

The Gravity of the Gospel

2025-09-28 - Ephesians 1:15-2:10



The challenge for believers today is to stand strong in a world that pulls us in every direction except the truth. Paul knew this and challenged believers to recognize the truth, praise the Lord for what he has done, and pray that other believers would stand strong in the truth. Join us this week as we look at what Paul sees as the center of the story of the Gospel and how to remain focused on Christ in all things.

Good morning. If you've got your Bibles, I want to invite you to open to **Ephesians 1:15**. If you were here last week, we began a series on the book of Ephesians. Our series is called "One Body," and we are called to be saints standing side by side. If you are a believer, **you're called to wear the armor of God each and every day (Ephesians 6:11)**. I prayed before you came in today, you prayed on the armor. That was a challenge from last week, and I'd encourage you, not just on Sundays, but every day, to take it seriously, that **we're called to stand in this world against the forces of darkness (Ephesians 6:12)**.

And as we begin this series, I want to tell you what I saw on your faces last week, early on. Because last week we talked about the fact that if you're a believer, **you're a saint (Ephesians 1:1)**. And for many of you, when I said that word, your first thought was, "Right?" And some of you are like that. And it was and it was you. We hear the idea that we're saints, and the first thing we think of is we think that's for someone far holier than I am. We don't think we're worthy of that title. If you're anything like the people I have talked to this week, many people I've talked to this week have said, "You know, I hear it. It's in Scripture. I know it's true. But it's one thing to have it here [points to head]. It's another thing to believe it." And we need to believe it. Because how we walk in this world depends on how we see ourselves in light of what Christ has done. How we walk in this world, how we walk amongst each other, is dependent on how well we believe what God has declared about Himself and about us. If we want to walk well in this world, **we need to believe we're saints (Ephesians 1:1)**. And if you struggle to believe you're a saint, by the end of today, it's going to get harder, but it's going to get a lot better.

We're in **Ephesians 1:15–2:10** today. And I just want to say that as I prepared for this passage, the imagery in my head was it's like we're at an audience buffet. **Ephesians 1:3–2:10** has so much in it that we could be here the rest of our lives and never get our fill. And my goal today is to leave you able to stand and walk out of here, okay? You know, if you've ever gone to a buffet and made

bad decisions like I have, I don't want you to leave with that. I want you to leave today seeing the biggest picture that stands out. And if you're out there, you probably struggle to believe you're worthy of the gospel. You probably struggle to believe you're worthy to be called a saint.

Let the gravity of the Gospel keep you centered in Christ

And the goal for today is that you would **let the gravity of the gospel keep you centered in Christ**. **Let the gravity of the gospel keep you centered in Christ.**

The reason we cannot believe we are worthy is because we put ourselves at the center. The reason we cannot believe someone else is worthy of the gospel is because we put ourselves at the center. The reason the woman and the man in the Garden of Eden ate from the tree is because they thought they were at the center. The reason Cain killed Abel is to put himself at the center. The reason they built the Tower of Babel..., I could go on and on and on. But if you are here today and you are a believer, **you are a saint, not because you're at the center, but because of Christ and what He has done (Ephesians 1:7)**. And my prayer for you is that today, as we read through this, you will be encouraged and challenged to let the gravity of His gospel keep you centered in Christ.

If you are here today and you are not a believer, I am praying that today the Holy Spirit opens your eyes to what I could not in my own strength show you and what you could not in your own strength believe. To that end, let us pray.

Father in heaven, we thank you as Ephesians 1:3–14 says, "We are saints that you chose before the foundations of the world". We thank you, Lord, that we who believe are your children. We have been redeemed by the blood of your Son, Jesus Christ. We have been reconciled and you have richly poured out your grace upon us. We praise you, Lord, that we have an inheritance and it has been sealed with the Holy Spirit. And we have assurance in this life and in the life to come that all of your promises are true. Father, we pray right now that your Spirit would give all of us eyes to see and ears to hear the truth of your word. I pray for anyone who does not know you, Lord, that by the end of the day they are rejoicing that they were dead and they are now alive in Christ. And I pray for those of us who know you, that today we would be challenged and encouraged. As we struggle to see ourselves as saints, Lord, let us see ourselves as displays of your glorious grace. Father, I pray you would speak to me and speak through me. I pray these would be your words and not mine. And Father, we thank you for the incredible power that you exercised in raising your Son from the dead, and lifting Him and seating Him at your right hand, that at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, and we praise you for that, Lord, that it is in His holy and precious name we pray. Amen.

