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Here we go. Okay, welcome back. This is our Thursday night session of our series in Revelation.

We have moved from Revelations 3 into a review of Ephesians so that we can actually have an absolute knowledge about Jesus Christ, because before we get into Chapter 4 of Revelation and talking about the rapture, we need to make sure that the condition of our life has set us up to be able to be included in that rapture, or we're going to go into the tribulation if we're still alive, or even if that, if we're not alive, we need to determine whether or not our eternal life is in heaven or hell focus. So we're into Ephesians. We have completed Chapter 1 that deals with God's plan before the foundation of the world.

We're into Chapter 2, and we're taking our time in Chapter 2. And this is our second lesson in Chapter 2, verse 1 to 10. We looked at last week the first viewpoint of that portion of Scripture in looking at coming alive in Christ, basically, as a salvation process that we focused on last time. While those same six points that we covered last time will be a continuation of points in this discussion tonight, we're taking a different viewpoint.

We're taking a viewpoint tonight about the gospel of grace, okay? It's the focal point of why salvation is given to us, but it's the focal point is given to us in a very different frame of reference as it relates to the Scripture, okay? And the Scripture, we're calling this gospel grace death to life. In other words, you're dead in sin when you're born. We're going to get to that again.

And you come to life through salvation, but it's through the gospel that you do that. And why is that important? Because the gospel ties into your commission. So we need to look at this and how it relates to our commission as Christians in this physical life experience.

So I want you to go back to Chapter 2, and it's going to take me a hot minute, as my wife says. It's going to take me a hot minute to get to that Scripture because I'm going to lay some foundation here, all right? But you guys have always heard me talk about the detail level of studying that I like to do. Well, I do that because God says you can't live by bread alone.

You got to live by each word out of the mouth of God. So what I try to do is I try to study every word in the Scripture that I'm studying. What does that mean? How does it apply? What's the root of that? Where does it go? So in other words, I try to bring to life words in Scripture for you guys.

Now, so I'm sort of like rescuing words that basically have been taken astray and stolen away from the biblical intent and used for all kinds of other things. Remember, we're dealing in a law of duality. So Satan is going to use the same words to his benefit, and he's going to try to confuse us as to what the world is telling us, because if they can do that, then he can keep us away from the will of God.

So in gospel is one of those words, okay, in caption. Gospel is perhaps the most treasured term in the New Testament, and certainly in the hearts of all who have been saved because we're saved by the gospel of Jesus Christ, 1 Corinthians 15, 1 through 3. So it is the jewel of theology because the gospel is the message that provides the only way of salvation, and forgiveness of sin, escape from hell, and a life eternal in heaven. So obviously there will be efforts, and there have been efforts through time, to confuse the gospel, okay, in itself, to subtract from the gospel or to add to it.

What Satan wants to do is he does not want you to focus on what the Bible says is what is gospel. He'll do anything else. He'll subtract, he'll add, he'll change, he'll do whatever else to confuse it.

So the gospel is an assault as anything for the obvious reason that it's the singular message that saves sinners. Remember what it says, believe on the gospel, and you're going to be saved. So everything's predicated on what that gospel is.

Back in chapter 1, the Apostle Paul wrote that we as believers have obtained an inheritance. Remember that? That was in about verse 11, 12, and 13, that we have been predestined according to his purpose who works all things after the counsel of his will. To that end, verse 12 says we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of his glory.

And then in verse 13, he mentions the gospel. So yes, we have been promised an inheritance. We are an inheritance.

We've been promised inheritance. As in verse 11 says, yes, this was predestined. This was done before the foundation of the world.

Everything in our life, everything in our life was predetermined before we were ever born. So you're living in a life that you're making choices in that you have not probably consulted God about what your predestined state might should be. If you know he's already determined your life and you're chosen, and you know what, he's selected you out of time to not only be saved but be called to do his work, and you've not asked him about that, you're missing out.

Verse 13 marks out the role that the gospel plays. Chapter 1, verse 13, in him, who's him, Christ, you also, after listening to the message of the church, you can't be saved until you listen to the message of the church. That is a foundational point of salvation.

You can't say, oh my gosh, I've never heard the gospel preached in my life, and I woke up one morning, and I was just automatically overwhelmed, and I got saved. Well, that is not biblical. Somewhere in that process, somebody has got to teach you about the gospel.

That's scripture. The gospel of your salvation, having also believed you were sealed in him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of his glory. All the redemptive purposes that God ordained in the past, all that he planned for the future, comes to reality in verse 13 of chapter 1, when you listen to the message of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, and you believe.

The gospel is a message. The gospel is a word from heaven. It is there called the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

Those are parallel statements. The message of truth is the gospel of your salvation. Salvation is dependent upon believing the gospel, which is a true message from God.

In Colossians chapter 1, in verse 5, it says the word of truth, the gospel which has come to you. Again, the word of truth from heaven about the salvation is the message of the gospel. So, as a foundational element of your salvation, as you look at your scorecard individually, is whether or not the time that you have determined of your regenerative, salvational process beginning, you must have heard the word of truth.

