

OKOTOKS EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

HIDDEN IN CHRIST

DEFECTS IN THE HEART AND MIND (EPHESIANS 2:1-10;
EPHESIANS 4:26-31)

OCTOBER 14, 2018



SERMON OUTLINE

REFINED

1. H _____ in Christ, when God L _____ at us, He sees J _____.

Glory: To let your heart's c _____ point to G _____, and allow your
life to o _____ in that direction.

2. Sin is a _____ and w _____ in our world, and it must be
taken s _____

- Greed: The r _____ to a f _____ that God will not
p _____

- Evil Desires: A l _____ for that which is f _____

- Malice: A w _____ desire to be e _____

- Anger: A v _____ passion

- Rage: An a _____ that seeks to d _____

3. In Christ we h _____. In Christ we are all e _____.

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

What do I need to do with what I have heard today?

MAIN POINT

God is so loving and merciful, that even when we were helpless sinners, He gave us new life in Jesus. We respond by putting to death the defects in our hearts and minds.

THINKING THINGS THROUGH

Connect the sermon to the study.

1. What would you say are the “typical” results of following Jesus Christ? How does this compare with the results we ought to see?

2. What dramatic results would we see in “before-and-after” spiritual photos of some of the people at our church?

Leader: In Ephesians 2, Paul reminded his readers of their state apart from Christ and the amazing grace they had been shown by God. In light of this, Paul exhorted his readers in Ephesians 4 to display lives that gave evidence of this grace. Today, we will consider how this should change the way we fight against anger and greed. In light of God's grace and by His power, we are given the ability to fight against these areas of sin and show the change He has made in our lives.

DIGGING DEEPER

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EPHESIANS 2:1-10.

3. How do verses 1-3 help us understand what sin is? How do they show us that sin is not just a bad choice, but a condition in which we live?

4. Why is it important that we understand humanity, apart from Christ, to be dead and not just bad?

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5. How do verses 1-3 make it clear that it was impossible for God to accept us in our sin? How does this magnify the importance of our being hidden in Christ (as in Colossians 3:3)?

Leader: Sin is the default condition of the human heart. This frames our understanding of the gospel because it helps us see that Jesus didn't come to make bad people a little better; He came to give life to those utterly without hope in their deadness.

6. What is your “but God” moment? The moment when everything changed spiritually for you? How is your life different now than it was before Christ?

7. Considering verses 8-10, why is important to know that God didn't just save us from something, but to something?

Leader: What matters most about us is not what the world tells us, how people around us see us, or even how we see ourselves. Our identity is determined by what God says about us. While apart from Christ we were dead and hopeless, in Christ we are alive, and we will never be dead again. When we begin believing what God says about us, we can find the freedom to walk in the good works He has planned for us.

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EPHESIANS 4:26-31.

8. How can you be angry without sinning? What does that tell you about how anger works? How is this connected to the grace you have been shown by God?

9. Why is it important to not let the sun go down on your anger?

Leader: We can be angry when something goes against God's design. Jesus cursed a fig tree when it did not produce fruit and turned over tables in the temple when people were using God's house for their gain. We need to know the difference between righteous anger and unrighteous anger. If we let our wrath go untreated it can grow out of control. We need to be rash, quick to take on our anger when it surfaces.

10. How does sinful anger give the devil a foothold? How do we keep from giving the devil a foothold through uncontrolled anger?

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11. How does a proper view of God's grace to us serve to diffuse the anger we harbor towards others?

Leader: In order to prevent the devil from getting a foothold, we must know what gets us angry and what stirs our wrath. When we know where the devil is likely to attack, we are able to defend against him with the help of God's Word and our Christian family. In seeking to avoid uncontrolled anger, we are showing with our lives that we truly believe vengeance is not ours, but the Lord's (see Romans 12:19).

12. Look at verse 28. How is greed a rejection of belief in God's provision? How does the rejection of greed show God's people have truly been changed by His grace and are placing their trust in Him?

Leader: Greed believes that we are the only ones who will look out for ourselves. God's people can trust that God will provide, as He has already done by the abundant grace shown to us in Christ. As we reject greed, we should that our ultimate hope is not in the world or our own efforts, but the God who has changed us.

