

Believer's Boot Camp – Part 2

The Lord Jesus Christ has already defeated our Enemy hands down.

However, He has left it up to us to enforce every day in earth's trenches **the victory He has won** in the Heavens.

The book of Ephesians serves as a Believers Boot Camp, *teaching us that the church is equipped with vast spiritual weaponry* to accomplish this very task.

- **Victory** is ours if we fight for it!
- **Ephesians** is serious training for **serious Christians**.

In chapter one**, Paul ***begins our training by talking about **the RESOURCES of God**, which are now given to us... ***We are identified as belonging to God by the presence of the Holy Spirit!!!!****

***In Chapter two**, Paul emphasizes **the theme of salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus**. **First, Paul describes the process of salvation as the result of God's grace through faith**.*

Human effort, and human goodness, are completely ineffective in our salvation.

Ephesians 2 – CEV - From Death to Life – ¹ In the past you were dead because you sinned and fought against God. ² You followed the ways of this world and obeyed the devil. He rules the world, and his spirit has power over everyone who doesn't obey God. ³ Once we were also ruled by the selfish desires of our bodies and minds. We had made God angry, and we were going to be punished like everyone else.

⁴⁻⁵ But God was merciful! We were dead because of our sins, but God loved us so much he made us alive with Christ, and God's gift of undeserved grace is what saves you. ⁶ **God raised us (to sit w/Christ in heavenly realms)** from death to life with Christ Jesus, and he has given us a place beside Christ in heaven. ⁷ God did this so in the future world he could show how truly good and kind he is to us because of what Christ Jesus has done. ⁸ You were saved by faith in God, who treats us much better than we deserve. ***(2.8 treats us much better than we deserve: The Greek word charis, traditionally rendered "grace," is translated here and other places in the CEV to express the overwhelming kindness of God.)***

This is God's gift to you, and not anything you have done on your own. ⁹ It isn't something you have earned, so there is nothing you can brag about. ¹⁰ God planned for us to do good things and to live as he has always wanted us to live. This is why he sent Christ to make us what we are. ***(We are God's handiwork)***

United by Christ - ¹¹ Don't forget that you are Gentiles. In fact, you used to be called "uncircumcised" by those who take pride in being circumcised. ¹² At that time you did not know about Christ. You were foreigners to the people of Israel, and you had no part in the promises God had made to them. You were living in this world without hope and without God, ¹³ and you were far from God. But Christ offered his life's blood as a sacrifice and ***(we have been) brought you near God.***

¹⁴ Christ has made peace between Jews and Gentiles, and he has united us by breaking down the wall of hatred that separated us. Christ gave his own body ¹⁵ to destroy the Law of Moses with all its rules and commands. He even brought Jews and Gentiles together as though we were only one person, when he united us in peace. ¹⁶ On the cross Christ did away with our hatred for each other. He also made peace ***(2.16 He also made peace: Or "The cross also made peace.")*** between us and God by uniting Jews and Gentiles in one body. ¹⁷ Christ came and preached peace to you Gentiles, who were far from God, and peace to us Jews, who were near God. ¹⁸ And because of Christ, all of us can come to the Father by the same Spirit.

¹⁹ You Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens with everyone else who belongs to the family of God. ²⁰ You are like a building with the apostles and prophets as the foundation and with Christ as the most important stone. ²¹ Christ is the one who holds the building together and makes it grow into a holy temple for the Lord. ²² And you are part of that building Christ has built as a place for God's own Spirit to live.

- **The blessings of God are a finished work** – we **ALREADY** possess them.
- But we must **FIGHT** for it, just as **Joshua** had to fight for his promise.
- ***The devil is intimidated*** by your present AND your future destiny.
- God predestinates us for great things – **this is a fixed fight!**
- **Nothing the enemy does** can abort **what God has already done.**
- Think about your eternal position, **not just your current condition.**

The resurrection of Jesus is to US as the crossing of the Red Sea was to ISRAEL.

- It is our “point of reference” for God’s power in our lives – because death is the greatest enemy we ever must confront!

Eph. 2:1 In the past you were dead because you sinned and fought against God. “and you” – You have the same resurrection power **IN YOU!**

From the moment we are born we have a built-in desire to run the world around us so that it benefits and serves us.

- We are all born with a self- centered, ME FIRST identity.
- We feel that the world revolves around US.
- This is the very essence of SIN NATURE.

God’s purpose for our lives is that we have a GOD FIRST identity. This goes against our PRIDE.

Matthew 6:33 - But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Whatever you want God to bless **PUT HIM FIRST** in that area!

