

Ephesians 2:1-5

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Ephesians 2:1

As for you, you were dead in your transgression and sin...

The Walking Dead**Dr Mark Roberts**

Ephesians 2 speaks to the walking dead among us. It resonates with those who, though physically alive, are missing real life. In language that is both foreign yet strangely familiar, Ephesians 2:1-3 describes the deadly life that many of us know all too well. Even if, because we are Christians, we are no longer completely dead in our sins, we still walk according to the lethal ways of this world. We still feel demonic power drawing us into toxic behaviors. We choose what we know to be harmful in order to gratify our desires.

Several ways this "dead in sin" language gets taken:

- It strikes a chord with our own self assessments.
- We reject the premise
- We do tend to think of sin in the personal

Romans 3:10-18

There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one. Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit. The poison of vipers is on their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Ephesians 2:2

...in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

The Devil, Satan:

- John 12:31 - The prince of this world
- Matthew 9:34 - The prince of demons
- 2 Corinthians 4:4 - The god of this age

NIV Application Commentary

A kind of blindness makes appropriation of this text difficult. It says that we live in keeping with the world and its 'ruler,' but we are deluded into believing we determine ourselves. We tell ourselves we are not susceptible to peer pressure, that we do what we want, without ever asking what or who determines our wants.

Ephesians 2:3a

All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts.

Dr Klyne Snodgrass

Paul uses [flesh] in various ways in his letters, usually with negative ethical connotations as here. It usually refers to that which leaves God out of the picture, that which is merely human and left to its own devices. Implicit is the thought that without God, desires are the lord in control. They must be gratified and followed. In the former life we lived by our sinful desires, doing whatever they told us. 'Cravings' and 'desires' refer to legitimate human needs that are distorted, subverted, and heightened to produce an irrational self-centeredness. Once again Paul focuses on the mind. The former life is marked by a misaligned reasoning process that causes people to do what the sinful nature says.

Ephesians 2:3b

Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.

Negative Assumptions about God

- God isn't the one who determines justice or rightness
- God isn't good and isn't capable of judging without an unfair bias
- I am justified in my actions and God is too small and doesn't see it or doesn't care

Ephesians 2:4-5

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.

Dr Klyne Snodgrass

That God loves and shows mercy is a truism. The problem is that we either take God's love for granted with no impact on our lives or we reject that God could love someone as sinful and/or insignificant as we are. The good news is the God knows how bad things are, but changes them. Where wrath should have come, mercy comes instead. Awareness of the enormity of the plight helps prevent taking God's love for granted, but the love of God must be appropriated individually. This is why Paul emphasized the wealth of God's mercy and love. His resources for loving are not limited, and his love extends even to the least deserving.

Romans 5:6-11

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

- Surrender to God who loves you and wants to approach you as his son or daughter.
- Admit to God ways that you don't want his authority or plan.
- Spend time praying and praising God for his goodness, grace and mercy.