

“But Now...”

September 30, 2018

Ephesians 2:8-13

CORE: (Key phrase in Ephesians 2:1-7 is “but God...”) **Key phrase in this passage is “BUT NOW...” To make a difference in the world around us—we must embrace the radical difference that has taken place in the life of every believer!**

“NOW”- *at this very moment—fully present to*

(NOTE: For every believer—**LATER is GREATER** (*i.e.*, “*face to face; fully knowing*”)

BUT NOW is WOW!!!)

1. (No longer powerless) A NEW LIFE-SOURCE (v. 8-9)

Living “*by (His) grace...through faith*” is not only foundational to entering His kingdom—it is foundational to living in His kingdom!

(NOTE: Salvation by works (**self-reliance and self-righteousness**) is a universal heresy—found in every form of religion.)

As amazing as God’s Law is—on our own we can’t meet its requirements.

- **The Law of the Lord is “*perfect*” (*Psalms 19:7*)—and we’re not!**
- **The Law is “*powerless to save us*” (*Romans 8:3*)—because of “*the weakness of our sinful nature.*” [*“Not from yourselves” & “not of works.”*]**
- **However, the Law included a system of sacrifices—a constant reminder that we can’t save ourselves—the Law was “*only a shadow of the good things to come; the reality is found in Jesus.*” (*Colossians 2:17*)**

“Grace” is God’s supernatural empowerment that “saves” us (*sozo*):

- **To release from all captivity**
- **To heal from every infirmity (dis-ease)**
- **To completely restore all that was lost; To keep safe**

“Works” says: “*I’ll fix it. I’ll make up for it. I’ll try harder I quit!*”

“Grace” says: “*What’s impossible with men is possible with God. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. His power is perfected in my weakness! I will work OUT my salvation (not work FOR it)—because God is at work in me, empowering me to do what pleases Him!*”

2. (No longer worthless) A NEW IDENTITY (v. 10)

“Workmanship”- (poema) “*planned and carefully overseen as we are uniquely created—with purpose; nothing accidental or haphazard*”

- **Only used one other time in Romans 1:20 to describe the creation of the natural world**

“Created”- “to completely transform; make a radical change”

- **“Created in Christ”—His personal involvement (as in Gen. 1/Jn.1)**
- **“FOR good works” not “BY them”**
- **“Good works”—“productive accomplishments—brought to completion”**
- **“Good works” are the fruit—never the root of our salvation (sozo).**

3. (No longer “far away”) A NEW PROXIMITY (v. 12-13)

“Near”- “in the same place; at the same time; full access to”

(Lit.- “to squeeze a bulb and throttle a lamp—keep it shining)

“Without hope and without God in the world”—describes worst condition to live in!

“BUT NOW”— much more than forgiveness alone—we receive Jesus Himself!

- **We receive Jesus—Who now “lives in our hearts by faith” (Ephesians 3:17)**
- **We join Jesus in the “place” He made for us—that where He is we are also (John 14:3) in the constant embrace of Father (John 1:18)**
- **“The love You (the Father) have for Me may be in them” (John 17:26)**

CLOSING

“We get saved by believing in Jesus. We get free by believing like Jesus” –Steve Backlund

- **“Hold fast to your confession of hope—without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.” (Hebrews 10:23)**
- **Like a coach at halftime, speak to every feeling of defeat, failure, and weariness in your soul (Psalm 103)**

For all who are in Christ, later is greater—but now is wow!