

How Much Grace Does it Take Ephesians 2:1-3

1 And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 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, 3 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.

I had a good friend of mine who's wife was in the hospital with severe abdominal pains. They had run a number of tests and decided that it was not serious. But the pain persisted and became much worse. Eventually he saw her gynecologist and begged him to do an exploratory surgery to find what was going on. Because they were friends the doctor agreed and my friend's wife was taken to an operating room where it was discovered that her appendix had ruptured at least 24 hours earlier. They went to work immediately with a major surgery to remove all the infection. It was a long haul but she pulled through & I saw her just last week.

If the doctor does not know the condition of the patient then terrible mistakes can be made and life can be lost.

But there is even a greater problem that one can encounter. And that has to do with one's soul.

What condition is your soul, your spiritual nature in?

In the spiritual realm there are a number of different ideas about the natural condition of man's soul.

Some think that man is just sick and has lost his way. And with a little help, education and encouragement that man can be fit for God.

The prevailing view in humanistic culture, that is where we are today, a child is brought into this world neutral or with a positive bent. That it is the world that corrupts the children making them what they become.

On that basis it is never anyone's fault for how they have turned out. Of course this view has no way to explain how all these innocent children grew up wicked to start with.

This is why there is not political solution to the problems that we face.

Without the power of God working in the lives of people, man will continue his rebellion and will continue with wars and oppression and aggression.

But how much power does it take?

Does man just need a little persuasion, a little push in the right direction?

Man's biggest problem is that they refuse to accept what God says about man.

Like the doctor that does not know the patient's true condition many churches and preachers do not know the condition of a lost soul.

I. And you who were dead

A. Were

1. For the Christian this is a past condition.
2. But they were once dead.
3. No one has always been a Christian.

B. Dead

1. Dead

- a. Paul picks the absolute worst condition to describe unregenerate man.
- b. This teaching goes back to the garden.
 - (1) Genesis 2:16 ¶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."
- c. Also see John 5:24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.
- d. Most religionist teach that man is never so bad off that he cannot help himself out of his lost condition.
- e. But then why do we need grace? How much grace does it take?
- f. If we can make ourselves better and right with God, then why did Jesus have to come and die in our place.
- g. This is why so many religionist reject the idea that Jesus had to pay the penalty for our sins.
- h. They reject the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ.

2. In trespasses

- a. The word means, to fall beside or near something, 2) a lapse or deviation from truth and uprightness
- b. Nothing that mankind can do can deliver him from the trespasses of his life.
- c. His failure is to meet the requirements of God. Any why can he not do it?
- d. He does not want to please God.

- e. Genesis 8:21 (NKJV) 21 . . . the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth;
 - f. Genesis 6:5-7 (NKJV) 5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."
 - g. This is not to say that everyone is as sinful as they could be.
 - h. Man naturally rebels against the doctrine of human depravity.
 - i. They do not accept that there is no other hope but Jesus.
3. And sins
- a. The definition of sin is to miss the mark.
 - b. Romans 3:23 (NKJV) 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

II. In which you once walked

A. Once walked

- 1. This is the key. We once walked there but no more.
- 2. When the mighty power of God came and worked toward us we left that path forever.
- 3. When God's Holy Spirit worked in our lives we were changed from the inside out.
- 4. But the natural man doesn't want to hear this.
- 5. They want messages of self help and how we can better our lives.

B. According to the course of this world,

- 1. The word course is actually the word often translated age.
- 2. This is the age of sin and has been since Adam and Eve rebelled against God.
- 3. Galatians 1:4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,
- 4. By the mighty power of God.
- 5. And as Paul told Timothy, "But evil men and impostors will grow worse

and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” 2 Timothy 3:13

6. Why did Jesus ask, “ when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?” Luke 18:8

C. According to the prince of the power of the air,

1. Who is the prince? It is Satan, the devil the old deceiver.

2.

3. The spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

4.

III. Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves

A. In the lusts of our flesh,

B. Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,

C. And were by nature children of wrath,

D. Just as the others.