

Ephesians 2:1-3
Dead to Sin

Have you ever been in a situation where things are a little difficult for you in this particular season, or time in life, and things are just a little hard; and then someone comes alongside you, and they try to console you in that season, and talk it through with you, and then they say, "You know, it was a lot worse last year." And you go, "True, true." And you find some consolation in that, someone is able to look at you and say, "Remember how bad it was three years ago though?" "Yeah, that's true, at least it's not that bad." There's some consolation that you can find when you look back; I mean, you could almost do this with each other with cellphones - we get so up in arms at our cellphone when it doesn't work - "Come on" - and then someone could say, "At least you have a phone." Remember when you had to borrow your parents' phone for everything, or sometimes your parents didn't have phones, they had landlines still. It's ok, if you have a landline. That's ok, you can still have a landline. But you're able to look back, and you find some ability to go, "Okay. I appreciate better where I'm at right now, in light of where things were, and they weren't that positive."

For me, one of those experiences was definitely when I had the chance to teach for a few years at Desert Christian High School. There were times in the second and third year of teaching where I'd have moments pop up in the air, and I'd go, "Oh man, I don't know how I'm going to get this done," or "how I'm going to go about this." And my wife, sensing that maybe I was a little more stressed out on that particular night, or week, or whatever, would just come alongside and ask, "What are you trying to do?" And I'd be explaining how hard it was, and how much I needed to get done, and she said, "Hey, at least it's not your first year of teaching, right?" And we were both like, "That's true, very true." And if you're a teacher, or you know a teacher, you understand the pain. That first year of teaching, where you go in and you somehow masterfully put on a display and ability to manage a classroom, plan curriculums and the scope and sequence for the entire year, and still go to meetings, and know how to interact with parents; that's like impossible for a first-year teacher. And that was my experience, where you

get thrown into the water and you are essentially drowning; and somehow at the end of the year, someone pulls you out and you're still alive, and then everything after that is like a piece of cake. You can look back and go, "Well, it was worse. It was a lot worse."

And in a somewhat similar fashion, we get the ability to do that this morning, in regard to our faith. We have hard times that we come upon, we obviously are trying to, even now, sing songs rejoicing and praising God for where we are right now; the fact that He has saved us, and that we are together here with one another worshipping Him. But hard times still do come, and it's important for us to be able to look back, and to say, "At least we're not back there, because look at where God has brought us to today. Look at where I am right now, look at where we are right now; what God is doing, what He has done in our life." And we can better appreciate our current state; we can better appreciate the fullness of the salvation that has been revealed and given to us as the gift that it is. And that's what we find today, we find a chance to look back and look at how bad things were. We're going to look back and just see how terrible things really were for you and for me, just how bad it was for the state of a Christian before Christ, in order that hopefully we can have a greater appreciation for where we are today, rejoicing in our salvation.

So let's do that, let's look at our verses for this morning; Ephesians 2, let's read verses 1 through 3. "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. Among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind." Just from looking at those verses, you can tell, not a pleasant scene. It's quite unhappy, it's actually pretty negative, everything that's being mentioned here in our verses for this morning. And it is all past tense, it's referring to where we came from, and that's what Paul is doing; he's reflecting on where the Ephesians came from, where he came from, even himself, before meeting Christ and actually having life changed because of the salvation gift.

And so really to summarize the thesis of what Paul is saying in these three verses, if we could just boil it down, it comes with what he says in verse 1, really, what he says in verse 1 and even a little into verse 2. "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked." This is the point, this is what Paul is trying to convey. He's trying to remind you, he's trying to remind the Ephesians, he's reminding us that "This is where you came from, you were spiritually dead. That's where you were. You were dead in the sins in which you once walked, you were dead in those trespasses and the ways that you used to live. It was spiritual death, that's where you came from." And so Paul is recalling that to mind, and if we could boil it down even more simply, it's kind of what I have for the title for this morning - dead in sin. That's the point of what Paul is conveying in these three verses.

And so what Paul could have done, we recognize then at this point, is he could have just said, "You were dead in your sin." Verse 4, "But God..." and start to talk about the good news of what God did in Jesus Christ. He could then elaborate on beautiful things about grace and glory that has been coming to us because of Jesus, and the forgiveness and mercy that He's displayed towards us. But that's not what he does. In verses 1 to 3, he doesn't think it's enough to just simply say, "You were spiritually dead. But let's talk about the good stuff." He says, "No, you were spiritually dead. And I don't think you fully appreciate and understand what it means to be dead spiritually." As if, how much more terrible can you get than the condition of where you were, spiritually dead sounds pretty bad. He says, "Let me tell you how dead you were." As if you could elaborate on death. "Let me tell you how spiritually dead you were," and that's where all of our verses come together, verses 1 to 3.

