

Dead Men Walking

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[0 : 00] Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to Ephesians, the book of Ephesians, chapter 2.

Ephesians, you remember, is after Galatians, which is before Philippians and before Colossians. Gentiles eat pork chops, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. Simple as that. Unless you can't find Galatians or Philippians. They're after the Corinthians, which is after the Romans, which is after the Acts, which is after the Gospels. So we're in there, right? Or just, if you don't know, just look at the first page that says what page number Ephesians is on. Okay, Ephesians chapter 2, enough of that. Ephesians chapter 2, we continue in our study of Ephesians. Remember, Ephesians is the book about healthy Christianity. And in the first three chapters of Ephesians, Paul is laying down the foundation. He's laying down what we believe, what God has done. All right, we saw in the first chapter that God has done great things. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. And the heavenlies in Christ.

And then he enumerates all these blessings. And then we have the prayer of Paul, which we spent a few weeks on because we want to learn how Paul prays. And Paul prays in a way that is so deep and biblical that it enriches our own prayers. And now we come to chapter 2, and Paul is continuing to show us the ways that God has blessed us, and specifically how he saved us. And so now we enter into, in chapter 2 of Ephesians, the salvation of God. Saved from what? And to what? All right? So we have a great contrast here between what we were before Christ and who we are after Christ. It's as if the change is from death to life. In fact, it is from death to life. From dead men walking to alive in Christ. Raised with Christ. So let's read it first. If you're able, please stand and read from Ephesians chapter 2. We're just going to look through the first five verses. Just read the first five verses, but we will spend our time in the first two verses. Ephesians 2, beginning at verse 1. And you, being dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them, we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

[3 : 36] But God, but God, being rich in mercy because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive, made us alive, excuse me, together with Christ.

By grace, you have been saved. Let's stop there. So reads the word of the living God. Let us pray. Father, open our eyes to see wonderful things from your word. Help us to grasp where we have come from and where many still dwell. Grant us not only understanding of what you have done for us and where we were, but grant us, Lord, to have compassion on the lost who are still there. Give us insight, Father, that not only we have insight into what you have done in our salvation, but how we want to love those who are where we were. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. So do you remember paradise? Remember Eden? Remember? Were you there? Do you remember how great it was?

It's kind of hard to remember. It's a long, long, long time ago, and it's, you know, through many, many begottenes. Many generations ago, but paradise, we read about it. Paradise was an amazing gift that God created.

[5 : 29] Remember, in Genesis, God created day one. He created a light. Before anything else, he created a light. And then day two, he created the expanse. He created, remember, the expanse above, we call the sky, the expanse below, which we call the sea. And day three, he created the land. He separated the expanse and created dry land.

On that dry land, he created vegetation, trees that bore fruit. On day four, then he created the light bearers. Interesting.

Four days later, after he created the light, now he creates the light bearers, the sun, what we call the sun and the moon. Day five, he created the sea life.

So the expanse below, and the expanse below, he created the birds of the heavens. Day six, he created land. Land creatures, the land beings, so to speak.

All the different creatures around. And as the climax of his creation, he created man.

[6 : 45] And he created man different than he created anything else. He created man in his own image. Or as it says in Genesis, in our image.

Let us create them male and female. Then we find out that in the garden, in chapter two of Genesis, we find out that in this garden, which was called Eden, right, there were trees.

There were trees of life and trees of knowledge. Well, or the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And God said to his created beings, eat from every tree as much as you want, except for the tree of knowledge.

You shall not eat from that tree. For the day that you eat from that tree, you shall die. The day you eat of that tree, you shall die.

Well, the day came. Adam allowed the dragon into the garden. And the dragon had a discussion with the woman.

[7 : 54] And the woman was deceived by the dragon. And she took of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and ate and gave it to Adam.

And without question, he ate it. So immediately, their eyes were opened and they covered themselves because they were suddenly aware of themselves.

So they covered themselves with fig leaves. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden. That would be interesting, wouldn't it? The Lord God walking in the garden.

They heard him. And so they hid. But God sought them out. Saying, where are you? Have you eaten from the tree I told you not to eat from?

