

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY, ~ WE CONTINUE OUR CLOSE EXAMINATION OF EPH. 2:1-10.

▶▶ Basically, ~ as we noted, ~ in this paragraph, ~ Paul explains that God has brought believers from spiritual death to spiritual, ~ or new, ~ life by His grace alone.

NOW LET'S TURN OUR ATTENTION ONCE AGAIN TO A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THIS paragraph, ~ in order to keep the overall context in view ~ and to remind ourselves how it all fits together.

▶▶ Paul begins, ~ in [verse 1](#), ~ by stating what our condition was prior to salvation, ~ and also the reason for this condition.

▷▷ He says, ~ "[And you were dead in the trespasses and sins.](#)"*

▶▶ In [verses 2-3](#), ~ Paul describes our spiritually dead condition. ~ He writes, ~ "[in which* you once walked, ~ following the course of this world, ~ following the prince of the power of the air, ~ the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience — ¶¶](#)

▷▷ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, ~ carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, ~ and were by nature children of wrath, ~ like the rest of mankind."

▶▶ Then in [verses 4-6](#), ~ Paul explains the gracious, ~ merciful, ~ and loving act of God that brought us from spiritual death to new life.

▷▷ He says, ~ "[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 — ¶¶](#)

↳↳ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

▶▶ After that, ~ in [verse 7](#), ~ Paul points out a purpose of God's gracious act of bringing us from spiritual death to spiritual life.

▷▷ He writes, ~ "[so that in the coming ages ~ he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.](#)" ¶¶ 1/8

▶▶ And finally, ~ in [verses 8-10](#), ~ Paul explains that our salvation, ~ this new life that God has given us, ~ is totally by grace alone.

▷▷ He says, ~ "For by grace you have been saved through faith. ~ And this is not your own doing; ~ it is the gift of God, ~ not a result of works, ~ so that no one may boast. ~ For we are his workmanship, ~ created in Christ Jesus for good works, ~ which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

IF YOU RECALL, ~ LAST TIME WE EXAMINED VERSES 1-2b.

▶▶ We looked at [verse 1a](#) ~ and what our condition was prior to salvation. ~ And that is ~ we were spiritually dead.

▷▷ I.e., ~ before salvation, ~ we were separated and alienated from ~ and enemies with ~ God.

▶▶ We also discussed [verse 1b](#) ~ and the reason we were spiritually dead.

▷▷ We were spiritually dead, ~ Paul said, ~ because of our "[trespasses and sins](#)."

↳↳ As Paul says in [Rom. 6:23a](#), ~ "[For the wages of ~ \[or payment for\] ~ sin is death](#)."

▶▶ And then we examined the first two of the five ways Paul describes our spiritually dead condition in [verses 2-3](#).

▷▷ 1st, ~ in [vs. 2a](#), ~ Paul: ~ prior to salvation, ~ we "[walked](#)" in our "[trespasses and sins](#)."

↳↳ I.e., ~ actively sinning characterized our lives prior to salvation. ~ IOW, ~ in our pre-salvation condition, ~ sinning was a way of life for us. ~ Sin dominated our lives.

→→ Implication: ~ sinning is not to characterize our new life in Christ.

▷▷ And 2nd, ~ Paul said that we followed "[the course of this world](#)."

↳↳ As we talked about, ~ Paul here does not use the word "[world](#)" in the literal sense of the physical world, ~ [but in the theological sense of people organized in their opposition against God](#).

→→ As noted, ~ this could be understood as referring to the various non-Christian religions, ~ [ideologies](#), ~ [philosophies](#), ~ [values](#), ~ and [economic structures](#), ~ as well as to the influence of [peer pressure](#), ~ [fashion](#), ~ and the [media](#). ~ 77

↳↳ And also to the people behind all these things. 11 2/8

↳↳I.e., ~ Before God saved us, ~ Paul says, ~ we followed the standards of this present evil world system, ~ or, ~ as Paul put it Gal. 1:4, ~ "the present evil age," ~ ¶¶

→→that is in rebellion against God, ~ that is opposed to everything and everyone associated with Him, ~ and where self is on the throne.

