

## Epistle to the Ephesians II Chapter Two

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This is a special Bible study that we're going through in the book of Ephesians, which becomes tremendously important for us for spiritual growth and understanding. It fits right into the whole theme of the Feast of Tabernacles, because it tells us

- why we're called
- how we are called
- how God deals with us
- how we need to lead our lives
- how we're eventually going to be in the Kingdom of God and be living with God

That's exactly the whole reason of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Before we begin the second chapter today, let's review just a little bit of the first chapter so that we be sure to have it in mind. Eph. 1 tells us about God's calling, which is His own Divine personal will for us. This is not to make us have the big, swelled vanity head, but this to humble us to realize that the very God:

- the very Creator
- the One Who is in charge of the whole vastness of the universe
- the One Who sent His Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior

personally, individually reached down and called us.

This has been the whole foreordained or preordained plan of God that 'as man as He would call' that He would 'predestine them' to the sonship of God.

Paul, when he did this epistle, for the first time really understood that He was not going to return during his lifetime. That makes it very important for us to understand, because Ephesians becomes the most important and principle epistle or instruction for us so that we can grow in grace and knowledge and come to the resurrection of Jesus Christ that He has for us and to be in the Kingdom of God.

These words—Ephesians 1:17—are so tremendous and the only thing I can say is that the whole book of Ephesians is profound! It is the most important thing for us to know, realize and understand with our relationship with God. To understand how it is that we are going to be in the Kingdom of God. The only way we're going to be in the Kingdom of God—especially during the end-time right now—is for us

- to be inspired
- have the strength
- the courage
- the faith
- the knowledge and understanding

to be able to really continue and be faithful in spite of all of the bombardment of false religions, false doctrines, the whole technological improvements of the world, and the great deceptions that Satan is bringing on the world right now. That's why the book of Ephesians was written.

Ephesians 1:17: "So that the God our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, the Father, Who radiates Divine magnificent splendor and glory..." It shows that later on that we are going to have the same spiritual and fantastic blessing of living at this level of existence.

It says in Isaiah that God inhabits—lives in—eternity. Living in eternity, it says He is clothed with majesty; He radiates Divine and magnificent splendor and glory.

When Daniel had the vision of God and he saw the tremendous train and glory of God. In other words, the reflection, the tremendous glory of God as Daniel was given the vision to see God the Father and Jesus Christ coming to him (Dan. 7). Then all of the tens of thousands and millions of angels surrounding the throne and praising God. When we discuss here the Divine magnificent splendor and glory that radiates from God the Father, God is going to give something to us:

"...may give you *the* Spirit of Divine wisdom... [That's what we need. Not the wisdom of this world that leads to death.] ...and the spiritual insight of revelation into the knowledge and understanding of Him (God the Father)."

Not only are we to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but through what God has given here we are to grow in the knowledge of the Father. If there is anything that is most imperative concerning the Feast of Tabernacles that is we will be living with God the Father and all of the saints when the whole entire plan of God is finished.

Verse 18: That the understanding of your mind be continually enlightened..." That's what we're trying to do here.

- to enlighten your mind.
- to inspire you spiritually.

- to give you the hope and the uplifting of God's Spirit

so that we can understand that that is the sole and most important thing that there is in the world. That while at the Feast of tabernacles we are to enjoy all the *physical* things that there are—that is true—but that we see and understand that it is the *spiritual* that counts.

Even as Jesus said, 'The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life. The flesh profits nothing!' So, we want to be:

- spiritually enlightened
- spiritually illuminated

"...so that you know and comprehend what is the hope of His calling..." (v 18). That if you have that hope and you comprehend that hope, you realize that God has called you and your really fully, completely understand that, then there is nothing in the world that is going to deter you from following God. There is nothing that is going to keep you out of the Kingdom of God and dwelling with God forever.

"...and the luxuriant riches, yes, even the opulent abundance of His Divine magnificent splendor and glory of His inheritance in the saints" (v 18). The whole plan of God focuses in on those of us that God has called.

Verse 19: "And for you to know and comprehend the super-abounding greatness..." If we can somehow can impart with these words—and with God's Spirit and what we are doing here—to give us just an inkling, an understanding any comprehension of this greatness.

"...even the magnitude of His infinite power toward us who are believing according to the inner workings of the dynamic power and the spiritual might of His strength, which He performed and worked in Christ, having resurrected Him from among the dead and set Him in His place at His right hand in the heavenlies" (vs 19-20). Right now at the right hand of God is our High Priest.