Well, our goal today is to **let the gravity of the gospel keep us centered in Christ** when you struggle to believe you're worthy, and struggle to believe others are worthy. **Let the gravity of the gospel keep you centered in Christ**. To that end, we are going to finish the opening paragraph of Ephesians, which will be **Ephesians 1:15 through 2:10**.

This is why, since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I never stop giving thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength. He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens—far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he subjected everything under his feet and appointed him as head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.

Ephesians 1:15-23 CSB

And the first sentence is really long, just like last week. And I'm going to read it all at once, and then after I read it, we will break it down together. But I want you to hear these words that Paul puts together without any stopping. Because after saying **we are chosen children of God, sealed by the Holy Spirit to the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1:13–14)**, Paul goes on:

“This is why, since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I never stop giving thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what is the wealth of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of His strength. He exercised this power in Christ by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavens, far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He subjected everything under His feet and appointed Him as head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.” That is our glory and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Let the gravity of the Gospel keep you centered in Christ

Rejoice when you see God's work on display (1:15-16)

Pray for the power of God to mature us (1:17-19)

Exalt Christ, for he is worthy of all worship (1:20-23)

Now there's three things we're going to see in this sentence. The first one that Paul brings up, we need to rejoice when we see God's work on display. And what I mean by that, Paul has heard about these believers at Ephesus and the believers that are coming to know the Lord, and what does he know?

This is why, since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I never stop giving thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.

Ephesians 1:15-16 CSB

"This is why," Paul says, *"since I have heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I never stop giving thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers."* Brothers and sisters, if you are here and you are a believer, you should be regularly thanking the Lord for the believers you know. You should be regularly doing that. You should be saying, "Lord, thank you for Betsy and John and Bob." And I'm not going to say everyone's name, but you should be thinking about that. I've been praying that in my head all week as I prepare this passage. You should, when you sit in your small group, when somebody is meandering and derailing the small group because they've got a thought that isn't tied to anything being talked about that day, do you know what you should be thinking in your head? "God, thank you that you have saved that person, that they are an example of your glorious grace on display." That's how we should view one another. In good moments, in bad moments, we should be thanking the Lord for one another because of what He has done.

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That's hard, right? Because it's easier, I've been thinking all week, whenever my wife and I have conflicts, I want to be able to prove my status instead of thinking, "Lord, thank you for this wonderful woman. Thank you, Lord, that she is a faithful follower of Christ." She's hidden behind someone right now, so I'm good with it, but I just want to say that I rejoice for her. I rejoice for others who are believers. You should do the same. **We as the body of Christ are a body of people who were dead in our sins that God made alive through Christ Jesus our Lord, we have been redeemed by His blood (Ephesians 2:5, 1:7)**, and we should constantly be giving Him glory for that. We need to pray with thanksgiving for one another, and we need to do that often.

And I wanted to, there's one time where you probably do it when we do baptisms, right? When someone comes and shares their testimony, we rejoice together and say, "Wow, what a story." But if we take this seriously, it's not just for those ones. It's a daily thing for one another. And Paul goes on. He doesn't just say rejoice. He also says, **pray for the power of God to mature us. We should be praying that God would mature us.**

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be

enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the **immeasurable** greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength.

