

**Ephesians – Part 2**  
**An Inside Look**  
**Mess to Masterpiece**  
**Eph 2:1-3**

Turn your Bibles with me to Ephesians, Chapter 2. We're going to be talking about a mess to a masterpiece.

We're going to look at first, what is the mess?

What describes a person who's life is in a mess and they're without Christ, they're without God, and too many times it's too easy for us to become judgmental, to forget where we once were, and where Christ has delivered us and to look back at people that are still living their life of sin, and we point our little spiritual finger at them and say, "You're a sinner and you need to get right with God."

And we're not very compassionate and we really don't show them the love of God ... we more convey guilt and condemnation than really loving them.

So Verses 1 through 3 describes the mess to us. It says:

**The first thing that we see there that defines a person's life who is a mess is someone who is dominated by sin.**

It says, "For you were dead in your transgressions and sins." How many of you know this?

A dead person doesn't care what you do to them?

A dead person doesn't move.

A dead person doesn't care ... they're not concerned about getting a little dirt on them, in fact, we bury them in dirt and they're good with it.

And a person who is buried in sin, they're not moving, they're not trying to get out of it, that is their lifestyle, that is where they're at, that is where they're comfortable.

The word "transgressions" or "trespasses" is a way of describing some translation ... a better description there would be "blunders."

And it refers more to our unknown sins.

Our transgressions are unknown sins.

And then the word "sin" in the Greek is "hamartia" and it represents our known sin ... when we know that this is wrong and disobey and go in opposition.

And so to sin means to miss the mark, or to fall short.

**Romans 3:23** says that all of us have sinned and all of us have fallen short of the glory of God.

We haven't fulfilled, we've missed the mark. And we came up short.

And the reason that these people that are without Christ, they're spiritually dead.

Not because they sin, but because it's part of their nature.

You see, a person who lies, a person who tells a lie doesn't become a liar when he tells a lie ... he was a liar ... that's what his nature was, therefore he produces lies.

A person who steals isn't called a thief when they steal, they were a thief, and therefore that produced that action in their life.

The same way committing sinful acts does not make a person a sinner.

What makes a person a sinner is when we commit a part of our nature.

And it's because we're a sinner, therefore we commit sin. Is that making sense?

So our first area of our mess is we're in our sin and transgressions ... we're buried there.

**Secondly, we're dominated by the world.**

So then what you used to live, you followed the ways of this world.

And too many times we get so concerned about what the world says ... about what the world thinks ... about what the news is saying.

It says in **James 4:4**: Don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God. A friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

**1st John 2:15**: Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

And **Romans 12:2** says: Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our mind. You see?

We become too dominated by the world's ways.

**Philippians 3:20** says, "Our citizenship is in Heaven."

We're said that we are ambassadors for Christ.

An ambassador from the U.S. that lives in Brazil lives as a representation of the U.S.

He doesn't live in the way the Brazilians live ... he lives in an embassy according to the way that the United States citizens live.

We are citizens of Christ.

Our citizenship is not here in this world ... we are literally foreigners on this planet.

And our citizenship is in Christ.

Let's keep reading. "In which the ways you used to live you followed the ways of this world and you followed the ways of the ruler of the kingdom of the heir, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient."

### The third picture of a mess are those who are dominated by Satan.

Your following the ways that he has for you.

Now, the common sinner says, "I live my own life. I do as I wanna do. And I live the way I wanna live.

No one's my boss. No one controls me."

And in reality, they're dominated, they're controlled, they're influenced, and they're a puppet of the powers of darkness and the spiritual principalities in high places.

They are his puppeteer. They are following the plan of death and darkness that he has ordained for them.

2nd Corinthians 4:4 ... Satan is referred to as the god of this world.

Jesus referred to him in John 12 as the prince of this world.

Sinners are citizens of Satan's world.

We aren't citizens of this world, we're citizens of Heaven, and we rule and reign with Christ.

**Ephesians 6:12** says, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and against powers and rulers of darkness of this world against the spiritual wickedness in high places."

There are real demonic forces that are going on.

But wait a second. We're believers! We've been adopted like we talked about last week.

