***Notes & Summary of “Ephesians: How God Rescues Us”***

***1) Dead in our Trespasses and Sins***

**Ephesians 2:1-3**

### Made Alive in Christ

2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2in 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. 3All 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.

* *God knows that each and every one of us is lost, but He has a rescue plan that is failproof. In His plan nobody is lost who wants to be found.*
* *Why does God need a rescue plan? That has something to do with us and our condition. The conditions of humans are “dead”. We are dead in trespasses and sin. The Bible says the wages of sin is death, and so we are following a course and life that is actually on a path to destruction. The prince of the power, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, is leading that path toward death. This is not the Prince of power that is seated in the holy place in Heaven. Satan leads us into spiritual and eternal death because of our sinful nature. Satan does not care what sins we commit. He just wants us to disconnect from the Author of life. Sin is ultimately a disconnection from God and it is manifested in behavior.*

**Genesis 3:1-4**

**The Fall**

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

2The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

4“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman.

* *How was Satan able to get Eve under his dominion? By the element of deception.*
* *In Revelation 20, it tells us the end of Satan, and so if we follow him, we will also have that end. And so, we have the option, the choice of following Jesus so that we can have eternal life.*
* *The devil comes to Eve and says, “Is what God said really good?” He twist it, and he does the same thing to us. Even now Satan gets us to question God’s Word and gets us to question whether or not God’s promises are real, whether what He said is actually real.*
* *Satan uses desires, flesh, the natural part within us and he does that with Eve, also.*
* *Satan also calls into question the relationship. It is very subtle, but up until this point, God is referred to as the Lord God, which is Yahweh Elohim. So, the powerful God and the personal God. But when Satan refers to God, he leaves out the personal God name. So, he is not only questioning God’s rules, but also, “Is He really a personal God who has a relationship with you?’*
* *Satan is also promising something, but here is the thing with Satan’s promises: he will never keep them unlike our God who keeps every promise that He makes.*

**Revelation 20:7-10**

**The Judgment of Satan**

7When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison 8and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—and to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. 9They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

**Matthew 4:3**

3The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”

* *Satan thinks he can actually tempt, and bring under dominion, Christ Himself. What is he hoping to do in this situation? Here Jesus is in the wilderness and He has not eaten or drunk anything for 40 days andf 40 nights.*
* *Satan is trying to use Jesus’ authority, a pride factor, “If You are this, then do this.”*
* *The devil has engaged because he knows information, and so he brings forth some truth, some lie, and then he presents that to us. If we are not careful, and we don’t know, then we seem to fall under his dominion. In the first case, there was a falling, but in the second case, Jesus knew what He needed to know, so He was able to defend Himself against the wiles of the devil.*
* *The illustration here is a powerful example of the deception of Satan, because God the Father had just told Jesus, “This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” And here Satan is trying to get Him to doubt His Sonship. He does that even to us in the world today. When we become sons and daughters of God, accepted in the beloved, he tries to convince us we are not sons and daughters of God. But Jesus claims the Word of God and uses the Word of God to refute his claim.*
* *Christ is hungry and weary. Satan tempts these very things and in you, Satan does the same things. Where we are starving and need things, Satan says, “Let me offer it to you.” But in that moment, Christ chooses to let His dependence not be on earthly things but to let His need be on the Father to provide those needs for Him, not on Satan.*

**John 8:44**

44You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

* *Satan deceives. Satan is the father of lies.*

**Ephesians 2:3**

3All 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.

* *We are children of wrath.*

**Ephesians 5:6**

6Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient.

