

## Our Spiritual Resurrection

Ephesians 2:1-6

“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup> among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. <sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

**There were two brothers, well known around town for their crooked business dealings and underworld connections.** They were a mean and cold-blooded as you could imagine. One day one of the brothers died, and the surviving brother wanted to give his dead brother a funeral fit for a king. **He called the funeral home and made all the arrangements, then he called the town’s minister and made him an offer, as they say, he couldn’t refuse.** He said, "I’ll give you \$10,000 to put that new roof on the church if, in eulogizing my brother, you call him a saint."

**The minister agreed.** The whole town turned out for the funeral, and the minister began: "The man you see in the coffin was a vile and debauched individual. He was a liar, a thief, a deceiver, a manipulator, a reprobate, and a hedonist. He destroyed the fortunes, careers, and lives of countless people in this city, some of whom are here today. This man did every dirty, rotten thing you can think of. But compared to his brother, he was a saint" (Nelson’s Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations & Quotes, 759).

In our last study of this epistle, we looked at the fact that God would have His children's "eyes...enlightened; that they may know what is the hope of (our) calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe" (verses 18-19). In other words, God's desire for the believer is that we have the eyes of our inner man, or soul, opened through the power of the Holy Spirit that dwells within us!

There are many born again believers who need to pray daily for the wisdom to understand the meaning of total commitment, and allowing the Holy Spirit to open their eyes that they may see the great power of God in their lives. A Christian may *hear the best sermons*, and read *Christian books*, and yet, *if his heart is not opened to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, his soul will not be fed.* That is the reason that many people come to church empty, and leave the same way they have closed their minds to the *indwelling presence* and *power* of the Holy Spirit. They come to church expecting to *endure* God, instead of coming expecting to *enjoy* God.

Our study tonight concerns our total victory in Christ. When I walk down the streets of glory, I cannot boast, saying, "*I made it.*" I will get there by the grace of God. The glory, the honor, the dominion, and the praise are all His.

Look first of all at verses 13, "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."

The apostle Paul looks at the world, full of activity, full of human emotions, and full of great learning, only to conclude that it is one great cemetery, and on every gravestone there is written these words, "Dead through sin." Today our world is still faced with this same dreaded disease, polluting the very heart and mind of every

man, woman, boy and girl. All of us are children of wrath. **The judgment of death is born within us!** It is not necessary to take time to learn it. It is not something that we have acquired by practice.

David put it this way in Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me." Romans 3:10 says, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." Paul put it this way in Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

**What a picture of the human race.** What a sordid, ugly picture the Bible has painted of mankind. We are dead men, walking according to the dictates of Satan, and refusing to be obedient to the ways and will of God. **But how did this all happen?** Surely there is a reason for man being the way he is.

**To find the answer to man's problems, we have to go back to the beginning, when God created the heaven and the earth.** After God had separated the water from the land, and brought the sun, moon, and stars into view, when all the animals had been created, God climaxed His creative work in Genesis 1:26, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

God then placed Adam in a magnificent garden, but then we are told that God went one step further, as seen in Genesis 2:18, "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help fit for him." **Then God put Adam in a deep sleep, and the Bible records the very first surgery ever performed on mankind.** Adam was asleep – the incision was made, a rib removed. And Genesis 2:22 tells us God closed the incision and "the rib, which the Lord God had taken from the man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man."

**There is no doubt in my mind that Eve was a beautifully gorgeous woman.** I believe she was elegant and dignified, for she was the "queen" of all creation. When God does something, He does it well! Perhaps Adam could not believe his own eyes he looked at the

helpmate God has brought to him!

I believe that it was there in the Garden of Eden that God performed the very first wedding. The wedding took place in God's great openair cathedral, and the angels must have sung the wedding song! Everything was just perfect, and God's first man and woman walked away handinhand to love and live for each other!

Time must have passed very quickly for these two new lovers. How long Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden, the Bible does not tell, but then tragedy struck Adam and Eve sinned. By sinning, they forfeited their joyous companionship with God!

When Adam and Eve sinned their eyes were opened, and they immediately realized that they had been lied to by Satan, and saw themselves naked and undone, and out of place in the presence of God. Seeking to cover themselves, they sewed fig leaves together for a covering, but then we are told in Genesis 3:18, "They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden."

That day, Adam and Eve learned something that the present day world should know.

First of all, Adam learned that he could not hide from God. This great truth is pointed out for us in Psalms 139:310, "You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Lord, You know it altogether. You have hedged me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it. Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me." And also in Jeremiah 23:2324,

we have been told, “Am I a God near at hand, says the Lord, And not a God afar off? Can anyone hide himself in secret places, so I shall not see him? says the Lord; Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord.”

**Just as the trees could not hide Adam and Eve from the eyes of God,** men today **need to learn that our involvement in the religious programs of the church cannot hide the real us from God,** for we must never forget the great truth old in 1 Samuel 16:7, “For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” **My friend, never forget God knows the real you!**

**Secondly, Adam and Eve learned that their excuses did not clear them of their guilt.** Notice what we have been told in Genesis 3:12-13, “Then the man said, The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate. And the Lord God said to the woman, What is this you have done? The woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

**Today, there are thousands of people seeking to justify their not serving God, many of them members of some church, by placing the blame on someone else.** They blame the preacher, the deacons, the Staff, and a hundred other things, but when all has been said and done, the real truth is found in the Word of God, as recorded in Isaiah 59:12, “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God.” **Just as Adam and Eve's excuse did not satisfy God, we must remember that each of us must stand before God at the Judgment Seat of Christ.**

**Thirdly, Adam and Eve learned that the labor of their hands could not cover the shame of their sin before God.** Notice Genesis 3:21, “For Adam also and for his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.” **We are living in a time when men seek to cover themselves in good deeds, in high morals, and vigorous activity, but only God has the power to put a covering over our sin problem. Look at His promise found in Isaiah 1:18,** “Come now, and let us reason together, says the Lord, Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be

as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool." People, God has not changed, and if we are expecting to cover our sin problems, then we must turn to God for the answer.

The picture of mankind is one of *bleakness* and *shame*, but God did not create us to be something to be destroyed by the ways and forces of Satan.

And that brings us to verses 46, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

**Listen to me very carefully.** How does a dead man save himself? **How does a dead man hear? How does a dead man feel?** All the preaching in the world will not resurrect a dead man. **If you would like to try it, go to the cemetery. They are dead out there.** Preach to them. **Preaching does not resurrect the dead.** Just as surely as those bodies placed in those graves are physically dead, so is the person without Jesus Christ spiritually dead.

**Spiritual resurrection is a gift of God.** God must touch the heart. **God must unstop the ears. God must quicken the soul.** Salvation is as great a miracle as when God created life and created you. **Listen to what Paul says in Ephesians 2:6,** "And (he) hath raised, us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." **Salvation is not a Baptist thing, or a Methodist thing, or a Pentecostal thing.** Salvation is a God thing. **A man in Christ Jesus is a new creation!**