So this morning, as you're hearing me talk, you're thinking, "Oh great, we're in for a pleasant message." You think, "This sounds like a downer, this is going to be just a real downer about how terrible life was for us, and how bad we were." However, what's the point? The point is, hopefully it will accomplish a great end of seeing all of our salvation in context, appreciating who our God is, appreciating what He's done, appreciating even greater the glories of Christ and the fact that He died on the cross for our sins. Taking

that into consideration with a whole new level of respect, because we look back, and we recognize where we were. We look back, and we see just how dead we were in our sins. So that's what we're going to aim to accomplish this morning. What he states in the thesis there in verse 1, about us being spiritually dead; we're going to mine that out a little bit more, and talk about just how spiritually dead you and I were before Christ intervened in our life, and we were saved, and hopefully we increase in our worship and our desire to give praise to God because of recognizing where He brought us from in the past.

The first way that we see that we were spiritually dead, is that we followed the world. The first way that Paul now elaborates on this, because it's not enough to just simply say, "You were dead in your sins, when you walked in them," he elaborates on this in verse 2, when he says, "In which you once walked, following the course of this world." And even there, just thinking of that statement and seeing that picture before you; a course, or a path, the path or the course that the world has set, that's where we were. We were on that course that the world set for us; we were on that path that the world set for us.

And you can think of this in many different ways. If you've been to a theme park anytime recently, you know how there's streams and mobs that form, and you just are sometimes caught in the flow, and there's nothing you can do, you just have to go with the mob until you can jump out of the side and reconnect with your group. Or, if you've ever been in the ocean, and there's this strong current that starts to develop, there's not a whole lot you can do; you fight it and you actually lose energy, and it gets even worse for you. And this is what Paul is saying, that you were in this stream, you were in this flow; you were going with it and there was really nothing you could do. It was so strong, it was so powerful; this was the very current of the world, and you were right in with it. That's where you were; you were trapped, you were caught in this current, the current of the world.

The word "course" here, as it says in the English version, is literally the word "age" in "the age of this world." You could even restate it, "we were

under the influence of this current age, we were under the control of the world's dominion." We were following this world's dominion and control upon us; thus our walking in sin was in accord with, and under the control of, the world, and everything that characterizes and epitomizes the world. Everything that the world sees as good, you were thinking was good. Everything the world sees as proper, as right, you were thinking was proper, and is right. You were totally embracing everything the world was putting before you as that which is purposeful and necessary for life, and all that you should want and need as you spend your time on earth. You were caught in that current, and you were buying it completely. You were all in on it, with what the world was putting before you. This was the course, this was the path of your life.

You think about this, and you go, "Okay, well, you've mentioned what the world says is good, you thought was good, and what the world puts on a pedestal, you thought was necessary and important to put on a pedestal as well." Is that a good thing? Is what the world has set before us, is what the world has done and accomplished, and the way it operates, is that positive by any means? Looking at the context of the verses, the obvious answer is no, it's not a positive thing. It's not charitable and good and peaceable; it's actually pretty obvious that it's not good when you just think about what the Scriptures say about the world.

What do the Scriptures teach about the world? Be reminded of James, and his words in James 1:27; "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to keep oneself unstained from the world." True religion is keeping yourself free from the pollution of the world, and its ideals, and what it throws at you. But later on in chapter 4 of James, verse 4, he says that "Friendship with the world is enmity and hatred toward God." That's obviously very negative. Jesus himself, in John 15 verse 18 says, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before it hated you." The world is opposed to Jesus, God the Son. And then even more clearly stated from John in 1 John 2:15-17, he says, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world - the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, the pride

of life - is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, along with its desires; but whoever does the will of God abides forever."

Pretty clear there, you're starting to see the opposition here; you have God on one side and you have the world on the other, and they are not on the same team. There is an opposition with how we see the world presented in Scripture compared to what God desires, and what God's ideals are, and what God wants accomplished in His will; the world is at odds with God. So this is not a good thing when Paul tells us that, "You were following that course, you were right in the current of the world." That's bad, that's terrible. You were in the current, and the course, and the path of the world that was running away from God; completely opposed to Him. That's a bad and negative spot to be in.