How did he know? And then becomes the blame game, the shift of responsibility, right? Adam says, she gave it to me.

[9 : 02] And I ate. It's her fault. Well, she said, the dragon. And it's his fault. And as a result, God cursed the serpent. And he cursed the woman.

And he cursed the man. And he cursed the land. Even the land is cursed. And then God graciously gave them garments to cover themselves.

Which meant an animal died. Blood was shed to cover their sin. So paradise was lost by an act of sin.

And because of that sin, sin enters the world and spreads to every man and woman ever born. Now God had said in the day you eat of that forbidden tree, you shall die.

How did they die that day? Did they not die? They kept living. I mean, Adam went another 900 years or something like that, right?

[10 : 13] How did they die? How did they die? They must have died. God did not lie. The serpent said, you will not die.

So he called, the serpent called God a liar. But God is not a liar. In the day you eat of it, you shall surely die. There was a difference after they ate.

Was there not? There was a marked difference. They were aware. It was a tree of knowledge. They became aware. And they were separated from God.

Death at its most root sense means a separation. They were separated from God. Now they hid. Now they were ashamed. So, death.

They became dead men walking. Life but no life. So, we're going to look at that today.

[11 : 17] What is that? What's, Paul says in chapter 2, verse 1, you were dead. You being dead. Until God made you alive.

What does that mean? So, there's a great contrast. I just want you to notice, first of all, in a big picture, there's a great contrast in this chapter. Remember that Paul had been praying previously at the end of chapter 1.

He was praying. The last thing that he prayed for the Ephesians was that they would come to grasp the power, right, that was already at work in them. The power that was so great, it was the same power that raised Jesus from the dead and seated him at the right hand of the Father.

That's the power that we have access to. That's the power that is at work in us. Do we believe that? That's what Paul is praying, that you would really come to grasp.

That is what we have access to. That's what will cause us to do the things we can't do naturally, like forgive, like walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, like bearing fruit.

[12:29] So, now we see the power at work as that which saved us, because before and after.

Before, verse 2, verse 1, we are dead. After, verse 5, we are alive. Made alive by the great power of God. Not merely saved from sin, but saved from a life dominated by sin.

As we see in verse 2, we were under the power, we were walking according to the prince of the power of the air, spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Verse 3, we were living in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath.

That's the kind of power we were saved from. Or the kind of things that power saved us from. So, we want to better grasp this.

We want to look at what we're saved from. How bad is sin? Do we really take sin serious? Do we really hate our sin? Do we really know how pervasive our sin is?

[13:42] And here's the thing, you know, we're safe from all that, why do we still have to deal with it? In fact, when sin creeps up in our life and shocks us again, right, or creeps in slowly, and we recognize, oh, I've been not paying attention to that, and we realize how pervasive it is, even in a saved individual.

Because now we have those two natures, right? We still have that old nature. That's why it's still there. But now we have this new nature that's fighting, battling this. So, we want to understand this. All Christians agree that man is sinful and depraved. Every Christian statement of faith will say that, usually. Well, although a lot of statements of faith don't even say that anymore. But evangelicals will say, we'll all agree that man is sinful and depraved.

And so, what does that mean? So, Paul dwells on this. Look at, and of course, this is Paul. So, he has lots of words. But he's really dwelling on this. In fact, he's diagnosing the problem.

You know, he doesn't just say, we were sinners and now we're saved. He doesn't just say, we were dead and now alive. He really digs into what all of that means. And so, what we have, I think, here in verses 1, 2, and 3, showing the before conditions, are four serious conditions or disorders.

[15:13] A disorder, I looked it up, a disorder is an unhealthy condition. Right? So, since paradise, what has happened to us?

In the day that you eat, you shall die. So, you change. You become separated. We're separated from God. Right? There's a barrier now.

We go and hide. Our tendency is when we sin, we go and hide. You know, 1 John tells us to walk in the light, to confess our sins in the light. Come into the light and let God expose what we need to confess, right?