THIS A.M., ~ WE TURN OUR ATTENTION TO VERSE 2C AND THE THIRD WAY PAUL describes our condition prior to salvation.

PAUL SAYS THAT WHEN WE WERE SPIRITUALLY DEAD, ~ WE WERE "FOLLOWING THE prince of the power of the air, ~ the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience."

▶▶Before getting into the details, ~ let's note, ~ and keep in mind as we look at the specifics, ~ that the main point of description is that, ~ prior to salvation, ~ we followed this prince or ruler.

ALTHOUGH PAUL DOES NOT IDENTIFY HIM HERE, ~ NO DOUBT, ~ BASED ON THE overall context of Scripture, ~ and Paul's wording here in verse 2c, ~ he is referring to Satan, ~ ¶¶

▶▶when he says "the prince of the power of the air."

▶▶Satan is a real spirit being and the adversary of God and God's people. ~~ Satan was originally one of the holy cherubim, ~ created by God.

▶▶At some point before the events recorded in Gen. 3, ~ this cherub rebelled against God and became Satan.

▷▷Is. 14:12-15 and Ezek. 28:12-19 ~~ *And BTW, ~ when we say cherub*

▶▶Satan is the adversary of God and God's people. ~~ And simply put, ~ Satan's main objective is to thwart the sovereign plan of God ~ and to destroy God's people.

▶▶So, ~ in verse 2c, ~ Paul's third description of our spiritually dead life ~ is that, ~ when we were spiritually dead, ~ we were following Satan.

PAUL IDENTIFIES SATAN AS "PRINCE OF THE POWER OF THE AIR."

▶▶Based on Paul's third overarching theme of Ephesians, ~ i.e., ~ the spiritual warfare of the believer, ~ and Paul's usage of the word for "power" (authority) elsewhere in Ephesians, ~ ¶¶

▷▷I believe that "power" here refers to demons in a collective sense. ~~ I.e., ~ Satan is the prince or ruler over the spiritual forces of evil. ~~ Rev. 12:7 refers ¶¶ 3/8

▶▶ When Satan rebelled against God, ~ he took a number of angels with him; ~ possibly one-third, ~ if that's what [Rev. 12:4a](#) is referring to. ~ And they became the demons.

▶▶ To expand on Paul's third description of our spiritually dead life in [verse 2c](#), ~ Paul is saying ~ that, ~ when we were spiritually dead, ~ we were "following Satan, ~ who is the ruler of the spiritual forces of evil."

OK, ~ SO "POWER" REFERS TO THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF EVIL. ~ BUT WHAT ABOUT the word "air," ~ when he says "prince of the power of the air"?

▶▶ Well, ~ Paul seems to be using "air" as a metaphor for the spiritual world in which the spiritual forces of evil operate. ~ I.e., ~ using "air" to represent the spiritual realm.

▷▷ And, ~ just as we cannot see air, ~ at this time we cannot see the spiritual realm.

▶▶ And since air is all around us, ~ Paul may have used the word "air" to emphasize how closely the spiritual forces of evil crowd in on human life, ~ filling the very atmosphere around us.

▷▷ Here it seems that Paul wanted to press upon us the fact that Satan and his demons are very much present and involved in this world.

▷▷ This is clearly portrayed in Satan's answer to God in [Job 1:7](#). ~ "The Lord said to Satan, ~ 'From where have you come?' ~ Satan answered the Lord and said, ~ 'From going to and fro on the earth, ~ and from walking up and down on it.'"

▷▷ And Daniel, ~ in his book, ~ refers to angels and demons that are assigned to ~ and involved with ~ the nations of the world.

↪↪ Opens curtains . . . ~ glimpse of what's going on behind the scenes.

↪↪ In explaining the delay of the answer to Daniel's prayer, ~ the angel tells him in [Dan. 10:13](#), ~ ¶¶

→→ "The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days ~ [demon, ~ no human could resist an angel for a second, ~ let alone 21 days], ~ ¶¶

↪↪ but Michael, ~ one of the chief princes, ~ came to help me, ~ for I was left there with the kings of Persia."

