Ephesians 2 New International Version (NIV)

Made Alive in Christ

**2**As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, **2**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. **3**All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+2&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29233a)] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.

In verses 1 – 3, Paul explains our state before (or until) salvation: Dead in our sins, following ways of the world and of the devil. We were disobedient, gratifying cravings of the flesh. We were “by nature” deserving of wrath.

1. How do we succumb to sin?
2. Do you remember the time before you were saved and what if felt like to be dead in sin?
3. Have you felt that same way at any time since?

**4**But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5**made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. **6**And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, **7**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. **8**For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— **9**not by works, so that no one can boast. **10**For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

There are two main themes in this section. In verses 4 through 10, Paul uses the term “it is by grace you have been saved” twice. He also states that it is a gift. It also says in verse 10 that God has things for us to do.

1. What does “God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in Heavenly realms” in verse 6 mean? Does it mean that we always have access to him?
2. In verse 10, Paul says that we are “created in Christ Jesus to do good works” (Faith without works is dead? (James 2:26)). It goes on to say “which God has prepared for us to do.” What things has God placed before you to do lately?
3. How do we benefit ourselves and others by acting on what God has prepared for us to do?
4. What good works has God prepared for you to do? (verse 10)

Jew and Gentile Reconciled Through Christ

**11**Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands) — **12**remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. **13**But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Thank God that he gave us the opportunity to take advantage of salvation through his grace. In terms of salvation, under grace, we have an equal opportunity for heaven.

1. NOTICE - “bunny trail” As Christians, what should our relationship with those of the Jewish faith be? Have you attended any service at a synagogue? How do you feel about not being one of God’s chosen race of people? Do you feel fortunate to have not been in that group and raised in a situation where you were taught from a very young age that Jesus was not the Messiah? Why do you think it is that there seem to be so few messianic Jews? How must God have felt when his chosen people “received him not?” Do you know any Jewish people who have been converted?
2. Are we now (after the cross) to be considered one of God’s chosen?
3. Is it any easier for us (gentiles) who are dead in sin to receive what Jesus offers than it is for Jews, Buddists, those of Islamic faith or for athiests?
4. Does God have any special instructions for us relating to Israel?, for other groups of non-believers?, or are there just two groups now – believers and non-believers?

**14**For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, **15**by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, **16**and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. **17**He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. **18**For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

1. “God has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility” (verse 14). How do you think God feels about all the groups that have appointed themselves to their own false beliefs?
2. In verse 16, Paul writes that God, through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. What is he talking about? Is it that there should be no hostility among believers no matter what their ethnicity or history?

**19**Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, **20**built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. **21**In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. **22**And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

So this is the “Body of Christ” that the bible talks about; one in Christ , a “foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.” And, finally, in our own bodies as a dwelling or temple of the Holy Spirit.

1. Judaism is not just a faith or religion, it is also almost exclusively a race of people. Does that make it harder for Jews to come to Christ?
2. What baggage do we bring when we come to the cross?
3. Wouldn’t that be extreme irony – that God’s chosen people are now more isolated from Christ than the Gentiles (everybody else)?