Here is something we all need to grasp and understand, and in particularly every minister, every teacher, because we know that what we are doing, though we have been a small little isolated group for quite a while, I am confident and assured that God is not going to keep us small and isolated forever. It has given us peace, harmony, tranquility and time to grow in grace and in knowledge and for us to understand the tremendous thing that God has done through Christ Jesus.

Verse 21: "High above every principality and ruler... [that is on the earth, physical or spiritual;

angelic or demonic] ...authority and power..." There is nothing when we're looking to Christ that is going to deter us, that is going to stop us, even if we are executed, or as Paul was—in the case when he wrote the book of Ephesians—in prison. Nothing is going to deter us!

- there is no power
- there is no authority
- there is no lordship or dominion, title or name

"...that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age that is coming" (v 21)—because Phil. 2 tells us that 'every knee is going to bow to Jesus Christ.'

Verse 22: "For He, God the Father, has put all things (even the vastness of the universe) ...**under His feet**, that is, the authority, rulership and dominion; and He appointed Him as the Head over everyone and over all things in the Church."

So, the whole purpose of the Feast of Tabernacles is that *we will be dwelling with God*, and *we will be looking to Christ*—Who is our Head of the Church now—Who is going to be over us forever through all eternity and, yes, with the marriage of the Lamb and Christ, which is also pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles, dwelling together and bringing people into the Kingdom of God through the whole process of the Millennium. He is the Head over everyone and all things in the Church:

Verse 23: "Which is His body, the fullness of Him Who is fulfilling all things in every way."

Ephesians 2—Paul then begins with where we were before God called us, and how we are brought into the Church and what this means. What we need to understand is that at the time that Paul was writing Ephesians he knew that Christ was not going to return. He knew that Jerusalem—according to the words of Jesus—was going to be destroyed. He knew that the temple was going to be demolished and removed.

Let's understand that the Jews who were converted in the Church upheld that the temple was the central place; that the temple in Jerusalem was where God was. That this was important, but Paul in writing Eph. 2 is telling us clearly that *the temple is meaningless*. Obviously then, this is going to infuriate a lot of Jews, because the temple to them was everything. Remember, before Christ came that's all there was.

Remember when Jesus was talking to the woman at the well in Samaria? The woman said, 'Sir, we worship in this mountain, and You say that

in Jerusalem is the place where men ought—ordained, required, obligatory, mandatory—to worship.’ Jesus said, ‘Woman, believe Me, the hour is and is now coming when you shall neither worship in this mountain nor yet in Jerusalem, for the Father seeks those who worship Him in Spirit and in Truth, for God is Spirit and those that worship Him must worship in Spirit and in Truth!’

This comes as a great shock to the Jews. Let’s understand where we have come from. Let’s see where we are going, and that’s the whole purpose of the book of Ephesians. It teaches us how to worship God in Spirit and in Truth.

Ephesians 2:1: “And you, having been dead in your transgressions and offences, and your sins and iniquities; in which you once moved and walked in the way of life, according to the age (and times) of this world and society, as dictated by the mighty prince and ruler (Satan the devil) that has the authority and power of the air, the spirit that is the source of the diabolical spiritual power who is now doing its inner workings in the sons of disobedience, rebellion and defiance, who are **obstinately opposing God**” (vs 1-2)

This is absolutely reflective of what the world is like today. Let’s remember where we have come from. We have been dead in trespasses, sins, iniquities and violations of God’s way—*dead*—which means that as God looks at the world, the whole world, in fact, is truly *dead* before God! Let’s think about this for a minute. It says, ‘As in Adam we all die.’ What does that mean? What did God tell Adam and warn him about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? He said, ‘In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die!’ That means literally ‘in dying you shall die.’

Spiritually, in Adam when we are born, we are dead in Adam. That’s what Paul was talking about in the whole book of Romans. Why are we dead in Adam though we have physical life? *Because from Adam we have the ‘law of sin and death.’* Therefore, God views the world as *dead!* Maybe that will help us understand why God not only allows, but even causes—and yes, even instigates—very traumatic and horrible things in the world as punishment upon people: famines, starvation, death, suffering—little children who suffer.

I heard a man on the radio who said, ‘I don’t believe in God, I’m an atheist.’ He was asked, ‘Why are you an atheist?’ He said, ‘Because I see all these things going on in the world, how can there be a God Who is a God of love if all these things go on in the world?’ *Because they don’t understand that they are dead now!* Jesus said, ‘Let the dead bury their dead.’ We know with the second resurrection God is

going bring them back to life. That’s what it means, *we are dead in our sins and iniquities!*

Verse 3: “Among whom, also, we all once conducted ourselves in that mode of life, that lifestyle motivated by the lust and designs of our flesh, habitually practicing the things inspired and dictated by the will of the flesh, and the thoughts and imaginations of the mind; and were by nature children of God’s wrath (His fierce anger and indignation), even as others who are continuing to live in this manner.”