If you didn't, and you're today where you're at, thinking it happened then, but now you're hearing it, you need to evaluate your salvation, because this is a fundamental aspect of salvation. In 1 Thessalonians chapter 2, Paul says, we had the boldness to speak to you the gospel of God. In verse 4, he says, entrusted with the gospel, so we speak.

And in verse 9 of that same chapter, we proclaim to you the gospel of God. The gospel is the truth from heaven about salvation to be spoken. Okay? So, if you go into the amazing book of Revelation and look into the future of time of tribulation as judgment unfolds on the earth, in an act of divine love and mercy, we read in Revelation 14 6, this is a vision of what will come in the future.

I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on earth and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people. In the future time of the tribulation, when we get into Revelation, getting back in it, as judgment is unleashed on earth, there will be an angel in heaven preaching the eternal gospel for people who are living in that time to be saved. Because you got to hear the gospel.

So, somebody's got to preach it. The gospel is always a message to be preached. The term gospel is used about a hundred times in the New Testament.

The word itself, egegelion, incorporates the idea of a message, therefore of communication, announcement, preaching, declaration, proclaiming. Egegelion is the message, and eu is the prefix to the word because it makes a reference to something that is good. So, what is the gospel? It's a good message.

It's the good news. Bound up in the web form, is the idea of preaching a good message. Egegelion is the word which we get evangelized or evangelical.

So, you cannot understand the gospel unless you understand it is as something to be communicated first, something to be declared, announced, preached, and proclaimed. And that something is good news. The gospel is called the gospel of God, the gospel of Christ, the gospel of the Son, the gospel of the glory of God, the gospel of peace, the gospel of blessed God, and then in Acts 20-24, the gospel of the grace of God.

So, all along the way in the Bible, when it talks about the gospel, it's talking about salvation. Jesus came preaching the gospel. You see that in Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

He came preaching the gospel. Subject to Jesus were the apostles, and they were told to take the gospel into the world. And so, when you come to the book of Acts, which we're studying as well, it isn't long before they are preaching right away.

Matter of fact, we're getting into that in chapter two in our studies now. By the time you get into a few chapters later in chapter eight, you have Philip preaching the gospel. Remember, Philip was stoned because that was the last time that the Jewish leaders heard the gospel.

Christ was standing at the throne of God, looking down, not sitting. And when Philip got stoned, that's when he set up the roadmap to get Paul. And then you have Peter and John preaching the gospel, and then you have around chapter 12 in the book of Acts, the apostle Paul begins to preach the gospel.

And all of them are preaching, all of them are proclaiming, all of them are declaring the message from heaven that is good news of salvation. You have to hear the gospel to be saved. Now, because the gospel is so essential, because the gospel is necessary, because there is no salvation apart from hearing the gospel, the apostle Paul knows that the gospel will be under attack.

We see that today, no different than today. We saw this last week when we talked about 2 Corinthians 11 in verse three, where Paul talks, I'm afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness or his cunning, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus, whom we have not preached, in other words, an antichrist, an idol, whatever, or you receive a different spirit, which you have not received, or a different gospel, which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.

What we talked about last time was the fact that they allowed that to happen, and they accepted it without challenge. That's bad, guys. Imagine a church willing to bear beautifully another different gospel.

That is such a problem that the apostle Paul came out blazing in the book of Galatians chapter one and six, I am not amazed that you are so quickly deserting him who called you by the grace of Christ for a different gospel, which is really not another, only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we are an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, which is the gospel of salvation, he is to be accursed, damned. He's to be removed.

As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you receive, he is to be accursed or damned. Again, the gospel is something to be preached, taught, and it is so precious that anyone who preaches a different or distorted gospel is cursed. All right, let's stop here.

Remember, Christ is no religion. So look at the religions today. You got the Catholic church that says, oh, you can have, they preach a gospel of grace, but they also say to be saved, you got to have works.

You got to do these things. Oh, let's take it to the Mormon church. You have to do these things to be saved and to continue to be sanctified.

You have to do these things all the time to the point that they govern your lives outside of the church. Let's look at the Methodists. The Methodists have just brought into the church another gospel to allow LBGTQ to be part of the church, even to be preachers in the church.

So all of the religions, I'm going to go back to this, every one of your religions should be evaluated in the baseline of what the doctrine of the Bible says is the gospel, because that's they should be preaching. Not a mankind evaluation or works that you have to do, because that was the doctrine of mankind when they established the church. They're religion order, not church, religion order.

Okay, so you guys, in not only in your self-evaluation towards yourself in looking at this, you need to evaluate any church that you might be affiliated with, because if their doctrine is not the same, you need to move. In Paul's writing to the Corinthians in his first letter, he says this in chapter 1 verse 17, Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, but not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void. You can void the cross with clever speech.

Okay, guys, that's exactly what religion has done. They avoided out the cross of Christ by their church corporate doctrine. You don't do that if you preach the gospel.

In chapter 9 of 1 Corinthians in verse 14, Paul says, so the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living living from the gospel. He was talking about pastors being able to take money from the tithes and live by. He said that was holy, that was divine, that was okay, but Paul rejected that for himself.

