

Sermon Summary – March 15, 2015, Pastor Alan Smith

“By Grace”

- Do we have any perfect people here today?
- I had a supervisor that told me that he was never wrong. He thought he was wrong once but he was mistaken.
- Have any of you made a mistake? Have you made the same mistake more than once?

Ephesians 2:1 Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. 2 You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. 3 All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God’s anger, just like everyone else.

We all were dead because of sin. We all followed passionate desires! We were all subject to God’s anger! We obeyed the devil and his spirit was at work in our hearts! We deserved a death sentence but...

Ephesians 2:4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, 5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s grace that you have been saved!) 6 For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. 7 So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.

Remember...

- God is abounding with compassion/mercy and loves greatly (John 3:16).
- We are saved by the grace of God and not by anything we have done.
- God has washed away our sins. We didn’t do it, is all God’s doing. We can’t brag about our part in our salvation any more than a car can brag after it has been restored. I know some of you restore cars do you think the car can take any of the credit for its restoration?

Ephesians 2:8 God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.

Remember...

- We can't boast no matter how many good things we have done.
- There isn't a set of scales in heaven, putting all the good things we do and weighing them against the sin that we did. Believe me, we would not want that!
- We struggle with sin every day and we sin over and over again!

There is good news!! Remember that we do struggle with doing the same sin over and over again. We are not alone in this predicament. Paul writes in **Romans 7:14 So the trouble is not with the law, for it is spiritual and good. The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. 15 I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate.** But God's grace is greater than our sin!

There is a song that is on my workout play list. It's called second chance and it's sung by a band called Rend Collective. Here are some of the lyrics:

**My future hangs on this You make preciousness from dust
Please don't stop creating me
Your blood offers the chance
To rewind to innocence Reborn, perfect as a child**

CHORUS:

**Oh Your cross, it changes everything; There my world begins again with You
Oh Your cross, it's where my hope restarts; A second chance is Heaven's heart**

**When sin and ugliness Collide with redemption's kiss; Beauty awakens by romance
Always inside this mess I have found forgiveness; Mercy as infinite as You**

**Countless second chances; We've been given at the cross
Countless second chances; We've been given at the cross**

**Fragments of brokenness; Salvaged by the art of grace
You craft life from our mistakes; Black skies of my regrets
Outshone by this kindness; New life dawns over my soul**

Just think about that phrase: "Countless second chances we've been given at the cross." Over and over again God forgives and restores us! But...

- This doesn't give us a license to sin. Paul wrote about this in **Romans 6:1-2 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?**
- We have been made alive! Through the saving grace of God! Not by anything we have done!
- **Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.**
- Wow, we are a masterpiece of God!
- We have been shaped, designed, restored for a purpose.
- God has a plan for us that He planned long ago!
- God restored us to a thing of beauty in His sight! He restored us for a purpose.