

04.06.2025 - Transcribe - Past Present Future

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Last week we talked a little bit about hope, and sadly there's a lot of people who don't have any hope. That's because they're already living in their past. And many people today live in their past, and so they can't enjoy the present or the future, because they're always living in the past.

But as a believer, spiritually, once you trust Jesus Christ, your past is gone. Notice what it says here, in verse 2. I'm sorry, chapter 2, verse 1. You hath be quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our conversation in time past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. If you have trusted Jesus Christ, your personal Lord and Savior, that's your past.

It says, we were dead in trespasses and sin. Prior to salvation, you are dead spiritually. Now, we know it's not talking physically.

We're still here, living, breathing. Yeah, but they're not dead. They just look dead.

You know, but we aren't there anymore. But many people are still there. But sometimes it's helpful to remember just a little bit of your past, not to dwell on it, but to thank God that you're not there anymore.

We were dead in trespasses and sins. You know, sins is missing the mark. God says thou shalt not, and you do it anyway.

And then you say, oh, I didn't know that. God didn't want me to do that. You say, well, it's just a mistake.

Well, it's a mistake, but it's still a sin. Trespasses are more willful transgressions. I know God says not to do this, but I'm going to do it anyway because I don't care.

And as an unbeliever, you were dead because of those trespasses and sins. Dead spiritually. You could not have a relationship with God.

Why? Because you're dead spiritually. You know what dead is? That's a corpse, has no way of handling things. You know, in verse two says, we walked according to the course of the world and according to the prince of the power of the air.

Now, before salvation, what determined what you did was, you're saying, well, it's the sin nature, yes, but you relied on what the world's culture was, what the world says was right to do, what Satan said was right to do, because you didn't know any better, but we did it anyway. And

even today, there are many walking according to the course of the world. There are many walking, even sometimes those that are believers, they're now still living in their past, even though they're born again.

They're walking according to the course of the world. That is what the world says is okay. What the culture sees as normal, though, very often is considered sin by God.

Just because the world says this is right, if God's word says this is a sin, it's a sin. And we see that happening more and more. We see it happening with the abortion.

People say, well, you know, whatever your feelings are, but what does God's word say? As a believer, we have to go by God's word. In Genesis 25-22, Rebekah is about ready to give birth to twins, Jacob and Esau. And here's what Genesis 25-22 says about these, and the children struggled together within her.

It didn't say this clump of cells struggled within her. It didn't say this fetus struggled within her. It said the children struggled within her.

Even the Christmas story, when Mary went to meet Elizabeth, and Elizabeth was carrying John the Baptist, what does it say? And it came to pass when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb. You see what the world says, well, it's just a clump of cells. God says it's a baby.

God says it's a child already. And we have to remember that as believers. They'll try to confuse you.

They'll try to guilt you in saying, well, what about if it's due to rape? Or what about if it's due to incest? Can I take the baby's life then? Can I take the fetus because of the way it was conceived? Why would you want to execute a baby for the sins of the Father? We don't do that to anything else, do we? Some people say, well, you can be whatever you want. You can be whatever gender you want. But what's God say? Male and female created He then.

He didn't leave any leeway for, that's what He made you, but you can be whatever you want. You see, in times past, many of us believed all that. But then we got saved and we started looking God's word and found out that's not what God wants us to know.

We walked according to the prince of the power of the air. As children of disobedience, we walked according to the way that Satan determined we should walk. That's the prince of the power of the air.

That's Satan. We walked, it says in verse 3, we had, we all had our conversation or our lifestyle in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh. You know, that's what John tells us in 1 John.

That's the three major sub, major headings of all sins. In John chapter, 1 John chapter 2, it says,

love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loved the world, that's the world's culture.

The love of the father is not in him. For all that's in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the father, but of the world. So when, and our time passed, we walked according, our lifestyle was according to what we thought was right.

What satisfied me? If I saw it, I wanted it. But sadly, that was because you were a child of disobedience. The last part of verse 3 says, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Now when it says you were children of wrath, that does not mean that you're a bunch of angry kids. The children of wrath means that you, because of your nature, your sin nature, had the wrath of God upon you. We see that in Colossians chapter 3, chapter 3, verse 5 and 6. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fortification and cleanness and ordained affection, evil concupiscence and covenants, which is idolatry.

Listen, for the, which things sake the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience. So the children of disobedience are the children of wrath because they have the wrath of God on them. But if you know Christ, that's in the past.

You're no longer under the wrath of God. Amen? Because now you have something different. No longer do you have to live and follow the lust of the flesh or the lust of the eyes or the pride of life.

No longer do you have to, and when it says among whom we also had our conversation, that means hanging out with others that do the same thing. Sometimes as believers we have to be careful who we hang out with. I know, you're saying, but they're my friends.

They're your friends who's dragging you away from God. You know, you've heard the illustration. If you take a bad apple starting to rot and you put a good apple with it, you can do that a million times and the good apple will never make the bad apple turn good.

