Bigger than all my problems,
Bigger than all my fears,
God is bigger than any mountain
That I can or cannot see.
Bigger than all my questions,
Bigger than anything,
God is bigger than any mountain
That I can or cannot see.
Gordon Jenson

Prayer Study # 464

EPHESIANS CHAPTER TWO

First Love Ministries, Inc., of Perry, Georgia USA

Ephesians 2 New King James Version (NKJV)

By Grace Through Faith

2 *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.
4 *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great*
love with which He loved us, ***5*** *even when we were*
dead in trespasses, made us alive together with
Christ (by grace you have been saved), ***6*** *and raised*
us up together, and made us sit together in the
heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ***7*** *that in the ages to*
come He might show the exceeding riches of His
grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ***8*** *For*
by grace you have been saved through faith, and
that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ***9*** *not of*

works, lest anyone should boast. ***10*** *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

When Paul uses *you*, he is talking about the Gentiles. When he uses *us,* he is speaking of the Jews. He begins this chapter describing life without Christ. Before Christ, we are spiritually dead. The word used for *trespasses* literally means *a slip* or *fall.* It speaks of someone who has lost the way and taken the wrong road. The word for *sin* literally means *to miss the mark.* Sin is the failure to be what we could be and ought to be, and, although it can be forgive, its effect remains. As someone once said, "The scars remain."

William Barclay tells us that sin does three things:

1. **It kills innocence.** The psychologists tell us that we never forget anything, including our sins. The sin might be buried in our sub consciousness, but it can be pulled back up, just like we can pull things up on a computer. Sin kills innocence, and innocence, once lost, can never be recovered, apart from a miracle of God.
2. **Sin kills ideals.** There are three stages of sin. First, the person know what they want to do is wrong. Secondly, they fall to the sin but still know it is wrong.

   Finally, the person does the sin so often that their conscience is hardened. They no longer feel any conviction, and therefore their sin kills the ideals, in their lives, the things which make life worthwhile. An ideal is a goal or standard

of excellence or beauty that a person tries to reach.

3. **Sin kills the will:** People engage in some sinful act because it is pleasurable. But soon the sin becomes a habit, then a bondage, making the person a slave to sin. Thus, the sin kills the will, having such a hold on people that they cannot, on their own, break free.

Verse two and three continue the contrast between the Christian and the non-Christian worldly person. Satan is the not only the *prince of the power of the air,* he is, because of mankind's sin, the *prince or ruler of this world* (John 12:31). He is a spirit and is behind the Babylonia World System. He and his evil army work to try to cause humans to walk in disobedience to God and to be full of lust. Before Christ, we are children of wrath because of our fallen nature, which has not been redeemed. Only accepting the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ can redeem us and make us free. Before Christ, we deserve the wrath of God. The editors of the New King James Bible tell us, "His wrath is His refusal to compromise with evil and His commitment to punish wrongdoing."

The ancient world believed that the air was so crowded with demons that one could not put a pinpoint between them. Barclay speaks of the air as the house of these disembodied spirits and says, "They were out to propagate evil, to frustrate the purposes of God and to ruin human souls. Those who were under their domination had taken sides against God."

But God…but God extends mercy and love and grace to us. He loved us even when we were

spiritual dead. *"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins"* (1st John 4:10). "*We love Him, because He first loved us"* (1st John 4:19).

Paul makes it very clear that we are not saved by works. There is nothing we can do to earn the salvation that God gives to us. All we can do is accept it. Nevertheless, God recreates us when we come into relationship with Christ, and our love for Jesus must motivate us to do good works. This is one of the great paradoxes of scripture: Salvation is free and cannot be earned and must be accepted by faith but faith without works is dead (James 2:17).

Brought Near by His Blood

11 *Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—* ***12*** *that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.* ***13*** *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

Paul is writing to Gentile believers. He reminds them that, before Christ, they had no hope. He does not speak of this here, but he could have reminded them that the Jews, who were circumcised, considered the Gentiles as firewood for Hell. If a Jew married a Gentile, the Jews had a funeral for that Jew and considered him dead. The Jews were not allowed to

go into a Gentile house, and they had a saying: Crush the best of the serpents and kill the best of the Gentiles. Paul totally disagreed with this philosophy, but he never forgot the unique place that Israel and the Jews had with God.

We are bought by the BLOOD. Derek Prince points out the importance of the blood of Jesus to the Christian believer:

1. **THROUGH THE BLOOD OF JESUS, I AM REDEEMED OUT OF THE HAND OF THE DEVIL.**
   Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy (Psalm 107:2).

