

Section 3

God's Masterpiece: The Material – Ephesians

2:1-10

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1. Overview

- What is the material?
- Who is capable of working with it?
- What has been made with it?
- Why has this been done?
- How has this been achieved?

2. What is the material?

- We were “dead” (v. 1)
 - no life, and no prospect of life
 - nothing to respond to God
 - no power to change

Dead towards God:

- incapable of making the least movement toward Him,
- Unable to do the smallest work for Him...
- ...or to give him the slightest pleasure.

- But “dead” does not mean lifeless (Luke 15:24), as we
 - walked in trespasses and sins (vv. 1-2)
 - walked according to the course of this world (vv. 1-2)
 - had our conversation (lived our lives) among the children of disobedience (vv. 2-3)
 - fulfilled our hearts and minds’ lusts and desires (v. 3)
 - We “lived in these things” (Col. 3:7)

2. The material (cont.)

- We also were children (characterised by deserving wrath) of wrath (v. 3)
 - “by nature” – again, no prospect for change
 - “as others” – there was nothing to set us apart
- The state described in Eph. 2:1-3
 - was true of all of us, Gentiles (v. 2: “you”) and Jews (v. 3: “we”) alike (see also 2 Cor. 5:14)
 - was true of each of us personally (e.g. v. 1: “your trespasses and sins” (JND))
 - was our past state (v. 2), although it remains possible to walk in such a manner

3. Who can use such material?

- Verses 1-3 present man's natural state
- Verse 4 presents God
 - rich in mercy
 - loving
- This was God's nature towards us even when we were in our hopeless, dead state

4. What has God done with the material?

- Verses 5-6 provide the evidence of God's nature
- God has not dealt with us as our natural state deserved
- God has not merely set things right
- Instead, God has
 - quickened (given life to) us – with Christ (v. 5)
 - raised us up (v. 6)
 - seated us in the heavenlies – in Christ (v. 6)
- This is our present state
 - a new life
 - lifted out of this world (a new position)
 - at rest in a new place.

4. What God has God done (cont.)

- This is our present state
 - there is no impediment to us enjoying it, and we should enjoy it
 - we should walk accordingly (Rom. 6:11-12)

5. Why has God done this?

- To display the riches of His grace
- And to do this throughout “the ages to come” – the millennium and the eternal state (v. 7)
- Note:
 - The Epistle starts with our individual blessings (called, chosen, seated, etc.)
 - But later on the assembly is in view (e.g. “one new man”).

6. How has God done this?

- We are saved
 - by God's grace (vv. 5 and 8)
 - through the agency of faith (v. 8)
 - as a result of God's gift (v. 8)
- We are not saved
 - by ourselves (v. 8)
 - by anything we have done (v. 9; see also Titus 3:4-5)
- The new state is God's workmanship, i.e.
 - something altogether new
 - created by God, and God alone

6. How God has done this (cont.)

- Did I have any part in this?
 - No. Being dead, how could I?
 - Moreover, if I did
 - > my salvation would not be by God's grace – I would have been saved by myself
 - > my faith and salvation would not be God's gift – I would have been saved by works and could boast
 - > I would not be God's workmanship.

6. How God has done this (cont.)

- Do I have any part going forward?
 - Yes: To walk in good works (v. 10; see also Col. 1:10)
 - God has “prepared” them – i.e. they are part of His eternal counsel
 - Note: Works are not required to maintain salvation (we “*are saved*”) but to fulfil God’s will.