The Jews have a practice of during the Feast of Tabernacles reading the entire book of Ecclesiastes. You might wonder why it is that they read the book of Ecclesiastes. If you want a book that is really quite depressing—and it is—read the book of Ecclesiastes. Let’s look at some of it and why at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles—when we should be thinking of the fullness of God’s way; when we should be understanding God’s way—should such a depressing book be read. I think it’s very fitting for the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles that they do read the book of Ecclesiastes. I don’t say that with any cynicism, but I say that as we are *‘dead in Adam.’*

The book of Ecclesiastes shows the futility and the frustration of this purely physical life in which we live. If that is all there is to life then it truly is as Solomon wrote. So, there is a lesson and instruction for us. Just as this physical life is futile, as we learned on the first day of this Feast of Tabernacles, you take the boughs and make a little tabernacle with it.

What happens to those boughs? *They die!* That’s the whole lesson that we are to learn; that this physical life is temporary; unless we come to Christ we are dead in our sins and children of wrath, subject to God’s punishment, subject to the ends of our own works and everything, when you truly understand that in Adam we are dead, showing us the futility in this physical life.

Ecclesiastes 1:1: “The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. ‘Vanity of vanities’... [worthlessness of worthlessness] ...says the Preacher, ‘vanity of vanities! All *is* vanity’” (vs 1-2).

That takes away all of the accomplishments that anyone can do; all the great civilizations of the past have been destroyed, because *they are vanity!* Yes, even if you have the Word of God without the Spirit of God there can be actually nothing more vain than that, because you hold in your hands the Truth of God, but you will not have the Spirit of God, which is life. There can’t be anything more vain than that. Then he goes on, I’ll let you do a

little reading on your own of the book of Ecclesiastes, we'll just cover a few verses.

Verse 3: "What profit does a man have in all his labor which he labors under the sun?" Everything he does. You build houses, empires, businesses; you make money, you have gold, silver, accomplishments, you write, you sculpture, you produce works of art.

Verse 4: "One generation passes away, and another generation comes; but the earth remains forever. The sun also arises, and the sun goes down, and hurries to its place where it arose. The wind goes toward the south, and it turns around to the north; it whirls around continually; and the wind returns on its circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea *is* not full; to the place from where the rivers come, there they return again. All things *are* full of labor; man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. That which has been *is* that which shall be; and that which has been done *is* that which shall be done; and *there is* nothing new under the sun" (vs 4-9).

Then you go through all of everything that he wrote about, and the most important thing that he says is that ***all is vanity!*** If you go out and have mirth, been a playboy or a playgirl, that's vanity and you can end up in trouble. If you drink and get drunk and take drugs, that's going to end in futility. If you're nice and upright and accumulate wealth and you do 'good' in this world—being sincere, good people in this world—and you come to the end of your life and you die, *that's vanity!*

Who's going to know what you're going to leave what you have. Who's he going to be? Is he going to be a wise man? *or* Is he going to be a fool? Go through all of the book of Ecclesiastes.

Why did I say it was appropriate for the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles that they read that? *Because Judaism does not have the Spirit of God!* That's what Paul was saying to these people with the coming destruction of the temple. Judaism does not have the Spirit of God, neither does any 'religion.' No pagan religion has the Spirit of God, so therefore, we can say very clearly Catholicism today—though it mouths Christ—does not have the Spirit of God.

How do we truly worship God? God has to do something first, because we are in a condition that only God can rescue us from. Here is what Paul is telling us: That the book of Ecclesiastes and all of the futility of the flesh is not what God had in mind.

Ephesians 2:4: "But God, being rich and abundantly generous in tender mercy and kindness, out of His great magnanimous love wherewith He

loved us." ***God's love to us! God did it!*** Not that we ever did anything for God before God calling us. Because God put man in this futile position, Jesus took upon Himself the death of Adam for all of us.

That may be very profound and I want you to think on that! That is tremendous! With God's great love, that's how much God loves us. That's why magnanimous love is so great and important. It is love that is given totally one sided—God to us. We're to respond to God because of that.

Verse 5: "Even when we were dead in our sins and transgressions... [even while the world was in this futile condition as we read of in Ecc.] ... (He) has made us alive with Christ... [He made the means, make it possible for us to be made alive with Christ] ...by (the means of) grace..." That tremendous overall relationship that God puts us into; from which God's grace flows:

- His love to us
- His blessings to us
- His faith
- His Spirit

And we are to respond in the grace by keeping His commandments and walking in His way and growing in grace and knowledge and loving God.