Paul came from a very wealthy family, and he says, I do not want to disturb the viewpoint from everybody listening to me. Why? Because he was a murderer before. He didn't want to be seen as somebody to take advantage before and advantage after.

So he says, I am not going to take a penny from that which is raised for the ministry of this of this church, wherever he might be, because I do not want anybody to boast on my behalf. I want to make sure I'm pure and clean. Paul said, look, I'm under compulsion to preach the gospel.

I don't really have a choice. That's the divine compulsion. Later on in 1 Corinthians 15, now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preach to you, which also you receive, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved.

You're only saved when you hear the gospel preached. Boom, in your face, there it is. Okay, so in your self-evaluation, and you're looking back at that time, you need to first say, did I hear the gospel? Okay.

Another passage that I want to direct you to is in Romans chapter 10, and this is a very important, along this line, and I'll give you, we're going to sort of give you this in a wrap-up when I get there, on why I'm going down this specific path on our study tonight. But in Romans chapter 10, verse 13, we read, whosoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved. That's the free offer of salvation.

Whosoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved, Jew or Greek. How then will the call on him in whom they have not believed? How would they believe in him whom they have not heard? And how would they hear without a preacher? In other words, you just can't be in the wilderness of your life and say, oh, I wake up, and I'm just going to be safe today. That is not how Scripture says it happens.

Somebody has got to sit down with you, read the gospel, go over it with you, and then on your belief of that, then you're saved. And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things. Verse 17, faith comes from hearing and hearing by the message concerning Christ.

All of that to make the very important point that you can't preach or teach the gospel without words. It's the words that make the difference. Okay, so now think about your life.

If you're living a closet life of Christianity and you're not out speaking the words of Christ, then you're not living Christianity. Your commission, your and my commission is go forth and tell the world about the gospel. If you live in a closet life, that's not following the commandments, guys.

While I'm belaboring this a little bit, just want to remind you of your commission and your responsibility in mind, which I just did. But I also want you to know that the gospel is being confused today in our world. There was a social justice pastor just a few weeks ago said that we have to say social justice is a gospel issue or people won't take it seriously.

Oh my gosh, that's creating a personal agenda, attaching it to the gospel of the scriptures and identifying that as the basis which people should need to look at. Why? Because if you post it to the gospel of the Bible, people will listen. That is almost blasphemy in scripture.

Look at your politicians. Look at your city council. Look at your health care system.

Look at your school boards. In our national history, there has been devastating ruin of churches and denomination institutions because the gospel was redefined in a social way. We even remember the term social gospel.

That's been out there for a long time. Well, we're back doing it again today. They're doing it on a different note.

They're tying to the gospel that which they want you and their social issue is not spiritual in nature, it's demonic. They have actually changed the viewpoint of the gospel to their gospel of Luciferian. If somebody wants a certain ethical issue to be given prominence, if somebody has a social idea or a moral idea of some ideology, they want to label it as a gospel issue which confuses the gospel.

It dilutes the gospel, adds to the gospel, and this is so unacceptable and it's a real problem. Let me sort of give you a reason why. In a recent survey of Christians, 50 percent of the people surveyed believe that salvation is earned by good works.

Go to half of the world's population in religion and ask them. They're going to tell you it's done by works. Islam's works, Hinduism is works, Buddhism is work, Catholics is work, Mormon church is work, on and on and on.

It's all works. That's 50 percent of professing Christians who believe you earn your salvation by good works. So they're already at a point where they think works are what earns salvation.

That is not scriptural. And if you give them another social agenda and you make it a supposedly gospel issue, you just compound that error. Everything is cumulative in the world.

That's how they work. The survey included the question about who goes to heaven, and the same percentage of people say heaven is for those who earn it by their good works. So when certain behaviors, certain actions are elevated to the level that this is the gospel, the true gospel is confused in the eyes of an already confused professing church.

What are they doing? They're honing you into societal norms, their corruptive agenda, because they're putting your feelings on the line, because they're attaching their agenda to something a part of what you consider to be holy in your church. It's not about any activity. Any social cause, ethical cause, or moral cause.

The gospel nowhere is something you do. It is something you believe. You don't read in the New Testament, do the gospel.

There's not a verse out there that says do the gospel. But what it does says, believe the gospel. Now, if you can't figure out the difference between doing and believing, you need to go back to grade school.

Your life is a testimony. Your life is a testimony of what the gospel has accomplished in your life. But your testimony will not save anyone, particularly your sort of silent testimony where you're just living your life.

What did I say? A closet Christian. You're just living your life in your home and not doing anything external to Christ. You're not going to save anybody.

You got your ticket maybe and ticket to go home, but you're going to have a miserable life in heaven. We already talked about that. The gospel is not a behavior.

You don't do the gospel. You preach and teach the gospel. And just so we know for certain what the gospel is, let's go to our text in Ephesians 2. Now, normally, or not normally, I could probably spend a month just in these first 10 verses over and over and over with different focuses of subject matter to get you to understand the application of these 10 verses in different areas you would like.

