

Alive in Christ

Ephesians 2 v 1-10

Key ideas: Christians are the living dead (v1-3), bought to life (v4-7) and re-purposed for good (v8-10)

As you look around, everybody is dead. The businesswoman hurrying to close a deal. The teenager lost in his music. The father holding his daughter's hand. Everyone. Dead.

Yet they carry on: rushing to a meeting, listening to an iPod, walking home for lunch. Is this a horror movie? No. It's your world, right now.

The living dead

Read Ephesians 2 v 1-3

People apart from Christ are "dead" (v 1).

- What sins do "dead" people - everyone apart from Christ - commit (v 2-3)?
- Whose direction were you following before conversion (v2)?
How does Paul describe him?
- Where does this approach to life end up (v 3b)?
- Paul is saying to each of us: Before you were a Christian, this was you. Look back to the time before you put your faith in Christ (if you can remember it). In what specific ways do these verses describe you then?

Brought to life

Read Ephesians 2 v 4-7

In his great mercy God did three things on behalf of his people (v 5-6).

- What are they?
- How many times does Paul use the phrase "in/with Christ"?
- What has God done for believers "in/with Christ"?

Re-purposed for good

Read Ephesians 2 v 8-10

We are not saved by works (v 9). Nothing we do contributes to our salvation in any way.

- So what motivates us to do good (v 10)?

We need to beware two opposite errors. One is that we are saved by what we do (legalism); it leads to pride or anxiety. The other is that it does not matter what we do

(license); it leads to laziness or immorality. The gospel tells us we are God's handiwork, saved by grace, created for good works.

Application

- When do you find it most attractive to think that your good works save you?
- When do you find yourself thinking that your good works don't matter?
- What do you think are the good works God has for you?

Pray

Take time to praise God for uniting you with Christ, so that his resurrection, his ascension, and his place at the right hand of the Father are yours as well.

Pray that by grace God would continue to change you.

Pray that God will lead you to do the good works he has prepared for you.