"...(which is God's gracious, Divine favor, blessing and generous gift)... [that's how]: ...you have been saved." That's what it means in the *King James* 'by grace you have been saved.' It is in the past perfect tense: *have been*. There's a point right now to which we *have been saved*.

As you are standing in this grace, this Gospel, 1-Corinthians 15:2<sub>[transcriber's correction]</sub>: "By which you are also being saved..." There is a process of being saved right now, which is what we are going through.

Then there is the statement in the Bible that says at the return of Jesus Christ and the resurrection we *shall be saved*. There's a threefold step in salvation:

1. ***have been saved*** now
2. ***are being saved*** through the process of growing in grace and knowledge, conversion and Christianity, and walking in God's way
3. ***shall be saved*** at the resurrection when Christ returns so that we will be in the Kingdom of God

We have exactly the three things, and all three are correct. That's why it's so futile to argue with anyone that once saved always saved. We know that isn't true. Let's see what we have been saved from.

Ephesians 2:6: “Even **having been raised up together**, and has seated us together in the heavenly thing with Christ Jesus.” There are some people who say that we are as good as being in heaven right now. *No!* That’s not true!

Having been raised up together, how are we baptized? *We are conjoined in baptism into His death!* Romans 6:4: “Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism into the death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life” (vs 4-5).

Ephesians 2:6: “...has seated us together in the heavenly thing with Christ Jesus.” We’ll see there’s a twofold meaning to that:

1. The very fact that *we have the Spirit of God in us* is a heavenly thing.

Is not the Spirit of God heavenly—that is it comes from heaven? Is that then a heavenly thing that God has given us? *Yes!*

2. The *prophecy* of it is found in v 7

When will we be actually sitting on those heavenly thrones? *When Christ returns to the earth!* That’s when we’re going to be literally seated with Christ, without a doubt, no question about it, absolutely no debate.

Revelation 20:5: “...This *is* the first resurrection. Blessed and Holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power. But they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (vs 5-6). That’s when we’re going to be sitting in those heavenly things or places.

Ephesians 2:7: “In order that He might make manifest (show and demonstrate) **in the ages that are coming...**” Paul knew that Christ wasn’t coming then, that there were going to be ages or time until Christ returned. Then what is the age that is going to come beyond that? *The Millennium and all of eternity!*

“...in the ages that are coming... [he’s going to show] ...the super-abundant and surpassing riches of His grace...” (v 7). You’re going to know the fullness of the grace of God

- when *you* have that spirit body
- when *you* have that spirit mind
- when *you* have that throne
- when *you* are a priest of God
- when *you* are ruling over your cities—two, three, five or however many

—in the ages that are coming!

“...the surpassing riches of His grace (His Divine favor, blessing and generous gift) in kindness and generosity toward us in Christ Jesus” (v 7). He wants us to understand that this salvation of God is so tremendously, through His grace, overwhelmingly one-sided *from God to us*.

Let’s stop and think a minute: What were you doing when you were called? *Kind of just going on with your life, however it was, and all of a sudden one day—BING!*—something sprung in your mind. That’s was God’s calling. That was the beginning of God’s gift.

There are certain things we have to do, that’s true; and I’m not minimizing what we have to do. Of course, there are those on the other hand who say there’s nothing you have to do because Christ has done it all. *That is not true!* There are conditions to this gift. But unless God did this through His grace then there is no salvation.

Verse 8: “Because by (means of this) grace you have been saved through faith (from the mighty prince and ruler, that prince of the power of the air, who has authority and diabolical power over this world)...”

- Didn’t Satan tempt Jesus with that?
- Didn’t he take Jesus and show Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time and say, ‘All of these are mine to give to You if you just bow down and worship me once’?
- What did Jesus say?
- *You shall not tempt the Lord your God!*

That’s what we have currently *been saved from*. Having been saved by grace from ‘the prince of the power of the air,’ the ruler of the diabolical powers of this earth. That’s what we have currently *been saved from*.

But we have to be *being saved* in the process of salvation by growing in grace and knowledge and understanding so that we attain to the resurrection of the dead like the Apostle Paul said: ‘If by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead’ so that you *shall be saved*. I hope that you have that really clear in mind:

- We *have been saved* from the ‘prince of the power of the air’ that now rules this world.
- We *are being saved* through the Spirit of God, His grace and the knowledge of God and growing in grace and knowledge.
- We *shall be saved* at the resurrection when Jesus Christ returns having

completely overcome death through the very power and Spirit of God, which is also His grace and generous, Divine and Holy gift.