But we're not going to do that. I'm going to spend three sessions on this. This is the second one.

We're going to have one more next week. So let's read the first 10 verses of chapter 2. I want to do that for you. Okay.

So in verse 1, it starts, and you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them, we too are formerly lived in the lust of our flesh, indulging in the desires of our flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, nice statement, but God, being rich in his mercies because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our transgression, made us alive together with Christ, by grace you have been saved, and raised us up with him, and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the surpassing riches in his grace and kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace, not by works, for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God, not as a result of works. Right there, it's just, it's out, not as a result of works. You can't be saved by works.

You can't get levels of heaven by works. You can't migrate up in your dimensionality in your spiritual life by works. That's what this says.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God beforehand prepared so that we would walk in them. Now, I want to speak, I want to break that down for you. Twice, verse 7, verse 5, and verse 8, you see the same statement, by grace you have been saved.

End of verse 5, beginning of verse 8, by grace you have been saved. Salvation is by grace. The Reformers taught grace alone.

So did Russia. Why did they make such an issue out of grace alone? Because the Roman Catholic Church teaches salvation by grace, but what they teach is that everyone has a certain deposit of grace. I only give you x amount.

You don't get this abundance that Scripture talks about. You only get this cup. When this cup is gone, you're out of grace.

Well, that's not Scripture. Kind of like pilot lights of grace in them, you know, so that you have the capacity to do what is the right thing, to do what is the righteous thing in bringing about your salvation. The Roman Catholic Church says, yes, we're all enabled by grace.

We've kicked started by grace. The pilot light is lit by grace, but the salvation depends upon works, what you do. And I bet you can look at every church out there and find the same thing, by the way.

We talked about some. We are enabled by grace to some preliminary degree, but the achieving of salvation is a matter of works. Well, that can't possibly be true because verse nine says it's not a result of works.

It couldn't be more explicit than that, other than the fact that you don't want to believe the Scripture. You don't want to take man's responsibility of your corporate doctrine of your church and believe that over what Scripture says. Oh, let me put it another way.

You don't read the Scripture. You allow man to tell you what you want to hear from them and you live your life about that. I tell you what, you're living your life going to hell, not as a result of works.

That's the negative. The positive is back to verse eight. It's the gift of God.

Your salvation is a gift. Nobody can give it to you other than God himself. And prior to that, it's not of yourself.

It's not of yourself. It's not of works. It is the gift of God.

You have nothing to boast in. God made it a situation that he gets the glory of your salvation and you get none. Oh, apply that to the church today.

Apply that to the Roman Catholic church. They promote you to sainthood for doing what? Their works. Mormon church.

Oh, you get x number of wives in heaven by doing all of these good works. It doesn't work that way. You have nothing to boast in.

Christ gets all of the glory for this. You can't say you cooperate with some measure of grace deposited by God and brought about your own salvation of any degree that could allow you to be self-congratulatory. You can't do this.

There is nothing in this world on this earth that will allow you to create your salvation. Nothing. In Titus 3, starting in verse 4, we read, When the kindness of God, our Savior, and his love for mankind appeared, he saved us not on the basis of deeds, deeds are works, which we have done in righteousness, but according to his mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, so that being justified by his grace, saved by his grace, we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Romans 3 says the same thing. So salvation is by grace, and that Reformation term, sola gratia, is absolutely accurate. It is all by grace, fully by grace, and grace alone.

If grace is not all, then grace is not grace. Think about that. If grace is mixed with the law or some kind of works, then grace is not grace.

If it's conditioned upon something that you do, it's not grace. No one can boast in anything without regard to salvation. So that's the foundation of understanding the Gospel.

It is not of works. It is a gift of God. It's by grace under undeserved kindness.

Now with that, as Paul sorts through the thing, he repeats it twice. I want to break down the Gospel here into six parts, the same parts that we looked at last time, but we're looking at it from a different point of view. The Gospel grace has six components.

Remember, salvation is by grace. So when you look at the Gospel of grace, you have the same components of salvation as you do with grace. So it is from sin, by love, into life, through faith, unto good works.

It's a magnificent treatise that Paul gives us. Let's begin where he begins. Gracious salvation is from sin.

Look at the opening three verses of chapter two. And you were dead in your trespasses and sin in which you formerly walked according to the course of the world, according to the principal power of the air of the spirit that is now working in the disobedient. Among them, we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging in the desires of our flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

This establishes the condition of every human being. When you're born in this world, this is how you're born. You're born dead, spiritually dead.

Your spirit is of the devil. You're living in trespasses and scant sins from the get-go. You live for the lust of your flesh, the desires of your flesh and your mind.

You're completely dead to Christ. You're dead spiritually to Christ. All of us were by nature children of wrath.

This is the human condition. We're hardwired for that on birth. We're hardwired that way at birth.

So before you get to the good news of salvation and your regenerative life, remember your whole system changed. You get a new body, your DNA changes, blah, blah, blah. We've already gone through this on salvation.

But you don't have that when you're born. You have to have the bad news first, which is why the good news is so good. Because now you can get out of death and move to life.