* *Why are those dead in trespasses described as “by nature children of wrath”? We are talking about God’s wrath. We are called children of wrath, not only are we seeking desires of the flesh, which is what is inherently what we tend toward without God, but then what ensues is the wrath of God Himself.*
* *What is God’s wrath? You have millennia of history where God was pictured as Somebody with whole illustrations of hell and all these things that were going to happen to you if you didn’t do exactly what He wanted you to, and that’s painted an unfortunate picture. It is important to look at what s it. It is the loving Father that is out there, that is in pain, watching His kids run off a cliff. What can He do? Yes, He lets them fall off small cliffs on the way. And so, He gives them over slowly (Romans 1) to different things like, “Okay, I have to let you go at some point, and so I’m going to let you go and fall,” in this sense. And He slowly…There’s this progressiveness to wrath, and there are also boundaries. God cannot be loving and not stop the craziness in this world from hurting us and from hurting the people themselves. It is love in that tough act.*
* *What we see in the beginning is the love. The wrath is the end of when we make the choice, the final choice, it’s the consequence of our sin. In His love and in His mercy, that is also an element of God.*
* *The wrath of God is never poured out on people; it is poured out on sin. This is evident in Romans 1. The problem is the sinner is not willing to let it go. So when sin gets destroyed, the sinner gets destroyed with it. God’s anger is against evil, because He loves all His children, and the Bible says He is not willing that any should perish. Yes, these distorted pictures. That’s why He is telling us to abandon sin, because there will come a time when He deals with evil. Revelation says the lake of fire is prepared for the devil and his angels. Not for us, He calls us to repentance.*

**Romans 1:18-32**

**God’s Wrath Against Sinful Humanity**

18The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

21For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

24Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

26Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. 27In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

28Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. 29They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, 30slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; 31they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. 32Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

***2) God’s Rescue Plan***

* *How many have fallen under Satan’s dominion or have gratified the desires of the flesh? All of us have fallen into Satan’s traps one way or the other. But, the good news is we have a rescue plan. We have Someone who is out there drawing us each and every time we fall to tell us to get up and to pull us up.*

# Ephesians 2:1(NIV)

**Made Alive in Christ**

2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,

# Ephesians 2:1(NKJV)

2 And you *He made alive,* who were dead in trespasses and sins,

* *Did God wait for us to become perfect before He made us alive? No. In our trespasses and sins is when He made us alive.*
* *How does God make us alive? It is God taking the first move. If I’ve sinned, and I’m dead in my trespasses, I am dead. God takes the first move*

# Ephesians 2:4-7

# 4But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

# *These verses are like a mirror image or a depiction of what transpired in the Garden of Eden. When Adam and Eve sinned, God came after them, and He was asking them, “Where are you?” And He gave them the assurance, the great promise, that evangelium (Latin for Good news) (Genesis 3:15) that there is Someone that will come; you don’t have to remain this way. You don’t have to remain spiritually dead. There is Someone that is coming that will pay the price of sin so that you can live forever. It is a great reminder that we don’t need to remain spiritually dead. Jesus is available for us, that we can give ourselves to Him, and He will save us.*

# Genesis 3:15

15And I will put enmity
    between you and the woman,
    and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
    and you will strike his heel.”

# John 3:16

# 16For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

# *What Christ did for us. God gave his precious Son to take our place of sin. Where did God transfer our sins onto Himself? At the cross, Calvary. The wages of sin is death so God took on that death went to the cross, died for our sins, and took on our sins so that we could be made alive in our trespasses and sins.*

# *Has it ever happened to you that you have heard a verse a thousand times and you hear it, and you hear something new? God so loved the world, loves the world so much..a picture of God that people need to see, the true picture of a God who loves us with an immeasurable and unfailing love.*

# *About the wrath of God that is poured out on sin, and the Bible says, “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us.” So, when you are talking about Jesus taking our sins, He is also experiencing the wrath of God, because He has become sin for us. God doesn’t want anyone to experience the wrath, and in the rescue plan Jesus says, “I’ll take the wrath.” He is taking the sin and the penalty for sin.*

# *The way that the sinless Son of God was treated exposed the evil character of Satan and his kingdom. Jesus did nothing but good, and we should remember it is not just “He died for our sins,” but He exposed all of Satan’s lies and dthat God is good and loves us with so much love.*