So, given this description of the world, it's clear that the path of the world is directly opposed to God. And that's the reality; we live in a time even now, not just in Paul's day, in our current time, in our current era, we recognize that the world rebels against the will of God. This really isn't something that I need to convince you of this morning. I think you all have your own experiences, you all are able to observe and look around, and see what the world is putting forth as most important and necessary for any human on this earth. And you recognize how that doesn't necessarily align with what God has told us in His word.

If you simply look around and observe, there's apathy and hostility towards God in the world that we live in today. It's very clear, regardless of the subject, the fixated end goal of the world is, "It's all about you." Not about God, and definitely not about others. It's all about you, you need to look out for number one; the world will continue to push that, it has and it will continue to do so, that you need to be most concerned with yourself while you're on this planet. You need to keep thinking about what will be best for you while you live your life, because that's all you have. All you have is yourself, so make sure you set yourself up and do things considering you and your interests. That is what the world will continue to push at people

with regard to finances, relationships, jobs and careers and education, you name it, it's all going to come back to self; while God, clearly, puts forth something different - that in order for you to have the fullest of your time while you're on this earth, is that you take all of those things and you align them in a path towards bringing glory to your Creator, towards God, and you will find fulfillment in that. This is a complete opposition.

This is where we were, though; running away from God, not desiring to give any glory to our Creator, but wanting to harness it and hone it all for ourself, wanting to take anything that we have in life, as the world would tell us, and channel it right back to us. Anything we can get our hands on, make sure it comes to us, and it benefits us, and it's all about us. That is what the world is teaching, that is where we were; buying that completely, thinking that is what life is all about. We were bought into this rebellion.

And we take a step back now, and we recognize where we are today; and we can praise God. How marvelous it is that God has now saved us and actually given us Christ, something far greater than what the world has put before us. We have this ability now, that in view of God's mercy and salvation plan, in view of God's grace in Jesus Christ, we no longer conform to the patterns of this world; but we're transformed in the renewing of our minds. We're able to walk in accordance to His plan, His purpose, His pleasure, His will. We don't have to do what the world tells us, we don't have to embrace what the world thinks; we can now step back and see what God would have for our life, because He has rescued us from this current, this path, this course of living that is dominated by the world. This is just the first layer, this is just the first layer of how dead we were, how dead we were in our sins; is that we were walking according to the course of this world.

But there's more; Paul goes on to say that we didn't just follow the world, we followed the enemy. Specifically, we followed Satan, we followed the devil. He states this further after saying that we were following the course of the world; he says also, "following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience." Interesting how he states it here, "following the prince of the power of the air." This is another title for

Satan, this is another name that is given to him; of the several that we find in Scripture. When you go through Scripture and see Satan referenced, there are many - the devil, the accuser, the father of lies, the ancient serpent, the god of this age, and here's another one - he is here described as "the prince of the power of the air". A ruler; a ruler of the power of the air. And we ask, "What is the air? How is he the ruler of the air, or the prince of the power of the air? In what sense is the air referring to?" It's more than likely a reference to the unseen realm of demonic creatures, to the unseen realm of spiritual beings. In fact, one commentator said it this way: "In Paul's day, the air was considered as the dwelling place of evil spirits." This is how they understood things, they recognized there were forces at work they couldn't see, and so they said these forces are at work in the air. And so Satan is described as the prince of the power of that air, of those forces; he is the ruler over those demonic forces.

But we still have to ask, "How does this relate to us? How does this tie in to our depravity now? How exactly did we follow Satan, the ruler of the demonic realm?" Well, the verse goes on to state it for us; that Satan is "the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience." Satan himself, "the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience." Another way of saying - Satan is at work in unbelievers, Satan is at work in those who are apart from Christ; those who do not know God, Satan is at work. We followed Satan because he somehow had an ability to work upon us, and even control us in some ways; as uncomfortable as that thought is, this is what he was doing, having his way in the sons of disobedience. How did Satan do this to us? How does he still do this to others that are unbelievers in this day? Satan exercises control over unbelievers through his control even over the current world.