Now, this is not to say that people can't do some moral good. There's evil people out there. As a matter of fact, before you guys were saved, I'm quite sure you did some morally good things.

You can look back on your life. Oh, I did this good thing. Oh, I did that good thing.

Oh, that looks good. I did that. You know, pat me on the back.

Society acknowledged me. I did good. They got a trophy for whatever.

Okay. Got my name on a wall or a plaque or on a brick. Someone, you didn't do that for Christ.

You did that for self. So the Apostle Paul in Acts 28.2 gives us an example because he said the native people showed me no small kindness. So even non-believers showed him some kindness when he was shipwrecked.

So there are things that humanity does that are philanthropic and have some element of goodness, but they do not overcome the reality of the following condition of your flesh. And the following condition is defined in verse one as being dead, dead in trespasses and sin. What does dead mean? Let's If you had a corpse here, a dead body, you could hit them.

You could poke them with a pin. You could needle stick them. You could actually hit them with a hammer.

They're not going to respond. They're dead. That's the deadness that you were until you were saved.

That's how you were with Christ. Death is the inability to respond. It has no capacity to respond.

So this is the condition of the whole human race. This is the condition of every government in the world from the beginning of time to today. It's all the same bloodline.

And it's not that they're dead because of their sins and their trespasses. It's they're dead in their trespasses and in their sins. It's a seer in which they exist.

You came into this world dead. It's not because you sinned after you were born and trespassed. It's because you came into this world as sinners and trespassers.

That's the reason why you're dead before you were saved. The condition is a condition of utter deadness. Completely unable to respond to God.

No life in them. Nothing. They have no light.

They're dead. They're dark. They're totally cut off and alienated from the life of God.

If you go to chapter 4, verse 18 in Ephesians, it says, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God. They're dead. They're an alien.

And the deadness means that they're unable to respond to the truth. This is really difficult to deal with. But you got to get your hands on it, guys.

Because this is where either you were or where you are. That's the condition here. Your self-evaluation, your self-evaluation chart that you brought into this study with you need to really take a hold on identifying where you're at.

We're called to preach, teach the gospel, and we're talking to people who can't hear, who can't listen, who can't understand, who can't believe. And we saw that, didn't we, in Isaiah 6. Jesus said repeatedly in his own ministry, hearing they don't hear, seeing they don't see. This is a formidable challenge for us to confront people who have no capacity to hear the truth and believe it.

Oh, let's stop there a moment. If you're dead, you can't hear, you can't see, you can't reason, you have no mind, you have no relationship to the spirit, to God, the spiritual world. And therefore, you have no capacity to understand.

And the people around us who were not Christians, who are not saved, think everything going on in this world is okay. That's the reason why our governments say, I'm going to do this. Why? Because I can get away with it.

And then not only do they have that because of their condition as dead in sin, no capacity to respond to God manifesting itself in trespasses and sin. But secondly, they are walking that is a daily routine of life as according to the course of this world. You are walking every day of your life.

Think about this. You're thinking every day of your life. Your decisions in your everyday life conform to the master of the world.

And who's that? That's Satan. They follow zeitgeist, whatever the trend is, because that's what you look for. As you look at what is society putting out and what is going to be the best for you, and that's where you go.

Whatever the worldview is, whatever is popular. So first of all, they're dead. Secondly, they're therefore subject to whatever's going on in the world around them, and they cannot elevate above it.

They have no capacity to elevate above it. Not only that, the one ruling system around them is the Prince of the Power of the Air, a title for Satan. That's given through the Bible.

So by Scripture, it tells you who's in control of this world. The controller of this world is Satan, guys. And the people who are not saved are dead, and they're living under Satan.

They're living under his guise, and they can't hear. They can't see. They can't understand.

And if you try to put out the gospel to them, they cannot hear it. Why does John tell us, do not conform to this world or love what's in this world? It's just because of this. They can take you back to where you were.

So first of all, they're dead. Secondly, they're therefore subject to whatever's going on in the world around them, and they can't elevate above it. They are given that sort of Hebraic title, Son of Disobedience, because disobedience characterizes them.

How can they be obedient if they don't have any life? How can they be obedient if they're not saved? How can they be obedient if they don't understand the wisdom of the Holy Spirit? Think about it. So here's the big problem. This is what's called total depravity.

You have a condition of absolute deadness. And that deadness engulfs every human soul in a life of trespasses and sin. When you were born in this life, dead, and you trespassed as a sin, your life was to be engulfed with trespasses and sin.

You had no choice. Two different words for violating the law of God. Unrighteousness compound that with the fact that they were subject to the world around them, which is full of lust of flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, as the Apostle John says, and which is under the control of Satan, who operates the system of the world to his own evil ends.

Guys, this is a system. We're living in a simulated system. We've already gone through this.

Everything was predestined before the foundation of the world. Every part of our lives were determined before we were ever born. Now, you have a freedom to elect it or not, but you were chosen in time to be saved and to follow the calling of Christ.

But it's not only around them, okay? Got to think about this. At the end of verse 2, it says he is working in the sons of disobedience. It isn't just that Satan has surrounded them with this world of temptation that ponders to their deadness.

