



SEQUIM COMMUNITY CHURCH

EPHESIANS

SESSION 3A: THE WAY OF SALVATION: DEATH TO LIFE

Ephesians 2:1-10

"Exploring the new life and new society God has created through Jesus"

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Ice Breaker: Talk about one of the best gifts (birthday, Christmas, or out of the blue) you have ever received. What made it so exceptional? _____

In the next two lessons we will explore one of the most famous passages of the Bible. Here we have an outline of what happens spiritually when a person is saved and initiated into the family of God. Getting a firm grasp of this process is extremely valuable when it comes to sharing our faith with others, as well as understanding how God moves us from death to life.

Ephesians 2:8 is the rallying point, which says "by grace you have been saved", and from this verse comes the conviction that salvation is a free gift that cannot be earned by good works.

These ten verses make up the foundation for understanding the way of salvation, and they can be broken into three sections.

I. SPIRITUALLY DEAD

"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." -- Ephesians 2:1-3

"Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear." – Isaiah 59:1-2

1. What are the effects of being dead in transgressions and sins? _____

In Ephesians 2:2-3 Paul states we were under the control of three things in our old life of spiritual separation.

- The ways of the world (cultural values and goals which are opposed to God)
- The ruler of the kingdom of the air (the devil)
- The cravings, desires and thoughts of our sinful nature (literally the "flesh")

Let's look more in depth at each of these:

The ways of the world (cultural values and goals which are opposed to God)

"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world-- the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does-- comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever." -- 1 John 2:15-17

2. Where does the course of this world take us? _____

• What about the world was (or is) particularly attractive to you? _____

The ruler of the kingdom of the air (the devil)

"The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." -- 2 Corinthians 4:4

"Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." -- 1 Peter 5:8

3. What does the devil do to people? _____

Have you ever sensed his spirit at work, either disturbing you or deceiving another person? _____

Jesus said to those who were doubting him:

"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." -- John 8:44

4. Sometimes the devil tries to plant lies in our thoughts. Have you ever identified one of his lies? _____

The cravings, desires and thoughts of our sinful nature (literally the "flesh")

"For the sinful nature (flesh) desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature (flesh). They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. The acts of the sinful nature (flesh) are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God." -- Galatians 5:17-21

5. Why do these "acts of the sinful nature (flesh)" keep a person from inheriting the kingdom of God? _____

• Why do you think God hates these behaviors so much? _____

Because of these three types of bondages and the lack of truth in our lives, Ephesians 2:3 says we were "by nature, children of wrath." We were spiritually dead, with the part of us with the capacity to connect with God completely shut down.

Praying for one another

My prayer is that this study has led you into new insights about the wonder of God's salvation and helped you to formulate your testimony (your story of God's grace in your life) in a more succinct and practical way. God's word keeps pointing us back to deeper truth if we take the time to explore it. Pray for each other and for more opportunities to share this powerful and wonderful news with those who don't understand it yet. By doing so, you'll be participating in the good works God has prepared for his church to do.