So as we were just thinking and seeing that this is where we came from, walking according to the course of the world, recognizing that there is a power that is actually influencing the world, that is then influencing unbelievers; and that is Satan, he is in control. As Scripture would go on to affirm, 1 John 5:19 states very clearly; "We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." This is what Satan is

doing, this realm, this earth; he is in control. You think that's just man on his own, just coming up with great ideas to distract us away from God, and Christ, and eternal life. Satan is having his way, he's feeding the lies right to the world; he's feeding the lies to mankind, that they might propagate and send them out - that if you only had more of this in your life, or more of that in your life, you would be fulfilled. And it's anything and everything to get you away from your true purpose of bringing glory to God, your Creator. This is what Satan is busy at work doing, and this is where we were; we were brainwashed, we believed the lies of the world because they came from the cunning, working force of Satan.

Furthermore, Scripture tells us more; 2 Corinthians 4:4 talks about Satan's work in blinding us. It states: "In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." So as you've seen, this is a depraved condition; this is really an understanding of what it means to be totally depraved, and man's inability when it comes to his relationship with God. Because man is running down the course, running down the path of what the world is telling him; and man is blinded, not even able to see the glory of Jesus Christ, the light of the gospel coming through. Man is depraved, man is unable to respond to God, and to see the gospel, the good news. Truly, we were dead in our sins and trespasses; truly, this is how we were walking, completely away from Christ, and towards our own wishes and desires that were influenced by the world, and Satan himself.

How does Satan control and work in the world? Here's some obvious ways in these verses - blinding unbelievers and controlling the evil in the world; additionally, Scripture gives us more ways. Consider 1 Peter 5:8; from that verse we learn that Scripture also describes Satan as a lion, prowling around and looking for someone to devour. And Paul goes on to describe in 2 Corinthians 11, verses 13 through 15, the reality that Satan is not so dumb as to try and remain this scary wicked force when he interacts with the world; but he is a masquerading angel of light, and the way that he works is even through false teachers, and trying to bring division into the church, and introducing these things amongst God's own people. Satan is having his

way, he's having his way on this earth. Obviously we know God is still in complete control and power of all things, allowing this to take place; nonetheless, it gives us a better glimpse of how dead we were, before Christ intervened in our lives, we were so dead, we were following the world, blinded by Satan and buying every lie he fed to us. This extends the understanding of our depravity; dead in our sin in the way that we followed the world, not even realizing that Satan is the very one directing the world, and his influence over us.

We take a step back again, and we recognize where we are today. We think of the songs we just sang, we rejoice that we have salvation in Christ and hopefully we praise God for saving us from this directing influence of Satan in our lives. The way that Satan was so working in your life, was so working in our lives has now been changed because we have Christ. Hopefully our adoration of Christ increases, as we recognize the wretched condition we were in before we met Him; we were under the spell of the devil, so to speak. He had us under his working, he had us under his hand. God has now granted to us the ability to repent, and be released from the captivity that Satan had us under.

Consider the words of Paul in 2 Timothy 2:25-26; Paul says, "God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will." This is where we were, not even realizing it; having no idea of the forces that were at work in our life and battling for our soul. The reality of just going along with the world and thinking that it was fine, while all along we are captives to Satan; ensnared and trapped by him to do his will. God had not granted us the repentance yet to see that; to come to a knowledge of the truth, to come to our senses, and to no longer be under Satan's captivity.

This is how depraved we were, and it goes to a third level; it goes to a third tier when we consider our inability and our depravity before Christ - we also fulfilled our flesh. Back to our verses, we read that "among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body

and the mind." Not only were we going with the flow and following the ways of the world, and not only were we unaware of Satan's control over us as we followed the world; we were living our own lives of fulfillment and pleasing our flesh. We were loving it, we were just giving in completely to whatever we felt, whatever we desired, and whatever we wanted; and we just loved it, we enjoyed it, we wanted it, and we got more of it for ourself. Paul states, "We all once lived in the passions of our flesh."

This is the third level here of our depravity; the first level of the world, the second level of Satan's influence, and now our own flesh even. Again, this is not a positive statement about our flesh. While there are times when Scripture affirms positive passions that we might have, as in a passion to bring glory to God, a passion to serve and love others; this is not a positive time, this is a negative moment. This is clearly a negative passion as it's coming from our flesh, and our flesh is in direct opposition to God. So anything that is coming from our flesh and its opposition to God, any passion is obviously negative and further sin and depravity.

This is clear in other Scriptures, too; we think of Galatians 5 and this is what Paul says in verses 16 and 17, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do." This is the reality, in giving ourselves to what we wanted, and what we felt, and what we thought, and what we desired; that was all against the Spirit. That was all coming from our flesh, and that was against the very God who made us. The depravity even reminds us of the times of Noah, when God actually flooded the earth because of the evil; in Genesis 6:5 we're reminded, "The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

This is the truth; this is the same situation for anyone that does not have the Spirit, that does not have Christ, that does not believe the gospel. They are evil in their intentions and they are giving themselves to those intentions of their heart, and their flesh, and their mind; they're allowing all that to just

continue to move forward, and to live in such a way. And it's opposed to God, it's absolute opposition to God.