It is that he operates in them, and that is laid out in verse 3. They all live in the lust of our flesh, indulging in the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. Not only are they characterized by disobedience, children of disobedience, they're characterized by wrath. So, the children of wrath, and they're all the same condition.

So, when we are talking about salvation, this is critical, guys. So, when we're talking about salvation, I want to make this clear. We're not talking about the Lord coming to rescue you from the lack of purpose in your life.

We're not talking about the Lord coming to rescue you from unfulfillment in your life, or loneliness in your life, or dissatisfaction of your life, or unhappiness, or hard marriage, or poverty, or abuse, or disappointment, or illness. The gospel that we're talking about here has one and only one focus, to deliver you from your sin. A lot of people go to church, corporate church, want to be affiliated with the church, and want salvation to deliver them from an unhappy whatever.

That is not going to happen. Massive depravity in which everything about you ends up in eternal wrath. You cannot respond to God because you're dead.

You are under the control of the system around you by Satan, and you are driven by desires that are evil. The default position of every human being is wicked. When you're born, you're wicked.

Have you ever gone through the tantrum tantrums of a two or three-year-old? That's wicked, guys. You're born wicked. The reason why you need to take a rod to the rear end is because you need to teach them to get out of the wickedness.

If you allow them to continue that, where in the world are they going to be when they get a teenager? You're going to fear for your life. The default position of every human being is wicked. Why do you think the world is drowning in a sea of pornography today? You don't have to fight to get into that.

That is an alluring seduction that is essential to your own fallen desires. As a believer, you're given power over that. You don't see a culture fighting for evil, do you? Oh, no, you don't.

Fighting to try to be polluted, filthy, or vile, that's not a fight because that's their direction. And if you're not saved, guys, that's your direction. So this is the first reality to understand about the gospel.

We're not rescuing people from abuse. We're not rescuing people for something done to them in this life or some other generation of life. We're not rescuing people from bad marriages.

We're not rescuing people from inequities. We're not rescuing people from poverty. That is not the gospel message.

We're rescuing them from sin at a massive and all-encompassing level. So the gospel is a message, the good news that you can be rescued from sin. Now, what happens when you're rescued from sin? All of the other things begin to what? Be healed.

But your focus can't be on that, or your intentions of salvation is not true. There's a second principle here that's very important. The gospel is not only from sin, which is wonderful, but it's by love, okay? The second part.

Salvation is from sin by love, verse 4, but God, being rich in mercy because of his great love, with which he loved us even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us live together with Christ. So God loves us so much that he gave his only son, so if we believe on him, his gospel, we're safe. Now, this is an amazing reality.

It's the word agape. Agape, however, the most elevated word for love, and it's almost like the Apostle Paul didn't even try to use an adjective to describe this love, because he just said great love, you know, great love, which is far below what it deserves, but God, who is rich in his mercy because of his great love with which he loved us. God loved us, so we see that in John 3.16. So there is another religion that has a God of love.

There is no other religion that has a God of love. Everybody in every other religion, you have to do something to get a reward from the guy. God says, no, that's not happening.

I'm going to give you that, and I'm going to love you with all the mercy and grace that I have. This is the only religion, Christology, whatever you want to call it, followers of Christ. Not a Baptist, not a Methodist, not a Presbyterian, not a Mormon, not a Catholic, no other religion.

This is the only religion, call it a religion, that basically has a God of love. There is no other religion that has a God sacrificing for his people. Think about that.

All demonic, devilish, Satanic religions have people sacrificing for their God or gods. You sacrifice your children, sacrifice whatever, sacrifice living beings, sacrifice animals, sacrifice your wealth, sacrifice your body, sacrifice whatever. The God demands the sacrifice, but the true and living God gives himself as a sacrifice of love.

His love is the greatest love. You say, well, how do you measure the greatness of his love? And you measure it, obviously, because of redemption. You start measuring it because in eternity past, remember, before the foundation of the world, he chose you to redeem you.

That was an act of love. You see, again, his act of love as he demonstrates his love toward his people through redemptive history. And then his love reaches the peak at the cross, does it not, where he places his only son to die in the place of those whom he loves.

The love of God is best measured by death because Jesus said, greater love has no one other than this that a man lay down. What? For the life of his friends. And that's what God did.

There's no such story in any other religion. So salvation, the gospel, is from sin and by love, this great incomprehensible love of God. There's a third reality in verse 5. Salvation is into life.

And we just read it. Even when we were dead in our trespasses, he, Christ, made us alive together, or he, God, made us alive together with Christ. So you were dead and he made you alive.

Because of the riches of his mercy, the greatness of his love, the extensive expression of his grace, he made us alive. And how did he do that? He made us alive together with Christ. So he placed us into Christ.

And Christ, we died. Okay, in Christ we died. And in Christ we rose.

We were dead in our trespasses until he placed us into Christ. When did he place us into Christ? For the foundation of the world. This is an amazing thing.

In eternity past, God knew upon whom he would set his love. He had foreknowledge. And when Christ went to the cross, God placed all the sins of all who would ever believe, though they hadn't even lived.