2. **THROUGH THE BLOOD OF JESUS, ALL MY SINS ARE FORGIVEN.**
   In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace… (Ephesians 1:7)

3. **THE BLOOD OF JESUS, GOD'S SON, CONTINUALLY CLEANSES ME FROM ALL SIN.**
   But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin (1st John 1:7).

   But if we [really] *are living and walking in the Light, as He* [Himself] *is in the Light, we have* [true, unbroken] *fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses (removes) us from all sin and guilt* [keeps us cleansed from sin in all its forms and manifestations]. AMP

4. **THROUGH THE BLOOD OF JESUS, I AM JUSTIFIED, MADE RIGHTEOUS, JUST AS IF I HAD NEVER SINNED.**

Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we should be saved from wrath through him (Romans 5:9).

5. **THROUGH THE BLOOD OF JESUS, I AM SANCTIFIED-MADE HOLY OR SET APART TO GOD AND SEPARATED FROM THE DEVIL.**
   Wherefore, Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate (Hebrews 13:12).

6. **MY BODY IS A TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT-REDEEMED, CLEANSED, SANCTIFIED BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS. THEREFORE, SATAN HAS NO PLACE IN ME, NO POWER OVER ME, THROUGH THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB, JESUS!**
   What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom ye have of God and ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's (1st Corinthians 6:19-20).

Christ Our Peace

14 *For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,* ***15*** *having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,* ***16*** *and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.* ***17*** *And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.* ***18*** *For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.*

Paul is referring to the temple here. The temple consisted of a series of courts. First, there was the Court of the Gentiles, then the Court of the Women, then the Court of the Israelites, then the Court of the Priest, and finally the Holy Place itself. The Court of the Gentiles was separated from the Court of the Women by a wall or marble. At intervals on the Gentile side of the wall were tablets stating that any Gentile who proceeded any further into the temple would be put to death. Paul knew this wall well. He was wrongly accused of bringing Trophimus, an Ephesian Gentile Christian, into the Jerusalem temple beyond this barrier. Although Paul had not done this, he was arrested.

Paul says that Christ has taken down these barriers. He brings peace to both groups. He does this by inspiring love in His people. When people love Christ, they come to love each other. He also wiped out the legalistic laws of the Jews. Only the Pharisees strictly adhered to all the laws, and there were only 6000 Pharisees among the millions of Jews. The laws had been worked out into thousands of commandments. The Pharisee had to wash his hands a certain way, keep the Sabbath in a certain way, was dishes in a certain way, and sacrifice animals in a certain way. Christ ended this legalism (*Christ is the end of the law*-Romans 10:4). In its place He put love for God and love for people as the fulfillment of the law.

Jesus did not make all Jews into Gentiles or all Gentiles into Jews. He produced one new kind of person. Everyone keeps their own identity (ex. Christian Indians, Christian Africans, etc.). The oneness is in Christ. Christianity is above all racial

differences.

Christ Our Cornerstone

19 *Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,* ***20*** *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,* ***21*** *in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,* ***22*** *in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*

Strangers are people who are living somewhere short-term before they move on. They have no rights. Foreigners are aliens who have settled permanently in a foreign country but have only limited rights. Fellow citizens have all the privileges and rights of God's household. The apostles and prophets lay the foundation for the family of God through their prophetic words and teachings.

Jesus Christ is the capstone that holds an entire structure together. In ancient times this stone had the name of the king written or carved on it to signify who took credit for the building's construction.

The Church is growing in the things of God. The Spirit of God is no longer confined to the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem but is in the Church, not a building, but a group of people.

The Healer
Lois Irwin

On the Cross crucified, in great sorrow He died;
The Giver of life was He-
Yet my Lord was despised and rejected of men,

This Jesus of Calvary.

Price for healing was paid, as those cruel stripes were made
Within Pilate's judgment hall.
Now His suff'ring afford perfect healing for all,
This wonderful Healer's mine.

Came the leper to Christ, saying "Surely I know,
That Thou, Lord, canst make me whole."
When His great faith was seen, Jesus said, "Yes, I will." And
touched him and made him clean.

He has healed my sick soul, made me ev'ry whit whole,
And He'll do the same to you. He's the same yesterday and today
And for aye, This Healer of men today.

CHORUS
He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
Surely He bore our sorrows,
And by His stripes we are healed.