

Prayer: The Living Dead

Sermon Notes: Ephesians 2:1-3

Week 22 – 2010

This is our final week of the Spring Quarter. Along with an abbreviated study, you will take some time to reflect on your group experience and then if wish, have communion together (Acts 2:42-47). You will also fill out Feedback Forms about your group experience and your plans for the Fall <http://www.parksvillebaptist.org/studyguide/GrowthGroupFeedback.pdf>. Growth Groups will take a summer break and resume the week of September 19. *Thanks for being part of your Growth Group and have a great summer!*

MY STORY

Summer is just around the corner! Do you have any special plans, activities or prayer requests for the next few months?

DIGGING DEEPER

- 1) Paul makes a startling statement in Ephesians 2:1 – “***you were dead*** in your trespasses and sins.” His point, we were all at “one time spiritually dead.” Read Genesis 2:16-17 and Genesis 3:1-4. How did Adam and Eve ‘die’ when they ate the fruit of the tree? What are the implications of spiritual death? Is spiritual death as serious as physical death? Why or why not? What evidence would you give to support the fact of universal spiritual death?

Genesis 2:16

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

Genesis 3:1

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die."

Now read Romans 3:9-18 and Romans 8:5-8. How do these verses speak about the state of men apart from God?

Romans 3:9-18

What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." ¹⁴ "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ in their paths are ruin and misery, and the way of peace they have not known." "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Romans 8:5-8

"For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

With this background in mind now read Ephesians 2:4-5. What stands out about God? How does this impact your praying for others this week?

Ephesians 2:4

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ--by grace you have been saved—

COMMUNION: REMEMBERING HOW GOD HAS WORKED

One of the ways to be encouraged to effectively live out our faith is teaming up and living life with others. Looking back at this past quarter and year, how has your Growth Group experience affirmed, encouraged and/or challenged you in your connection and influence with others, and what it means to follow Christ?

One of the keys to remembering the influence we can have on others is to remember Jesus' ultimate example of what it means to love, serve, and care for others. That's why Jesus told the disciples at the Last Supper to repeatedly come together and take communion. It would remind them of His total commitment of love and faithfulness to all as revealed in His life, death and resurrection.

This week, we encourage your Growth Group to conclude by doing as the disciples did by taking communion together. To prepare for this, read the following verses and reflect on Jesus' commitment and work in your life as you

follow Him.

Psalm 103:8-13

*The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger, abounding in love.*

[9] He will not always accuse,

nor will he harbor his anger forever;

*[10] he does not treat us as our sins deserve
or repay us according to our iniquities.*

*[11] For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;*

*[12] as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.*

*[13] As a father has compassion on his children,
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; ^[NIV]*

John 15:9-15

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. [10] If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. [11] I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. [12] My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. [13] Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. [14] You are my friends if you do what I command. [15] I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ^[NIV]

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." [25] In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." [26] For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. ^[NIV]

Before you take the bread give opportunity for some to share why they are thankful that Christ gave his body for them. Pray.

Before you take the juice give some people the opportunity to share their ongoing experience of forgiveness and what it means for them to be washed by the blood of Jesus.

Have a times of thanksgiving.