

Carey Baptist Church

Sunday the 24th Nov 2024

"Alive with Christ"- Ephesians 2:1-10.

(Genesis 2: 15-17)

Let me add my warm welcome too. Thanks for the invite to share the Word of God on this beautiful Lord's Day.

Hope & Pray that you & your loved ones are keeping safe and well by God's Grace.

We are going to look at Paul's letter to the Ephesians in God's Word and let see what the Lord has in store for us this morning.

The Lord has titled this talk as "Alive with Christ"

Paul states at the start of chapter 2 (*which we all know that he did not write letters in chapters, but we inserted them*) "as for you". Basically saying, "now let's talk about you people". Why is that? Who was he talking about before? If you look at chapter 1, he was talking about our Lord Jesus Christ. And then he says "As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins"

Dead! How come, were they really dead? Yes, they were. And now they are 'Born again'. This reminds us that every unsaved sinner is dead! What could you expect from a corpse? Nothing. Could God expect anything from a dead man walking? Nothing. How come then we are dead, if we are not saved. Remember what God declared when Adam sinned!

You heard in Genesis 2:17 – God said, "but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will (*get sick, get a tummy ache, vomit. No!*) **certainly die.**" But your Bible tells us that Adam lived 930 years and then died. Then what happened here! Did God get it wrong! No way! Adam sinned and died! Adam died spiritually. That's what happens when we sin.

Romans 5:12 says "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way, death came to all people, because all sinned".

I am so glad that Paul wrote the following sentence soon after, "*in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air*"

What does it mean! Now, are we still dead? No, we all are alive. We all used to be dead but when you give your life to Christ, you become alive. **Alive in Christ.**

So, what did God do? Did HE just give up saying "I told you guys not to sin and you followed the deceiver and now you save yourselves". No, HE did something amazing. Because no one else could do anything for a dead man or a woman. Could the corpse roll-out from the coffin and then come and repent. Let alone repent, could the corpse do ANYTHING! Only God could do a miracle to a corpse. What did God do and why did HE do that amazing thing?

We all know that HE is a long-suffering God and HIS mercy is so vast. Look at verse 4 – "**But** because of HIS great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy". Whenever the Word of God says "But", there is a significant change of direction. Rich in Mercy! We just sang that HIS mercy is more! Whatever the sin we have committed, however big we think that is, the truth is that HIS Grace and Mercy is bigger than that. There is no sin bigger than God's Grace. What is Grace! It is a gift from God. Would you try to pay for a gift? No! because then it would not be a gift. That is why we cannot earn our salvation as it is a gift of God that no man can boast. HE Loves you unconditionally.

So then, what did God do to this dead bunch of sinners! V5- "made us **alive** with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved."

Alive! With whom? With HIS begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. But why Christ? Why not Moses, Elijah, Noah, Peter or why not with the Carey Baptists? Because Jesus was and is the only one who is without sin. HE did not even know sin. Jesus is

sinless and that is why God had to raise us up with Christ Jesus. God sacrificed HIS only begotten Son, Lord Jesus Christ on the cross with all the extreme suffering one could ever think of and made HIM sin because of the great love God has for you and me. Then after that what did God do. The Word continues to say that "HE seated us with HIM in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus ". Now you might wonder, what heavenly realms, I am seated at Church! Look at the next verse which says, "in order that in the coming ages" you see, in the coming ages. I am sure the Greek version says this clearly. This means that we are now placed in the direction that in the coming ages that we will sit with Christ our Lord. Do you live in that hope of excitement? Why does God do that. You know, this is the beauty of being a sinner saved by Grace. As Christians we have this hope of Glory. Not just that we die and go to heaven but that is the beginning because the Word says that "HE might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus" See how kind is the God who we serve! This is just the beginning and we are going to see so much during the eternity, including the incomparable riches of HIS grace. Every moment is going to be excited. We were dead and now born again. Jesus HIMSELF declared in John 12:24 *"Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds"*

So, now we are born again and enjoying the walk with God, reaping the benefits of the Peace our Lord restores upon us and looking forward for the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ to take us there where HE has prepared! What about the people who are still dead? We are to share the Word. Remember the Carey mission statements where one of it says *"Open our arms to our community needs, seeking opportunities to show God's love"*. What do we usually share in these days? "Have you tried that new restaurant in town? Wow the fish & chips are awesome! Check number 9 in the menu card if you ever go there, ok? Jokes apart, when was the last time we talked to someone about Jesus with that sort of excitement?

This is not a guilty trip my friends but I am saying this because when the Lord gathers us and when we see our friends on the other side of the chasm, believe me, there would be so many accusing us for their agony, stating *"Oh, Chami, why didn't you tell me about Jesus?"* Remember the story Jesus said about Lazarus and the sinner? We can't convert anyone. It's God's job. I am glad that Colin mentioned last Sunday that it is the supernatural who would do that. Remember, the corpse we talked about earlier? We can do nothing but only God. Why! So that no one can boast. Versus 8&9 says, *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not by works, so that no one can boast."* Just imagine if you were saved your good works! My... What a lot we would boast. Our boasting will go through the roof! That is why God gave it as a gift.

You see my friends; I understand that we can't go around Hemel telling people that they are dead! Can you do that? No way! We may end up behind bars. But you get what the Lord telling is us this morning! We ought to have that long suffering love of God and the loving care for others also to live with us in eternity.

Every soul is precious in the eyes of God. Why? Because HE made them in HIS image. I am going to close this with a little story!

Once the great artist Michael Angelo was carving a huge shapeless stone and someone asked him "what are you doing with that useless rock?". You know what he said? He said that he was "liberating an Angel". How about that. If we were nice and lovely, God pleasing, without sin, then we would not require salvation! We were dead in sin and that is why God liberated us and raised us and made us 'Alive in Christ'.

That is why the Bible says that we are God's handiwork. Let's end with the last verse for today which says that "for we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus" for what? "Created in Christ Jesus to **do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to do"

You see my dear brothers and sisters, there is an awesome plan for each of us. Not of ours, but of God and HE will accomplish it. We are not just dust, but a Royal Priesthood

made in the image of God, and we have so much to do in HIS kingdom. Therefore, don't you ever say that we are like worms, or we are too weak or too foolish! If that's so, then it's good, as God says `when we are weak, then we are strong in Christ. Also, we are foolish enough so that God has made foolish the wisdom of the world. 1 Corinthians 1:20.

Let's close by reminding ourselves that we are alive in Christ and that God will let us rule HIS Kingdom with Lord Jesus Christ and that we are the apple of HIS eye. And let us tell the world that God can *and* will make them alive in Christ.

May the Good Lord continue to remind us how precious we are in HIS eyes.

God bless.