Ephesians 1:17-19 CSB

How Paul says this in verses 17 through 19: ***“I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what is the wealth of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the **immeasurable** greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of His strength.”***

Paul says we should be praying with thanksgiving for one another who have become believers, and we should be praying for the maturity of one another. We should be praying for our brothers and sisters in Christ to grow in their maturity. And I want to say the most mature believers are the ones who want to be prayed for more maturity. There’s not a person in this room, no matter how old or young they are, that is at a point in their faith journey where there is not more maturing to do. On this side of the grave, we are all becoming more and more like what Christ has already made us through His work, but we will not get there until the other side of the grave. And so we should be praying for one another, that we would mature, that we would grow in our faith, that we would become people who see **we have enlightened eyes so that we can know the truth, the hope of His calling (Ephesians 1:18)**. We should pray for wisdom, that we would walk well in this world, and we should pray thinking about **the **immeasurable** greatness of His power toward us who believe (Ephesians 1:19)**. That word “**immeasurable**,” it’s entirely outside what we can fathom. That word “**immeasurable**,” His power, the greatness of His power. It’s not, “Lord, help us understand it on a scale of one to a hundred.” His power is infinite. And it’s us coming to understand and believe what’s abundantly clear in Scripture. **He’s omnipotent, He is all-powerful (Ephesians 1:19)**, in coming to believe how He has used His power for His glory for our benefit. We need to be praying for one another, that we would come to believe that. We rejoice and give thanks that God has built us up, and we need to be praying that God would mature us.

Let the gravity of the Gospel keep you centered in Christ

Rejoice when you see God's work on display (1:15-16)

Pray for the power of God to mature us (1:17-19)

Exalt Christ, for he is worthy of all worship (1:20-23)

And in all of this, in all these prayers, we need to be **exalting Christ, giving Him glory, for He is worthy of all worship**. And as we rejoice, we’re not rejoicing, “Hey, I’m praising the Lord because Betsy did such a good—” sorry, Betsy, I’m going to pick on you, but because Betsy did such a good

job, but because of what God did in and what God does through Betsy. I'm not praising the Lord and saying, "Thank you, Lord, because Betsy is worthy of all this." I'm saying, "Thank you, Lord, that you have made her worthy through the work of your Son." And that's true for each and every one here. And when we do that, we are exalting Christ.

He exercised this power in Christ by **raising** him from the dead and **seating** him at his right hand in the heavens—far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given, not only in **this age** but also in **the one to come**. And he subjected everything under his feet and appointed him as head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.

Ephesians 1:20-23 CSB

As Paul prays at the end of verse 19, that we would know **what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe according to the mighty working of His strength (Ephesians 1:19)**, the best display we have of the strength and power of God. *He exercised this power in Christ by raising Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavens - far above every ruler and authority, power, and dominion, and every title given, not only in this age, but also in the one to come.*

When we read these words, is there anything that Christ is not over? No. Every ruler, authority, power, dominion, all of it. Every title in this age and the age to come, Christ is greater than. And He's shown this through the power of **being raised from the dead, being seated at the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:20)**. There is no question. We're not going to get there someday and say, "Now, who's the next enemy who will rise against God?" There is nothing that can stand before it. **He is greater than all (Ephesians 1:21)**. And *He subjected everything under His feet and appointed Him as head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way (Ephesians 1:22–23)*. For we who believe, all that Christ has done, **being raised from the dead, being seated at the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:20)**, all of that, is for us. Isn't that amazing? Is it, it's just, just let that, hey, we talked last week, **you were chosen from before the foundations of the world (Ephesians 1:4)**. And **the reason God said 'Let there be light' (Genesis 1:3)** so that His church could experience Him in all of His glory. That is a reason to worship Him. That is a reason when you look at your brothers and sisters in Christ, to just give thanks, that **they are one of those chosen children of God from before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4)**, that God purposed His plans for.

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Christ died on the cross for our sins, that we could be redeemed and stand before Him (Ephesians 1:7), not because of anything we can do, but for His glory, for our good. These are such wonderful things that we should rest in them.

