

Raised and Seated

Ephesians Sermon 8

Ephesians 2:4–10 (CSB)

⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, ⁵made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace! ⁶He also raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the coming ages he might display the immeasurable riches of his grace through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—⁹not from works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.

Intro. Our New Life begins with Resurrection.

A. People are not basically good.

1. Every two-year-old proves this truth:

a. Tell a two-year-old to mind, and they won't.

b. Two-year-olds are gifts from God to remind people that we can be cute, and guilty.

2. Even old people can be cute but sinful.

a. I once watched a couple women at the Senior citizens get in a fight over who made better gravy for the biscuits.

b. The worst day of the week to shop at Wal-Mart is when the seniors get their checks.

3. Joking aside, we have all seen enough to know how dark and sinful people can be.

B. The Apostle Paul was not immune.

1. He knew how sinful he was, and he reminds all of us that we were all DEAD in our trespasses and sins.
2. But it doesn't have to end there.
 - a. You do not have to stay "dead".
 - b. Because GOD who is rich in mercy makes resurrection available to those who were once dead.

C. It's a shame we only talk about Christ's resurrection and Ascension once a year.

1. Because Jesus' resurrection and Ascension set the pattern for us.
2. When you give your life to Jesus, you too are raised from dead to life.

D. But, there is one more aspect:

1. **When we give our lives to Jesus we are raised from death to life and SEATED at the right hand of the Father with Jesus!**
2. Though you may feel like you are just hanging in limbo, Paul says that our spirit person is already seated with Jesus in heaven.

1. Have a seat.

A. Before we appreciate where we are sitting, we do well to remember where we used to sit.

1. **Illustration**; Has anyone ever had really good seats to a ball game?
 - a. Growing up, I always loved the top rows and the bleachers at Busch Stadium.
 1. I have been in the cheap seats in 2 Busch Stadiums, Coors Field in Denver, and Dodger Stadium in LA.

2. And all of those tickets have something in common: I paid for them.

b. But It was a thrill just to be there.

c. But on two occasions, I had the opportunity to sit in really good seats.

1. Twice, I've had seats where you could actually see the baseball.

2. Once you've had really good seats, the cheap seats lose their thrill.

3. However, The bad seats helped me appreciate the good seats.

B. Ephesians tells us that Jesus gives us access to a platform that we could have never expected.

1. Kings, power brokers, and even Satan have tried for these seats, but they have never sat in the position of God's right hand.

2. Then, Jesus ascends to heaven to reclaim his position.

3. But the next part is what I can't grasp.

C. Paul says, through Christ Jesus, we are then seated at Christ's right hand.

1. If this wasn't in the Bible, I would say NO WAY.

2. How could it be possible that people, like you and I, are seated at the right hand of the Father because of Jesus?

a. Jesus is at the position of power and authority with the Father.

b. We are seated with Christ in the heavenly realm.

3. Yet, this is exactly what Scripture says happens.

a. And it's not just an invitation (I had to be careful with language).

b. At salvation, Jesus does not just invite us to this spiritual platform, He seats us.

c. You don't have to do anything or earn your spot, because we are saved by Grace, lest we boast about our work ethic.

D. Therefore, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same one that brought us from spiritual death to spiritual life.

1. It's the same Spirit.

2. It's the same power working.

3. It's all the same.

a. There isn't a 1st Century version of the Spirit and a 21st Century version of the Spirit.

b. There isn't a New Testament power and a lesser, modern-day power.

c. The Same Father, the Same Jesus, the Same Holy Spirit, the Same Power has raised us to the right hand.

E. The position of sitting signifies that the work is done

1. To be seated means that your part is done.

2. The work is done.

3. The show is about ready to begin.

4. Have a seat, Jesus says, while He brings to pass the victory He has promised and ensured through His blood.

2. Because of this, Jesus' enemies are our enemies.

A. When we face attacks, you aren't the ultimate aim.

1. It's because of the God you love.

a. The attacks are because of who you serve.

b. Following Jesus puts in the crosshairs of Satan.

