

“Raised With Christ”
Ephesians 2:4-6
(Preached at Trinity, March 30, 2014)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In **Verses 1-3** Paul wants us to know just how desperate our situation was.
 - We were spiritually dead, unable to know God; unable to reach out to Him.
 - We were engulfed by this present world, walking according to its ways which are under the power and deceptions of Satan.
 - We were bound by the lusts of our flesh always doing those things that the flesh and mind willed to do.
 - We were under God's wrath and condemnation.
2. Humanly speaking there was nothing we could do. Paul says we were dead. This describes inability. We were no more able to turn to God for the benefit of our soul than a corpse is able to rise up and leave the grave.
The unaided lost man simply has no desire to submit to God's authority. And there is nothing that will change his mind.
3. But what is hopeless for man is possible with God.
Ephesians 2:5 NAU - "even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),"
4. In describing the great change Paul compares the life-giving resurrection of Christ with our own resurrection from the dead.
Ephesians 2:5 NAU - "even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ"
5. Paul's words are not meant to say that the resurrection of Christ and our resurrection was exactly the same. Rather, he is focusing upon our union with Christ.
Because we are united to Christ His death has become our death and His resurrection has become our resurrection and His life has become our life.
6. Our union with Christ is one of the most important doctrines in the Bible.
John Murray wrote in his treatise, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*
"Union with Christ is really the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation."
7. Paul uses three words here to describe our unique union with Christ. All three express a spiritual reality as a foreshadow of the future fullness. Each of the words carry the Greek prefix *συν* meaning "with" or "together with."
Paul uses the three words to describe our life brought into union with Christ.
 - A. *συνεζωποίησε* – to make alive with
Ephesians 2:5 NAU - "even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)"
Colossians 2:13 NAU - "When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,"

- B. συνεγείρω – to raise up with
Ephesians 2:6 NAU - "and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,"
Colossians 2:12 NAU - "having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."
- C. συνεκάθισεν – to sit down together with
Ephesians 2:6 NAU - "and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,"
- I. The New Testament clearly teaches our unique union with Christ
- A. We find it first in the teaching of our Lord
1. He compared our union with Him using the metaphor of a vine and its branches.
John 15:4-5 NAU - "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."
 2. He spoke of eating and drinking of Him
John 6:35 NAU - "Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."
John 6:54-56 NAU - "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵ "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him."
 3. In His priestly prayer in **John 17** Jesus spoke again of this union we share with Him and of the unity of His body.
John 17:22-23 NAU - "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; ²³ I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me."
- B. This union was a particular theme for Paul
1. We've already seen it in **Chapter 1**
Ephesians 1:22-23 NAU - "and gave Him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."
 2. Paul often referred to it as being "In Christ" – a favorite expression of Paul He used this expression over 25 times.
Romans 8:1 NAU - "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

- C. We have become one with Christ
1. We have entered into a unique relationship. At the end of this chapter Paul will describe it as a building.
Ephesians 2:20-22 NAU - "having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit."
 2. We share all things with Him
- II. The unique character of our union with Christ
- A. In a special way the death of Christ has become our death
- Romans 6:3-4 NAU** - "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death"
1. This means our old self is dead
2 Corinthians 5:17 NAU - "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."
 2. In order to be freed from the spiritual death described in **Verses 1-3** the old self has to die. God doesn't improve our old sinful self. Rather the old self is put to death and God raises up a new person.
Paul describes this in **Romans 6**
Romans 6:6-7 NAU - "knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; ⁷ for he who has died is freed from sin."
- B. Christ's resurrection has become our own
- Ephesians 2:5 NAU** - "even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)"
Ephesians 2:6 NAU - "and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,"
1. We were dead but now we have been made alive with Christ
Romans 6:4 NAU - "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."
Romans 6:8 NAU - "Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him"
 2. We are made partakers of His life. We have died with Him that we might live through Him.
Galatians 2:20 NAU - "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."

3. This newness of life is not something you are hoping for or striving after. It is something that is true of you because you are united to Christ. You have a new citizenship. Since this is true of you you are to live consistently with this new life.

Colossians 3:1 NAU - "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."

4. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is at work in us to live above this world.

Ephesians 1:19-20 NAU - "and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might ²⁰ which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*"

5. This is one of the wonderful truths we proclaim in baptism. We have died with Christ and have risen to walk in newness of life by the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

C. We are seated with Christ

Ephesians 2:6 NAU - "and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,"

1. Paul is drawing from his previous statement in **Chapter 1**
Ephesians 1:19-20 NAU - "and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might ²⁰ which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*"
2. What does Paul mean that God has "raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places*"
3. Paul is pointing out that Christ dwells above this world. If we have been raised with Him our sites should also be above this world.
Colossians 3:1 NAU - "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."
4. We were once earth bound. We were tied to the things of this world. We were lovers of this world.
 - a. Paul said in **Verse 2** - "you formerly walked according to the course of this world"
 - b. But now we have been raised above this world
5. This doesn't mean we have no connection to this world. No! We have much to do in this world. We have Gospel work to do. We have families to care for and loaded with many earthly responsibilities.
 - a. But this world is not our permanent home. We don't spend all of our time in worldly pursuits as if this is our permanent abode. We don't look to this world only as a means to satisfy our fleshly lusts.

Lloyd-Jones says of the Christian – “He has a new standard of values; he assesses things in an entirely different way. What he wants to know about anything now is, not what sort of a ‘kick’ he will get out of, not what sort of pleasure it will bring him; but rather, what is its value to his soul.”

b. This has always been the heart of God’s people

1 Peter 2:11 NAS - "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul."

Hebrews 11:13-14 NAS - "All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. ¹⁴ For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own."

Conclusion:

1. For the Christian salvation isn’t only about eternity. It is a present reality. We **HAVE** been raised with Christ. We **ARE** seated with Him in the heavenly realm.
2. For the Christian he is living in a different realm. Jesus told Nicodemus:
John 3:3 NAS - "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."
 The word can also be translated “from above.” We have a new life; one created from above.
William Hendriksen – “We are being governed by heavenly standards and motivated by heavenly impulses. The blessings of heaven constantly descend upon us. Heaven’s graces fill our hearts. Its power enables us to be more than conquerors. And to heaven our thoughts aspire and our prayers ascend.”
3. Are you living the resurrected life, a life in this world but living high above this world. Oh that our eyes might be fixed upon our Savior and may our hope rise beyond this world into eternity