

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

The Lord or the World - Your Choice

Ephesians 2:1-10

¹ The Lord or the world. It's your choice.

Our scripture today is from Ephesians, chapter 2, verses 1 through 10. ² 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 sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. ¹ ³

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

¹ Ephesians 2:1-3.

the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.² ⁴

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.³

You are offered choices in this life all the time. You reap the benefit, or the consequences, of those choices. That’s how you, eventually, learn to make right choices.

Most of the wrong choices you make have only temporary consequences. Your car runs out of gas, so you walk. You say something unkind or thoughtless. Then, you must either apologize or lose a relationship.

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² Ephesians 2:4-7.

³ Ephesians 2:8-10.

The one choice you must make, because it has permanent consequences, is what do you do with the Lord Jesus? You must make that choice!

The first choice is found in verses 1 through 3. ⁶

I. You Can Choose the World & Be Spiritually Dead - v1-3

You can choose the world and be spiritually dead! ⁷

Verses 1 and 2 ⁴ tell us that **Satan**, the ruler of the kingdom of the air, **provides the temptations of this world**. The pressures of your non believing friends and associates tempt you to go the worldly route. ⁸
Romans, chapter 12, verse 2, from the Phillips paraphrase, puts it this way, **Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within.** ⁹

⁴ Ephesians 2:1-2 - 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.

How do you respond? ¹⁰ Verse 1 says, **As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins . . . , you walk into a Satan controlled life!** ¹¹

The meaning of the word **Transgression**, in the original language, ⁵ is “to trip or take a false step”; to “fall away”. ¹² The meaning of the word **Sin** ⁶ is “a missing of the mark”. It describes an archer missing his target. ¹³ You simply let your desires control you. James, chapter 1, verse 14, puts it this way, . . . **each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.** ¹⁴

What are the results of the world-controlled life? ¹⁵ We all sin! Romans, chapter 3, verse 10 and verse 23, **There is no one righteous, not even one . . .** ¹⁶ **For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God . . .** ¹⁷ **As**

⁵ παράπτωμα.

⁶ ἁμαρτία.

a result, **we are the objects of God's wrath!** ⁷ ¹⁸ You don't want to be the object of God's wrath!

This brings you to the other choice.

II. You Can Choose Lord Jesus & Be Made Spiritually Alive - v4-10

You can choose Lord Jesus and be spiritually alive! ¹⁹

God provides an opportunity for you to be His instead of Satan's property! ²⁰

Verses 8 and 9 are appropriate here, **For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.**

What is the gift of God? This has been a debate among biblical scholars for a long time. Is it faith? Is it salvation? Is it grace? ²¹

⁷ Ephesians 2:3 - All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

Bear with me, here, as I present the original language because **case endings** may help us solve this problem. As in the English text above, the appropriate words are underlined. Τῇ γὰρ χάριτι ἐστε σεσωσμένοι διὰ πίστεως· καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν, Θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον· οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων, ἵνα μὴ τις καυχῆσθαι. ⁸ ₂₂

Grace (χάριτι), “God’s unmerited favor”, is **dative**. That’s the motivation behind the gift! ₂₃

Faith (πίστεω), “trusting Lord Jesus as Savior”, is **genitive**. That’s the way you obtain the gift! ₂₄

Gift (δῶρον) and **saved** (σεσωσμένοι) are both **nominative**. Since they agree in case and number they are paired here. Salvation is the gift of God! ₂₅

What is the reason for the gift? God wants you to know His kindness! Verse 7, . . . **in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches**

⁸ The reason I am including the Koine Greek text here is because some of you may have studied enough of the original language to benefit from this. If you have not, please be patient with this explanation!

of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 26

How do you respond? 27

Verse 9 shows us how not to respond! . . . **Not by works, so that no one can boast.** You don't respond by trying to do a bunch of good things to earn salvation. If life were a giant bookkeeping system where your merits would outweigh your demerits, you would be earning your way to heaven.

Most people believe this is the way. Most of the religions of the world have the observance of ceremonies, obedience to rules and regulations, and closely observed standards of conduct, as requirements to get in!

If this were the way, you could pound on the gates of heaven and demand entrance. You could, also, brag about how good you have been.

Besides; who decides where the line is drawn that determines your status, when you cross over it, from

being a bad guy to being a good guy? Who has the right to decide that; the government, your pastor, your parents, you? ²⁸

So, how do you respond? Verse 8 ⁹ proclaims that you **respond by faith!** ²⁹

Faith is committing yourself to Jesus as Lord and Savior of your life. ³⁰ Faith is trusting that Lord Jesus will fulfill His promises to you. ³¹ Faith is commitment seen in a Holy Spirit controlled life. ³²

What are the results of a Holy Spirit controlled life? What happens when you respond to God's grace and accept His gift of salvation?

Verse 10 says, **For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.** ³³ You become God's **workmanship**; His created product. ³⁴ You begin living the **good works** life God had originally created you for.

⁹ Ephesians 2:8 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith . . .

What's the bottom line? ³⁵ You do good works because of God's gift - not in order to get it! ³⁶

Don't put this decision off!

“Early one morning fire broke out in a house on a narrow street in London. The alarm was sounded by a policeman on duty. Before the fire engines could get to the scene, however, flames were leaping high into the air. Suddenly a young man appeared at an upper window in his pajamas. Firemen quickly placed a ladder against the burning building. But to the consternation of all, he refused to come down, shouting back that he had to get dressed first. The firemen pleaded, ‘Come as you are! Come as you are!’ From below they tried to ascend the stairs but were turned back as the wind fanned the flames into fury. When a rescuer tried to enter through a window the heat and smoke forced him away. Suddenly the stairs

gave way and the roof fell in. The man had waited too long and was buried beneath the ruins.”¹⁰

In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation. II Cor 6:2

Now is the time to make the right choice.

Don’t put it off!

<http://biblelifemessages.org/>

¹⁰ Years ago I found this story in “Our Daily Bread”, in an article titled “Come As You Are - Now!”, Ephesians 2:1-10, December 29.