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| Book | Ephesian – Study 5 |
| Topic | |
| Reference | Ephesians 2:1-10 |
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The Scheme of Ephesians:

- Chapter 1 is what God did for us. All the grace and the blessings.
- Chapter 2 is how God did it.
- Chapter 3 is why God did it.
- Chapter 4 and 6 is our response to what God did.

THE NATURE OF OUR SALVATION:

Verses 1-10 are divided into three sections:

1. Spiritual death – our original state.
2. How God saved us.
3. The nature and purpose of grace

1. Our Original State:

Ephesians 2:1-3 (ESV) 1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

So in long sentences like this we like to break it down to understand it a bit better.

Spiritual condition,

How were we dead?

following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind,

Consequences:

and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind

What is spiritual death?

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked,

How can you be dead and still walking? It is a spiritual death because of trespasses and sin, which are basically deliberate acts. It is like people who are brain dead, who are not aware, not awake, they are not responsive, they are not breathing but they are kept alive by medical science. So if you are brain dead, within a week you will physically die. If you are spiritually within 70 years you will have physical death as well. So spiritual death is something where you are

- *Non responsive to spiritual values*
- *No ability to do so*
- *No insight over his own death*

Orders of Life:

It is like the various orders of life. You got plant life, even if you play the best music in the world for them they will not respond. The most they will respond to is the light. Animal life will respond to the sound, but they cannot the difference between a happy and sad song. Animal life take in some reality but not all of reality. Human life, you actually are able to take in the beauty of the song and the meaning of a song. These are esoteric values which animals don't understand. The last order of life is basically spiritual life, when you are aware of spiritual issues and spiritual values.

What about religious people? Are religious people spiritually alive?

They are praying, they are meditating, they are doing all sorts of things. If we look at Nicodemus who was a religious person, professor of theology and he comes and he talks to Jesus about spiritual matters but the first thing that Jesus says to him,

John 3:3 (ESV) Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Basically Jesus is telling him that you are dead, you cannot understand spiritual things but Nicodemus is a teacher of Israel, he understands the Bible, he read the Old Testament, he knows it by heart and yet he is spiritually dead.

John 3:5-6 (ESV) Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

So it is a different dimension of life.

*Revelation 3:1-3 (ESV) And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: "The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. "I know your works. **You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead.** 2 Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. 3 Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you"*

So here you actually have a very alive church. They have a reputation of being alive. They might have so many people in their worship team, they got lights, they got huge tithing, huge budget as a church, but when Jesus comes and talks to them, you have reputation of being alive but you are

actually dead. So we are talking about spiritually dead people who belong outside the church and also they are inside the church. Church can be spiritually dead.

How are we spiritually dead?

We are dead because we are following the course of this world, we are following the prince of power of the air and we are following up the desires of our body and our mind. These are three ways in which we are actually dead.

In the story of the prodigal son, the son says one day to his father, I have grown up now can I have my money. This means that according to the prodigal son his father is already dead. In Middle Eastern society when you say that, you are saying to your father, you are dead. So the son took the money, goes outside and he spends his money on all sorts of things he does and when he comes back later on his father says

Luke 15:24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.'

Now it gives us an idea of what the Bible means by spiritual dead. So when the son leaves, as far as the father is concerned son is dead, you don't exist anymore, spiritual death is like that. Spiritual death is when we turn around to God and you tell God, I don't want to live under your roof anymore and God says, okay you can go you are already dead. The prodigal son didn't listen to his father, he didn't refer to his father, he went to another country and took all the money and he spent it doing all sorts of things that he liked, so that is spiritual death, alienation. So he did rebellion against the father, he took the inheritance, left the house, acted as his father is dead and he went onto reckless living. So basically he was following the course of this world. This world likes to party.

among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind

So we are now carrying up the passions of our body. So the outward human level, we are following course of this world, we go to party, we go clubbing, we do all sorts of things. On the other bottom level, the inward spiritual level, we are following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. On one level it looks as if you are partying and enjoying good life. On the second deeper level, it is actually demonic influence. Demonic influence isn't like the movies, where you sit down there and suddenly the woman's voice like becomes like a man's voice. It is not like that; it is actually subtler. Let me tell you two instances in the Bible where you got demonic influence. It is not like the exorcist. The first influence was