DOING LIFE TOGETHER

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

13. What is one way you can remind yourself of who you were before Christ without feeling a sense of judgment or condemnation? Why is it important to do so?

14. Is there anything specifically related to anger or greed you are struggling to "put off" from your former way of life? How will the truth that Jesus loves you and gave Himself for you inspire you to set aside your own desires and allow Him to live through you?

PRAYER

Thank God that in His mercy, He made you alive with Christ when you were dead in sin. Pray that you would have a greater appreciation of what Jesus has done and a greater desire to fight sin as you look deeply into the truth of the gospel.

MEMORIZE

⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. — Ephesians 2:4-5

SPOTLIGHT ON THE PASSAGE

EPHESIANS 2:1-10

2:1 Dead in your trespasses and sins: "Trespasses" are lapses; "sins" are shortcomings. Apart from Christ, people are without authentic spiritual life. In this state the most vital part of the human personality is dead; thus people cannot by their own efforts or ingenuity experience fellowship with God or meet His requirements.

2:2 Walked according to the ways of this world: "This world" is associated with the realm of Satan. The way of life without Christ is in accordance with Satan's ways.

2:3 Previously lived among them in our fleshly desires: The Greek word translated "lived" is a different term from the one in verse 2 translated "previously walked," though the idea is similar. "Lived" means to turn to and fro and behave in accordance with certain principles. Apart from Christ, people are dominated by "fleshly desires," which refers to an orientation away from God toward selfish concerns. The plural suggests multiple unredeemed urges in our life apart from Christ. The unredeemed person is completely at the mercy of the tyrannical self and its lustful impulses. By nature children under wrath: The fall into sin described in Genesis 3 was not merely a moral lapse but a deliberate turning away from God in rejection of Him. Sin's entrance brought about a sinful nature in all humanity. Men and women are "by nature" hostile to God and estranged from Him. While functioning as free moral agents, sin always negatively influences human decisions and actions. People do not genuinely repent or turn to God apart from divine enablement (Eph 2:5).

2:4 But God: Over against the human rejection of God, Paul painted a picture of the new life manifested in God's gracious acceptance of sinners because of Christ. The strong contrast points to God's answer to people's dreadful situation. Rich in mercy: "Mercy" is God's compassion for the helpless that relieves their situation. While grace involves God giving believers what they do not deserve, mercy means that God does not give what is deserved.

2:5 Made us alive... even though we were dead is Paul's extension of his thoughts in verse 1, which are viewed in retrospect from the vantage point of redemptive history. Because of God's great love, He "made us alive" with the Messiah.

2:6 Together with Christ Jesus: God's loving mercy not only makes new life possible, but by it God has made us alive, raised us up, and seated us with Christ. God's great power has enthroned us with Christ in the heavenly places, even as Christ was exalted to God's right hand following the resurrection.

2:7 The salvation of men and women is a display of divine grace. God did all of this in Christ with a single goal in view: to display the immeasurable riches of His grace, the exhibition of His divine favor for all of history to see, including angels as well as people (1Pe 1:10-12).

2:8-9 The work of salvation is for God's glory and is not accomplished by human works. The whole process of salvation is not a human achievement, but is an act of God's goodness. The emphasis is always on Christ, the object of faith, not on the amount of faith. Salvation is by God's completely unmerited favor. In the Greek text, the grammatical construction of the entire

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phrase by grace through faith serves as the antecedent of the phrase, it is God's gift. We must not portray grace as God's part and faith as our part, for *all* of salvation is a gift from God. The work of reconciliation is not from yourselves and not from works so that no one can boast. This prevents the slightest self-congratulation or boasting in the believer. God alone saves.

2:10 Created in Christ Jesus for good works: The work of salvation is a display of divine handiwork. Good works are the fruit of our salvation, not the cause of it. Also, good works are not incidental to God's plan; they are instead an essential part of His redemption plan for each believer. Good works are demonstrated in gratitude, character, and actions.

EPHESIANS 4:26-31

4:25-32 Paul offered five examples of what living the new life means in the context of relationship with others. All of the examples include a negative command, a positive command, and a spiritual principle on which the commands are based. At the base of all of Paul's commands is a God-centered spiritual foundation.