



Sermon Notes: July 19, 2015

Alive

7 of 14 from the teaching series "The Messiah's Community"
Ephesians 2:1-7 • Pastor Paul Bradford

How we see ourselves affects how we live - we should realize our potential in Christ

- believe in God, not in ourselves
- trust the power of Christ in us, not our own abilities
- gain ground by trusting deeper in what God has done for us, not by trying harder

Ephesians structure

- Theological
 - 1:1-3:21 Sit (we are seated with Christ)
- Practical
 - 4:1-6:9 Walk (living the Christian life)
 - 6:10-24 Stand (stand our ground against the enemy)

Ephesians 2:1-7

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

we were dead in sin

- separated from God, trying to fill the void with things other than God
- because of our sinfulness, we deserve death

we are now alive in Christ

- the "mystical union of Christ and believers"
 - God made us alive together with Christ
 - God raised us together with Christ
 - God seated us together with Christ in the heavenly realms
- Louis Berkhof (<https://www.biblicaltraining.org/library/mystical-union/systematic-theology/louis-berkhof>) - our union with Christ is
 - an organic union - all the believers form one body
 - a vital union - Christ is the vitalizing and dominating principle of the whole body of believers
 - a union mediated by the Holy Spirit - through the Holy Spirit Christ now dwells in us
 - a transforming union - we are changed into the image of Christ according to his human nature

we are seated with Christ in heaven

- this means
 - we dwell continually in God's presence
 - we have authority in Christ
 - we can live continually from heaven's resources - a continual flow of God's grace
- position vs. experience - when having a nightmare, we experience fear, but in reality our position hasn't changed - we are safe in our beds; in life we may have the illusion that we are abandoned by God, but in reality we are seated with Christ

we are rich beyond comparison

- *incomparable riches of his grace* - over the top - to go beyond
- *kindness* - God's sympathetic concern for the welfare of humanity
- *in the coming ages* - what God has done is now a reality for believers, but only in the coming ages will it become evident to all what an abundance of grace and kindness God has bestowed on his people through Christ

Our Response

Through faith embrace your union with Christ, and you will experience who you are in Christ!

- Christ is in you, sin has no power over him, so you are free from sin
- He is perfect in love, so you can love
- He is perfect in forgiveness, so you can forgive
- He is wise, so as you seek he will give you wisdom