

# Ephesians 2

by Robert F. Adcock

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*In Ephesians 2, Robert F. Adcock emphasizes the transformative power of God's grace and the call to live a life of love and obedience as new creations in Christ.*

**Duration:** 46:26

**Scripture:** Ephesians 2:11-13, 1 Peter 1:22, 1 Peter 1:24 - 2:1

**Topics:** "Eternal Life", "Evangelism"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of honoring Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who suffered judgment and wrath on behalf of humanity. The preacher expresses gratitude for living in a land where the gospel of Jesus Christ is still being proclaimed and encourages listeners to share the message of God's love and salvation with others. The sermon also raises the question of why people must die without hearing the gospel and emphasizes the urgency of evangelizing and spreading the message of eternal life. The preacher concludes by reminding listeners that having a personal relationship with Jesus is the key to receiving eternal life.

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## Transcript

I'm a little flustered because John said there were going to be two special numbers and then he looked over and said it's time for you and I said I'm not that special number. I lost all track whether it was morning or evening, so I don't know whether any of you folks ever get into that position or not, but that's what I found myself in, but thank you girls, that was beautiful. Always good to have visitors with us and today is no exception and if you're here at Northgate for the very first time, we'd like to bid you a special welcome.

Why must I die? Help me. Is there no way to save my dying soul? Is there no plan? Why must I die? Is there not someone somewhere who knows the way? Is there no way to free my soul from sin? Is there no ear to hear my plea for mercy? Why must I die? Can we not hear? Why must I die? There is a God eternal love. Well, you're moving to Pittsburgh, but you must come back.

You must. That number is indeed, that was beautiful. Beautiful and so meaningful.

Billy, can you tell me where your brother Les is this morning? You know, it's so unusual. Oh, Gene, you have a report. Those that are hurting and stand in need of help, shall we just bow in a word of prayer? Father in Heaven, we thank thee and praise thee for the Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son and our Savior.

And we are encouraged to pray one for another. And we will pray for our dear brother Les Dobey, for his wife Mildred, and we remember the Guthries, and we remember Ruth Pittman and Gurney, and there are just a host of names that come before us. Robert Gianetta.

So many that find themselves in circumstances that are not too pleasant. And blessed Holy Lord, we hold them up to thee. Ask for your healing.

Ask for your special comfort for their hearts. In the precious and worthy name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

I'd like for us to read from Ephesians chapter 2 this morning. We'll be reading a couple of passages and they're linked together and they make, I believe, they will at least give you a better understanding of what it is that we are seeking to bring out. Chapter 2 in Ephesians chapter 2, verse 11, Wherefore, remember that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh who are called on circumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands, 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.

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. And now to 1 Peter chapter 2. I'd like to read from the 22nd verse of the 1st chapter. See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, being born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever.

For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man is the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away. But the word of the Lord endureth forever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

Chapter 2, verse 1. Wherefore, laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies and envies and all evil speakings, as newborn babes desired the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious, to whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house and holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Wherefore, also it is contained in the scriptures, Behold, I lay in thine a chief cornerstone, elect and precious, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, which believe he is precious, but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a rock of offense even to them which stumble at the word being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God, which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. So often we are reminded that as Gentiles, when you read in the scripture that we were in the world without any covenant relationship with God, and we were without hope. It seems like all of the blessing was being showered upon the Jew, the Israelite, the sons of Jacob, and then when we get to this wonderful word of God, we are reminded that God by his grace had a plan for us all along.

He wanted all men to be saved. It is not the will of God that any should perish, not the will of God that any would ever fall under his judgment and his wrath. It is a wonderful day when we discover that.

Perhaps there is something that has to happen before we can enjoy that, and it is that we are lost. Spiritually, we are dead in trespasses and sin. If you read in that second chapter of Ephesians, we were indeed dead in trespasses and sin.

God provided a way to rescue us out of that dilemma, and whosoever will may come. It is not limited to one nation of people, not limited to one class of people, whosoever will may come. The invitation is extended.

It is a broad and wonderful, inclusive invitation to whosoever will, let him come. The only condition being that we acknowledge that we have a need of that which God is about to provide. Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently.

