

## Legislators and Staff Prayer Breakfast

Legislative Cafeteria

June 20<sup>th</sup> 7:30 AM

Books and Bagels

June 28th

### Introduction

The first chapter of Ephesians presented the blueprint plan of redemption for mankind.

1. It was drawn up in eternity past.
2. It addressed the greatest entrapment of God's creation that could possibly happen, this entrapment was the result of sin.
3. The framework of the mission of God to rescue people and the world was through God Himself becoming man and carrying out an unbelievable act of love.
  - a. Romans 5:8 (ESV) *"But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*
  - b. [speaking of God the Son, Jesus Christ]2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV) *"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."*
4. The power of God to carry out this rescue was a mighty power beyond comprehension. The text below describes it:



Ephesians 1:19–23 (ESV) *"And what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all."*

5. You, the reader, are left in awe of this magnificent work of salvation. It can be summed up as the substitutionary sacrifice of God the Son for you. The sacrifice of Christ paid your debt to God.
6. The law condemns; it demands perfection and reveals that man has missed the standard of God's holiness. But the magnificent blueprint of God had God the Son keeping the law for you. The work of Christ fulfilled the Law of God in your place.

7. It has been accomplished. People are described as making a decision of faith to receive this gift from God.
  - a. Ephesians 1:13 (ESV) *"In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit."*
8. By whose authority can a person move from this entrapment to sin, totally separate from God to being included in Christ? The authority of a risen and ascended Savior. The Resurrection and Ascension of Christ has exalted Him to the position of having all authority in heaven and earth.
  - a. Matthew 28:18–19 (ESV) *"And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."*

Conclusion: Salvation of man was a very complex, sacrificial work of God that addressed depths of depravity and enslavement to sin and the law beyond our comprehension. It took the greatest power of God Almighty to accomplish it.

How terrible of a problem was it? God the Holy Spirit describes it in chapter two.

### 1. Man is spiritually dead and not responsive to God.

Ephesians 2:1 (ESV) *"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins."*

- a. **Sin came into this world** by Adam in the Garden of Eden.
  - i. Romans 5:12 (ESV) *"Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned."*
  - ii. The verse points to sin coming into this world almost like our science fiction would describe an alien virus. It personifies sin, and points out that "sin" came from outside the world of humanity.

Paul does not discuss the origin of evil beyond this fact. There are some today who deny the fact of sin at all and who call it merely "an error of mortal mind" (a notion) while others regard it as merely an animal inheritance devoid of ethical quality. **And so death passed unto all men.**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Ro 5:12). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

The word used for passed unto all men, *διερχομαι*, (*deer ko my*) is used in Luke 2:35 to describes a sword passes through an object. What has passed through men is spiritual death.

Noted Bible teacher Warren Wiersbe explains: Spiritual death means that a person is unable to understand and appreciate spiritual things. He possesses no spiritual life, and he can do nothing of himself to please God. Just as a person physically dead does not respond to physical stimuli, so a person spiritually dead is unable to respond to spiritual things. A corpse does not hear the conversation going on in the funeral parlor. He has no appetite for food or drink; he feels no pain; he is dead. Just so with the inner man of the unsaved person. His spiritual faculties are not functioning, and they cannot function until God gives him life. The cause of this spiritual death is “trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1). “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). In the Bible, *death* basically means “separation,” not only physically, as the spirit separated from the body (James 2:26), but also spiritually, as the spirit separated from God (Isa. 59:2).

The unbeliever is not sick; he is dead! He does not need resuscitation; he needs resurrection. All lost sinners are dead, and the only difference between one sinner and another is the state of decay. The lost derelict on skid row may be more decayed outwardly than the unsaved society leader, but both are dead in sin—and one corpse cannot be more dead than another! This means that our world is one vast graveyard, filled with people who are dead while they live (1 Tim. 5:6).<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The spiritually dead function in a different spiritual kingdom.

Ephesians 2:2–3 (ESV) “*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— 3 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.*”

The description of the sinner before knowing Christ is that he functions in a different spiritual kingdom. Supporting this is Paul’s writing to the church of Colosse. Colossians 1:13 (ESV) “*He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.*”

There are three influences presented in this text that describe function in this different spiritual kingdom.

<sup>2</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, pp. 17–18). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

- 1) The world’s pressure, the course of this world.
  - a. Romans 12:2 (ESV) “*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*”
- 2) The Devil, Satan, is spoken of here as the prince of the power of the air. His influence is through his lies; He is the Father of Lies, John 8:44. He also leads an organized force of demons who seek to turn people away from God, continually deface God and keep people from seeing God’s goodness and salvation.
  - a. 2 Corinthians 4:4 (ESV) “*In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*”
  - b. Ephesians 6:12 (ESV) “*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*”
- 3) The flesh
  - a. This is not the body because the body is not evil.
  - b. The flesh refers to the pull of the fallen nature. It is that which wants to control our body and mind and guide us to disobey God.

As a parent I never had to teach my children to disobey. It was a natural response. This is the pull of man’s nature. It has a bent to disobey and turn away from God. These enemies of God work against people to keep them blinded to God’s good news.

### 3. God’s mercy is good news for you.

Ephesians 2:4–5 (ESV) “*But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, **made us alive together** with Christ—by grace you have been saved.*”

His power of resurrection life calls the spiritually dead to salvation. Note the emboldened phrase; **it is raised together with Christ. What a personal Savior!**

Oh the love that drew salvations plan.  
Oh the grace that brought it down to man,  
Oh the mighty gulf that God did span...