(go to the next track)

Ephesians 2:9: “Neither is it originating from (human-ordained) works...” Directly against the ‘religions’ of the pagans on the one hand and Judaism on the other hand. Man cannot proscribe a single solitary work that is going to be spiritual, that is going to make God grant you either favor or blessing or salvation.

“...and this state of grace (Divine favor and blessing) does not originate or emanate from your own strength and ability; **it is the gracious gift of God**” (v 8). I’m sure we all completely understand that now. Let’s see a little bit more about this grace and understand this a little bit more.

So, all of our human ordained works, which means that all of these things that you find in *The Two Babylons* about the pagan religions is just so much trash. All of this that is in Judaism and all of their traditions and all of the things that they have is just so much ‘bunko.’ They are human devised means and regulations to bring about a righteousness in the flesh. And the righteousness in the flesh is still *death!*

Romans 5:1: “Therefore, having been justified... [Been made right with God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ wholly and completely acceptable to God as if Christ were standing there in your stead. That righteousness of Christ is imputed to you through grace.] ...by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”—by Whom we have access *by faith into this grace*.

That’s why it’s very important, v 9: “Neither is it originating from human-ordained works, so that no one will be able to brag or boast (in the presence of God).”

This grace then is a condition of our spiritual standing with God. That we are *standing in this grace*. It doesn’t give us license to sin, but it does mean that God is not going to condemn us because of what we are as physical human beings because we have weaknesses and faults. Even as the Apostle James said, ‘Look, we all are sinning continually.’

Just think if Job would have won that battle himself between he and God. If he would have won, who would have been God? We need to think about it and really put it in its proper perspective. If Job would have won that battle against God, which he couldn’t have because Job was human, but he at one time said, ‘This is so painful I just wish that there were an umpire between me and God’; that’s human ordained works!

I know you are, too. You’re not perfect, I’m not perfect, we haven’t been. Maybe even this morning you got mad at your wife or husband, or something didn’t go right where you were staying, or you got up on the wrong side of the bed and hit the wall instead of the floor—whatever it may be.

- Was not Job perfect in those works? *Yes!*
- Was he perfect before God spiritually? *No!*

God accepts us of that. In Rom. 8 Paul says, ‘There is no condemnation to those who have been called in Christ’ who still have the *law of sin and death* within them. God has accepted you through His grace. This puts a tremendous responsibility on us.

Only God can make that so through His grace. No one is going to be able to brag or boast in the presence of God.

Verse 2: “Through Whom we also have access by faith...” Access to God the Father! I want us to understand that the most profound thing happened in Paul’s teaching in Ephesians—which was unknown, unheard of, absolutely completely not understood until Christ was resurrected and ascended into heaven; that you could, as an individual, wherever you are, whatever your circumstances were—can have access to God the Father through this grace!

Let’s see a little bit about the calling that we have, that we understand it in an even more profound way. Now you see how absolutely pompous and vain it is for any of us to get a big, swelled head and start saying, ‘I have done this! I have done that!’ So what! Doesn’t matter—anybody, anything—what they do unless it is motivated by the Spirit of God and that’s fine, build on it and that goes into the future. But that doesn’t give us any reason to brag or boast.

Sometimes we get sort of mundane in our prayers. Could even end up doing like the Catholics. NO! We have direct access to God the Father, “...by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God” (v 2).

1-Corinthians 1:26: “For you see your calling, brethren, that *there are* not many who are wise according to the flesh, not many who are powerful, not many who are high-born *among you*.” Then you start all of this great wisdom of human beings and stack it up to God, and all of this great mightiness of the power of individuals and how great they are.

And you can think of the array of dictators

we've had to live through in our generation to see how absolutely futile that that is. God didn't call them. God says that even if He has any weaknesses it is greater than the strength of man. Even if God had any foolishness, it's wiser than the wisdom of men. There's our calling.

Verse 27: "Rather, God has chosen the foolish things of the world, so that He might put to shame those who are wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things. And the low-born of the world, and the despised has God chosen—even the things that are counted as nothing..." (vs 27-28). The world doesn't care about us; they could care less. But all human beings before God are as nothing, and He's chosen us. We are the weak, the base.

"...—in order that He might bring to nothing the things that are; so **that no flesh might glory in His presence**" (vs 28-29). No one is going to say, 'God, I devised a way whereby we can guarantee we're going to get into the Kingdom of God.' Forget it! Never happen!