*Mark 8:31-33 And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32 And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "**Get behind me, Satan!** For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, **but on the things of man.**"*

Here we have Jesus telling Peter, you know I am going to go there and die, after three days I am going to rise again and Peter rebuked his own master, but that act of taking Jesus aside and saying

that Jesus is telling the wrong thing is actually influenced by Satan. It is actually influenced by logic and the times that he is in. He was using normal logic, that when the Messiah comes in the Old Testament, he will take over and he will rule. He is applying the correct thing, so therefore demonic influence can be quite normal, mainly secular kind of thinking. Making friends, networking can be governed by demonic influence.

*Acts 5:1-3 But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, 2 and with his wife's knowledge he **kept back for himself** some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has **Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit** and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?"*

Ananias was a lot better than us. None of us nowadays is willing to sell our house, we wouldn't even think of it, but he sold his house. He should get a lot of credit for it. The only difference on him was that when they were about to give money to the apostles, Satan put in their hearts to not give full money to church. Why are you giving full money to church, keep some for you also. It was absolutely logical for them to keep some money with them, but when they did it the only one difference was that he said, this is the total money of the house. Everybody at that time sold their entire house and gave everything, this guy gave some and tried to hide his money. He died at the same spot. So Satan's influence is a very normal influence, it doesn't have to be a deep voice. Satan works much more in an ordinary fashion.

The term sons of disobedience, they always use 'son of' in the Old Testament and the New Testament as well because the son always follow the father's work. The profession of father is passed down to the son. So therefore it is more than genes, it is identity, it is training, it is vocation, it is standing in society. Therefore, your son shouldn't embarrass the father, it is a very big pride thing if your son misbehaves as it were. We have various parts in the scripture:

- Son of the beating Deut 25:2, that means worthy to be beaten,
- Sons of the might 2-Sam 17:10, strong man
- Sons of the afflicted, prov 31:5, suffering people

So when you say son of something, it just means that your life is characterized by that. This is as if, if you are farmer, your life is characterized by farming because your father is a farmer. So sons of disobedience mean your Character, deliberate, premeditated, persistent disobedience to God. So it describes how are the people spiritually dead. They are following the course of this world, the logic, the thinking of mankind and they are disobedient to God. That is why they are spiritually dead.

OUR SINFUL NATURE:

We all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out desires of the body. Now the problem is that we always think there is a dichotomy between flesh, all flesh is evil and all spirit is good and really bad things are the flesh like murder, rape, robbery and then not so bad sin is jealousy, gossiping, hypocrisy and pride. We try to differentiate. Actually the Bible doesn't differentiate.

*Genesis 3:4-5 (ESV) But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be **like God**, knowing good and evil."*

The passion of the flesh, the sin of the flesh is wanting to be like God. When Eve looked at the fruit, she had concluded three things about fruit, it looked good, it was good for food. It looks good, taste good and desire to make one wise, pride of life. Now these three factors, able to appreciate beauty, able to appreciate good food we all have that but the difference is, good normal desires given to us by God is now hijacked to a different purpose. That's what sin is. God gave us the eyes to discern beauty, God gave us a stomach to taste good food but if you take those normal desires and hijack them that's called flesh, that's called rebellion, that's called sin. So the flesh is an aspect of life that wants to be God. So therefore you take out all the desires of your mind and flesh and fulfil your desire to be independent of God.

We all desire food, comfort, sex, to be useful, to have love and affection and to have power. These are natural desires. If you go to Garden of Eden, they were asked to have dominion that's power, they work in the garden, that's food and comfort and competence, relating to each other that's love and affection and sex. So what happens in the flesh is that you got normal desires, but what you do is that you use these things to fulfil a strategy of a life without God. That's what the flesh is. It is like giving a girl a beautiful car and before you even do anything she takes the car and drive her new boyfriend out and leave you standing behind. That's exactly what happened with us.