Something happens when indeed you are born again into the family of God. Spiritual life, alive unto God for the first time. Scripture reminds us that the Spirit of God has spread abroad in our hearts the love of God.

I think a few weeks ago when we were in 1 John, we put strong emphasis upon the fact that God is love, and indeed he implants in the heart of every believer the desire to love. It is wonderful to keep yourselves in the love of God, but it is something else to let that love as a fruit of the Spirit emanate from your life and prove it to the world that we live in. I think Peter was one that was asked that question.

It is a rather embarrassing question in that it was asked of Peter because of something he had said in the past to the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, Peter, very outspoken and very bold in making known the feelings of his mind and heart, had told the Lord that, I love you so much that if everyone else, your disciples included, if they abandoned you and ran away, I would stay and die with you. That's how much I love you.

I don't have to tell you the story. You know the account of how he withered under the questioning of a small maid, and she just simply asked him a question. Do you know Jesus Christ? Are you of that company that follow him? And he said, no, no, no, I don't know him.

I don't know anything about him. Later, after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, one morning on the beach, the Lord Jesus Christ had prepared a breakfast for those fishermen, Peter among them. They came ashore and they ate of that food that he had provided.

You know, you are kind of suspicious that he will say something to Peter. The one that always speaks out first, he is about to be interrogated. He is about to have our Lord ask him some very pointed questions.

That question went like this, Peter, do you love me? Remember what he said in the past? Remember about how shamefully he behaved there in that judgment hall? Peter, do you love me? That question was put to Peter three times over. Our Lord started out with a term for love that means, would you sacrificially give of yourself for me? Would you stand with me? Would you die with me? Well, of course, Peter had already proven that not that kind of love. Not that kind of love.

You know, we are often reminded that you may love someone, but would you die for them? I think sometimes it is something that is even stronger than that. Will you live for that person? Will you give of yourself for that person? And you know, Peter was embarrassed, I am sure. But as our Lord probed and asked him that question, he had to finally say, Lord, you know all things.

You know how much I love you. And if that question has been put to each one of us this morning, how much do we really love the Lord? How much has his touching our lives and giving us eternal life, providing the forgiveness for all of our sins? How much do we truly love him? The word of God says this, and there are words spoken by the Lord Jesus, if you really love me, you will keep my commandments. If you really love me, you will keep my commandments.

You will do what I have instructed you to do. And I thank Peter in thinking about all of these things and the change that was wrought in that man's life. I think of people that try to live the Christian life based upon something other than accepting that one sacrifice for sin.

You know there are people that call themselves Christians just because they have joined a fellowship of believers or people that call themselves Christians. They have been properly baptized in water by immersion or sprinkling or some way. And they base the relationship with God upon something other than the one way that God has provided for mankind to be identified with him.

Without the shedding of the blood, without a sacrifice, there can't be any forgiveness of sin. And no one in their sin there approach God or come into his presence, because if you do, you are a dead man. Those that come into the presence of God and stand in his holy presence must stand with all of their sins forgiven.

There must not be one iota of defilement about that person that stands in the presence of God, lest he suffer the judgment and the wrath of God. But people today brazenly and openly disregarding all of that, dare to say that they will stand in the presence of God, they even speak like this. If I'm asked the question, why are you here? Why are you in the presence of God? I'm going to say I was always a good person.

I always tried to do the right thing. I tried to be a good neighbor. I joined the church.

Any church. I was sincere. I can tell you, and sadly so, because it's so disappointing to think that someone would be so foolish in the light of what has been provided in the word of God.

As far as truth and instruction is concerned, you're a dead man if you stand in the presence of God. Because you're dead in trespasses and sin. You need to be born again.

You need to have spiritual life. You need to have the value of that one sacrifice of sin put to your account. Do you know when you do that, when you make that decision and when you take that step, you become as pure and righteous and sinless as the Son of God himself in the presence of God.

Oh, you're still living in this life and in this flesh. You still have defilement. But we're talking about as far as accepting the value of a sacrifice that would forever clear you from experiencing that penalty upon sin.

Because Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has already paid that penalty. And we're in Christ. And positionally speaking, we're accepted in the Beloved.