"...no flesh might glory in His presence. But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, **Who was made to us wisdom from God—even righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption**" (vs 29-30). Everything comes from God!

- that's why this grace is so important
- that's why it is so profound for us to understand
- that's why it's so absolutely imperative that we realize this

There have been people who, because I give the Jews a good lick every once in a while; I give the Catholics a good lick every once in a while, have said that I'm prejudice against Jews. Well, if you think that I'm prejudice against Jews you've got another thought coming. I'm only reflecting the thoughts of Paul toward Jewish religion and Jewish behavior and toward pagan religions and pagan behavior. I don't want anyone ever again to accuse me of it. But I am not going to be muzzled by anyone because they think I am.

It's really a very depressing thing to get into about the *synagogue of Satan* that is ruling this world. I am not prejudicial, but I don't have to tolerate any of the stupidity and carnality and satanic foolishness of anyone anywhere regardless of their race, color, religion, who they were born to, who their father and mother were and what their genealogy is.

Before God none of that has any standing at all whatsoever—period! If you don't understand

that, then maybe you better go back and maybe you better re-evaluate your own thoughts toward God, and maybe you're having some works that you're counting on that you can boast, brag and glory in before God. No! There isn't one single thing that we can do.

Verse 31: "So that, as it is written, 'The one who glories, let him glory in *the Lord*.'"

I'm going to have some pretty tough things to say about Judaism, as well as the religions of the pagans, because none of them have any standing before God—*none of them!*

When you really understand it and look at it, those who are pagans who have never had the Word of God—if you want to use any comparative condition—are not in as bad a condition as the Jews who had the Word of God and rejected Christ, and unto whom Christ came.

Ephesians 2:9: "Neither is it originating from (human-ordained) works, so that no one will be able to brag or boast (in the presence of God), because we are His very own work of Divine creation... [salvation is creation] ...created in Christ Jesus for the purpose of doing good works (deeds and endeavors)... [now while we are living in this life] ...which God has prepared beforehand, appointed and ordained that we should walk in them (as a way of life)" (vs 9-10)

That's what God wants us to do, so it doesn't matter who you are, what you are, what you have done, you need to walk in *God's way*. In that, with God's Spirit, He is going to create in us His whole and tremendous spiritual family that God is going to resurrect at the return of Jesus Christ. If you happen to be living when Christ returns, then you'll be changed instantaneously from flesh into spirit.

We are *His* workmanship. We have good works into which we are to be walking. What are some of those good works?

1-John brings out very clearly what it is that we should be doing with the good works. Here's part of it, because there were a lot of people back then—John was writing just after the death of the Apostle Paul—having the same 'Protestantish' 'Christ has done everything for us and we don't have to anything. We can eat all the slop we want to, it really doesn't matter about anything, as long as we have love in our heart and love toward God.'

This is some of the good works that we have to be doing. I'm not telling you anything new, because you've done this most of your Christian life.

1-John 2:3: “And by this *standard*... [Greek: ‘en toutoo’—we are to furnish what this means, *the standard*] ...we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments.” That’s what it means in the Greek, that we be *keeping His commandments* and these are the good works that have been foreordained that we walk in. What are some of the other good works:

- we love the brethren
- we love each other as Christ has loved us

Those are the good works: commandment-keeping in this? *Yes!*

Verse 4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected.... [Why? *With the Spirit of God, the love of God has been perfected, and is being perfected!*] ...By this *means* we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked” (vs 4-6).

Did Christ walk in good works foreordained of God? *Yes, He did! He surely did!* So, we are also to walk in those. That’s what it’s talking about here.

1-John 5:2: “By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments.” That is in the ongoing tense of keeping His commandments.

You kept them yesterday, *that’s fine*, but yesterday is gone. Are you keeping them today? *Yes, that’s fine, you need to because today is today.* Are you going to keep them tomorrow? *Yes, because God is requiring that of you tomorrow!*

Verse 3: “For this is the love of God... [How are you going to show back to God that you really love Him? *By proving it, sustaining it with action!*] ...that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.” No, they’re not, there’s nothing burdensome about the commandments of God.

- they are *good*
- they are *Holy*
- they are *spiritual*
- they are *true*
- they are the *good works we are ordained to walk in*

God’s grace covers us for any of our shortcomings and weaknesses and stumbling and falling and sins that we may commit because of our human nature and the *law of sin and death* within us.

Paul starts a whole new topic in Ephesians

2:11: “For this reason (considering what you were, and what God is doing)... [Isn’t that what we’ve been talking about? What we are? What God is? *Yes!*] ...remember that you were in times past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by those called Circumcision in the flesh, performed by hands.”