So, that's what we're to do. But that's not natural. Our natural thing is to go and hide in the darkness or not talk about our sin or not deal with it or push it down. But here are the conditions that we have. Verse 1, dead. Okay? Condition 1. Verse 2. The next condition is that we're under two external forces, two evil external forces.

[16:13] One is the world and one is the devil. And then verse 3, there are two internal forces that we're dealing with, as well as at the end of verse 3, fourth condition is under the wrath of God.

We'll look at those. We'll look at verse 3 next. Lord's Day. Lord willing. So, let's look at this.

Condition 1. Disorder 1. Without Christ, we're all spiritually dead.

Without Christ, before Christ, we are all spiritually dead. So, how does he start it? He says, being dead.

In the Greek, it's not, you know, it's just like you being dead. That's how Paul starts his sentence. It's just like you being dead. You, plural, all of you being dead.

Right? I'm going to start out, he does not say, he says dead. He does not say dying. He does not say very sick. He does not say just need a little help from God. God helps those who help themselves kind of stuff.

[17:17] No, he says you being dead. You don't need a little help. You need a whole lot of help. Dead. You're separated. You have no life. Clearly, he's talking about spiritual death, not physical death.

You being dead. If we're already physically dead, then we're done. But he's talking about spiritual death. How did Adam and Eve die? What sense did they die in the garden? They died, right, spiritually.

Something changed. Immediately changed. Our eyes are open. And now they're more self-aware, so they're self-focused, self, right, reliant, self, all the self-dash things.

And he says, dead in what way? Dead in your trespasses and sins. In your trespasses, the falling away kind of things, the deviating kind of things.

You trespass. There's a line. You cross it. Right? You trespass. You're not trespass. Or you'll be shot. Right? There's a trespass.

[18 : 21] Old Testament. Here's the 10 words, right? Here's the 10 commands. We violate any one of those commands. It's called a trespass. I've crossed that line.

Right? So there's those kind of sins. In trespassing, a life characterized by acts of rebellion. They're intentional. Right? They are the kinds of sins that the Old Testament sacrifices do not address.

The Old Testament, as we've discovered, and you read the book of Hebrews, it's clear, the sacrifices of the Old Testament cover unintentional sin. Touched a dead body.

Didn't mean to. It just, right? Unintentional. But crossing the line, those, there's no sacrifice for that. That's why David in Psalm 51 cried for mercy.

If there was a sacrifice, I would give it. David was a dead man. He was a cursed man. So those are the trespasses.

[19 : 30] And then sin. Sin, that's the more general. You're dead in trespasses and sins. Sins, the Greek word there just means to fall short, to miss the mark. You know, those are the kind of, they could be unintentional.

I'm trying to do my best, but my best doesn't get me all the way. My best, I'm to love the Lord my God with all my heart and all my soul and all my strength, but I'm not able to do that 24-7.

It's just, I just can't do that. Even if I do my very, very best, I will fail. There's just no way. All of my heart, all of my thoughts, all of my will, all of my soul, my soul, my gosh, my soul's all over the place. And all of my strength, my strength fails. So that's sin. And God knows we're but dust. Of course we're gonna miss the mark.

But his mark is always high and his mark is his mark. So what does it mean being dead? What does it mean? If I'm physically dead, then I have no ability to respond, right?

[20 : 35] I have no sign of life. You know, so the doctor comes in, there's no vitals, there's no heartbeat, there's no breathing, no sign of life.

No response. Right? Stick the person and they won't respond. There's no reaction. Insensitivity.

They can't see, they can't hear, they can't feel, they can't walk, they can't speak. In fact, the miracles that Jesus did, especially in the Gospel of John, were counter those very effects of death. death. Jesus, so the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, right? The dead are raised.

So the signs of John, the very miracle of, show what salvation does. It brings the dead to life. It brings the, those who can't hear the word of God to be able to hear the word of God.

[21 : 39] From those who cannot walk in the way of God to be enabled by the Spirit to walk in the ways of God. So that's salvation. It's, it's a dramatic contrast to what I was before.

I'm enabled. I'm God-breathed. So, so let's understand how it applies then. So, that means, if we're spiritually dead before Christ, without Christ, we're spiritually dead, then it means that we were blind to God's truth.