It's always the other way around. So it says in our time past, since we were children of wrath, we hung out with others that were also disobedient to God. But that's not where we should be now.

Amen? There's been a change because that was the past. Look at verse four. Those first two words.

Verse one through three says you had an evil past. You who is rich in mercy for his great love were with he loved us. God had a plan for each and every one who lives as children of wrath.

God has a plan for each and every child of disobedience. Why? Because he's a merciful God, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. He's a loving God for

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that what whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

God had a better plan for us. Verse five, for even when we were dead in sins, he quickened us together with Christ by grace you're saved. We're dead in our sins.

He made us alive. He made us alive. That's what quicken means.

When we were dead in our sins. He didn't say, listen, Joe, I know you're a sinner. Change your life.

Start living better. And then I'll let you go to heaven. No, he said, listen, I know you're dead in your sins.

I know because you're being dead in your sins, you're going to go to hell, but I'm going to make you alive. Alive from the dead. How? By grace.

Skip down to verse eight. For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves. It's a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

For we were his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in him. Don't. We all had a past, but we don't need to continue living there because God had another plan.

By grace are you saved through faith. God's grace saved you. Not your faith.

Your faith only allowed God's grace to work in your life. I know many people look at this and it's kind of confusing because it says it's the gift of God. You look at this verse and you may ask yourself, so what's the gift of God? Is it his grace? Is it being saved? Is it his faith? You know, some people will say the faith.

They'll go, see, your faith is a gift of God. You can't get saved until he gives you the gift of faith. Let's scripture.

Tell us what scripture means. Let's see what that word great or gift. Another way it's mentioned Romans six 23 X and Romans.

Romans, you don't have to turn there if you don't want to, but in Romans chapter six, verse 23, I know it's here somewhere. Is it good? I don't have to look at the index. Romans six 23.

You probably all know this verse for the wages of sin is death, but what the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. So what's the gift of God? It's eternal life and Ephesians. What would be the gift of God? The salvation, which leads to eternal life because of God's grace.

God says, I'm going to give you the grace to be saved. I'm going to give you the grace not to be

children of disobedience or children of wrath. I'm going to give you the grace so you don't have to live in the simple past.

You used to live. You just have to believe it. Wait a minute.

It can't be that easy. God says it is. You don't have to live in your past anymore because he's given you a new future when you trust him by faith.

Not a works, nothing you can do. Because the truth is, even if there was something we could do for salvation, none of us would have the strength, the knowledge or the ambition to really do it. We could try, but we wouldn't make it.

You say, well, what if he just give us some rules to follow? And I followed those. Could I go to heaven with that? Oh, I know. I followed the Ten Commandments.

There's only ten of them. God's word says nobody can keep them. In fact, if you say that you've kept them your whole life, you've already broken the one that says don't lie.

You say, well, it's only ten. Listen, in the Garden of Eden, God give them one rule to follow. Just one.

He said, you guys can have anything here. It's all yours. Just don't eat of that one tree.

One rule, and they broke that. And we think we can work to heaven by following ten of them. No.

But you can go to heaven by simply believing in Jesus Christ and what he did for you on that cross. Faith. God says when you have faith in what I did for you, my grace will save you.

Finished. Amen? Finished. No longer will you be the children of disobedience.

No longer will you be the children of wrath. No longer should you live the way you did in your past. But instead, because we have a new future, and that future is in heaven, verse six says he's made us to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

The ages to come he might show the exceeding riches. One day we're going to be with him in heaven. That's our future.

We still have to live in the present. So what are we supposed to do in the present? He give us a new one. He saved us by grace.

Verse 10. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto what? Good works. Which God ordained that we should walk in them.

God said, okay, I have a plan. I know because people, their free will, they're going to sin against me. But I want them in heaven with me.

That's always been God's plan. I want them to be there. So what is he going to do? He's going to send his son to die on a cross as a sacrifice, shed his blood, be buried, and rise the third day.

We're going to celebrate that in a few weeks. But when you believe what he did for you, when you believe that he has forgiven you of your sins, where do your sins go? Gone. Far as east is from the west, cast into the deepest sea.

He'll remember them no more. And you're going to heaven. But we're still stuck down here.

We're stuck down here because he has a plan for us. All because you believed in him. I have an object lesson.

Sometimes people will ask you about salvation. Why is it so necessary? This is a glove. You all recognize this is a glove, right? All right.

How effective is that glove? It's not at all. It's just there. I mean, I could use it for a coaster.

It'd be a little wobbly, you know. But it's not useful until I put it on. Think of Genesis.

In the beginning, God made man out of his own image. And then God breathed into him, and he became a living soul. So when God breathed into man, he became a living soul.

Now mankind was useful to do what God wanted. But then Satan came along, convinced them that they don't have to listen to God. And it says that sin entered into the world.

What happened to sin? Well, sin separated us from God. We still look like him, his creation. But now we're dead.