So your desire for food is good, but instead of you live to eat not eat to live. So it is all been distorted. So you have got career, business, performance, responsibility in life, family, friend, all that we use to live a life apart from God. So therefore if we have a desire for competency, desire for business, so therefore we are so involved in business that we really don't have to think about God. We are so involved in the family, that we don't have time to serve God at all. These are good things to be with family, nothing wrong with being the family but if you use it as a strategy to get away from God then that's spiritual death and sin.

What about religious people?

The problem with religious people, although they don't do good for the glory of God alone, when they do good it is for a particular purpose. There was a recent interview by a guy called James Comey, FBI Director. He went to his school and then he gave testimony because he wrote his book 'Trashing Trump'. He actually told about his life, he said, what I did was before I joined government service I was working in a law firm and I was very-very successful. I had a car, I had a beautiful house with five rooms that only cost me 250,000 in those days and then everything was provided for. I had a great life, I liked my job. His wife told him one day, something is missing in your life. He liked his job but he didn't love his job and the wife knew that what he actually love was government service. He left his lucrative private practice and went back to government service to serve and then wound up climbing the ranks up to the FBI number one spot. He said in his interview in CNN, there is a difference between the job you like and the job you love and the job I love is the one that will make a difference in this world and that's why he became all the way to FBI director because he wanted to make a difference in the world.

Money should always be secondary; it cannot be primary because primary it make a big difference. James Comey wanted to be useful. So for him that is his goal in life, to be useful and serve in government. If being useful and serving takes you away from God then it becomes a sin, it will become spiritual death. So it is a good thing, good to serve government but if that takes you away

from God then it becomes sin and spiritual death. So the devil will use all sorts of things, good things, bad things, ugly things and pretty things, as long as it takes your eye off the ball. So religious people build up self-righteousness, they are moral, hardworking, integrity, good works and then what they do is that they look down at other people. They use morality or self-esteem to save themselves, while an immoral person would use sex to be independent of God. They are both in the same boat as it were, so we are now affected by the values, the fashion of our times, affected by Satan and my own desires which are natural and enjoyable, nothing wrong with them but as long as you don't use them to circumvent this issue of looking to God. So what happens is that Satan and the values and fashion of this time will actually work on your own desires which are natural and enjoyable and then cause you to walk away from God. That's how it works.

What is the consequence of our spiritual death?

It is by nature, children of wrath. Basically we will incur the judgment of God and this word by nature can either be habitual or natural inborn. This is more likely to be nature that means we are born with this propensity to sin.

How do we apply our theology today of spiritual death?

It tells us about the nature of man and evil, which got implications in our society, ourselves and church. It tells you about the nature of salvation, implication, evangelism and worship, it tells us about the nature of accountability and wrath. Society doesn't believe this, it believes that we actually have a bad nature, either kept in check with the society or we are of good nature corrupted by society. Society believes that man is fundamentally good. Adam Smith who is one of the writers famous for the US Constitution believes that we are actually fundamentally good. So therefore depending on what your outlook is, what you believe will lead to your action.

Even in evangelicals, Barna Poll in 2001 says, 70% of evangelicals Christians believes man is basically good. That means 70% of them actually don't believe the Bible. Another 80% of them believe God helps those who help themselves. It means we have some intrinsic good to help ourselves. If you give people free money because you think they are all good, they will take the free money and they will make some useful things of their life, no they will tell others there is free money here, come and let's enjoy.

Lucy Adeniji – an evangelical pastor and author of two books on childcare – trafficked two girls and a 21-year-old woman from Nigeria to work as slaves in her east London home. She made them toil for 21 hours a day and tortured them if they displeased her. The youngest girl was 11 years old. She was then sentenced to 11 and half years in prison last month by Judge Simon Oliver. He said, "You are an evil woman. I have no doubt you have ruined these two girls' lives. They will suffer from the consequences of the behaviour you meted out to them for the rest of their lives." Then later on it was revealed that Judge Simon Oliver takes bribes in the form of gift boxes. They are both doing the sinful thing, whether you are a judge or whether you are a pastor, evil is everywhere.