I couldn't see it. I could read it. I could understand. I could read the gospel and I can understand that Jesus did this and he did this and he did this and he did this and he died and raised and he said he forgives us and I can understand that, but I don't understand that.

You know what I'm saying? I don't have an apprehension. I'm blind to his truth. I'm deaf to his word. Right?

I can hear it, but I'm deaf to it. It doesn't sink. I don't appreciate it. I don't believe it. I'm lame.

[22 : 47] I'm unable to walk in God's way. My mind is darkened. It applies in the sense that I'm oblivious.

I like that word. I'm oblivious to the things of God. It just doesn't matter. It's just not important. I just don't care.

You've talked to people like this, haven't you? Well, that's good for you, but I don't care. I really don't care. I mean, that doesn't relate to me. It's nothing that motivates me. It's just, I don't connect

with that.

And particularly what it means is I don't know God. I know about God. No one can deny that they know about God. Read Romans 1. There's no such thing as an atheist or even an agnostic. Everybody knows God. They just suppress it. They just talk themselves out of it. They know about God. They can't help it if they live in Colorado and look at the mountains and the trees and the beautiful area that we're living in.

[23 : 52] You can't deny that. And if you have a night sky that's clear and you see the star, you can't deny there is a God. You can't. Well, you can't.

You're a fool. Because it's obvious. God has made it obvious. But we don't want that. Right? We don't want that. So I buy into some theories that seem to dismiss that. So I'm not interested. I'm insensitive to it.

He describes it later in chapter 4, verse 17 where he's calling us to walk as new men. Walk like we are. Walk no longer as the Gentiles walk in the futility of their mind.

So here's part of what we were. Futile in our mind. Being darkened in their understanding. Excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them because of the hardness of their heart.

[24 : 53] Right? Becoming callous. They're not interested. So without Christ, we're spiritually dead. There's no life to it. There's no interest in it. There's no response to it.

It's insensitive. So without Christ, we're dead in our trespasses. Not dead because we sin. We are dead because we're in sin.

I'm not a liar because I lie. I lie because I'm a liar. I'm not a sinner because I sin.

I sin because I'm a sinner. It's who I am, not what I do. So I'm dead in my trespasses as I'm dead because I'm a trespasser and a sinner.

So these same two words, trespass and sin, what Paul says, you're dead and trespass and sin.

These same two words Paul uses again in Romans 5 when he's talking about Adam.

[25 : 58] In fact, he says what Adam did are those same two things. He trespassed and he sinned. That's what he did in Eden. He said, but he didn't even, he didn't even talk.

No, he didn't even talk. He just ate the fruit that he knew he was not supposed to eat. So he trespassed, he crossed that line and he sinned. He fell, he fell way short. He missed the mark.

So here's what Paul describes it. He says, therefore, Romans 5, 12, therefore, just as sin, so where'd sin come from? Just as sin came into the world through one man.

There you go. That's where sin came from, one man. And death through sin and so death spread to all men because all sin. So there we go. Sin came to us and because we're sinners, we sinned.

But the free gift of God is not like the trespass. If many, for if many died through one man's trespass, so there he is, there's Adam, both sin and trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift come by the grace that is in the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for many.

[27 : 12] And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin for the judgment following one trespass, Adam's one sin, brought condemnation, but the free gift following the many trespasses brought justification in Christ.

For as by one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many were made righteous. So who are you connected to?

Are you connected to Adam? Everybody should say yes. That's what made me a sinner. I'm connected to Adam. Yes. Are you connected to Christ?

See, if you're connected to Christ, if you're in Christ, then all his righteousness comes to you. That's that gift, right? He doesn't just take our sins, but he gives us his righteousness.

We're made right. Not because we did anything. Because we believed. Because he gifted it to us. So how are we dead in sin?

[28 : 25] We inherited this from Adam. Yes, we who are Bible believers actually believe there was a man who existed by the name of Adam and a help meet by the name of Eve, and they were the beginning of all life.