Even as, again, you hear this, don't you feel unworthy right now? Whenever I think about this, I think, "If you knew me, you wouldn't think I'm worthy of this. If you knew me." You know who's writing this though, right? Paul. Paul, before he became a believer, witnessed the first martyr and was in a position of prominence for a young Pharisee and was in a, "Look, this is such a good thing." He approved of the first Christian killed for their faith. And then he came up with a plan to see more and more believers killed, dragged out of their homes. He was executing that plan when God appeared to him and changed him. He went from a hateful enemy of God to a follower of Jesus to the glory of God. The one who wrote this letter dedicated his life before Christ to killing Christians. And he died for his faith beheaded at Rome, declaring that **Jesus rose from the dead and is Savior of the world (Acts 9:1–20)**.

At the gravity of the gospel keep you centered of Christ.

We need to rejoice when we see one another and give thanks that we are examples of God's work on display. **We need to pray that God would mature us** because as we follow Christ, as we are growing by Him, **as we mature in our faith**, that is a good thing because we are growing to understand the truth and the gravity of the gospel. And as we do that more and more, the more we believe, the less we're going to focus on ourselves, the more we are going to give glory to God and exalt Christ because He is the only one worthy of being in that place. Amen.

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient. We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace! He also raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might display the immeasurable riches of his grace through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.

Ephesians 2:1-10 CSB

Now let's read the next sentence, and it's really two here, **Ephesians 2:1–7** and then **8–10**.

“And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you previously lived, according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient. We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts. And we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love that He had for us, made us alive with Christ, even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace. He also raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages He might display the immeasurable riches of His grace through His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is God’s gift, not from works, so that no one can boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.”

This is probably my favorite passage in all of Scripture. I come back to it all the time.

Let the gravity of the Gospel keep you centered in Christ

Testify of how lost you were without him (2:1-3)

Praise Him who has made you alive (2:4-7)

Rejoice when God displays His work in and through you (2:8-10)

And the first thing you see when you read this passage in verses one through three is you see how lost we are without Christ. And if you’re a believer, this passage is a reminder to [testify of how lost you were without Christ](#).

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient. We too all previously **lived** among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also.

Ephesians 2:1-3 CSB

You were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you previously lived, according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient. Now that opening sentence is every single human. From Eve and Adam on, from the moment they took from the tree, **every human outside of Christ who was holy man and fully God (John 1:14). Every human was dead in our sin, fully separated from God (Romans 3:23)**. The language of the ruler of the power of the air and the spirit now at work in the disobedient is the language of Satan and his minions. And this is a past tense passage, but if you are here today and you are not a believer, **you are dead in your trespasses. You are dead in your sins. You walk in those now (Ephesians 2:1–2)**. If you are here today and you are not a believer, the passage says **you are a child under wrath (Ephesians 2:3)**. And what that means is that in your own strength, **you are**

destined for hell, for all eternity, for separation from God, for all eternity (Romans 6:23), because none of us in our own strength could be anything else.

If you are here and you are not a believer, let me say it again. **You are dead in your sin, and in your own strength, you are stuck there (Ephesians 2:1).** But notice the passage, for all who believe, **“You were dead” (Ephesians 2:1).** If you’re here today and you think you’re a believer, let me say one other thing. Sometimes I talk to believers who say, “I’ve always been a Christian.” If you were never **dead in your trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1),** you are not alive now. Because you are denying the need for what Christ did on the cross if you were never **dead in your sins (Romans 3:23).** **All of us fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).** **The wages of sin are death (Romans 6:23),** and **by nature and by choice, each and every human walks in sin in our own strength (Ephesians 2:3).**

But look what Paul says. *“You were dead in your trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1), believers, in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient. We, too, all previously **lived** among them.”*

Paul says, “I, as well, I, Paul, know that I was a sinner, dead in my sin.” And when it says “we previously **lived**,” that is one of the most unfortunate translation choices in English, because “**live**” should not be in a sentence about corpses, right? But it’s a hard word because the word in Greek is, “we too all previously conducted ourselves in the same manner among them.” And that sounds weird, right? But that’s what it is. It’s not “we were alive with them.” No, it’s **we were dead just like them (Ephesians 2:3).** *We were carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also (Ephesians 2:3).*

Every single human in our own strength is destined for death (Romans 6:23). **We are dead. We are corpses (Ephesians 2:1).** And corpses can do nothing on their own. Corpses cannot save themselves. If a corpse, you know, like if a body dies in the hospital, it doesn’t grab a defibrillator on its own. You go “clear” ..., no! You don’t have any image of you being alive outside of Christ because if you do, you do a disservice to Scripture. **We are dead in our sin (Ephesians 2:1).** And there’s nothing we can do to change that, and we need to testify to that.