# *The fact that the Son of the universe, perfect, had to come down and go through that, shows how terrible sin is, that sin is not just something to can brush aside. No, this is something that destroys the foundation of everything, that God can have any trust and that will bring joy and beauty in life, and so no, sin is what Christ showed it to be. There is something in the fact that Jesus came and died and gave up His life. There is something about that death that demonstrates love in a way that nothing else can demonstrate.*

# Romans 6:23

# 23For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

# *The ending is eternal life for those who accept the gift of God. We deserve death because of sin but we receive eternal life in Christ Jesus if we accept it. We see the heart of a loving God, pleading with His children to accept God’s rescue plan for us.*

# Colossians 1:13-14

# 13For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

# *Sum of everything read thus far. It talks about deliverance from the power of darkness. It talks about God’s love for us, and it talks about being redeemed. by His blood.*

# Ephesians 2:6

# 6And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

# Colossians 3:1-3

**Living as Those Made Alive in Christ**

3 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

***3) Rejoicing in God’s Grace***

* *The promises that God gives us is twofold. One, they are for you to be able to live in the present, but there is also the promise of eternal life.*

**Ephesians 2:5**

5made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

**Ephesians 2:8**

8For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—

* *By grace you have been saved through faith.*
* *What is grace?*
	+ *Words that come to mind such as unconditional, unlimited, unmerited love and favor of God that He has for us.*
	+ *Power to forgive and also to free from the power of sin in my life. Grace is power.*
	+ *“Grace is our hope when we are all out of options, the answer that comes to a desperate prayer. Grace is the arms that lift up the fallen and comfort for wounds that are too great to bear.”*
	+ *“Grace was sent in search for us” not that we deserve grace but because we are so undeserving,*
	+ *Words that come to mind are the undeserved part, meaning there is nothing we have done, in fact, we don’t deserve it, and then the gift part; it is something that has been given to us.*
	+ *It is freely given, it is undeserved, it is un-everything and grace is power. It is the power also to be called into obedience and to do the things that God is asking us to do. In his grace, God has forgiven us.*
* *It is hard to define grace because you know it when you see it, and then you are trying to describe what it is that you saw. It is so incredible and so indescribable that you try to put this thing into words. Everything you need to know about grace occurs in one thing and that was on the cross when Christ went for you. All these words we try to figure out, redemption, grace, love, compassion, all these characteristics of God, they are all embodied on the cross, on Christ’s death, on His resurrection, and on His ascension.*

**Ephesians 2:9**

9not by works, so that no one can boast.

* *How do we not get grace according to these verses? It is not by something we do.*
* *How do we get the gift of grace? By faith. And you just accept it gladly.*

**Romans 12:3**

**Humble Service in the Body of Christ**

3For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

* *What else does God give us? In addition to grace and salvation, God also gives us the gift of faith. Every person is given a measure of faith.*
* *You may look at someone and ask “Why does that person have more faith than this person? God must have distributed out in a particular way and given some more here.” Is that accurate? How is it that your faith can grow? Why is it that someone else might look like they have more faith?*
	+ *The parable where Christ says it is a mustard seed, so it may not necessarily be more faith as much as a willingness to depend upon it, to stand on it, like, “I may barely believe, but I believe enough to know that God is faithful, and I’m going to stand on my little, tiny bit of mustard seed and wait for a mountain to fall.”*
	+ *The Christian journey is analogous to a walk. “Steps to Christ.” “From faith to faith. The just shall live by faith.” “Grace to grace,” there is this walk, and as we and others walk God takes us from one level of faith to the next level of faith to the next level. As we go along our Christian journey, God takes us to one step to the next step to the next step. God increasingly builds that faith through circumstances and things we encounter in our daily lives.*
	+ *Faith is built by exercise just like a muscle, so the more you exercise it, the more it strengthens.*
	+ *The parable of the mustard seed: When we think about plants, we put seeds in the ground, and that’s a cold, dark place. But, how does a seed actually start to grow? It requires the sun, which in spiritual terms is the truth, to warm the soil, and the rain, the Holy Spirit, to slowly soften the hard shell, and then what grows first is the roots which grow down deep into the soil to anchor that tree into the soil. And then slowly all of this happens before you see that tiny, little seedling come out and eventually becomes a tree. So, that is how to grow faith, through allowing the light of truth and the Holy Spirit to soften us and grow roots deep down into the soil.*