He knew the path of their sin. He knew the full record of their sin. Our sin, by the way.

And he placed it on Christ and punished Christ for it as if he were, if we were there. And we died. We died.

Okay. Preachers, churches say that we have how many deaths? Two, right? One is this physical death that we will experience, and one is the second death if we go to hell. They don't teach you that your spiritual life has already been died and risen by Christ.

And we died then. And all you can do as a penalty for sin is die. The wages of sin is death.

We read that in various of our teachings. We died. We died in Christ and we rose in him to the newness of life.

That is scripture, guys. We died spiritually just like Christ did, and were risen spiritually just with Christ, as scripture says. So he placed us into Christ, and in Christ we died, and in Christ we rose.

We were dead in our trespasses until he placed us into Christ. This is an amazing thing. In eternity past, God knew upon whom he would set his love.

And when Christ went to the cross, God placed all the sins of all who would ever believe. The union is very important part of Christian understanding. Romans 6 gives us insight into it.

Just a few verses here. Romans 6, we'll start at verse 3. Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ, Christ Jesus, have been baptized into his death? That's just amazing. It's not talking about water baptism, guys.

This is spiritual baptism. We have been immersed. Think of it in a metaphoric sense.

We've been immersed into Christ. We've been immersed into his death. We've been immersed into his burial.

Verse 4, we've been immersed into his resurrection because he was raised from the dead to the glory of his father, so that we too might walk in his newness of life. For if we have become unified with him in the likeness of his death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified in him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin, for he who has died has freed us from sin. We have died with Christ, and now we live in him.

This is amazing. This is an amazing reality of being united to Christ in his death and resurrection, and he said, because I live, you shall live also. That was the vehicle that you took it on.

Salvation is from sin by love into life, and the number four salvation is for glory. Verse 6 and 7, God who loved us, God who placed us into Christ, is the one in verse 6 who raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages, the ages start when you're saved, so in the ages, the ages start when you're saved, to come he might show us the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. This is staggering, guys.

From the gospel side, look at this. This is different than what we viewed at in coming alive in Christ last week. This is from the gospel side.

This is his blessings. Back in chapter 1 verse 20, it says that God raised Christ from the dead and seated him at the right hand in heavenly places. God raised Christ.

Think about this. God raised Christ and seated him at his right hand in heaven, and here it says exactly the same thing about us in chapter 2. He raised us up with him, Christ, and seated us with him, Christ, in the heavenly places in Christ. He is at the right hand of the Father, and so are we.

Think about that. Those of you who are saved, you're already in heaven. Shocker? And you think your prayer life, think about your prayer life if you're in heaven next to him.

Think about that. He's not only intercessory in 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, but he gets to hear from you. Salvation is not about fixing things in this life.

Salvation is about glory in the life to come, and in the meantime, enduring the difficulties of this life and counting it all joy when you have to endure them, because the testing of your faith strengthens this, and because you get his blessings during the course of this life. We were not only to unite to him in his death and unite to him in his burial, as it were, and unite to him in his resurrection, but we are now seated with him in the heavenlies based upon your salvation. It's spoken of as if it already happened, but what God plans, God does, and all we are good as there, we're in glory.

Why? So that he can show the surprising riches of his grace and kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. That is beyond comprehensive. The reason Christ saved you, why? Is to show you kindness.

That's the only reason he saved you. His glory. He wanted to show you kindness.

Oh my gosh, think about the kindness we bestow on him. Why does the Lord want to take you to heaven? So that he can show you eternal kindness. How much grace is that? How much suppressing grace is that? How much suppressing rich grace is that that leads loving God to bring us all redeemed sinners into his presence for the sole purpose of seating us on the throne of his son, making us joint heirs of all that his son possesses, who is most perfectly loved by the father, so that we too can be loved by the father as his as he loves his sons, and therefore forever and ever God will pour out on us the unimaginable eternal kindness.

We're his trophies. He gets to show us off. We're his trophies of his redeeming love.

We're the trophies of his redeeming grace, and the trophy case is the throne of his son, and God will forever pour out indescribably surpassing riches of his grace, and by the way, it's always, it will always be grace, because we will never deserve to be there at all. His grace will be on display, and who will be looking at the trophies, you might ask. He shows us off to the angels.

That's who he shows us off to, because the angels look upon the glory of his saving grace, which is us. Salvation is from sin by love into life or glory. Number five, salvation is through faith.

That gets us to those familiar words in verse 8 and 9, for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourself is a gift of God, not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. Again, saved through faith. Well, is faith a work? Let's answer that question, because basically the scripture says you can't come to salvation by works.

Is faith something that we exercise and therefore apprehend salvation? No, because we just read it's not of ourselves. Verse 8, not of works. Verse 9, so whatever faith is, it isn't from you or me, and it isn't our works.

That'd be a good way to illustrate what faith is, is you're breathing right now, right? Do you have to think about your breathing? If you had to think about your breathing, how long would you breathe? We talked in our session in Acts about God being everywhere and in everything. Think about this. The atmospheric pressure of the atmosphere we live in put pressures on our lungs to force us to breathe.

