotten, sinner."And they took issue with me.....And the wife said, "Pastor, we understand what you ^{are saying} believe. But, really, our little baby hasn't had a chance, yet, to sin and show a sin nature." I am sure she will in time, but really nothing right now."

And you know, it is amazing how God gives you illustrations. Because right at that ^{moment} time, that baby through a tantrum.....Just kidding and throwing its arms around.

I said, "What is the matter with your child?".....I said, "Maybe you haven't feed her?"....I just finished.....I said, "Well, maybe she needs a change of dippers?".....She said, "I just changed her."...

I said, "Well, what is wrong with the child?"....She said, ^{I guess} ~~I don't know~~ "DIRTY...ROTTEN...SINNER....(HA). ^{she is showing her sin nature}

It doesn't take a baby long, as any parents knows, to be rebellious. To indicate the nature that we really have. It is incredible..

I shall never forget the reaction of one of my kids when they were little. I said to Danny: "Do you love Daddy?" And he said "NO!!!!!"

When are we ever going to learn? The Devil is ruling over that spirit in the sons, the product of THE DISOBEDIENCE. He is ruling over it.

David made this statement in Psalms 51:5 "in sin did my mother conceive me." ~~but she was a sinner~~

Interesting.....Let me just add this thought. In the whole argument over abortion: whether you should have one or not. The whole issue that people struggle over is ~~whether~~ whether or not there is a real person in that womb. Now, David said, "In sin did my mother conceive me" Now: bear me.... not begot me...But, conceived me....

Now, you have two possibilities in that verse:

One, He is saying that there is the presences of the sin nature at the point of conception.

Now, the body is not inherently evil. The sin nature is in the soul. If what he is saying is true, then you have the presence of the soul as well as the body being formed at the point of conception.

Or, another possibility is that David is an illegitimate child. Which if you read the story is not true of David.

I say to you, that we were born with a sinful nature. And the Bible is teaching that ~~there~~ ^{we} are ~~some~~ products of the one act of disobedience. Of failing to respond to God. And everyone from Adam on down, whether you like it or not, is a sinner by nature. And you can count on this, even if you don't believe that, sooner or later you are going to prove that you are a sinner by choice.. *actions and deeds*

I think it is important to understand this statement. You are not a sinner because you sin!!!! You sin because you are a sinner...

And many of us have never gotten that, ~~through our minds~~. We have a false view of other people. We have a false view of ourselves. And we forget what the Bible really says. We are sinners by nature.

And without the ^{grace} ~~help~~ of God, there is no hope for the human race. We are bent towards self and sin. And we are born that way. *and we prove over days our life*

The song writer expressed it best when he wrote: "~~Born~~ ^{born} to wander... Lord! I feel it. Prom to leave the God I love....

That is our nature..Apart from God's ^{grace} ~~help~~ we would all be without hope, without God.

(3) But Paul isn't ~~expressing~~ ^{frustrated} ~~with~~ ^{yet} all of that. He comes to fleshly attitudes. *The Lust of the flesh*

Dear Fred we have a sin nature

I know that a lot of you think that this isn't your problem. But the Bible says that it is. *A couple of things in Vs*

Vs 3 says "Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind."

Now, friends, if you are a little uncomfortable this ^{even} m~~orrowing~~, I want you to know that I was uncomforatable studying all of this. It is hard...

And I believe that one of the problems in the christian life is that we forget what Ephesians 2:1-3 is really saying about us. And that is why we don't fall upon the mercy and compassion of God. That is really why we don't depend upon God like we ^{used to} ~~once~~ did. Because we forget what God says about our sinful nature. The lust of the flesh! Let me point out three things...

(1) He mentions the influence of unbelievers, who are controlled by *the Lust of the flesh*

He says, "Among them". Among who?...End of Vs 2..."Sons of the disobedience." All unbelievers...*are sons of disobedience*

"Among them, we too all formerly lived." He is also talking when he used the word "live" about the inpacked of our fleshly desires upon us. There is a tremendous inpacked. He said, "you lived in them." Your whole life style is right there in the midst of lust and desires.

(2) Now, if I haven't reached you yet, I know that I will in this next statement....Vs 3 says "~~the~~ indulging of our ^{*The desires of the flesh*} ~~fleshly~~ desires."

The word "indulging" means "literally doing by way of habit of life the desires of the flesh. Now, watch this: Desires of the flesh and what?..... WHAT DOES IT SAY?.....MIND...."

Have you ever heard people divorce their mind from their flesh?...:Man I just ^{*couldn't*} ~~could~~ help that.....I didn't decide to do that. I just felt this, or I was pressured by others....."

Are you kidding!....That is bolony....Theological and practically.... The battle ground is in the mind. The mind has been deeply affected because of sin. And the desire of man's heart is away from God and towards sin. It is towards self-satisfact and indulgence of fleshly desires. And were it not for the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, every one of us would be drowning in that lake of lustful desires.... *There is no question about it.*

That is what he is saying...It is a terrible problem....And again, if it wasn't for God, there would be no hope for any of us. Non, what so ever.

Praise God, there is deliverance.