This is one of the obvious places where God and Walt Disney take their separate ways. Not just Disney; I could name any other movie producer, any other entertainment person out there. But you think of phrases like "follow your heart," "chase after your wildest dreams," "be whoever you want to be," "do what feels right," all these types of phrases; and if we just take a step back and recognize what those phrases are saying in relationship to what God tells us in His word, that's probably the worst thing you could tell your child. That is terrible advice for children, that's terrible advice for people. But this is the mantra, the world is going to keep championing this mantra, "Hey, whatever comes up and bubbles up inside that you really want, do it. Give that to yourself, make sure you pursue that to no end."

And that is what is constantly put forth in the world today. It's terrible, it's wrong, it's opposed to God; it's actually a very obvious indicator of what's being stated in Galatians 5. It's coming from the flesh, it's in opposition to the Spirit - so obvious. The second we give in to the natural inclinations of our flesh, we plunge ourselves further into sin and more depravity, and separation from God. Paul goes on to state that we're not just feeling these desires inside, but that we were also expressing these desires on the outside; this wasn't just something brewing inside of us, this actually manifested itself, it showed itself.

He goes on in verse 3 to state that we were "carrying out the desires of the body and the mind." We were actually carrying these out, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind. You see, it's impossible to simply hold onto some desire and keep it within; it's impossible to have some thought, or to have some passion that is ill-placed and wrong and sinful, but to only keep it inside. Those passions, those desires, they will eventually flow out from us; they will eventually show themselves. I mean, we could just really continue on in Galatians 5, and we would see that. We'd see that even more clearly. Galatians 5, verses 19 through 21, "Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities,

strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these; I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

And you might see a list like this, and you might think to yourself, "Well, I can't really relate to this list, because well you see, I was saved at a young age. I was saved at a young age, so I really didn't get involved in all this debauchery and terrible living; I wasn't really into that, so I wasn't too bad of a person, honestly, when I was saved." To that I would say, "You're absolutely wrong." First of all, to say that you didn't have jealousy, or envy, or impurity even at a young age when you were saved; that's debatable, and we could talk about that later.

Secondly though, Scripture declares so clearly that our depravity is even from birth. Look at what David says in his Psalm of confession in Psalm 51. "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Now, there's no question that babies and infants are adorable, we all know this. However, there's no hiding the displeasure or anger that displays itself when a little one does not get what he or she desires. We've all seen this, and you want to hide it and think, "No, it's okay, it's innocent." Or it's anger, and it's sin that we all have from birth.

It's an example of the sinful flesh that we have inherited from Adam, and what was accomplished, and what took place in the garden; which was not the continuation of fellowship as was intended with God, but instead, a breaking of that fellowship when Adam and Eve sinned against God. That was massive; Romans 5:12, Paul states, "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man - through Adam - and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned." This is what we inherited; one man introducing sin, and therefore death into the world, and that spreading to all of us. None of us are exempt from this curse that we have; a curse of sin, and a curse of inevitable death because of that sin. This is the clear and obvious indicator of our spiritual death and depravity, due to our own sinful nature.

So when we do what is natural, the world might see it as a positive thing.

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The Scriptures make it clear, doing what's natural is doing what Adam did. That's bad, that breaks your fellowship with God, that's sin, and that's wrong. So doing what you feel, and doing what comes natural, is actually opposed to God. But this is where we were; we chose to give into our internal fleshly lust, and we allowed them to have an external display of sinful rebellion against God. This was our condition before Christ; this is what we were giving ourselves to, and this is what we were showing.

Again, take a step back, and consider the grace of what Christ accomplished on the cross. He died, and rose again, so that we might no longer be slaves to those desires; we might no longer be slaves to this sinful flesh that we have. Romans 6:6, Paul states it this way, "We know that our old self was crucified with him, in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin." Hallelujah. All we could do before Christ, when we look back on our past, was sinful desire after sinful expression after desire after expression of sin, 24/7. That's who we were, that's what we did, and we couldn't even control that; because we were in course with the world, we were in sync with Satan as he was brainwashing us, and we were giving in to what felt right in that moment.