Let the gravity of the Gospel keep you centered in Christ

Testify of how lost you were without him (2:1-3)

Praise Him who has made you alive (2:4-7)

Rejoice when God displays His work in and through you (2:8-10)

Because when we testify to that, we are testifying to the power and work of Christ, and we are giving **praise to Him who has made us alive (Ephesians 2:5),** which is the next point.

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, **made us alive** with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace! He also **raised us up** with him and **seated** us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, so that in **the coming ages** he might display the **immeasurable** riches of his grace through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.
Ephesians 2:4-7 CSB

*“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love that He had for us, **made us alive** with Christ, even though we were dead in trespasses. And I've got made us alive in green, because what did God do when exercising his power in Christ? He raised him from the dead. And what does God do as he exercises his power in us? He raises us. What God did in Christ and what we can be because of Christ, we're invited to participate in the story. And it's not just he made us alive. Even though we were dead in trespasses, **You are saved by grace! He also raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages He might display the immeasurable riches of His grace through His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.**”*

God raised Jesus from the dead, seated Him at His right hand in the heavens (Ephesians 1:20). He is above every ruler, authority, dominion, power. He has a name that is above every name (Philippians 2:9). He rules in this age and the age to come, and for all who believe are right there next to Him. We're not just invited to be like the usher, sitting outside heaven saying, “All right, I'll be the gatekeeper. It's as close as I can get.” **We're invited in. We're part of the family (Ephesians 2:19). We are invited to experience the full breadth and width of the glory of God through the work of Christ Jesus (Ephesians 3:18–19). By grace, you have been saved (Ephesians 2:5).** Amen. And it is immeasurable.

Ephesians 1:3–2:10, you should hear the word over and over, “riches,” because **God is so abundant in His blessings for us (Ephesians 1:7–8).** His value for us is far greater than anything we could ask or imagine. And know this, you do not deserve it. **You deserve death (Romans 6:23).** I deserve death. **We all deserve to be separated from God forever (Romans 3:23).** He said, ‘Let there be light’ (Genesis 1:3). He chose us as His children (Ephesians 1:5). He saved us. He redeemed us by the blood of His Son. He reconciled us to Him. He sealed us with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:7, 13–14). **The inheritance we have, we have assurance of (Ephesians 1:14),** not because of anything we do, but because of what He has done. **By grace, you have been saved (Ephesians 2:5).**

It is so hard to believe this. Because I center the gospel on myself. It is so hard to believe this because you center the gospel on yourself. We think, “Well, I'm not worthy of this,” and you're not. If we had to be worthy of any part of it, it would never happen. Let that sink in. It is such a wonderful thing.

Let the gravity of the Gospel keep you centered in Christ

Testify of how lost you were without him (2:1-3)
Praise Him who has made you alive (2:4-7)
Rejoice when God displays His work in and through you (2:8-10)

And this brings us to the final point. **Rejoice when God displays His work in you and through you.** And the idea of displays. We saw that in point one. Give thanks, rejoice in the displays of God in working in others, and rejoice when God displays His work in and through you.

For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast. For we are **his workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.

Ephesians 2:8-10 CSB

And here are the final words of this passage: ***“For you are saved by grace through faith. And this is not from yourselves, it is God's gift not from works, so that no one can boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.”***

That word **“workmanship”** is an often-debated word. Underneath it in Greek is the word “poem,” and I pronounced that word wrong, you can laugh at me later. But you know, like poetry, a poem. I know I'm saying it wrong, but it's the idea of either that or a craftsman making something that is a masterpiece.

