

Episode #2-43 – Ephesians 2 Part 1 - Caught in the Flow

I. The purpose of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians is to tell us what God's present purpose is in all His work today. This includes His work in the world and in the individual believer. Ephesians is the book of God's present purpose, the book of being "in Christ," and the book of God's grace.

II. In Ephesians 1, we learned of all the good things God has made true of us "in Christ." Now, in Ephesians 2, we continue Paul's prayer, learning more of the blessings God has done for us in Him.

III. Verse 1 really continues the sentence begun in Ephesians 1:15.

IV. Ephesians 2:1. This talks about when we were dead in sin...or does it?

A. When being dead in sins is meant, the Greek uses the preposition "en" + sins.

1. John 8:21, 24. To not believe in Christ is to die in your sins.

2. I Corinthians 15:17. If Christ did not rise, you are still in your sins!

B. When being dead to sins is meant, the Greek uses the dative case of "sins."

1. Romans 6:2, 10, 11. In Christ we are dead to sin and alive to God.

2. Ephesians 2:1! This passage is talking about those who are dead TO sins, not dead IN sins.

C. The translators wanted to make this passage soteriological, or having to do with salvation. Yet this book is written to those already "in Christ." God is not speaking about the experience of the unbeliever, but those who already believe, and reminding us that we are dead to our offenses and sins.

V. Ephesians 2:2-3. The way those in Christ sometimes walk.

A. The word "once" is the Greek *pote*, which means at some indefinite time, like our English expression "at some time or other."

B. The word "course" is the Greek *aion*, often translated "world" or "ever." I believe the translators were forced into a good translation here, perhaps the closest they ever got to properly translating *aion*. The basic idea of the word *aion* is of flow. This speaks of the flow of this world, or the way this world typically operates.

C. The sad fact is that those of us who are in Christ are at times sucked along in the wicked flow of this world, following Satan's song and dance!

D. The prince of the power of the air does not mean Satan is a master of "air magic." The idea is of the atmosphere, like when we say "the air is thick in here" when we mean the emotional atmosphere. The whole atmosphere of this world is ruled over by Satan. He operates in those who represent disobedience in their lives and actions.

E. Verse 3. Though we would like to deny it, sometimes, even we believers are carried along in the current of this world. Sometimes, alas, we act just like the children of wrath!

VI. Conclusion: The sad truth is that, even though we "in Christ" are dead to sins, at certain times all of us are caught up in the flow of this world and act like the children of God's indignation who surround us, giving in to Satan's atmosphere and acting according to his principles, not God's. Alas, who can save us from such a sorry state? Praise God, we can be delivered "in Christ!"