↪↪ And then in [11:1](#), ~ the angel tells Daniel, ~ [LEB](#) ~ "And I, ~ in the first year of Darius the Mede, ~ I stood as a support ~ and as a protection for him." ~ {Michael}

▷▷ So, ~ we see that the spiritual world is very much present and involved in the physical world. ~ And Paul, ~ it seems, ~ doesn't want us to miss this truth.

↳↳ And here's a thought. ~ When we observe things going on with the governments of the world's nations ~ and the actions they take, ~ **we need to take into account what Daniel reveals to us.**

→→ And begin to think more on a spiritual level ~ rather than on a physical, ~ only what we see level.

▶▶ To further expand on Paul's 3rd description of our spiritually dead life, ~ Paul is saying ~ that, ~ **when we were spiritually dead, ~ we were following Satan, ~ who is the ruler of the spiritual forces of evil in the unseen world, ~ which is all around us.**

ALTHOUGH PAUL DOES NOT MENTION IT HERE, ~ WE SHOULD NOTE THAT IN addition to ruling over the spiritual forces of evil, ~ Satan is also the ruler of this world.

▶▶ I.e., ~ he is the ruler of this present evil world system, ~ that is in rebellion against God, ~ that is opposed to everything and everyone associated with Him, ~ **and where self is on the throne.**

▷▷ Three times in John's gospel, ~ in **12:31, ~ 14:30, ~ and 16:11,** ~ Jesus called Satan **"the ruler of this world."** ~ Notice, ~ "the," ~ not "a."

▷▷ In **2 Cor. 4:4,** ~ Paul calls Satan **"the god of this world."** ~ I.e., ~ the one who has power or authority over this world.

▷▷ In **1 Jn. 5:19,** ~ John writes, ~ **"We ~ [i.e., ~ Christians] ~ know that we are from God, ~ and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one."**

▷▷ Satan is the ruler and the power behind the non-Christian religions, ~ ideologies, ~ philosophies, ~ **values, ~ and economic structures, ~ and also the people involved in all these things.**

↳↳ We've already seen an example of this in two passages that we've already mentioned. ~ **Is. 14:12-15 and Ezek. 28:12-19**

▶▶ Now, ~ the good news here is that on the cross, ~ Jesus defeated and overthrew Satan.

▷▷ In **Jn. 12:31,** ~ which we mentioned earlier, ~ Jesus, ~ speaking about His crucifixion, ~ said, ~ **Now is the judgment of this world; ~ now will the ruler of this world be cast out."**

▷▷ But, ~ as we've discussed, ~ Jesus has not yet exercised His full authority. ~~ He allows this present evil world system and its ruler to temporarily continue.

↳↳ To put it differently, ~ this "present evil age" ~ and its ruler ~ are living and reigning on borrowed time. ~~ And that time will someday run out.

→→ Rev. 20 ~ ~ **2 Peter

GETTING BACK TO EPH. 2:2c, ~ AND HIS THIRD DESCRIPTION OF OUR UNSAVED LIFE, ~ Paul further identifies Satan as ~ "the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience."

▶▶ "sons of disobedience" refers to unbelievers ~ and is actually a good description of them. ~~ They reject God, ~ rebel against His ways, ~ and follow Satan and his ways.

▶▶ Simply put, ~ Paul says that Satan, ~ and we could include the other demons here, ~ "is now at work in unbelievers."

▶▶ The term Paul used for "at work" implies more than the idea of simply "at work in."

▷▷ It can be paraphrased as "the spirit that is now powerfully working in the sons of disobedience."

▶▶ And "powerfully working" most likely refers to powerfully influencing unbelievers.

▷▷ Not only is Satan the ruler and power behind the evil world system. ~~ He also powerfully influences the various non-Christian religions, ~ ideologies, ~ philosophies, ~ values, ~ and economic structures, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ as well as powerfully influencing peer pressure, ~ fashion, ~ and the media, ~ and also the people involved.

▷▷ Much of the greed and self-centered ambitions of the nations, ~ much of the deceptive diplomacy of the political world, ~ much of the bitter hatred and rivalry in the sphere of commerce, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ plus the godless ideologies of the masses of humanity, ~ spring out of ~ and are fostered by ~ Satan's powerful influence.

