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Deadness

Ephesians
Keywords Devotional



Ephesians: Deadness

Ephesians Ch 1, v 20

that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the DEAD and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,

Jesus died before He resurrected and ascended into Heaven as our perfect High Priest. There is no resurrection or ascension without the death of Jesus. The power of God is demonstrated not just through Christ's victory but in His humble obedience even to the point of death on a cross. Don't get me wrong. God's power is seen in Jesus' resurrection from the dead and His ascension into Heaven. But, the divine power of God is also revealed through the self-sacrificial love of Jesus, where He laid His life down.





Ephesians: Deadness

Ephesians Ch 1, v 20 - Continued

Jesus demonstrated supreme power not just by what He could accomplish, but also in what He chose not to do. He chose not to summon legions of angels at any point. Jesus chose not to give into His human will which was to avoid the cross. Jesus chose not to open His mouth and rightly condemn people for their wickedness. Jesus chose not to fight back when He was arrested and eventually nailed to the cross. Jesus chose not to come down from the cross until it was finished. Everything Jesus did would ultimately result in physical death. But, also, everything Jesus chose not to do was a form of dying to His flesh and denying His imperfect fleshly will. The life of Jesus looked like small moments of dying to the flesh which would lead Him to that culminating moment of His death on the cross.



Ephesians Ch 1, v 20 - Continued

Here we see the death of Christ makes way for the supernatural power of God. God makes a spectacle of death through the death and resurrection of His Son. God defeats death by dying as one of us. He conquers death victoriously by laying His life down in order to break out of the grave in supernatural power.

Not only is death the platform for God's divine power through His Son's resurrection and ascension, but Jesus' death signaled the ultimate demise of the spiritual forces of evil. Jesus conquers the spiritual rulers in the heavenly places by giving Himself over to death, and accomplishing a victory that no one ever could.





Ephesians: Deadness

Ephesians Ch 2, v 1

And you were **DEAD** in the trespasses and sins in which
you once walked

Paul is speaking to born again Christians in this verse. He tells believers that they used to be dead in their sins that once dominated their lives. Outside of Jesus Christ, there is only death. To be dead in sin, means that your spiritual wickedness separates you from the God who is eternal life. If you are disconnected from the source of life, you have no life. You might have physical breath, but sin leaves people in spiritual death, which is exile from God.





Ephesians: Deadness

Ephesians Ch 2, v 1 - Continued

When Adam and Eve sinned, they were exiled from the perfect garden presence of God, who was their source of life. This was the death that God promised would follow rebellion. God is life, and outside of Him is nothing but death. Since God is perfect light and absolute goodness, no evil can dwell in His presence. Psalm 5:4 tells us that no sin can dwell in the perfect presence of God, because it isn't compatible with His perfect righteousness and light. Our spiritual darkness is not compatible with God who is perfect light. Impurity, sin, or any form of evil ends up getting obliterated by the perfect holiness of God. This is why those who live in sin are spiritually dead. They have no life because their sin exiles them from the perfect presence of God, who is their life. Sin not only kills us physically but leaves us spiritually dead because we're disconnected from God.



Connecting the Verses

Jesus had to experience death in order to be raised from the dead. Why did Jesus have to experience death and rise from the dead? Because humanity was dead in their sin and wickedness. Jesus' death and resurrection was God's solution to our problem of spiritual death. We are all dead in our spiritual darkness, and God responds by sending His Son to take on the death that we rightly deserve. Jesus dies to solve our problem of death. He becomes our sin on the cross in order that sin would be condemned in the flesh. Then, after paying for our sin with His life, He willingly subjects Himself to our death in order to rise from the dead and conquer the spiritual forces of evil that once held us captive through our sin.





Ephesians: Deadness

Ephesians Ch 2, v 5

even when we were DEAD in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved

God rescues us out of our deadness through the perfect work of Christ. Something that is dead cannot make itself alive. But, God can give life to the dead. Those who trust in Jesus for salvation are made alive by God through their faith. God raises us up from the dead and grants us spiritual life through our faith in Jesus. This is a work of God's grace and not a result of our efforts. We aren't just raised to life in some impersonal way. God raises us up to life with His Son, so that His resurrection becomes our own.