O.K. I have share with you a little bit about the condition we are in. I have shared a little about out conduct.

and That brings us to
(3) Now, let's comes to the matter of the consequences we face because of our sin. Look at the end of Vs 3.."and we were by nataure children of wrath."

SOFTY
Now, notice that word "Children". That is not referring to a Junior age child. It is the word "Teknos" in Greek which mean "the little born one." He is not using the word for older child. That some how through our experience we become children of wrath. We don't become children of wrath by experience or example. We are children of wrath by birth...We are born that way. || By nature, he says, we are little born ones of wrath, even as all the resst."

In other words, the consequences that you and I face are based upon two things.

(1) One, they are based upon a sinful nature that we have. It is by this nature that I am a child of wrath.

(2) And secondly, it is based on the judgment of God himself. I am a child of wrath. God is not going to over look sin. [A lot of people think that is going to happen when you believe in Jesus. Some how God is going to over look our sin. He just passes it by.

Oh, no...The Bible teaches that all the wrath of God was laid upon Jesus. Jesus bore our wrath and our sin *when He died on The Cross*

God doesn't ever by pass sin. And if you refuse to believe in Jesus Christ the one who took and bore your sin when he died on the cross, the Bible teaches that you will experience the wrath of God. He will not let you off the hook. *The Bible* ~~is~~ says that if you refuse to Believe in Jesus you are already condemned. And the wrath of God is abiding on you. *God and people to hell*

If you have any confusion in your mind about what the wrath of God is, there are many reference in the Bible. It talks about flaming fire and taking vengenous upon those who do not respond to God's love. It talks about a fire pit of separation from God for all eternity.....

The terrible wrath of God is not to be taken lightly. His wrath is against sin. And the wonderful truth ^{of the Gospel - EASIER message} is that all of that wrath was put upon Jesus when he died on the cross. That is why a lot of us love Him so much... He took our place. Forgiveness, compassion, love, all ~~based on~~ rooted in Jesus bearing the wrath of God ^{on the cross - why we call Friday - Good Friday}

Then Vs 4, ^{at the end} "But God" ^{Quite vs 4} "...~~to~~, what do we do about all of this?..."

I believe it is obvious....If you are here ^{tonight} today, and you have never settled your personal relationship with God, I John 1:9 is for you. It says, "If we confess our sin, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sin and will cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Often, I am ask the question. Is it necessary to confess sin in order to become a christian. And the answer to that based upon I John 1:9 is YES.... Yes.... There is too much of this easy believism in christianity today. That somehow has us tacking on christ to our life. Just add Jesus and he will give you a lot more joy and peace than you had before.

That is not the gospel. The gospels is that we are sinners. And we face an eternity in hell without God, if we ~~don't~~ don't turn to Christ. He bore our sin in his own body on that tree. ^{(-John 3:16) - quote - John 8:24} That is the Gospel of Christ.

No one becomes a true christian who does not agree with God about his sin. Confess your sins, the Bible says. And receive J.C.

And I would like to add this point, to the believers...If right now, you are continuing in sin, whether it is in your mind or your actions or whatever, but you are continuing that sin, justifying it, defending it, my friend you will never have true freedom, you will never have release, you will never have true restoration, ^{and Fellowship w. the God} until you confess that sin.

In Joshua 7:19 Joshua said to Achan who sinned and tried to hide it. He said "give glory to God, Achan. Confess your sin."

It glorifies God when we admit what God says about us.

My christian friend if you are trying to hide and harbor that sin in your life, and you are refusing to confess it, you will never experience ^{God's love} ~~true~~ Godly ^{collaborative} repentence. Jesus taught us that ~~if~~ we ^{need to} confess ^{and repent of} there will be repentence...

So often people say that they have repented. They say they have turned from their sins. But they are justifying it, excusing it, and refusing to admit it. In counseling you will find that one of the hardest things for people to do is to name the sin they have done. And to confess it.●

They excuss their sin. Instead of saying "I have ~~committed adultery~~ and sinned against God. They say, "Well, I have had this little afair." As it ~~it~~ will some how weaken it. And make me out to be not as bad as what God really says.

And we say, "It is just a little white lie." Instead of saying, "I have lied. And I have sinned against God."

People ~~we~~ are all guilty.....We try to justify and defend ourselves ~~before~~ before people and before God. And ~~then~~ ^{then} we wander why we don't have the freedom in the Lord and the power and effectiveness in our life.

Proverbs 28:13 says that a person who refuses to ~~do this~~ ^{repent}, God will cut him off. ~~He will harden his heart.~~ But the one who confess and forsakes his ~~way~~ ^{sin} will find compassion. {The Lord loves to work in the heart of a man or woman who says "I have sinned against God. This is what I have done. And I have hurt him. And I have hurt others. I know it. And I confess it."

Friends, We can't keep going on hiding our sin and hope to have power with God. No way....If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us and gleanse us from all unrighteousness.●

Let us close in prayer

*May you experice that cleansing tonight. As you confess your sin - Ask Jesus into your life - and experice his wonderful forgiveness and love
Every head bowed - every eye closed*