You, we, I called you a saint last week and you said, **you are a masterpiece (Ephesians 2:10)**. That is how God sees you. You don't see yourself that way, right? I should. You should. When we look at the front of this passage and I say we should be praying thanksgiving for one another, it's not just we're praying thanksgiving for one another, it thanks that they're a believer. “God, thank you that this person is a masterpiece displaying your glorious grace.” The prayer for maturity is, “God, let them see themselves the way you see them.”

If we could see ourselves the way God sees us, we would stand so strong in this world, not because of us, but because when God sees you, **He sees a chosen child covered by the blood of Jesus (Ephesians 1:7). He doesn't see the sin and the shame. He sees the redemption. He sees you as His sons and daughters (Ephesians 1:5).** Hallelujah. **You are a masterpiece (Ephesians 2:10)**. And you say, “Liar.” That's weird. “I don't want to be on display.” But do you know what? For all eternity, **we will be in heaven (Ephesians 2:6)**, and what you are even now, because He doesn't say you will be a masterpiece. He says **you are now (Ephesians 2:10)**. For all eternity, **each and every believer is a reminder of God's glorious grace on display (Ephesians 2:7)**. Because **you were dead in your sins. You could not make yourself alive (Ephesians 2:1, 5)**. You couldn't make a mark. You couldn't do a thing except walk in sin and death, and yet **God made you alive (Ephesians 2:5)**. **You are a miracle that could only be accomplished by Christ (Ephesians 2:5)**,

and you cannot boast in it, but you can boast in Christ and what He has done. **By grace you have been saved (Ephesians 2:8).**

When you become a believer, the hardest challenge for believers sometimes is they worry, “Well, don’t I have to do certain good things and this and that?” And we start to think of ourselves and think of the works we do to earn what God has really given. You cannot earn it. But **He who has made you a masterpiece has prepared the good works you will do that you could not do outside of Him (Ephesians 2:10).** And by the way, when it says **He’s prepared the good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do (Ephesians 2:10),** it’s not, “Oh, we’re coming up on—sorry, Betsy, I’m thinking—oh, we’re coming up on Betsy. She’s going to become a believer. We’ve got to pick out some good works.” **Before the foundation of the world, God knew each and every thing you would do (Ephesians 1:4).** And be prepared to do a blessing that will display His glory in this age and the age to come. Isn’t that wonderful?

Let the gravity of the Gospel keep you centered in Christ

Testify of how lost you were without him (2:1-3)

Praise Him who has made you alive (2:4-7)

Rejoice when God displays His work in and through you (2:8-10)

When I read this, it’s hard not to tear up, because I know how far, short I fall. And I know I fall short even more because I don’t believe what the Scripture is telling me is abundantly clear. And then I can fall into this cycle where I’m like, “Well, that’s not true about me.” And I said, “Well, it is true, but I don’t live it out enough.” And so this and that. And I think it about me because what do I do? I put myself at the center. And what do you need to do to that? You need to come back to the gospel again and again.

Let the gravity of the Gospel keep you centered in Christ

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rejoice when you see God’s work on display• Pray for the power of God to mature us• Exalt Christ, for he is worthy of all worship | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Testify of how lost you were without him• Praise Him who has made you alive• Rejoice when God displays His work in and through you |
|---|--|

Because when you come back to the gospel, you’re not going to sit there saying, “These are all the ways that I have errand this.” If you do, my friend, you are not saved. You are not saved if you begin the picture of the gospel with a sentence that starts with the word “I.” Because it is Christ Jesus who has done it. It is God the Father, Son, and Spirit that has **made you alive (Ephesians 2:5).** If you start the sentence, “Here’s what I have done,” you have missed the gospel from beginning to end. It’s not about you chose Him. It is about **He chose you (Ephesians 1:4).**