This is what we actually believe. That's what Paul believed, what Jesus believed, so I'm going to believe it. I'm not smarter than Paul, and I'm definitely not smarter than Jesus. So yes, we are fools enough to believe that what Genesis says is true life.

Fact. So we've been born corrupted. Here's the implications for us. This is what I don't like. I see a baby born, and the babies are just precious and innocent, right?

And then there's that day with the baby, you take the baby home, and they're just crying their head off. They're just crying, like they're mad.

They are upset. And there's usually just a couple of reasons. One is they're hungry, or two is what? Okay, they need to be changed.

[29 : 31] So, you know, but the cry, the cry already, the cry has this willfulness in it. It has this defiance in it. Yeah. This innocent little life.

Precious little baby. How does that make sense? Then they turn two, and what happens? They perfect that sin nature, man. They're just getting that down.

I'm crossing that line. You said I can't do that. I can't eat. What? Did it? Are you eating? It sounds like God in the garden. Are you eating what I told you not to eat?

Yes. So how bad is our connection? It's grave. We are spiritually dead without Christ. And it's important for us to know that.

It's really important for us to know that. Not only for us to give greater glory to God because of what he's saved us from. He's made us alive. God. To recognize that there was nothing I could do to save myself.

[30 : 35] I'm insensitive to God. I'm dead. If I'm dead, what can I do? Well, I know when I was dead, spiritually dead, I did know I was convicted, and so I did pray.

I asked for rescue. And unfortunately, I was told by many godly men that if I prayed, that I would be delivered. Immediately. Completely. And it didn't happen for, I don't know how many years.

At least 12, 15 years. But I kept praying. I kept praying. Kept praying. Kept praying. But I could not cause that rebirth. I could not cause it. The wonderful godly men said, cross this line, pray this prayer, throw that stick in the fire, you'll be changed.

It never happened. Happened on another time when nobody told me to do that, but when I was scared by a demon, and I went and prayed with two other friends, just threw ourselves on the mercy of God, and something changed.

Boom. Something changed. God makes us alive when he makes us alive. Does he use our prayers?

[31 : 58] Absolutely. Of course. Is it right to pray for Jesus coming to my heart? Absolutely. Pray that. Keep praying it. Keep praying it. Keep praying it until he answers it.

Don't wait for a preacher to say, yeah, you got it. Don't trust preachers in that regard to your spiritual destiny, about your personal soul. Trust preachers if they're preaching from the word, and they're, okay, but if they're telling you, oh, yeah, okay.

I don't need to get into that. Let's not pick on preachers today. So disorder when we're dead.

Without Christ, we're dead. Secondly, verse two, without Christ, we're dominated.

We're dominated by evil external influences. Two forces. Two forces at work in verse two. He says, we are walking.

You formerly, before Christ, you were formerly walked according to two things. According to the course of this world, and two, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

[33 : 03] So you're walking two forces, the course of the world and the ruler of the air, who is also the spirit of those who are disobedient. So what's the course of the world?

Without Christ, before Christ, we're walking according to, right? We're following the path of the world. We're on the course that the world has set out.

The life directed by the world. We're conformed. Remember Romans 12.2 says, not being conformed to the world, right? Not being pressed into the mold of the world.

We have to intentionally not follow the ways of the world, though it's natural to follow them. So we have to fight that. But before Christ, we naturally followed, conformed to the world.

That's what people at work are saying. It's what people, that's the values and the attitudes and the ideas of the world are just, yeah, I agree with that. I think that. The world, the word world means, is the word cosmos, which means order.

[34 : 14] Something ordered. Something orderly. Something arranged. It's a system, a way of life. So our world definitely has an order to it, an arrangement to it, a system of life.

It's the spirit of the times. The Roman world had this. The Greek world had this, right? The European world has this.

The American world has this. Kind of system that everyone tends to follow. Except for the few mavericks, who are just nuts.

No, I don't know. So without Christ, without Christ, without a, brought in a spirit that's counter to that, we just followed that.

We were governed by that. So he does not say, we walked according to ourselves. He says, we walked according to this external force, this external influence, which is called the world.

