

Being and Becoming

Ephesians 2:4 – 10

I. Intro

- A. Great opportunity this week, beginning tonight; no greater opportunity than to be able to share the Gospel with people – get to do that all week with boys/girls/youth
- B. Continuing our focus on discipleship – talk about serving, but from a different perspective
- C. Think about serving as doing, ministry – doing for others, but it's more; certainly, serving causes us to think more about others than ourselves
- D. Too many in churches today suffer from a consumeristic mentality instead of a contributor mentality – because they see serving as doing work
- E. Need to change our mindset on what serving is really all about – putting action to our faith, about (title of message) being and becoming
 - i. Jesus washing disciples' feet: John 13:13-15 (ESV)
 - 13 You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am.
 - 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.
 - 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. (Serving is being/becoming more like Christ – serving also provides a strong sense of belonging)
 - ii. Last week – church family, being connected, deep/personal relationship with brothers/sisters in Christ, making sacrifices for each other – people want to feel they belong
- F. **READ Ephesians 2:4 – 10**
- G. Backtrack, see how we come to this point of serving to be and become more Christ-like

II. What God Did

- A. (v. 4) *But God ...* - when all hope seems lost, when all humanity was destined to fall and headed for destruction/eternal death because of sin, when no other means/alternative was sufficient/good enough – *But God*
- B. God beyond our comprehension, whose infinite being & perfect holiness is far above our grasp, because He is merciful (holding back from letting us have what we deserve) and because of His unfathomable/unlimited love He came down to us and offered up Himself as sin sacrifice to provide the only hope for our salvation/rescue
- C. (v. 5) ... *when we were dead* – not just barely alive, hanging on, struggling to survive – No, DEAD
 - i. Adam and Eve in garden, God gives them one command: Genesis 2:15-17 (ESV)

15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,

17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die.**”

ii. **Question:** Was God joking/exaggerating? No

iii. Only one sure outcome when God is disobeyed and His commands not followed – Death

D. So, *when we were dead* because of being separated from God due to our natural tendency to sin and disobey God, God *made us alive with Christ*; in a personal relationship with Christ and surrendering to Him as Lord our hopelessness is changed to hopefulness; sin and death are inseparable – Jesus Christ and life are inseparable

E. (v. 6) ... *raised us up with Him* [Jesus Christ]; once saved from penalty/consequence of our sin, we are resurrected (brought from death to life) when the Spirit of God (Holy Spirit) comes to dwell in us; and when our physical bodies wear out and physically die, we raised again (a second resurrection) with new/whole/perfect/glorified bodies that will never wear out and die again; ... *seated us with Him [Jesus] in the heavenly places* – not only brought from death to life in this world, but death to life eternal in our heavenly home with Him

F. That’s what God has done for us and all mankind for those who would believe in His Son and what Christ has done for us

III. Why God Did

A. **Question:** What was God’s purpose/motivation?

B. Already mentioned His mercy (holding back from giving us what we deserve); His mercy extended to us is because of His love for us; His reasons for saving and reconciling us to Himself is found totally in Him

C. David Guzik commentary quote: “*Every reason for God’s mercy and love is found in Him. We give Him no reason to love us, yet in the greatness of His love, He loves us with that great love anyway.*”

D. (v. 7) Other motivation and purpose – demonstration of God’s grace, out of His great love and kindness extended to us what we do not deserve; ... *He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus*

i. Jesus, absolutely essential/vital part of experiencing God’s mercy, love, grace; Acts 4:12 (ESV)

12 And **there is salvation in no one else**, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

ii. (v. 4) ... *by grace you have been saved*; (v. 8) ... *by grace you have been saved through faith*

- E. **We are saved through faith in Christ in order that God’s grace can be shown; because God’s grace has been shown to us, we then are to show/demonstrate God’s grace to others – which brings us back to “serving”**

IV. What God is Doing – What We Must Do

- A. **REFER v. 10**
- B. **God doesn’t stop His work in us once we are made alive again in Christ, once we are saved from outcome of sin**
- C. **God is still, and continues, to work in the lives of those who belong to Him through relationship with Christ**
- D. **He is working to make us something beautiful before Him, and before others; *workmanship* (Gr. *poiema*) – achievement; sounds like the word “poem” - Hebrews 12:2 (ESV)**
2 ... Jesus, the [author] and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross ...; **Jerusalem Bible translates – “work of art”**
- E. **This beautiful “work of art” that God is creating in us is for doing *good works* – serving, and in doing *good works* we are demonstrating the *good work* that God through His Spirit is doing in us – ultimately, transforming us more into the image of His Son**
- F. **Romans 8:29 (ESV)**
29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, ...
- G. **As a true disciple of Christ, this is what God is doing in your life, and my life, right now – and this work He’s doing in us leads us to allow Him to work through us to serve – being and becoming like Jesus Christ our Lord**

V. Close

- A. **Hopefully, we all realize and understand we can never ever DO enough to earn God’s favor – to earn salvation; whatever we do, we do in response to God’s love for us, never to win God’s love**
- B. **Serving, with the right attitude, right motivation, is simply responding to God’s love in order to be demonstrations of His love to others**
- C. **Benefits of service:**
 - i. **Keeps us from growing spiritually stagnant**
 - ii. **We model Jesus**
 - iii. **Personal reward of purpose – you only get out of something what you put into it**
 - iv. **Reward from God**