2. Satan can't hurt God, so he hurts God's people.

B. The Good News: Jesus' victory is our victory.

1. We, too, wait until the final enemy is defeated.

2. Revelation tells of Satan's final days.

a. Soon, there will be a day when the believer experiences no more pain, sorrow, or tears.

b. Soon the day will come when every knee bows and every tongue confess Jesus is Lord.

3. But until that day, every so called "win" of the enemy is a hollow victory.

a. Because Satan cannot stop God or hurt Him.

b. And you and I are seated at Christ's right hand in the heavenly places.

c. Yes, the pain you feel is real.

1. The consequences are painful.

2. The struggle is real.

4. The Apostle Paul knows, because he writes this under arrest.

a. In a few years, his life would end at the hands of a Roman soldier and his sword.

b. Paul knew ALL about how Satan fights and attacks, but he also knew that Satan could not touch his spirit.

c. Because his spirit man was already seated at Jesus' right hand, and Jesus' victory was his victory.

3. All because God is rich in mercy.

A. Paul doesn't linger long on this thought.

1. He considers what he says next to have great importance.

a. I know most of us want to more detail here.

- b. What do the thrones look like.
- c. What kind of power comes with it?

2. The focus is not upon us.

B. Paul uses all sorts of prepositional phrases to remind us who is in focus here:

1. Over and over: in Christ is the theme.
2. **Apart from Jesus, there is no benefit or blessing.**
3. But in Jesus, all things have been made available and access granted.

C. Reminder: Apart from Jesus, none of these promises are true.

1. It's not because you are a good person.
2. It's not because you have saved yourself.
3. For we are saved by Grace, through faith and you have no reason to boast.

D. So why does God does this?

4. So that He might display and make known the immeasurable riches.

A. Paul declares, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works."

1. The person you are becoming because of Jesus gives God glory.
2. Your story may be riddled with pits, holes, and very dark places.
3. But in Jesus we are able to point people to the miracle, life changing power of God.
4. We are proof that Jesus changes lives.

B. We are His workmanship.

1. Paul's uses this illustration elsewhere including 2 Timothy 2:20, the pastor of Ephesus.

a. Every house had noble and non-noble vessels.

b. They called them honorable and dishonorable.

1. I learned years ago that just because you can wash something, some dishes should never be used for certain purposes.

2. I might have been guilty of uses one of Julie's nice dishes to bail water out of the toilet (years ago).

c. Many of you have the fine-china and the paper plates.

d. Both get the job done but in very different ways.

2. But remember, that both the person who gives their life to Jesus and the person who suffers the wrath of God's righteous judgment BOTH bring God glory but in very different ways.

3. The Apostle says we are created in Christ Jesus to do GOOD works.

C. Notice whose workmanship this belongs to.

1. We are God's workmanship.

2. Humanity is created in the image of God.

a. Intricately and beautifully made.

b. Sin mars the image of God and makes us look unrecognizable.

c. That is what sin does.

3. All around us we see **the beauty of God's workmanship being maligned and marred, and messed up.**

a. How is that happening?

b. The enemy says, "If god created them male and female, let's destroy Gods distinction."

c. The enemy says, "If God made life as something precious, let us kill and destroy as many as possible."

d. The enemy says, "Let there arise monsters, like Jeffrey Dahmer and encourage people to watch his life story on Netflix and further the degradation God's image in humanity."

d. The enemy says, "Let's cheapen God's image in humanity through pornography and let's throw it in the trash like an aborted fetus. "

D. Because we are created in Christ's image, if we are his workmanship, then we have a job to do.

1. We have the responsibility of showing the world the beauty of Jesus.

2. We have the responsibility to expose Satan's plan to destroy and blame God. (What he has done since the beginning).

Close: In the coming days God is going to use you to display His kindness, mercy, and power.

A. So don't forget.

1. You are God's workmanship.

2. You are created for good works.

3. The enemy cannot eternally hurt you because you are spiritually seated at the right hand of the Father.

4. All of this is true when we stay "in Christ Jesus".

B. Let's Pray