Brothers and sisters, when we look at one another, we should be rejoicing when we see masterpieces on display. We should be praying for one another, that we would mature to the point that we believe what Christ has done, and we walk as if it's true. You know when someone's really proud of their accomplishments, they stand, right? But they stand really firm because they know it's true. When you see someone, I mentioned last week my brothers, when they went through boot camp for the military, I still remember after, after the training they went through, they stood different from that moment forward because they were broken down and built back up. **You have been made a masterpiece of Christ (Ephesians 2:10)**. And let me say this, don't ever believe the lie that you're the artist. You're the canvas at best. If you believe you're the one doing the brushstrokes, it's going to look ugly. It's going to be a mud pie, at best. It's your death and your sin. Don't believe for a moment you in your own strength are the one guiding the brush. When we do that, we fall so short of what the gospel undeniably declares. We don't boast in our strength, we rejoice in His.

If you're here today and you're not a believer, if you are currently **dead in your sin (Ephesians 2:1)**, I want to encourage you to pray and cry out right now to cry out to the Lord to open your eyes to the truth of the gospel. Because just like everyone here who were **dead in our sins (Ephesians 2:1)**, that **God made us alive (Ephesians 2:5)**. **By grace you have been saved (Ephesians 2:8)**. Do not think you can save yourself, but know that the man who died on the cross, **He is holy God and holy man. He died. He rose. He reigns. He's returning. He will reign for all eternity (John 1:14; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Revelation 22:12-13)**. And He calls us on. And I pray that even now, He's opened your eyes.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you that you see all who are yours as chosen children, redeemed by the blood of your Son, reconciled to you through the work of Christ. We thank you that you have richly poured your grace on us. We thank you, Lord, that you have given us an inheritance and sealed it with the Holy Spirit. And we have assurance of all you will do. God, we thank you for the work of your Son, displayed in His death and resurrection. We thank you that He is the resurrected King who will reign for all eternity and reigns even now, above every throne and dominion and ruler and power. We praise you, Lord, that for all who believe you see us as your masterpieces, not because of what we have done, but because of what you have done. We thank you that you have brought us from death to life. And Lord, I pray if there are any here who do not know you, that even now, you are opening their eyes, that they are going from dead to alive this morning. I pray, Lord, as we leave, we would leave looking at one another as masterpieces of the Word of God on display. I pray we would act like those who have been masterpieces by you, that we would not fall into our fleshly desires that have sinned, but we would trust in you, and we would walk forward in your strength, not our own. We pray, Lord, that the gravity of the gospel keep us

centered in Christ, and we would settle for nothing less. And we say all of this to the praise of your glorious name. It's in the name of Jesus we pray, amen.



Digging Deeper – **The Gravity of the Gospel** – Ephesians 1:15-2:7

1. What stood out to you from the sermon?
2. Do you struggle more with keeping focused on Christ at the center because you put yourself at the center, or because you put someone or something else at the center? Which are you more likely to struggle with and why?

Read Ephesians 1:15-2:7

3. What stands out to you as you read through the passage?
4. Do you ever give thanks for other believers? Do you pray for the believers around you to mature?

Take time as a group to pray for other believers (including each other!). If you get no further into the digging deeper questions because your group takes a long time to pray for other believers, that would be a successful night.

5. Look at what God has done through Christ in verses 19-23. What stands out to you?
6. Look at who Paul says we are in 2:1-3. What stands out to you? What does it mean to be a child of wrath?
7. Contrast 1:19-23 and 2:1-3. Who does Paul say is capable of doing anything? Who is not?
8. How does God change us in 2:4-6?
9. What similarities do you see between the work God does in us in 2:4-6 and what God displayed through Christ in 1:17-23?
10. Do you think of yourself as a workmanship (other translations say masterpiece) that displays God's glory and grace? Why or why not?
11. Do you think of other believers as workmanships that display God's glory and grace? Why or why not?
12. How should the reality that we *are* God's workmanships change how we live as the body of Christ?
13. Take some time to end in prayer by sharing prayer requests and praying for one another. Repeat what you did after question 4 and add praise that those you are praying for display God's glory and grace.