Ephesians: Deadness

Ephesians Ch 2, v 5 - Continued

Jesus took on our death so He could grant us His life. Our spiritual deadness didn't keep God from rescuing us; it was the reason God graciously rescued us. And, we don't raise to life because we deserve it or because we earned it. God is motivated by His own grace to raise us up from the dead. Grace is undeserved, unearned, unmerited kindness and favor of God. And, this grace is best seen in how God rescues a helpless individual who is dead in their sin. God picks us up from the lowest place and brings us up to the highest place possible; with His Son.



Connecting the Verses

As those who are spiritually dead in sin, our responsibility is to believe in the gospel and trust in the only One who can raise us up from the dead. God responds to our faith by graciously granting us spiritual life in His Son. We are only able to come into Jesus' life because He has entered into our death and conquered the grave for us. We weren't strong enough to overcome death and the grave. We needed someone tremendously stronger than us. This is why God personally came down into our world to handle the sin and death that held us captive. He is our salvation.

Jesus' death allows us to be raised from the dead into newness of life. When we believe in Jesus and His finished work, we participate in what He's done. We die to our old sinful way of life through the death of Jesus and we are raised to new spiritual life through His resurrection. We have no eternal life unless Jesus experiences our death. This is how Jesus' death and resurrection make it possible for us to conquer death with Him.



Connecting the Verses

(Continued)

The way into eternal life is through death. Tim Mackie of the Bible Project says, "Jesus' tree of death becomes our tree of life." This is the beauty of how God has reversed death to bring life from the deadness of the grave. Jesus' death makes it possible for us to die to our old sinful lives in order to enter into relationship with God. God reverses death through the work of Jesus. Where once death was the result of sin, now, in Christ, death to self is the way into abundant life.

There is no need for a resurrection without death. This is why we are made alive with Christ. Not only do we participate in a resurrection of our dead spirits, but we will eventually die physically in order to experience resurrection to a new glorified body like Jesus. Jesus' death paves the way for us to follow Him into life.



Ephesians Ch 5, v 14

or anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper and arise from the DEAD, and Christ will shine on you."

Paul quotes a combination of passages from Isaiah to make the point that the light of Christ is required for someone to rise from the dead. This applies to both unbelievers who are spiritually dead because of sin, as well as believers who are called to daily leave behind the deadness of their old life in order to live a new life in Christ.

Even believers can wander back into places of deadness at certain times throughout their lives, and it is the light of Christ that exposes their darkness and wakes them up from their slumber. Believers have a tendency to be hypnotized by the lullabies of this world system to the point that they become spiritually ineffective. We are called to rise up from the dead on a daily basis by denying ourselves, picking up our cross, and following after Jesus into His marvelous light. And, as we do, the light of Christ will reveal more and more places of deadness and sin in the darkness of our hearts.



Connecting the Verses

Jesus didn't just die in order to grant us eternal life. Jesus' death is what enables us to live an abundant life here on the earth in anticipation of the fullness of life waiting for us in the future. In other words, the death and resurrection of Jesus doesn't just become our way out of death, but Christ models for us what it looks like to live the fullest life by dying to ourselves daily and living with self-sacrificial love for others.

Now that we have been raised from the dead with Christ, we are called by God to enter into a deeper experience of abundant life everyday. And, this requires us to stay spiritually awake on a daily basis, in order to avoid going back to the old dead ways of our past life. The death and resurrection of Christ not only guarantees our eternity in the Kingdom of God, but empowers us to live an abundant life of growing holiness and obedience.





Ephesians Chapter 1, v. 15-23

15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus
and your love toward all the saints,

16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my
prayers,

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give
you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what
is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his
glorious inheritance in the saints,

19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us
who believe, according to the working of his great might

20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the DEAD and
seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,

21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above
every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to
come.

22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head
over all things to the church,

23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.