**Ephesians 2:4-7**

4But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

**John 10:10**

10The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

* *Are these things that God gives us are for the here and now or for the future? The evidence that we are seeing is that God’s rescue plan is both for the present and also has eternal blessings.*
* *Is the life that Christ came to give us more fully in Heaven or is that something else? It is both. He wants to give us a full life here in Him, and that will translate into a life full in eternity.*

**Romans 6:23**

23For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

* *So, there is an aspect of both. The blessings are both in the here and now, and it is also for eternity.*

***4) God’s Rescue Plan, Not Ours***

* *Why is it important that this rescue plan that God has for us is not something that we can engineer on our own?*
	+ *At the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus said to the Father, “If there is there was any other way, take this cup from Me,” and no answer comes from heaven. There was no other way for a plan. That plan was the plan, and if Jesus Himself could not come up with another plan, what makes us think that we could come up with a different plan? This was a plan put together by God the Father, God the Son, and it was a perfect plan, and it will work perfectly if we say yes.*
	+ *Satan is happy for us to try to save ourselves because he knows we will fail. If God is not willing that any should perish, Satan is not willing that any should find eternal life. He knows we will fail He does not care what false path we go on as long as we take a false path. There is only one way. Jesus said, “:I am the way, the truth and the life.” “No one comes to the Father except through Me.” Will there be people saved in Heaven who don’t even know about Jesus? Yes, saved by God’s grace, and they will learn there how He did that through the sending of His own Son. That false path is anything that is not God’s path.*
	+ *It is dangerous to believe that we can rescue ourselves, because then we don’t feel our need for Jesus, and He is the only way to be saved. There is no need for a Savior if you can save yourself.*
	+ *Because we have inherited this tendency to sin because we have sinned, we have become like the father of sin; we have become selfish. We have become full of ourselves. But when we realize that our eternal destiny is in the hands of Jesus who is outside of ourselves that we invite in, it keeps us humble, and it keeps us grounded, s o that no man can boast.*
	+ *The Pharisees were very ready to do all these things, and Christ said, “No one can come to (Me) unless the Father …draws him.” That is a very interesting idea that we can do so much, we can try all these things, but unless that faith is coming from the Father, planted in us, unless it is what God is doing in us, drawing us to Him, everything we try, every path we take, will only build on us, and it won’t lead to Heaven.*

**Ephesians 2:9**

9not by works, so that no one can boast.

**Ephesians 2:10**

10For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

* *When we make this decision, this choice to accept God and to accept His grace, there is also something else that happens when we accept mercy and grace. God has something for us to do, that is to do good works. Are these self-generated works? Do we sit down and create a list of good works and then start checking them off as to what we have done? We can certainly try. There are a lot of people who do, and as a result of that call themselves good. But, where do these good works come from? From a prior illustration, a seed that is sown, it gets all the nutrients, it gets the sunshine from above, it is all external. And then the growth is just the result of what has already been provided for free, so it is from God.*

**Ephesians 4:1-3**

**Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ**

4 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

* *God gives us all these gifts and then He says, “Walk worthy of the calling,” not, like, dejected and saying, “How am I going to do this? How am I going to make this happen?” It says walk as if you are worthy of it.*
* *A couple of promises God has given us to remind us that we can, indeed, walk worthy of the calling.*
	+ *Philippians 4:13 - “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”*
	+ *Matthew 19:26 - “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”*
	+ *Philippians 1:6 – “Being confident of this very thing, that he who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”*