The beautiful hymn in the Beloved to be accepted. Peter learned what it meant to be accepted in the Beloved Person of the Son of God. There's a challenge that goes out.

Change is supposed to take place in our lives once that has been experienced. Some people say, I'm saved and that's all I want. I just want to be saved.

You have no desire to serve. You have no desire to worship and praise God. You have no desire for fellowship.

What's wrong with you? We are new creations in Christ Jesus. For a child of God to say, I don't desire any fellowship. I don't desire to pray.

I don't desire to have a relationship with God in the person of the Lord Jesus is truly meaningful. That's a strange, strange way to even think about this great salvation. When we accept Christ, we become a new creation.

Indwelt by the Spirit of God as lively or living stones, as Peter points out. We become a part of the true church, the body of Christ. Oh, there are many, many, many fellowships of believers across the face of the earth, but there's only one church and it is the body of Christ.

And he is the head of that church. Call yourself by any name you want to, but I think it's best just to be satisfied. I'm a Christian.

I'm a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm not demeaning you calling yourself something else by being a part of some other fellowship. If that's happy with you, I'm happy with it.

But Jesus paid it all. And all to him I owe the precious, precious blood of the Son of God. With all of my sin and the judgment that it deserved, he paid the price before God and made me fit for the presence of God.

And I praise and worship him because he is the one that has provided salvation for our souls. And none other, don't give your loyalty to anything else on the face of this earth other than the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul says he must have the preeminent place.

Beloved believer in our Lord Jesus Christ, give him first place in your life. Let him be enthroned in your heart. You're going to run into things in this life that can be devastating.

But honor him. Honor him, the Son of God. After all, he suffered judgment and wrath that was meted out from the sovereign, holy hand of God his Father upon sin and its penalty.

God laid on him the iniquity of us all. How often we hear that. Think of all of the millions, as we were reminded, around the world today that are still in sin's darkness.

They are blind spiritually. They don't know. They've never tasted of the goodness of God in salvation.

They've never heard the gospel. I'm so thankful that here in this land we live, the gospel of Jesus Christ is still being proclaimed. Or you can hear it any time, day or night, that you'd like to hear it.

Turn your radio on. Bible broadcasting network. You can hear the gospel any time, any hour, day or night.

And there are many platforms today in which this message is going forth. God loves you. Christ died for you.

And you as a poor son, all you've got to do is accept that and be saved. Isn't that simple? Isn't that so simple? But men stumble over it. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

You would have thought the Israelites, you would have thought the Jews, looking forward to the coming of their Messiah, would have been away and embraced and accepted him. Some did. But as a whole, all of

those Pharisees, all of those leaders among the people of God rejected the Son of God.

And it grieves his heart. And it grieves his heart that you as a poor sinner and me as a poor sinner, any part of our lives were ever lived rejecting him. Thank God.

Thank God, the Spirit of God, through the truth, awakened us to our miserable state and our unacceptance for the presence of God and provided a Savior for us. And today he's in our hearts, he's in our lives. And we're looking forward to his return.

And one day we're going to be with him and be like him for all eternity. I don't know how much Peter ever experienced in his own life, some of the things that he calls to our attention in this passage. But it's not very complimentary to think that any one of us could do any of this, wherefore laying aside all malice.

How in the world could a child of God, one that is made clean and acceptable for the very presence of God, how could he ever give place to malice in his life? You know, that's the active intent to harm someone else. I want to hurt that person. I want to hurt somebody.

So you maliciously do something. Can you envision a man that says, I'm a Christian, I'm a born again child of God, wanting to do something like that? Malice! Wherefore lay aside malice. Man, don't let that be a part of your life.

That's the works of the flesh. That's that old Adamic nature that is within you and me that wants to raise its ugly head and it wants to act from another part of our being that we would to God. It didn't any longer exist in any one of us.

Lay aside malice. Oh, guile. Guile is something that is evil, something that is deceitful.

Have you ever deceived someone? You have to lie to do it. You have to lie to deceive someone. And yet there are those that would prove guile, something so evil, something so deceitful.

Our Lord never, never entertained anything like this in his own life. And every believer is to be Christ-like. No malice.

