

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

"God's Mercy" Ephesians 2:4-7

Introduction

1. Total depravity is the Scriptural doctrine affirming man's utter destitution before God. This is eloquently set forth by Paul (vv. 1-3).
2. Actually, man's sin and God's wrath serve as the dark background against which the enormous wealth of God's mercy shines so brilliantly. The diamond of salvation is therefore seen against the darkness of sin.
3. At conversion the believing sinner is given a blessed position. This includes:

1. BEING THE OBJECT OF DIVINE PASSION v. 4.

The opening words of v. 4 show that God has a different nature from us. He "being" (present active participle) as He is did not leave us in our sins (cf. Hos. 13:9). Thank God His nature is not like ours. He, therefore, initiates our change!

- a. God's mercy v. 4.

This speaks of God's compassion and pity for sinners. It is that in God which provides for non-believers. He is rich or wealthy in this (cf. Psa. 103:8-18). No scanty foothold, but full of it. This emotion in God creates assistance.

- b. God's love v. 4.

Here is that attribute of God which expresses deliberate choice. He is totally unselfish. This is so divine (cf. Rom. 5:6-8). Hence, He desired us as sinners. Once saved, He delights in us (Eph. 1). The noun and verb here are cognates. The accusative shows that God's mercy is because of (on account of) His love. Although our condition (vv. 1-3, 5a) was repulsive to His holiness, He loved us (1 John 4:19).

- c. God's grace v. 5c.

This is plainly undeserved favor. We absolutely had no claim on God's mercy. This is God's free favor and shows the gratuitous nature of salvation. It will never be forgotten. Incidentally, the verb tense is

perfect, noting a completed act with permanent results. That's the only kind of salvation God provides--permanent!

2. BEING THE RECIPIENT OF DIVINE ACTIVITY

a. Regenerated with Christ v. 5.

The verb "quicken" means to make alive, to impart life. It is equivalent to being regenerated. This took place "even when we were dead in sins." Notwithstanding our miserable condition, God intervened for us. When Christ our Head lived again, we, believing, lived with Him. "Together" notes we have fellowship with the living Christ of God. We share His resurrected life.

b. Raised with Christ v. 6.

What an escape from our sinful condemned estate. The death He died was ours. So His resurrection was ours. It is the great truth taught in Romans 6:1-10. Ponder the moral implications of this revelation (Rom. 6:8-13; Col. 2:20-3:4).

c. Reckoned with Christ v. 6.

Think of it--seated now with Christ. This verb, like the previous two (quicken and raised), is an aorist. It is counted as done. Being "in Him," we partake of all that He is. It is the lofty truth of Ephesians. What a change from what we were. Marvelous! It all staggers our imagination. So we sit enthroned with Him upon His seat of victory and dominion. Hallelujah.

d. Resplendent with Christ v. 7.

Here is God's ultimate purpose for saving us. It is His fixed goal. The verb "show" means "to demonstrate, put on exhibition." The "show" will exhibit the "exceeding riches of His grace." Note earlier comments on God's wealth or riches (1:7, 18; 2:4). Here the word "exceeding" points to God's superlative grace. This will be seen in the "kindness" which God has bestowed upon believers "in Christ Jesus." Since "ages" is plural, there is the thought of endlessness. Plenty of time to have the exhibition--all eternity.

Conclusion Who can stand unmoved before these fantastic truths? They bend the knee, they overpower the intellect, they move the heart--or do they? What is your response? Oh, give God the glory and believe for yourself that He did it for you alone. Amen.