[35 : 19] So what is it about the world that so opposed the way of God? First John two puts it clearly. Do not love the world or the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the father is not in him.

John is so black and white. For all that is in the world. So how is he, how is John going to define the world? All that is in the world, the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life. Three things, right? Desires of the flesh, desires of the eyes, pride of life, is not from the father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

So the world, we could say, is that which is self-focused, self-centered, self-promoting, self-reliant. That might look different in a Roman world or a Greek world or an American world, but it's still self-focused, self-reliant, self-promoting, self-centered.

It's about me. That's the world. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life. Some Bible scholars have put those three things on the sin of Adam and Eve, that you could see each of those in the way she looked at the fruit and she desired to fruit, right?

[36 : 45] And it was able to make her wise. Right? So you could kind of see all three blended in that original sin. So, so we walk according to the world.

Secondly, we walk according to, this is, we walked according to the ruler of the air. Now, some people might object to that. I would imagine a lot of folks would say, yeah, oh yeah, I walk according to the world.

Yeah, no problem. Obviously I did that. I was walking according to the world. Self-focused, self-centered. What we, what we might object to is that I, I was walking according to the ruler of this world.

What ruler is that? He says, according to the prince or ruler of the power of the air. The prince of power, the ruler of authority that is in the air.

So what, what is that? Who is that? Who's the ruler of the authority of the air? The ruler of power of the air. Well, of the air means it's an unseen realm under heaven.

[37 : 53] It's an unseen realm. It's the power of the air. It's what he will talk about over in chapter six when we put on the armor of God, right? We, our struggle is not against flesh and blood.

This is, this is Ephesians 6, 12, but it's against what? The rulers, powers, world forces of darkness, the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenlies, in the air, in the realm that is unseen.

All right? So there are a lot of people who don't believe in that. And the devil's great with that. But believers must believe in that. must be aware of that.

Must be aware that there is a ruler of the air who has temporary authority in this world. Right?

He's called the ruler of the demons in Matthew 9. He's called the God of this world in 2 Corinthians 4, the God of this age.

[38 : 58] In Revelation 12, he's called the ancient serpent, the dragon. He is called Satan and the devil, the deceiver of the world. He is taken absolutely seriously in Revelation 12.

And remember Revelation 12, remember the sequence of Revelation 12. Talks about when Christ was born and then he's raised up to heaven.

Immediately as he's raised up to heaven, there is war in heaven because the devil, the dragon, is cast down.

See, once Christ arrives in heaven, there is no place for Satan. He is cast down. And now he knows his time is limited. So now his realm is under heaven, his realm is in the air, and he's fighting invisibly, right, to get us, to take as many of us with him as he can because he knows his days are short.

Sure, Bill, summarize the Revelation. So he's also described as the spirit, the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience, right, the spirit that is working in the disobedient folks.

[40 : 19] He's working in them. Remember Ananias in the book of Acts, Ananias wanted, right, to buy the Holy Spirit from Paul because he saw that the Holy Spirit's power in Paul was greater than

his own.

He was a sorcerer and he wanted to buy the Holy Spirit and Paul just said, you know, get away from me. and he said that the devil has filled your heart.

Oh, wait, I'm sorry, Ananias. Wrong Ananias. Thank you. Yes, Ananias who lied. Right, Barnabas sold the police the land, Ananias sold the land, claimed it was different than what he sold it for.

Right, Peter. Yes, Peter said, Satan has filled your heart to lie. So, how is the spirit of working in the sons of disobedience? Spirit was working in Ananias, right, to lie.

The spirit, the spirit of Satan was working in Judas. Remember, it said the Judas, the devil, enter Judas and put in his heart to betray Jesus.

[41 : 29] So, he's working in the sons of disobedience. So, Judas was a son of disobedience. Ananias was a son of disobedience because Satan was working in them.

In Ephesians 4 and 6, the rule of the air is called the devil, diabolos, the slanderer, the accuser. And in chapter 6, 16, he's called the evil one.

He was just the evil one. So, in John 8, Jesus teaches there's only two kinds of people. It always reminds me of the movie, What About Bob?