No guile. Hypocrisy. You know what a hypocrite is? It's someone that puts on a mask.

That's what hypocrisy is all about. You mask your true feelings toward someone else. What you really have in your heart toward them is malice and so many other things.

There's bitterness and there's hatred, but you put on a mask and you smile and you pretend that everything is okay. Not okay. I tell you something that should frighten us when we even want to think about playing the hypocrite is, God knows all about it.

He knows your heart. He knows what's in your little mind. And if you are a deceiver and if you have malice in your heart and you're a hypocrite, God knows all about it.

Envy. To be envious of someone. Envy.

Have you looked at someone that was very successful and been jealous of them? Peer pressure today among young people makes them do some bad things. Because they want to be popular and they want to be accepted. Adults do the same thing.

On a big scale, you want something better than the neighbor has. Better car, better home, better job, better security, all like that. I deserve it.

I deserve it. He doesn't deserve that. But envy.

Being envious of anyone. Our Lord never envied anybody. He came into the world seeking to save that which was lost.

Man, He addressed the basic needs of mankind. He got to the bottom of things. You know, our true condition of being lost and without God was so important that all these other things just faded into insignificance.

And as I'm pointing out this morning and reminding you of where we came from, our souls have been purified. We've been made in a state and condition before God of being acceptable by virtue of what He did. We ought to spend the rest of our lives praising and worshiping God for what He's done for us and honoring the person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So often that's not true. And he adds, and evil speakings. You know, sometimes I like to talk to people who just got saved.

Newborn ones. It's not like talking to some of those that have been saved so long that they've gotten used to it. You got used to being saved? Man, what's wrong with us? I was dead in trespasses and sin and now I'm alive unto God through faith in Jesus Christ and He lives in my heart.

And I'm indwelt and empowered by the Spirit of God and I get used to that? Something wrong with me. Not supposed to get used to it. And newborn babes in Christ, they're excited about being saved.

My sins are forgiven. They don't know what hypocrisy is. They don't want to practice any guile.

They're not envious of anybody. I'm saved. Saved by the grace of God.

You know we need a good dose of that. You need to get excited about being saved and on your way to heaven and all your sins forgiven. And you're going to be in the presence of God for all eternity with acting like little children that don't know any better.

That's shameful behavior. And I think Peter knew that. For that to be said about a believer, and yet that's what Peter said.

He must have had some experiences in that area. Don't you think he had? He has met some people like that. I'm not blaming him.

I'm telling you, I think the Lord really did a work in saving his soul. You can't grow by feeding your soul upon the things of this world and all of the fanciful things that will come into your mind and heart. Do not be conformed to the ways of this world.

It will rob you of the joy of your salvation. It will reduce you back down to what you were in your sins as far as the flesh is concerned. And you'll be miserable.

And God forbid that a child of God would go back to being what they were in the world. We're strangers and pilgrims down here in this world. We're in the family of God.

We're children of God. We're on our way to heaven. We're too busy living and doing what we want to do.

And he commissioned us to go out into all the world. My brother stopped out here the other day. He said, where do you see the mission field? I said, anywhere you want to look is the mission field.

A man tells me at the back of this chapel, I want to be an evangelist. I want to evangelize. Where should I start? Right outside that door.

Go out there and evangelize. Go out and tell the whole world that God loves us. And that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for us.

You say that's all there is to it? That's all there is to it. He that hath the Son hath life. He that hath not the Son of God doesn't have life.

I mean, quit muddying up the water. All the courses on evangelism around the world won't help you unless you have a desire in your heart. We're just beggars.

We're men that are starving and we found some bread and we're telling other men and women how to find it. That's what it's all about. That's what it's all about.

God loved us and the Lord Jesus died for us. Peter knew that. I like to find new believers.

They're excited. They're excited about being saved. They don't have any malice in their heart.

They don't have any of these things. The evil fruits of the old nature, they're not thinking about that and they're not responding about that. We're born into an entirely new world.

What would you think of someone that, and you know what leprosy, if you read the scriptures, you know what the conditions were like for a person that was a leper. The garments that he had on, all of these ulcers, all of these loathsome things that were a part of his body, so defiled that everywhere he went he had to put up his hand and say, I'm clean, I'm clean. Don't come close to me.