That's how you breathe. So, if we don't think that this atmosphere is God's presence, something's wrong, because a lot of our normal biological responses that are naturally in tone—heartbeat, think about, heartbeat, breathing—all of your natural capacities that you just think are just, okay, here they are. They're stimulated by the environment.

We're energy. This air we set in is energy. There's atoms all around us, and the direction of those atoms is to compress your chest to the point where you have to breathe in to extend your lungs to get the pressure off.

That's breathing, and that's done by faith. You don't think about it. You just do it.

I know we talked the other night about you live by faith every day of your life, whether or not you open a bottle of Coke, or you open a bottle of water, or you go to McDonald's and get food, or go to a restaurant. You live by whatever they give you, and not think a thing about it. That's faith, guys.

So, what is the gospel? It's the good news of salvation from sin, by love into life or glory, through faith, and finally unto good works. That's verse 10. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.

Created in Christ Jesus means that we were created in the first place. You weren't a part of your creation, or you didn't come in and create yourself, right? You were part of his. God is the creator.

So, we were created like everything else that God creates, making no contribution to our own creation. We're the clay. He's the potter, and scripture says he molded us, and he continues to do what to us? Through sanctification, mold our bodies.

He molds your bodies through the Holy Spirit that you allow to take charge over your bodies through sanctification. You are a working masterpiece, outwardly and inwardly. So, we're really created like everything else that God creates, making no contribution to our own.

But in verse 10, it says for good works. There is where the good works show up. There is where the good works show up.

You're created by God in Christ unto good works. We are his workmanship. We're an ongoing clay of sculpture.

We're getting to be a masterpiece. That master, remember what scripture says. You are on the outside what you project from the inside.

Your mouth is the most deadly weapon out there. So, if you do in your sanctification, allowing the Holy Spirit to take more charge of your life in those areas of your life you're working on, your outward appearance changes. That masterpiece goes to being a true masterpiece of what you're working on.

We are God's masterpiece. We're not finished yet, but we are his masterpiece. What he does with his masterpiece is produce good works, because that's what he prepared beforehand for us to do.

That's what we walk in. Before the foundation of the world, he chose you. He elected you.

He predestined you. He called you. He justified you.

He sanctified you. He's going to glorify you with your body when you go to heaven. That was all done before the foundation of the world.

So, this is where we show our compassion, our love, our affection to God. This is where we do deeds of kindness and mercy and all the things. All of the righteous behaviors that the Bible calls us to do, but they are not the cause of our salvation.

They are the result of our salvation. So, that's what the gospel is. Everything was done before the foundation of the world.

We've seen now a second view at this thing called salvation in chapter 2 verses 1 to 10, as now the gospel that Christ talked about throughout scripture and the gospel that we are to proclaim and preach and teach through our commission to go do this throughout the world. Any questions? Comments? Nothing? Sure. All right.

Wow. I mean, everything was done before the foundation of the world by God. You're living in a simulation.

Okay. All right. It's mind-blowing.

Chapters 1, 2, and 3 of Ephesians, what we're studying, was all done by God as part of his plan before we ever came on the scene. Right. And so, our good works are done through our sanctification, right? Yeah, your salvation.

That's through your salvation. That's what you, but your sanctification is what allows the Holy Spirit to take more control over areas of your life so we can do more good works. Right.

So now, does that work into our prayer too, Jim? Works into your prayer. Okay. All right.

Okay. Thank you. I'm trying to catch up.

I was on vacation, but where's the prayer thing? Was that in the sub-stack? Yeah, it's in the sub-stack. It's also in the blog. It's also in the library.

It's in various places. It's also in the forum, so you won't miss it. Okay.

I thought it was in the sub-stack, and I think I overlooked it. Okay. Thank you.

Hi, guys. I've gone through the chat. There's really nothing there to respond to.

Anything else you guys want to talk about in this? Okay. I'm sorry. Can you say those six things again? Sure.

The six elements? Yes. Your salvation is from sin, by love, into life, for glory, through faith, and unto good works. Okay.

Thank you. All right. So, let's pray, and we'll call it a night.

Father, thank you again for giving us this time together to search out your scriptures, understand your word, being able to understand how to apply it to our lives, and basically giving us a historical perspective exactly how you did this creation. None of this is taught to us by pastors as regards to you did all of this before you manifested one iota of this earth. This whole thing was planned out.

Our lives were identified by name. Our calling was identified on time, in time, for our own salvation and for the duties that we might be called to do for your glory. Oh, that's just magnificent.

We can't say anything but just thank you, because without that, we would not be saved. We would not be saved had that not occurred. I want to thank you for that.

Father, give us the direction of study. Give us the direction of wisdom, of understanding, and revelation as you work in our individual lives, moving us along our own individual timeline of learning and understanding your word. Father, we ask that we continue to watch over this group and in our group at large.

We ask that basically you give us joy as to what's going on in the world, because you are totally at control. Give us peace in our hearts that everything is going to work out for your glory. I ask all these things in my name.

All right, guys.