? What causes us to leave God’s plan for our lives and follow our own plan?

- We have a low tolerance for “***delayed gratification***”!
- We really think we can do it ***faster and better than God.***
- That is just human PRIDE.

2:1 – “were dead” - Death in the Scriptures is “separation” – we were dead in the most significant way – DEAD SPIRITUALLY.

- Just as your body separated from your spirit **cannot** function on earth,
- your spirit separated from God’s spirit **cannot** function in God’s Kingdom!

Physical death “***silences***” the body, but spiritual death “***silences***” the spirit!

WE WERE WALKING AROUND, BUT WE WERE DEAD!

Eph. 2:2 You followed the ways of this world and obeyed the devil. He rules the world, and his spirit has power over everyone who doesn't obey God.

2:2 – **because we were DEAD**, we tried everything possible to make ourselves **FEEL ALIVE** – that’s basically where SIN comes from

- (But that little nagging voice from God continually says, “but you’re still **EMPTY**”)
- “**disobedience**” – to be totally noncompliant (OT – “**stiff necked**”)

Eph 2:3 Once we were also ruled by the selfish desires of our bodies and minds. We had made God angry, and we were going to be punished like everyone else.

2:3 – “**children of wrath**” – warring against all that is holy by serving the god of SELF, fulfilling every carnal desire and inclination.

THE WAY WE WERE BEFORE SALVATION WAS UGLY!

Satan was supernaturally powerful and much smarter than we were.

The world system surrounded us from birth, and we were imprisoned in our carnal sin nature – yet we **somehow managed to escape**. **HOW?**

Eph. 2:4-5 But God was merciful! **We were dead** because of our sins, but **God loved us so much he made us alive** with Christ, and God's gift of undeserved grace is what saves you.

2:4 – “**but God, who is rich in MERCY**” – there is no other solution **but God!**

2:5 – we were **BORN DEAD**, but God loved us so much he made us alive!

DELIVERANCE (think UPS or FedEx) happens **not** just when someone SENDS a package, but when someone else RECEIVES that package – **we must reach out and take hold of the salvation and blessings** God provided.

When people become Christians, one of the hardest things to do is to **RETRAIN them** not to continue to operate according to the world system.

It took one night to get Israel out of Egypt, but forty years to get Egypt out of them.

- **There is always a battle** between the NEW person and the OLD person.
- And that is **why** we need teaching like Paul gives to us in Ephesians.

WE ARE NOT DEAD ANYMORE – SO DON'T ACT LIKE IT!

- You can't get unrepentant people to live like saints.

In fact, we have a hard enough time getting saints to live like saints!

SIN IS A HEART ISSUE – you can't fix a person from the outside in, just from the inside out.

2:5 – **“by grace”** – Grace is not God's ability to overlook our sin, Grace is the ability He gives to us to live above sin!

- Grace is the power to **CHANGE!**

Eph. 2:6 God raised us from death to life with Christ Jesus, and he has given us a place beside Christ in heaven.

2:6 – **“raised us up together”** – you cannot be blessed outside God's BODY / **“made us sit together”** – your victory depends on the BODY of Christ

Without developing an **“us mentality”** the church will be forever divided, and forever less than God intends.

That is why the devil constantly seeks to bring **DIVISION** among the church, so God's presence, provision and power **can never be manifested in us.**

Eph. 2:7 God did this so in the future world he could show how truly good and kind he is to us because of what Christ Jesus has done.

2:7 – **“he might show”** – God likes to show US off (think about Job in the OT) – God even wants to use your PAST for His glory (**“such were some of you”**)

“Take up your bed and walk” – show the world that **you are now able to carry what once carried you** – TALK ABOUT YOUR **TESTIMONY!**

In the ages of eternity God will say, **“Look how much I did with so little”.**

Eph. 2:8-9 You were **saved by faith in God**, who treats us much better than we deserve. ***This is God's gift to you, and not anything you have done on your own.***⁹ It isn't something you have earned, so there is nothing you can brag about.

2:8-9 – “by grace” / “through faith” / “gift of God” / “not of works” –

GOD DID IT, BUT WE NEED TO WALK IN IT!

- *He treats us better than we deserve: the overwhelming kindness of God.*
- “By grace you have been saved completely from your past.
- Presently you are in a state of salvation, through the present time.

SALVATION IS THE MOST ELASTIC WORD IN THE BIBLE...

Eph. 2:15 Christ gave his own body ¹⁵ to destroy the Law of Moses with all its rules and commands. He even brought Jews and Gentiles together as though we were only one person, when he united us in peace.