I'll defile you. Do you remember one day the Lord Jesus healed ten lepers? Ten lepers. Ten people in that condition.

It would be horrible to be in that condition. It would be wonderful to be healed of that condition. Do you think a person that had just been healed would remember where he took off those old garments, those stinking, filthy garments that he had worn as a leper and say, I'm going to put these back on.

They are very comfortable. Can you envision somebody doing that, that was a leper? There ain't no way in your imagination, your mind, you can't reconcile that. Why would a child of God, a child of God, now alive unto God, a new creature in Christ Jesus, cleansed from all of his defilement, his leprosy, the sin has been taken care of.

Why would he ever want to go back and become a part of a world that everything in this world is geared to being under the judgment and the wrath of God. It groans under that oppressive weight of God's judgment and wrath that is to fall upon it. And we re-identify ourselves with that world and all the things that are so attractive and pleasurable in that world.

Why is it we do that? It happens, though. It's not very popular to talk about it. There's anger, there's deceit, there's slander, all of these things that are so unbecoming to a believer in our Lord Jesus Christ.

And yet it happens among God's people. Oh, to know the word of God. Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God.

We're living stones. Our Lord is that chief cornerstone. You've heard the story of the building of the temple, that glorious temple, and all of those stones, they were cut out and quarried where they were quarried, where they were cut out of the stone.

Every one was measured so that there would not be the sound of hammer or chisel in the erection of that beautiful temple. There's something significant about that. Not a sound, quietly, stonemasons just sitting those stones in their proper place.

But there was one stone there they couldn't find where it sitted. You know what the problem is today in the lives of so many? Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone. It is said that the Masons looked at this and looked at it and couldn't find where it was supposed to go.

They rejected it. We can't use that. Isn't that what the world has done to Jesus Christ, the Son of God? What those Masons did, what the Israelites did, people are still doing it.

I don't want Him, the Son of God. I don't want that foundation stone of the church, the body of Jesus Christ. I don't want Him.

And He's rejected. And that stone that they are offended by is the one that loves them and died for them and provided salvation for their souls. God's people should be living stones.

We're a part of a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. You ever thought about what it means to be holy? The Word of God says, Be holy, for I am holy. Being holy means that you separate yourself from all that is defiling here in this life.

Or you've been cleansed from the penalty of your sin. You are fit for the presence of God. But down here, we need to get down to the business of being clean and pure and holy in this world we live in.

When you do that, Peter makes mention here of God's people are a peculiar people. We're not peculiar enough, I'll tell you that. There's too much of the world that has invaded our fellowships and our own personal lives, and we enjoy it.

We find pleasure in doing things that are of the flesh rather than that which is of the Spirit of God that would have us to bear that fruit of love and joy and peace. Peter's just telling us that it's easy to get off track. I've been off track lately.

Do you perhaps imagine in your mind some way right now that maybe I'm a little off track, a little off track, and I want to get back on track. All you've got to do is what a man by the name of John, and he wrote enough about it to convince us it's true, and most of us have experienced it. I trust that every person in this room, as a believer, you avail yourself of what he said.

Brother, we're not talking about salvation. We're talking about being pure and holy and fit for God's use. The chief end of man is to glorify God.

He says, confess your sin. Confess your sin. Not to me.

Not to your fellow believer. Confess your sin to God. He is faithful and just, and he will forgive you of your sin.

That defilement that Peter is talking about, that's robbing you of your joy in the Lord and making us, as believers, a subject of ridicule in the world that we live today. Little wonder. Little wonder that there's not enough of that recognition that we are a peculiar people.

It doesn't mean eccentric. It means we're different. It means we're holy, and we recognize it, and we want to live that way for the glory of God.

That's what it's all about. Our gracious Heavenly Father, as we bow this morning in thy presence, message that has been said before us. Peter, our dear brother Peter, the man that knew what it meant to fall and to be weak and to need mercy and grace and help, learned how to confess and forsake his sin.

He's left us with a message, Lord. Grant, we pray thee, that everyone in this room this morning has by faith bowed to me and confessed I'm a poor sinner.

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