▶▶ Now, ~ it's extremely important to understand two things here regarding Satan powerfully influencing unbelievers.

▷▷ 1st, ~ it does not mean that people won't be held accountable for their actions

▷▷ And 2nd, ~ when Paul says Satan is powerfully influencing unbelievers, ~ it does not mean that Satan is personally at work in the life of each unbeliever.

↳↳ Satan is a created being. ~ And, ~ unlike God, ~ who is God and omnipresent, ~ Satan cannot be in all places at one time.

→→ But through his army of demons and his power over the "present evil age," ~ he powerfully influences the lives of all unbelievers.

GETTING BACK TO, ~ AND ONCE AGAIN EXPANDING ON, ~ PAUL'S THIRD DESCRIPTION of our spiritually dead life, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ Paul says that ~ when we were spiritually dead ~ we were following Satan, ~ who is the ruler of the spiritual forces of evil in the unseen world, ~ which is all around us, ~ and who is powerfully influencing unbelievers.

NOW LET'S BRIEFLY LOOK AT THE MAIN POINT OF PAUL'S 3rd DESCRIPTION

▶▶ In brief, ~ Paul says that prior to salvation, ~ we followed Satan ~ and not God.

▶▶ Now, ~ based on the facts that Satan is the ruler of this world, ~ that he powerfully influences unbelievers, ~ and that when we were unsaved, ~ we belonged to this world, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ we can draw out the larger point that Paul is most likely making here in his 3rd desc.

▶▶ And that is ~ when we were spiritually dead, ~ we followed the ways of Satan; ~ we were under his dominion, ~ authority, ~ control, ~ and powerful influence; ~¶¶

▷▷ we carried out his will; ~ and we joined him in his opposition to God and His people. ~ Furthermore, ~ he blinded us from seeing the truth of the gospel.

▷▷ In 2 Tim. 2:26, ~ Paul points out that Satan has captured unbelievers "to do his will." ~ I.e., ~ to carry out what Satan desires.

▷▷ And in 2 Cor. 4:4, ~ Paul writes, ~ NIV, ~ "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, ~ so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, ~ who is the image of God."

▶▶ But the good news, ~ my brothers and sisters in Christ, ~ is that through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, ~ God the Father defeated Satan, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ opened our eyes to the truth of the gospel, ~ and freed us from the clutches of "the ruler of this world." ¶¶ 7/8

▷▷ In Col. 1:13, ~ Paul writes, ~ NASB, ~ "For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, ~ and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, ~ in whom we have redemption, ~ the forgiveness of sins.

▷▷ And in Col. 2:13-15, ~ Paul says, ~ "And you, ~ who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, ~ God made alive together with him, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ having forgiven us all our trespasses, ~ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. ~ This he set aside, ~ nailing it to the cross. ~¶¶

→→ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, ~ by triumphing over them in him."

▷▷ In brief, ~ my brothers and sisters in Jesus, ~ now that God has "rescued from the domain of darkness, ~ and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son," ~ ¶¶

↳↳ we follow Jesus ~ and not Satan.

CONCLUSION.

PRIOR TO SALVATION, ~ we were spiritually dead, ~ because of our trespasses and sins, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ we were 100% sinful, ~ sinning was a way of life for us, ~ we were following the standards of this "present evil age," ~ and we were following Satan ~ and not God.

MY FELLOW BELIEVERS, ~ WE WERE IN THIS HORRIBLY SINFUL, ~ HELPLESS, ~ AND hopeless condition. ~ We were alienated from and hostile toward God. ~¶¶

▶▶ We aligned ourselves with Satan.

▶▶ "But God, ~ [to give us encouragement ~ and another preview of the good news that comes later in this paragraph, ~ Paul writes in verses 4-6] ~ ¶¶

▷▷ [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 — and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

▶▶ Grace, ~ grace, ~ God's grace, ~ Grace that will pardon and cleanse within; ~ Grace, ~ grace, ~ God's grace, ~ Grace that is greater than all our sin.

LET'S PRAY 8/8