2:15 – “**enmity**” – **great hostility or extreme conflict** – The **LAW** was the root cause of this hostility.

- **But Jesus fulfilled the law** and abolished the conflict.

2:15 – “**make in himself**” – **Jesus became SIN that we might become RIGHTEOUS**

Eph. 2:16-17 On the cross Christ did away with our hatred for each other. He also made peace between us and God by uniting Jews and Gentiles in one body. ¹⁷ Christ came and preached peace to you Gentiles, who were far from God, and peace to us Jews, who were near God.

He also made peace: Or “The cross also made peace.”

2:16-17 – “**far from**” = Gentiles / “**near**” = Jews / now “**ONE BODY**”

Eph. 2:18 Because of Christ, all of us can come to the Father by the same Spirit.

2:18 – “**access**” – depicts a formal entrance into the presence of a king.

Hebrews 4:15-16 ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come **boldly** to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 13:5-6 ⁵ *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”* ⁶ So we may **boldly say**: “The Lord *is* my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?”

Eph. 2:19 You Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens with everyone else who belongs to the family of God.

2:19 – ***“household of God” – YOU LIVE HERE! - “What are you doing *standing outside ringing the bell when Jesus died to give you the key?*”***

Eph. 2:20 You are like a building with the apostles and prophets as the foundation and with Christ as the most important stone.

2:20 – **we are built** on the ***“foundation”*** of what the **apostles** (NT) and **prophets** (OT) **SAID**, and on **the cornerstone of what Jesus DID**.

Eph. 2:21 Christ is the one who holds the building (being fitted together) together and makes it grow into a holy temple for the Lord.

2:21 – ***“fitted together”*** – **you cannot be independent** and be part of **the Body of Christ** / you are not ***“fitted together” if you are not GROWING***.

1. **How have you grown** in your spiritual life in the last year?
2. **What is different** about you today?
3. **Are you growing**, or are you just “holding your own”?

Eph. 2:22 And you are part of that building Christ has built as a place for God's own Spirit to live.

2:22 – ***“building Christ has built” – Satan’s only hope of overthrowing our faith is creating DISUNITY***.

- You have never seen two demons fighting, because they are united!
- **YOU CANNOT LOVE CHRIST WITHOUT LOVING HIS BODY!**

John 17:20-21 Here Jesus Prays for All Believers - ²⁰ I am not praying just for these followers. I am also praying for everyone else who will have faith because of what my followers will say about me. ²¹ I want all of them to be one with each other, just as I am one with you and you are one with me. I also want them to be one with us. Then the people of this world will believe that you sent me.

- **JUSTIFICATION – SANCTIFICATION – GLORIFICATION**
- **Past – “I was saved” Present – “I am being saved” Future – “I will be saved.”** PENALTY of sin, POWER of sin, PRESENCE of sin.

CLOSE: Believer's Boot Camp

Eph.2:10 God planned for us to do good things and to live as he has always wanted us to live. This is why he sent Christ to make us what we are.

2:10 – “we are His workmanship” – God is working to the OUTSIDE what He has deposited on the INSIDE – we were created to perform GOOD WORKS

2:10 – “*that we should walk in them*” – literally, we should ORDER OUR LIVES within the sphere of the works God has destined for US to perform.

Eph. 2:11 United by Christ - ¹¹ Don't forget that you are Gentiles. In fact, you used to be called “uncircumcised” by those who take pride in being circumcised.

2:11 – “remember” – Look back with APPRECIATION for what God has done.

Eph. 2:12 At that time you did not know about Christ. You were foreigners to the people of Israel, and you had no part in the promises God had made to them. You were living in this world *without hope and without God,*

2:12 – “without Christ, being aliens ... strangers ... having no hope.”

Eph.2:13 and you were far from God. But Christ offered his life's blood as a sacrifice and brought you near God.

2:13 – “MADE NEAR BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST”

- These verses are for you.
- Christ's love overcomes all feelings of alienation.
- And brings outsiders into the body of believers.

Eph. 2:14 Christ has made peace between Jews and Gentiles, and he *has united us* by *breaking down the wall of hatred that separated us*. Christ gave his own body.

2:14 – “*he is our peace*” – Christ not only GIVES peace (temporary), but He IS also our peace (permanent)

- Paul writes the Jesus is now our peace. He himself is our peace.
- He brought us together by *His Blood shed for of our sins*.
- Believer's Boot Camp – Now let's fight for our Peace!