We're adopted in the family of God.

Jesus said, "Use my name. In my name you'll cast out demons. You'll speak in new tongues. If there's anything deadly or poison, it will not harm you. In my name!!! You lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. In my name you have authority to cast out demons."

I'm not scared ...

So here's what we need to know.

We need to realize that the believer is not righteous because he does righteous acts ... he does righteous acts because he is righteous.

The problem is not a person's outward actions; it's the nature of their heart.

A sinner sins because that's his heart nature.

And one of the things that we try and do as a church and as Christians ... not this church ... other churches!

Not this church! We point our finger at sinners and we try and get them to stop, don't do that.

They're not going to stop that until they've met the resurrection power of Jesus Christ and the old has become new and they become a new person in Christ.

Then, life transformation is easy.

But we wanna try and skin the fish before we get it in the boat!

We've gotta be clean ... Hey, come, dirty, stained in sin, but come and let Jesus change your nature and your heart.

### Our fourth area is to be dominated by the flesh. Dominated by the flesh. Gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts.

That carnal nature that we were all born with ... that says, "Me, myself, and I. I want more money. I want more power."

That flesh carnal nature that wants to sin, that wants to do wrong, that wants to disrespect, that wants to cheat, that wants to steal ... we have to fight that.

Now of these four areas, here's what I ask you.

When you stand in front of the spiritual mirror, do you look more like Christ, or more like the world?

Do you take on this picture of a mess ... one, or two, or three of these attributes?

Or are you going to take on the picture of a masterpiece?

Well when Jesus comes into the life of a mess, it transforms things and it turns things around.

So what's the picture of a masterpiece?

Let's look at Verses 4-10 now. And I want us to jump ahead to Verse 10 and let's read what Verse 10 says. It says, "For we are God's handiwork." Other translations say "workmanship." "Created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do."

The word 'handiwork' or 'workmanship' there is poema.

It's a Greek word. And what that word literally means ... it's where we get our English word poem.

But it's much more than we are created to be God's poem ... it represents and indicates a work of art or a masterpiece.

That God has designed and created ... that we would be His handiwork.

Created in Christ Jesus to do good works ... now follow me. Watch this.

\*\*\*We aren't made righteous because we do good. We do good because we are righteous.

It's part of our nature. Are you following me? We don't do righteous works because, "Oh, God, I wanna live right for You so that You'll accept me."

We do righteous works because it's part of our nature, it's part of our citizenship, it's part of who we are.

So I want us to look at what is the picture of the masterpiece? Verse 4: "But because of His great love for us." Everybody say "but." BUT ... because of God's love for us. Because of that love. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.

The first picture of a masterpiece is the gift of unconditional love.

Not conditional. Not with parameters and boundaries. Unconditional. Unlimitless.

God gave His love to us. And here's what I enjoy ... is that God loved us when we were unlovable.

Whenever we're like, "I don't like them. They're just ornery, mean, nasty," I mean every name in the book ... God says, "I love him. I love her. I want them in my family."

Secondly, it says, "But God who is rich in mercy." God, who is rich in mercy. Our second picture of a masterpiece is the investment of mercy. It's an investment of mercy.

I looked up the word 'rich.' I wanted to know what the word 'rich' meant and 'rich' is close, but if you could understand the Greek meaning here, it literally means 'filthy rich.' Like to be excessively rich.

Not just rich. It says that, "God is rich." Filthy, excessively rich in mercy.

The Greek word is 'plousios' which means filthy rich.

Pluto, the god of wealth in Greek mythology ... that's where that name comes from.

The most modern day English word is a 'plutocrat' which is defined as someone who is rich and he has influence over people.

His wealth causes influence over people.

\*\*Now look at this: God is rich in mercy. What is it saying?

God wants to use His wealth of mercy to influence us to receive His love. I like that! I like that!

It says because of His great love for us, God who is rich in mercy made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions.

It is by grace you have been saved.

And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in Heavenly realms in Christ Jesus in order that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of His grace, express in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Now people say, "God's mean, God's ugly." **You're not reading the same Bible I'm reading.**

Look what it says in Verse 8: For it is by grace you have been saved through faith and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works so that no one can boast.