Connecting Ephesians 1:15-23

The faith and love of the Ephesian church is evidence that they've been raised from the dead with Christ. Faith and love are not compatible with a life of sin and dead works. Rather, faith and love are what you'd expect of someone who has been raised to new life in Christ.

Paul prays that the church would know Christ in order to understand the hope they have and God's inheritance in the saints. Why does Paul pray this? If the church gets a deeper understanding of these things, they'll be motivated even more to live according to their new life in Christ, rather than go back to their old, dead ways of sin. In other words, the clearer that we see Jesus and the hope we have in Him, the less we'll find ourselves being drawn away to the dead places and dead works of our old life.

Connecting Ephesians 1:15-23 (Continued)

If we want to stay spiritually awake and alert daily, we need the light of Christ to shine in our hearts and open our eyes to who He is and all that He's accomplished for us through His death and resurrection. One of the ways we can better know Jesus is by meditating on His self-sacrificial love and obedience to the point of death. The death of Christ will not only give us a clearer glimpse of our hope in His name, but also motivate us to resist going back to those places of deadness and sin that Jesus set us free from. If our forgiveness cost Jesus His precious life, we should take sin more seriously the deeper we understand His incredible sacrifice.

Connecting Ephesians 1:15-23 (Continued)

Paul wants the church to understand the hope they have in Christ. But, this hope is connected to the death of Christ. Our hope is in God's promise that Jesus has paid for our sin and taken our death upon Himself. His death gives us assurance that our sins are forgiven and we're raised to life with Him through our faith. The death of Christ made way for His resurrection which results in our eternal hope. And, we're called to a certain way of living that is appropriate for this hope. This way of life is modeled by Jesus who calls us to deny ourselves daily, die to our flesh and follow Him in faith. Hoping in God's promises means that we are so confident in Christ's finished work, that we're able to die to our flesh daily.



Connecting Ephesians 1:15-23 (Continued)

The power of God is demonstrated through the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. And, this is the same power that raises us to life in the Spirit. We need to know this power better everyday in order to experience the fullest, most abundant life. This power is at work in our lives, keeping us from going back to places of deadness and sin. To the spiritual rulers and authorities, Jesus might've appeared defeated when He died, but actually Jesus' death signaled their ultimate defeat. Because Jesus triumphs over the grave in the power of God, He makes it possible for us to follow Him out of the grave to triumph over the spiritual forces of this world. And, these spiritual rulers and authorities want to lead people into death, while Jesus brings life through His death and resurrection. This is how we conquer death through Christ.



Connecting Ephesians 1:15-23 (Continued)

Now, through our faith in Him, we've not only been raised from the dead, but we've been placed in the highest position possible for a human, which is with Christ in heavenly places. We were once helplessly dead in the grave, and now we're seated with Christ in ultimate victory over sin, and all spiritual rulers. We wouldn't have this high position without Jesus assuming the lowest position possible. He climbed into our grave to raise us up higher than we could've ever climbed on our own. He took our death so we could enjoy His life forever.

Now, Christ fills His church with His life, so that we can live above sin, death, and the grave. We might physically die, but death doesn't have the final say. Just as death was the way into resurrection life for Christ, so physical death is our way into a fuller sense of eternal life with Him. And, by choosing to let the light of Christ shine on us daily to keep us from dead works, we prove our thankfulness to God for all He's accomplished through the death and resurrection of His Son.



Ephesians Chapter 2, v. 1-10

1 And you were DEAD in the trespasses and sins

2 in which once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,

5 even when we were DEAD in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.



Connecting Ephesians 2:1-10

The ways of this world bring nothing but death in the end. Not only is there a condition of deadness, but there is a lifestyle of deadness as well. There are evil spiritual forces that are leading this world into death, and people are not only dead because of their sin, but their lifestyle is marked by death because of who they follow. The spirit of disobedience wants to lead people into death through sin and rebellion to God. And, this antichrist spirit is at work in the lives of those who are spiritually dead in their sin. These spiritual forces of darkness capitalize on our sinful passions and fleshly desires. The passions of our flesh lead us into nothing but deadness. This old way of life was marked by the love of sin. When Jesus raised us up from the dead, He opened our eyes to see properly so that our view of sin changes.