How do we get through this, evil is everywhere, we change the definition of evil, change the definition of sin. Bill Hybels church, Willow Creek Community Church in Illinois and he says, sin is a sickness or an addiction, the sinner is the victim. When you say the sinner is a victim, it implies that you have got no responsibility. Sin is a flawed strategy to gain fulfillment.

There is Faith in America movement, they want to redefine sin, *church leaders must be made "to take homosexuality off the sin list."*

So these are the ways of the world, these are the ways of spiritually dead.

*Romans 8:6-8 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is **hostile to God**, for it does not **submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot**. 8 Those who are in the **flesh cannot please God**.*

So if you are in the flesh, if you are following your natural desires to rebel against God which is in the flesh, you cannot please God. There is no way you can please. Roman says, it is not possible for a spiritually dead man to respond to God.

*Romans 1:21-23 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they **became futile in their thinking**, and their foolish hearts **were darkened**. 22 Claiming to be wise, **they became fools**, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.*

So there is a change in their mind. That's why the Bible says, those who say there is no God are fools. It is so obvious there is a God.

How do you know that you are spiritually dead?

1. Faith is routine and concepts of faith are abstract, which means talk about heaven, hell, grace, cross, knowledge of God, forgiveness and faith. All these you know but actually they don't mean anything to you and your faith is routine. You just to church, you treat your faith like a have to attitude. That maybe a sign of being spiritually dead.
2. A blind man cannot see a beautiful girl. So when you put Jesus Christ in front of you, however beautiful he is you will not see him. If you actually feel that Jesus is boring and you have to do it, if that's the case then you are in danger because you are spiritually dead.
3. Crisis reveals true spiritual state. When something happens, when you got a sickness, when you got an illness, they are the two things that can happen. One, your abstractions break down, God's love, God's sacrifice, God's reconciliation, peace, all that don't bring comfort. All you want is the pastor to come to your house and pray that you get healed, anything less you don't want. You must be healed then if God doesn't heal, your expectations are crushed down. So all these ideas of God's love, his sacrifice, I am not interested. If you are spiritually dead, all these things will start to break down. If you are spiritually alive, these abstractions become real in the crisis, you hang on to your heavenly inheritance, you hang on to the love of Christ then you know that you are spiritually alive. Spiritually alive people are always thinking, agonising over their sin, remorseful, working through your doubts. You are spiritually sensitive. No sense of missions, because spiritually dead people use God they

don't serve God. There is a difference between using God and serving God, you don't really care. So that's a spiritual inventory, we have to check ourselves because we may be spiritually dead. If these things don't excite us, these things don't move us, the word of God is not precious you are like a blind man looking at a beautiful girl.

THE NATURE OF SALVATION:

We are totally depraved, that mean sin corrupts the whole person, it corrupts emotion, the will and the intellect. We are extensively evil; it affects all of us with different intensity. Some of us just tell lies, some of us just cheat, some of us will commit murder but it is all sin, not the same death but the same extensiveness. It affects every single one of us. We are truly incapable of a truly good act. That means the truly good act most of us won't do good in order to honour God. We will do good for ourselves, so that we can buy a ticket to heaven and we are unable to turn to God.

Pelagius was a British monk in the 5th century and his main rival was St Augustine of Hippo, now the problem with Pelagius was he believe that Sin of Adam was not transmitted, we were born neutral. We have free will to do right. So the gospel will lead us to become sinless. So basically Pelagius believes that all of us are morally neutral. That means we can make up our mind whether we want to believe God or not, we can make up our mind whether we can be good or bad. That means the weight of your salvation lies on you. That's what Pelagius believed.

Augustine believes that we are all hopelessly sinful and spiritually dead. Pelagius believes salvation is by man alone, man is not dead. Augustine believes salvation by God alone and you are completely dead. Then the ones in between nowadays are the Semi-Pelagianist. They say man are mostly dead, they say a little bit effort from man is also required.

Paul says, you are spiritually dead. You cannot respond. In Pelagius view, you are not dead, you are morally neutral, you can make up your mind. The Semi-Pelagianist view is that I am mostly dead, but with your help I can save myself. So God and me together, I did something, God did something, it is a very-very common view but it is not correct.

