

RIDING ON THE WRONG BUS – Lesson #8

One of the flaws of the religious world today is the constant calling for people to be saved, but most don't know what they are supposed to do in order to be saved.

- Repeat the Sinner's Prayer
- Ask Jesus to come into your heart
- Just believe in Jesus, by faith only

If I came to you and told you that you needed to be saved, but I never explained what you needed to do to be saved!

Could you answer that question?

In today's lesson, we are looking at God's message of salvation and what we need to do to be saved. **Ephesians 2:1-3**"

"...And you **He** made alive, who were (once) dead in trespasses and sins, **v2** in which you once walked according to **the course of this world**, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, **v3** among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others".

Dead in trespasses and sins. Dead men walking, **Romans 6:23** "for the wages of sin is _____death!

Ephesians 2: 4-7 "...**But GOD**, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, **v5 even when** we were dead in trespasses, made us alive (**quicken****ed, means to make alive**) together with Christ, for by grace you have been saved, **v6** and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **v7** that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Sin is described as transgression of the law of God, **1st John 3:4**, and rebellion against God," **Deuteronomy 9:7**

Sin began with Lucifer. Not content with his angelic position, he desired to be higher than God, and that was his prideful downfall.

Isaiah 14:12-15 – "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! **v13** For you have said in your heart: '**I will** ascend into heaven, **I will** exalt my throne above the stars of God; **I will** also sit on the mount of the congregation, on the farthest sides of the north; **v14 I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds, **I will** be like the Most High, **v15** Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit".

Renamed Satan, who brought sin to the human race in the Garden of Eden, where he tempted Eve with the enticement, "you shall be like God."

Genesis 3 --describes the fall of Adam and Eve, their disobedience and rebellion against God and against His **ONE** prohibition, and since that time, sin has been passed down to every generation, and we, as Adam's descendants, have inherited sin from him.

Romans 5:12 tells us that **through Adam**, sin entered the world, and so death was passed on to all men!

Being born sinners means we all sin. Notice the progression in **Romans 5:12**: sin entered the world through Adam; death follows sin; death comes to all people, because they inherit sin from Adam.

Romans 3:23 "Because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Ephesians 1:7 Our sin has been crucified on the cross of Jesus, and now "**in Him** we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."

God, in His infinite wisdom, has provided the remedy for the sin we inherit, and that remedy is available to everyone. "

Acts 13:38 -Therefore, let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins;

We all have the same problem – a sin problem **1st John 1:9**, "...If we confess (agree with God) that we are sinners...He, Christ is faithful and just to cleanse us from _____ all sin"

Ephesians 2:2-3 -Paul describes the problem --even further: "In which you once walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, **v3** among whom also **we all once conducted ourselves** in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and **were by nature children of wrath**, just as the others".

Paul says the problem we once had --was that we were following **the wrong person** and **the course (the pattern)** of this world!

- The "pattern" refers to the dominant mindsets, values, and lifestyles that are opposed to God and his standards.
- The world's pattern -is driven by human sinfulness; it does not acknowledge God as sovereign.
- The world's pattern –reveals itself in things like greed, lust, immorality, idolatry, deception, injustice, pride, self-centeredness, and godlessness
- The pattern involves conformity -to cultural norms that conflict with biblical values and obedience to God.
- The patterns of the world --are not morally neutral; they are morally sinful. Satan is at work in this world.

The ways of the world --are not the ways of God. Therefore, when we choose to separate ourselves from God, we walk and talk like the world does.

v3 amplifies our problem -Not only are we dead in our sins, but we are also dead because we're following the wrong person and obeying the wrong desires.

We have chosen --to get on the wrong bus because we followed and listened to the wrong person/s, sitting in the wrong seat, heading in the wrong direction! **Matthew 7:13**, Jesus describes this as the Broad road that leads to destruction.

This is why the first two words of **Ephesians 2:4** are the two best words you will ever hear: "**But God...**" who is rich in mercy, and because of his great love with which he loved us."

God did not do this --because we have something to offer God. God did not act because you are such a great person, God did not intervene because we are good, moral people.

We are not good. We are not moral. We deserve every ounce of punishment coming to us.

Grace and Mercy. Often treated as if they mean the same thing. They do not, and the difference is not theological trivia.

Mercy is not receiving --the punishment you deserve. **Grace is receiving** -the blessing you do not deserve --**Mercy** holds back something terrible. **Grace** pours out something wonderful.