Connecting Ephesians 2:1-10 (Continued)

Now that we're alive in Christ, we're able to see clearly in order to stay sober-minded as we fight against the sinful passions of our flesh. Whenever we give into our old sinful passions, we're going back to the place of deadness, instead of abundant life. This is why we're called to wake up from the dead daily by resisting our sinful passions and allowing the light of Christ to progressively shine on the dark places of our heart.



Connecting Ephesians 2:1-10 (Continued)

Even though we were dead in sin, and followed the spirit of disobedience, God doesn't respond to our deadness by giving us more death. God actually responds with His own self-sacrificial death. God responds to our deadness and sin by coming into our world to pay for our sin with His life. Jesus dies in our place to bring us out of death. Now, through His death we have a way out of our own, if we'd only believe.

God responds to the faith of a dead sinner by raising them up from the dead and seating them with Christ in heavenly places. The mercy and love of God is highlighted by our previous condition of deadness.

When a helplessly dead sinner chooses to trust in Christ for salvation, God graciously gives them eternal life in His Son. He gives us what we don't deserve and what we could never earn. God has mercy and grace on helpless, undeserving dead sinners.



Connecting Ephesians 2:1-10 (Continued)

But, God does even more. He doesn't just raise us up to new life. He seats us in heavenly places with Christ, where He sits in ultimate authority and power above all spiritual forces and rulers. We enter into a much higher form of existence through the death and resurrection of Jesus. God doesn't do the bare minimum. He does the maximum for us. As dead sinners who were separated from God, we couldn't be in a worse condition. But, now in Christ, we couldn't be in a better position. God brought us from the lowest point of existence to the highest point of existence through our faith in His Son. God chooses to show the fullness of His grace through the way that He treats dead sinners who put their faith in Jesus.



Connecting Ephesians 2:1-10 (Continued)

Grace was demonstrated when Jesus went into the grave to conquer death. Grace was demonstrated when God made a way for us to be with Him in glory, even though we were enslaved to sin and death. Grace was demonstrated through the way God treated us when we trusted in Jesus. He goes as far as He possibly could for us. There is no way that we could arrogantly claim credit for all the God has done for us. It is all a work of His grace. Now, that we've been raised to life in Christ, we are walking testimonies of the grace of God. Our lives are visual representations of the greatness of God's grace.



Connecting Ephesians 2:1-10 (Continued)

Apart from Jesus, there's no way that we could be what we are today.

There's no way we could've ever attained the status we have in Christ. We didn't deserve it. We didn't want it. And, we couldn't even have imagined it on our own. Eternal life is an unbelievable gift. It is a gift to be raised up from the grave. It is a gift to conquer death with Jesus. It is a gift to be able to daily choose abundant life instead of the dead ways of sin.

And, it is a gift to know God and walk with Him into the works He's called for us. These good works are not like the old sinful works of our past. The good works God calls us to, are not found in the places of deadness where you find sin and darkness.



Connecting Ephesians 2:1-10 (Continued)

These good works are found in His life-giving presence. Before, God calls us to do those good works that bring life to the world, He has to raise us up from the dead into new life. Now, that we're spiritually alive, we can imitate Jesus and do His good works of holiness and righteousness. Christ has raised us up from the dead through His death and resurrection.

And, if we're going to bring His life to the rest of the world, its going to come through our daily decision to die to our flesh and deny ourselves. In other words, the abundant life God has called us to, will result in abundant life for others. But, this abundant life looks like self- sacrificial love, laying down our lives for the benefit of others, and denying our sinful passions everyday. Eternal life spreads through vessels that assume the posture of Christ, which means death to self.



Ephesians Chapter 5, v. 3-14

3 But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.

4 Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

5 For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

7 Therefore do not become partners with them;

8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

9 (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true),

10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

12 For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.

13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible,

14 for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the DEAD, and Christ will shine on you."