This was a tremendous problem, because *Judaism* says that you must be circumcised. The *Pharisees* said ‘you’ve got to be circumcised to be saved.’ *Christ* says, ‘No! Anything that is outward is not going to justify you inwardly, spiritually, to God.’ This is why it becomes very devastating to the Jews. They could say, ‘You didn’t have God; you didn’t have God’s Word; you didn’t have Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; you didn’t have the temple; you didn’t have the sacrifices; you didn’t have God’s blessing’—which is all true, but now it’s different. To an Orthodox Jew, the most ugly profane thing that could happen would be to teach—which the Apostle Paul was—uncircumcised Gentiles to partake of the Passover; and not at the temple but in their own homes. That’s why the Jews so mightily hated Paul. That gives you just a little inkling of some of the problems that Paul had.

Verse 12: “Because at that time you were apart from and without Christ, alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel, stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God (estranged from the knowledge and worship of the true God) in the world.” That is true!

Verse 13: “**But now** in Christ Jesus, you who were once far away and completely removed, have been drawn near by the blood of Christ our Savior.” Very profound! Now he’s going to tell us that everything at the temple is worthless spiritually.

Verse 14: “Because He is our peace...” The only way you make peace with God is through Christ. Doesn’t matter if you’re a Jew on the one hand, or a Gentile on the other hand, you’ve got to make peace with God through Christ.

“...(the peace, harmony and tranquility of God), Who has made and fashioned the both of them into one...” (v 14)—Jews on the one hand, Gentiles on the other hand. Neither one were to bring the remnants of their past religion into it. That’s what Paul is saying here.

- It is a *new body* in Christ!
- It is a *new person* in Christ!
- It is a *new way of life* in Christ!

“...and the barrier, that middle wall of partition...” (v 14). Which there was literally a middle wall of partition at the court and temple where the Gentiles

were on one side and the Jews on the other side. There was literally that, so he is saying something here very profound.

“...previously erected between us, He has torn down and abolished. Even having abolished, annulled and having made invalid, in His very own flesh, the enmity and antagonism contained in the commandments, injunctions and dictates as stipulated in the dogmas and decrees (of men...)” (vs 14-15).

- they’re all invalid; everyone of them
- they’re all worthless
- they’re all made for the trash

“(…that is Judaism’s traditions, injunctions and precepts, and the Gentiles’ idolatrous religions and demonic philosophies), so that in Himself He might be able to create the two into one new man... [body in Christ] ...establishing peace” (v 15).

No longer is the Jew going to say ‘we have the way to God.’ NO! They only had the way to the temple. No longer is the Gentile going to say what a stupid thing it is to circumcise yourselves, and what a stupid thing it is that you have all these washing of pots and pans, and plates for meat and plates for milk, and all of the things that they had in worshipping trees, cows, turtles and men, the gods and goddesses and all of that. All of this stupidity on both sides is completely removed in Christ.

“...so that in Himself He might be able to create the two into one new man, establishing peace; So that He might reconcile to God...” (vs 15-16)—being brought back to God. Don’t we all need reconciliation? Don’t Jews need reconciliation? *Yes!* Paul said we approved and concluded that all have sinned—Jews and Gentiles—and there is none righteous, no not one!

“...both Jews and Gentiles within in body (which is the Church) through the cross, having put to death the enmity and antagonism by this means” (v 16). This becomes very profound, brethren, that through Christ all of these things, the Jewish religion on the one hand and the pagan religions on the other hand, don’t bring it in and intermix it in the Church of God. That’s what he was saying.

They had this tremendous fight within the Church of God. Peter, John and James really didn’t know about Paul. They really thought that Paul was going off the deep end when he was preaching these things until just after the death of James. That’s a whole other subject. I just want you to know that even within the Church of God, at that time back then when Paul was writing this, there was this roaring controversy, not only of Jews against Paul, but also the apostles wondering about Paul.

Only when Paul was in prison and Peter visiting him was that reconciled; where then Peter<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup> really understood. Paul wasn’t saying that he was throwing away all the commandments of God, only those physical things pertaining to the physical worship. That’s all! That’s why later on Peter said that Paul ‘even in his epistles wrote things which are difficult to understand’; that those who are unlearned and unstable twist and turn and distort as they do other Scriptures. It’s exactly what he’s talking about here.

There was that problem happening within the Church at that time. Very vicious! Very profound! Plus the whole society was in an absolute uproar and Paul was in prison.