Thirdly, a picture of a masterpiece is the deposit of grace and faith. You see, God gives us the faith.

Grace is God reaching out to us, our faith is us reaching back to God ... but He gives us the faith to reach out to accept His grace. It's all His gift!

It's God's unearned, undeserved, and unmerited favor. It's God's love in action. God's riches at Christ's expense.

\*We don't get what we deserve ... we get what God wants us to have.

What is God's grace?

It is based upon His performance, not ours.

It's upon what Christ accomplished, not us.

What's the difference between God's grace and His mercy?

He's rich in His mercy but it's by grace we've been saved.

Mercy forgave me of the debt.

Grace said, "We wanna go above and beyond just because I wanna bless you, I wanna give to you, I wanna invest in your life."

**Romans 3:23** says, "The righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Look at Verse 24 ... "And are justified freely, free of charge, by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

The word 'justified' ... hard Bible word. **Simple definition: to declare free of blame, absolved, or to pardon. To be free of guilt and penalty attached to a grievous sin.** And this is one I learned in Bible College 30 years ago: Justified ... **just as if I'd never sinned.** We've been justified.

And lastly, the last piece of our masterpiece ... for as by grace you have been saved. Saved. **The birth of a sozo life. Everybody say "sozo."** [SOZO]

You just learned Greek. That's the only word I can pronounce.

Sozo ... the word 'saved' means sozo.

For it is by grace you have been sozo'd.

The word 'sozo' means to save, heal, and deliver.

If you combine that with the word "soteria" which is the Greek for salvation, ... here's what happens when a person changes their nature and gives their heart and life to Christ ... **to be saved means to be saved, healed, delivered, preserved, protected, to make prosperous, and to make whole.**

Folks, that is good news!

When you get adopted into the family, God saves you ... He sozo's you ... and you are healed, delivered, saved, preserved, protected, made prosperous, and made whole.

It's not, "I got my ticket here somewhere. Oh, here's my ticket. I got my ticket. There's my ticket. I got a ticket to Heaven!

And in a couple decades when I die and get off of this miserable planet ... they'll be no more sorrow, no more tears in Heaven ... there'll be streets of gold, God Bless.

But right now ... I'm suffering."

Wait a second. Where is our citizenship? It's in Heaven.

Who's ambassadors are we? Christ's.

God wants us to live the saved life now, not just when we get to Heaven.

What did Jesus pray? Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.

Is there sickness in Heaven? Is there poverty in Heaven? Is there pain and sorrow in Heaven?

God wants you to live Heaven on Earth right now as citizens of Heaven. Amen?

**Romans 10:9** says: "If you'll confess with your mouth and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

It means sozo. To get the whole package.

Healing. Matthew 9:22: Jesus turning to see her, He said, "Daughter take courage ... your faith has been made sozo (your faith has made you well) and at once the woman was made sozo."

She was healed.

Sozo isn't just being saved from hell, sozo is the whole package.

Look at **Luke 8:36**: "In those who had seen it reported to them how the man who was possessed. Had been made sozo'd.

The man was set free from the powers of darkness.

Healing, salvation, and **deliverance.**

A picture of a masterpiece?

Unconditional love, an investment of mercy, deposit of grace and faith, and the birth of a sozo life.

Which leads us ... **live the like the masterpiece you are** and don't go back to the mess that God has delivered you from.

**We aren't made righteous because we do good. We do good because we are righteous!**

**Galatians, 5:1:** "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm then and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yolk of slavery."

**Galatians 5:1 - NLT**

Would you close your Bibles? I want to read a Scripture to you and I want you to listen to it. In fact, I just want you to close your eyes while I read this. I want you to hear these words that God is speaking to us as his people.

Romans 10:8-13 ... here is what God wants us to hear and here's how He wants us to live:

The word is near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart.

That's the word of faith we are proclaiming. That if you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved ... sozo'd.

For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified ... just as if I had never sinned ... and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved, healed, and delivered.

As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame, for there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him.

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Amen.