The beauty of the cross, the beauty of what has happened to you and I, is that it doesn't have to be the case anymore; we don't have to be in this position where we are constantly giving in to sin 24/7. We can now actually, by the power of the cross and the Spirit working in us, say no to sin. We can now actually obey our Creator; we can now live the life He intended us to live, a life of bringing glory to Him. Hallelujah that He has changed us, and that we are no longer in this place where we were stuck in sin, according to our flesh and what it desires.

So these three levels of depravity, showing us just how dead we really were in our sin; and fourthly, we see here what is not necessarily another level of depravity, but what is the result of all that depravity. This is where we see that we faced God's wrath. We faced God's wrath, in that position that we were in. In light of all this, "we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind." We were in love with the world, we were brainwashed by

Satan, we were addicted to our flesh; and in the most terrifying reality, this was not the worst part of our condition. Those are all terrible things, we've seen that very clearly, but that isn't even the worst part. Paul states that the results of those previous three levels of depravity is really the scary part, that "we were by nature children of wrath."

And what does he mean by this? Paul is stating that, he's really revealing to us, our logical and necessary position before God. Before Christ intervened, and we were stuck in our sin, obsessed with it, addicted to it; even if we tried to do good deeds, they would be meaningless to God. Isaiah 64:6, "We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment; we all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away." Before Christ, we fell short of God's perfect, holy, and righteous standard; and consequently, there was only one necessary outcome for us. The outcome where we faced that punishment we deserved. The outcome where that wrath of God is put upon us, His creation, that has rebelled. That's the outcome we deserve. That's the only necessary place that we should have been. We were rebellious children that deserved God's wrath.

And this is the case for anyone who fails to believe in Jesus as God's Son. We're reminded from John 3:36, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." That's where we were; in this position, we were depraved, and we were sinful, and we were wretched, and the wrath of God remained upon us. We were still going to face that wrath. Paul adds that this position was true, not just for us here in this room that have been saved out of that; but this is true for the rest of mankind, this is true for the world. He says, "like the rest of mankind." This is still the dreaded position for anyone who walks on this earth without the hope and salvation of Jesus Christ. We look at Ephesians 2:1-3, we think of our verses, and we praise God for the cross, we praise Him for our salvation, we praise Him for undeserved grace and the love that He has shown toward us, we rejoice that we are no longer destined for God's wrath; amazing things that we can praise God for.

But, for the rest of mankind, we have to remind ourselves this morning, for the rest of mankind, that's not the story. For the rest of mankind, they are still in love with the ways of the world; for the rest of mankind, they are still blinded by Satan and his influence. For the rest of the world, they are still living in the passions of their sinful flesh; and obviously, for the rest of the world, they are still in a position where they will face the wrath of God.

In light of that reality, and in light of the fact that we have spent so much time focusing upon the depravity of man this morning, I would be foolish not to end with an urgent reminder of the gospel; an urgent reminder of the salvation that's available in Jesus Christ. We need this, and I would urge you, listen; lend me your ear if this is a situation that you have not rectified, you have not reconciled, it is still outstanding in your mind, listen this morning. Because it is very clear that mankind is not in a good position; they are not right before God, and there is only one hope for mankind in such a position.

Although we live in such a way as man who loved the world, and Satan's influence, and fulfilling our flesh; God has a Savior to rescue us from our deserved punishment. God's Savior lived in this world, and He resisted its influence. God's Savior walked on this earth, and He didn't bow to Satan who was the ruler of this earth. God's Savior did not give in to His fleshly lust, but instead found fulfillment in doing the will of His Heavenly Father. And in the most unthinkable fashion, God's Savior humbly went to the cross to face the wrath and punishment of His Heavenly Father. It was not wrath that He deserved; when He went to the cross, that was not something that was rightful for Him to take upon Himself. He went to the cross to face the wrath and punishment of His Heavenly Father for you and me who are sitting here today. Jesus Christ endured God's wrath for you, if you will make him King and Lord of your life from this moment forward.

Do not delay; for we are dead in our sin, and destined for wrath, until we respond to Jesus. Come today, respond to Jesus, and do not stay in the condition of Ephesians 2:1-3; but run to verse 4 and following, that God has intervened and provided Christ, and you can grab ahold of that.

Righteousness, salvation, deliverance from sin, no longer facing the wrath of God. It's beautiful. And then you can look back on verses 1 to 3; you can look back at your life and say, "Praise You, God. Christ is more glorious today than He ever has been, because I recognize how dead I was in my sins, and trespasses."