Because Bob, when he went into the counselor and he asked him why he was divorced, he said, there's only two kinds of people in this world. There's those that love Barry Manilow and then the second group to explain why he, okay.

Better teaching, Jesus taught there's only two kinds of people. You are either of God or you're of the devil. That's it. There's no in between. So, it seems that Jesus is agreeing with Paul or Paul is agreeing with Jesus that before you're of God, you're of the devil.

[42 : 54] You're either one or the other. So, here's what, in John 8, 44, Jesus is speaking to a group that, back in John 8, verse 12, this is a group that were called believers.

Jesus was speaking to a group who believed in him. Quote, unquote, believed in him. By verse 44, Jesus is saying to that same group, you are of your father, the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires.

He was a murderer from the beginning and he does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character for he is a liar and the father of lies.

But because I tell you the truth, you do not believe me. If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? Whoever is of God hears the words of God.

the reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God. You're either of God or of the father, the liar.

[44 : 06] Wow. Without Christ, without God, you are of the devil. You believe that? That's hard to... Like I said, people could say, oh, okay, I'll accept that I was worldly.

I'll accept that I was of the world. I do not accept that I was of the devil. I was not aware of that. I was not following Satan. I was not worshiping Satan. I was not interested in Satan.

I was just worldly. They will say I was not of the devil. Paul disagrees with you. Jesus disagrees with you. Well, Jesus doesn't disagree with you.

He just corrects you. it's just hard to see that. Isn't it? I mean, I look at my life growing up and I know I was rebellious.

I know I did not... I hated the commands of God. I hated going to church. I know I hated all that stuff. I will admit that now. Didn't dare admit it then.

[45 : 09] But of the devil? That's hard. But what if the devil does not want me to know and he's just blinding me and he's leading me in ways of the world?

What if he's persuading my spirit to be defiant against the God who commands everything of me? What if he stirs that up? What if he's working right in my disobedience?

Okay, maybe I was of the devil. I didn't know it. I wasn't actively seeking to be that but I was because he blinds the unbeliever.

Does he not? Until God removes that veil, until God lifts that, I will not see. so Jesus says to these quote unquote believers, they believed that Jesus was the Messiah because he was doing all these works, but once Jesus started talking, they had trouble believing him.

Especially when he said, you are of the devil and your will is to do his will. He's a murderer and a liar and that's why you reject the truth. You are under the devil's power, under his authority, under his deception.

[46 : 38] It's why you can't hear or believe. You have been blinded and you have accepted his lies and until God changes that, that's where you sit.

God. Whether you believe that or not, that is what is true. So here's the stunning news though.

That's bad news. Here's good news. This is where the gospel comes.

Here's the stunning good news is that God is able to rescue you from spiritual death. He's able to rescue you from the tyranny of the forces of evil who have blinded you.

He's able to, verse 4 and 5, make you alive, save you by grace because he has loved you even when you were dead in your sin. He loved you.

He loves sinners. God loves rebels. Do you believe that? He loves rebels.

[47 : 38] Why did he choose Jacob over Esau? He loves rebels. Jacob said, I'll do it my own way.

He will save you by grace. He will transform you. You can't do anything about that except call to him, but he can.

Ask him and believe. Is God speaking to you today? Is he calling you to come, to seek him, to believe?

Is he calling you to come back to him? Maybe you've not been with him and maybe you have fallen away. Come back to him. Ask him or is he showing you your true condition?

Who you really were or who you really are? So I call to you in the name of Christ, accept what he says about you.

[48 : 42] Trust that Christ did die for your sins and set you free to love God because he has called you out of death into life.

Let us pray. Father, we thank you for this word. It may be a word we don't, certainly we don't adore this word. We don't like the bad news, but it's truth.

And so we want to absorb it, we want to understand it, we want to understand, Lord, where the lost are, we want to understand where we've been and why that pull, that natural pull away from you is so strong.

So give us, Lord, the spiritual ability to grasp these things. And we pray, Lord, that through these weak words that you would open eyes, draw to yourself.

We ask in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.