And we can't act the way we're supposed to. We can't function the way we're supposed to. So we're just sort of going through life.

You're saying, well, even unbelievers are useful. Yeah, you know, I could use this to pick things up, but that's not the way it's designed to do it that way. I could use it, like I said, for a coaster on my table.

You know, I could use it to dust off things. Yeah, I could be useful, but it's not what it's designed for. But what happens when you trust Jesus Christ as your Savior? He says, you are born again.

Your sins are forgiven. You are now indwelt with the Holy Spirit. You know what that means? Now you can do what God has designed you to do.

Now you can be the person God has designed you to be. Now you're useful for good works that God wants you to do. And sometimes we fall into sin anyway.

But what happens? It says, be not drunk with wine, wares, and excess, but be what? Filled with the Spirit. Once again, when we allow the Spirit to fill us up and control us, we can do what we're designed to do. Remember when first John says, if we confess our sins, he's faithful and

just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

That literally means he will forgive us our sins and cleanse us so we can return to a place of usefulness to him. So if you ever need to describe salvation to somebody, try using a glove. People always like illustrations.

Now, we have, as believers, we have a present to do good works. The primary good work we're left here for is to do what? To witness. To witness to others so that they too can have their sins forgiven and start doing what they're designed to do by Almighty God.

That's our primary goal. You know, for a reminder, there's only two things you can do on earth that you can't do in heaven. Do you know that? The first one's sin.

You can't do that in heaven. And the second one was witness to sinners. Well, I don't suggest you do the first.

He doesn't want us to sin, but he does want you to witness the sinners. You know what the Great Commission is? Go ye therefore and teach all nations. That's what we're supposed to do.

Now you're saying, well, no, we're here to worship. We'll do that in heaven. A lot better when we do it now, even though we do it pretty good.

We can praise the Lord in heaven. We can talk to him in prayer now. You can do all that in heaven.

Not to say that you shouldn't be doing it now while you're on earth, but we must not forget what we're created. We're his workmanship to create it unto good works, to help out other people. Amen? To be useful.

I was talking with somebody the other day, and their life's been kind of messed up. And I said, you know, a human being's life should be to say, when I die, how did I make the world better for everybody else? Sometimes it's just a little better in your own realm of things. Sometimes it's a lot better.

But he left us here to be useful for good works. So we need to consider that. Why? Because that's our present.

And when we start looking at our past and look at what he took us out of, we should be more than willing to live the way he wants us to in the present. Amen? Because one day we'll have a future. A future with him.

A future in which no more sickness, no more pain, no more tears. Oh man, I can't wait till then. But fortunately, I'm going to have to until he calls me home.

Or the trumpet sounds. And then, no matter what our ailment is here on earth, we'll be walking with him in heaven. We'll be in his very presence.

Why? All because we allowed his grace to save us through our faith. Have you trusted Christ as your savior? Is your present a lot better than your past because of that? It should be. Amen? And your hope of the future should be a lot brighter than it would be before you knew the Lord.

So we must always remember that. We had a past, a sinful past, a spiritually dead past. But he made us alive.

And if he made us alive, why do so many times we sit around feeling like, acting like we're still dead? We just need to work for the Lord. We mentioned in Sunday school, when Jesus, Jesus' only prayer request of his disciples, you know, we have prayer meetings and we say, anybody have any requests? Jesus only had one prayer request. He says, pray you the Lord will harvest you to send more laborers.

He didn't say to send more leaders. He said, send more laborers. Why? Because we are created in Christ Jesus under good works.

Let's bow our heads. We, hopefully each person here has come to the point in their life where they've trusted Christ and what he did by faith. They've had their sins forgiven.

But then we all need to realize that that's not the end of the story. That's just the beginning of a new present. Just the beginning of him working in us to do good works.

It may be just for a few people that are around, that are in our small sphere of friends or family. It may be bigger. I don't know what the Lord has for him, but I do know what he has for you is to do good works, to share his word, to help people whenever possible.

That's why we're created in him. If you haven't trusted him by faith, you need to do so. Because the end is coming.

But let's all determine that we're going to live the way he designed us to be, to serve him by serving others, to pray for others, to stay away from the old crowd and start hanging out with a new one. Let's all pray together. You know what's on your heart.

You know how the Lord spoke to you. You pray to your Lord. Pray to the Lord as I pray.

Heavenly Father, Lord, we thank you for your word, for reminding us the way we were before salvation. But also encouraging us, Lord, because of salvation to continue on to serve you, to be the kind of believers that we were designed to be, to be filled with the spirit all of the time so the spirit could control and direct and guide us. For your word says, if we walk in the spirit, we will not walk in the flesh.

Help us, Lord, to be believers that stand out, that people that know us instantly know there goes a child of God, there goes a believer, there goes someone who serves the risen Savior. Thank you, Lord, for this encouragement. In Jesus' name, amen.

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