The only correct view according to Paul is that you are spiritually dead, God has to resurrect you, then only you can be alive.

Methodists also believe all human are spiritually dead but somehow they got prevenient grace and then they respond. So it is like you are dead and then suddenly God comes and wakes you up, transient restoration of free will and then only you can decide, you believe, you are born again or you unbelieve, you continue and then you die again.

Calvinist believe you are already dead, the only way you can wake up is when God chooses you, God puts the Holy Spirit, gets you born again. God does everything, he chose you, he resurrects you, puts his spirit inside you and you are born again. You don't do anything except to respond by faith. Now the thing is, if you actually believe in this, it gives all glory to God.

How do you apply this if you are spiritually dead interacting in church?

The biggest problem in church is hypocrisy, you realize because you are in a transition period of time. You have to hold to a standard and yet you cannot achieve that standard. So you either do two things in church, you either build a castle and you build good works, charity, mission trips, building fund, prayer meeting, do all that and it is your self-righteousness. You hide your sin, you hide your feeling, you hide all your scandal, and all of you just build more things and then you look down on others. That is not how it is supposed to be, because however you build your castle, you are still a sinner. Use to be spiritually dead, God saved you, you didn't save yourself.

So the other picture how to interact in church in Alcoholics Anonymous. You come, we all sit down, the first thing is that we are sinners, and our life is characterized by repentance and forgiveness. That's the cycle of growth. The cycle of growth is not doing more things, so that you gain self-esteem and righteousness and people look at you and appreciate you.

The only way you can grow is that, you sin then you admit you have sinned, you ask for forgiveness, you repent and you acknowledge the standard and you continue to try to live towards the holiness standard, it is a cycle. Now only if you go through this cycle, you can grow. Now if you never admitted your sin, if you never asked for forgiveness or forgiven others and you never repented you cannot grow. The only way you can grow is by admitting your sin, ask for forgiveness and forgive others. Every time you forgive them, you grow. If you never forgave anything and anybody else, you will never grow because we are all sinners from the doctrine of total depravity, we are sinners. So you need to understand how we interact in church.

When you learn to forgive you will grow, if you never learn to forgive you will never grow, you will stay the same. God says, if you don't forgive others I will not forgive you. If you don't forgive, you are spiritually dead. So the church gives you wonderful opportunity to forgive others.

*1 Timothy 5:19-20 (ESV) Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. 20 As for those who **persist in sin**, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.*

The Bible says those who persist in sin, they don't repent. The issue is not sin, we all got sin, the issue is that they refuse to repent. Jesus died on the cross when we were still sinners and we have to do the same for each other. That's the way we should live.

Do babies go to hell?

Some people say they go to hell because they are spiritually dead. They actually have original sin. The no people say, there is an age of accountability, where children weren't punished.

*Isaiah 7:14-16 (ESV) Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. 15 He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16 For before the **boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good**, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted.*

Which means there is an age, in which the boy will grow and he will be able to choose good and refuse evil. That means there is an age of accountability.

*Deuteronomy 1:37-39 (ESV) Even with me the Lord was angry on your account and said, 'You also shall not go in there. 38 Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall enter. Encourage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. 39 And as for your little ones, who you said would become a prey, **and your children, who today have no knowledge of good or evil, they shall go in there. And to them I will give it, and they shall possess it.***

So all the adult who sinned cannot go to promised land, the children went because they cannot decide about good and evil. So therefore God is very-very fair.

*2 Samuel 12:21-23 (ESV) Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive; but when the child died, you arose and ate food." 2He said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, who knows whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' 23 But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? **I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.**"*

So when the child died, David had a feast because he knows that one day he will be with the child. So therefore he draws comfort. You cannot draw comfort in something that is false. Another possibility that the children don't necessarily go to hell.

*Luke 1:13-15 (ESV) and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. 14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, 15 for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, **and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.***

Wow! Sinful baby filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. So these are some of the evidences. God is a wise and fair God and he will not put children into trial.