Connecting Ephesians 5:3-14

What you expect from dead sinners is spiritual darkness. As long as someone is spiritually dead, they cannot produce the fruit of light. A sinner who's separated from God, will produce a dead lifestyle, which includes sexual immorality, impurity, and covetousness, but these are not appropriate for children of God who have been raised from the dead with Jesus. When God brings us out of the grave, you expect that person to produce a kind of lifestyle that is consistent with their new life in Christ. You expect that new spiritual life to affect every area of their physical life on earth.

A believer should live and speak different now that they've been raised from the dead in Christ. Where death once poured out of the lips of the dead sinner, now life pours out of their mouth as beloved children of God. Our lips shouldn't be filled with dead words that produce darkness. Our lips should be filled with life-giving words that bring light to people.



Connecting Ephesians 5:3-14 (Continued)

God's Kingdom isn't made for children of wrath who are dead in sin.

Their sin and darkness makes them incompatible with God's Kingdom of light. God's Kingdom is made for those who have been made new in Christ. God's Kingdom comes by inheritance, because it is not a reward for our efforts. Our dead works could never achieve entrance into the kingdom of God. His Kingdom has to be extended by inheritance through the heir of all things, which is Jesus. In our dead spiritual condition, we aren't able to enter into God's Kingdom. This is why Jesus brings us to life, in order to give us a new identity and position as children of God. As children of God who are spiritually alive, and brought into the light, we share in the Kingdom of God that Jesus allows us to inherit. Spiritual deadness is one of the fundamental differences between a child of God and a child of the devil.



Connecting Ephesians 5:3-14 (Continued)

A child of the devil is spiritually dead, stained by their sin, and exiled from the Kingdom of God. A child of God is given new life in Christ, and their brought out of their exile into the Kingdom of God through their faith in Jesus. Sin and darkness keep us out of God's Kingdom, because God's Kingdom is one of life, not death. Now that we're raised from the dead in Jesus, and freed from sin, we're able to inherit God's Kingdom through the life that Jesus has granted us. God now calls us to daily live according to the ways of His Kingdom, which bring life to the world, rather than living according to the ways of this world which bring more death.

Now that we're children of God, we are no longer in darkness; now we're children of the light. And, our lifestyle should reflect the light of God's Kingdom rather than the darkness of our old lives. Part of living as children of the light, means that we're discerning what is pleasing to the Lord. When we're raised from the dead, we're not only given new life, we're given a new mind and heart which enables us to love and understand the ways of God.

Connecting Ephesians 5:3-14 (Continued)

Those who are spiritually dead have minds and reasoning faculties that are poisoned by their sin. In other words, their ability to reason and understand the world around them is corrupted by their darkened heart and sin. Sin corrupts the mind. This is why Jesus gives us a brand new mind when we're raised to new life. Now, our hearts are setup to love the ways of God, and our minds are capable of understanding and discerning God's will in everyday life. Our new life in Christ grants us access to the mind of God through His Spirit.

When God raises us up to new life in Jesus, He really gives us everything we need to live in the light.



Connecting Ephesians 5:3-14 (Continued)

Now that we've come out of the grave with Jesus, it is not appropriate for us to participate in the dead ways of darkness with the world. Instead, we're called to expose the darkness in our own life and in the world around us by allowing Jesus to shine on our hearts. The light of Christ keeps us from going back to old places of deadness. God has raised us to life and shined His light on our hearts so that we would live spiritually awake and advance His Kingdom in the earth. Too many Christians are walking around half asleep, and are missing out on the abundant life God has called them to experience. And, abundant life is not only living in the light of Christ by avoiding sin, but it also means we're exposing the darkness daily through the light of Jesus. This assumes we're allowing the light of God's presence to shine on us daily through prayer and His word.



Connecting Ephesians 5:3-14 (Continued)

We've been raised from the dead for an unbelievable purpose. God uses us to bring His life to those who are dead in sin, and as we walk in the light of Jesus, we shine on those who are spiritually asleep and dead in sin. This life is not just for us. If Jesus' death meant life for us, then we can definitely say that our new life in Christ is designed to spread to the rest of the world.