Verse 17: “And also having come... [Christ having come] ...He preached and announced the peace, harmony and tranquility (the good news of the Gospel) to you who were far away (the Gentiles), and to those who were near (the Jews), because it is through Him... [here’s the paramount importance; through Christ and Christ’s way; through God and His Word] ...by one Spirit...” (vs 17-18)—the Spirit of God; nothing else counts, brethren; this really is very profound for us to realize.

I’ve heard a minister of God that almost every time he’s got to get up there and tell us why at two-years-old he began speaking and why he was ‘born to this.’ Who cares! If you’re not doing what God wants, it doesn’t matter. That’s why I’m not going to tell you I’ve done this, that or the other thing, because that doesn’t matter. Whatever I did doesn’t matter—good or bad—it’s over with.

What we need to focus in on is Christ, because anything else other than Christ is just going to put us into a ‘movement’ or a ‘religion’ or an ‘institution’ that has nothing to do with Christ. So, it is in Him!

“...by one Spirit that we both have direct access (that is being allowed to have admission) into the presence of the Father” (v 18). I want you to concentrate on it and think about that in relationship to when you are praying into Whose presence you are coming. We don’t say, ‘Oh, dear Jesus...’ or ‘Hail Mary. Will you pray to the Father for us.’ NO! We say, ‘Father...’

This becomes so very, very important for us to understand and realize; Paul says, Romans 8:13: “Because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if **by the Spirit**... [you have direct access to God the Father through the Spirit and we are to use it to mortify, put to death, murder as it were] ...you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. For as many **as are led by the**

**Spirit of God...**” (vs 13-14). That’s why the Spirit of God won’t make you do a thing; *you must choose*.

- the Spirit of God will lead you
- the Spirit of God will convict your conscience
- the Spirit of God is going to witness to you in your mind

—but it’s not going to make you do anything. God is not going to take away your choice and free will to choose to do His way; or if you choose to go and sin, if that is your desire.

Verse 14: “For as many as are led by **the Spirit of God** these are *the* sons of God. Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, ‘Abba, Father’” (vs 14-15).

When you pray, and you are praying to the Father, you are going directly to Him! Remember what Jesus said? ***You can ask in My name. You pray the Father and I say to you that I will not ask the Father for you, for the Father Himself tenderly loves you!*** We have direct access, and that means being allowed to have admission into the presence of the Father.

As a result of all of that is this, Ephesians 2:19: “The result of all of this is that you are not any longer strangers and aliens, neither are you sojourners or wanderers, having no purpose in life, but you are now joint citizens... [of the Kingdom of God] ...with the saints (the Holy consecrated ones in Christ) ...even of the family and household of God; being built up (in spiritual advancement and growth in Christian character) upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the primary foundational stone (in fact, the precious cornerstone showing that He is the crowning glory of the Church and of God’s plan)” (vs 19-20).

I brought to bear (in the Amplified Translation) all the rest of the Bible in here so that we can focus our minds in on the tremendous spiritual lesson that God has given us. That ***we***, brethren, are that building of God. God doesn’t care about a temple. God doesn’t care about a building. ***We*** are the temple in Christ. ***We***, with the Spirit of God have that.

So, in this Feast of Tabernacles, dwelling with God, brethren, what a tremendous thing it is right now that we have that access to God!

Verse 21: “In is in and through Whom that the entire household and building of God is properly and fitly joined and compacted together...” In Paul’s appeal of unity to the division that was wracking the Church, so that they could look to Christ and know that that’s where they have their spiritual belonging.

“...and is increasing and growing into a Holy consecrated temple in the Lord...” (v 21). No longer a tabernacle, no longer a tent, but literally living with God. That’s what the whole Feast of Tabernacles is about.

Verse 22: “By and through Whom you also are being spiritually edified and built up, even formed and molded into a habitation and dwelling of God through the Spirit of God.”

Brethren, these are tremendous and profound words. The long and short of the lesson for the Feast of Tabernacles is that you and I, all Christians wherever we are, ***are the true dwelling place of God with His Spirit for us today!***

Scriptures in Ephesians from *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, An Inspirational Study* by Fred R. Coulter

All other Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

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- 1) Ephesians 1:17-23
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- 4) Ephesians 2:4-5
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- 6) Ephesians 2:6
- 7) Romans 6:4-5
- 8) Ephesians 2:6
- 9) Revelation 20:5-6
- 10) Ephesians 2:7-8
- 11) Romans 5:1-2
- 12) Ephesians 2:9
- 13) 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
- 14) Ephesians 2:9-10
- 15) 1 John 2:3-6
- 16) 1 John 5:2-3
- 17) Ephesians 2:11-18
- 18) Romans 8:13-15
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- Daniel 7
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*The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop

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