



Alive In Christ

Who Needs Some Good News Today?

Good news stimulates the brain's reward system, releasing neurotransmitters like dopamine and endorphins that reduce stress, boost happiness, and foster optimism. It counteracts the negative effects of stress, strengthens the amygdala's response to positivity, and activates the frontal lobes to improve mood, increase social connection, and promote a better mental outlook. Mayo Clinic

This Is Good News!

- Giant tortoises are returning to the Galapagos Islands for the first time in 200 years.
- Major League Baseball Opening Day is March 26!
- In a new entry in a national Mental Health Medical Journal researchers have concluded that offering forgiveness is good for you! Over 200,000 people in 23 different countries. Releasing resentment will make you happier.
- Teens should sleep in on weekends! It may boost mental health....

There is good news and there is THE Good News!

And you were 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. 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 together with Christ** (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly [places] in Christ Jesus, so that in the

ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Eph 2:1-7 NASB95)

- You may be noticing a trend so far in this sermon series. The first two chapters in Ephesians are all about our position in Christ - our ability to be “the most loving place in town” is directly related to how well we understand this reality. Before we can be love we have to grasp that we are the objects of love from God.

Loved In Our Sinful Nature That Leads To Death

- And you were 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. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which **He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions.**
- “They are blind to the glory of Jesus Christ, and deaf to the voice of the Holy Spirit. They have no love for God, no sensitive awareness of his personal reality, no leaping of their spirit towards him in the cry, ‘Abba, Father’, no longing for fellowship with his people. They are as unresponsive to him as a corpse. So we should not hesitate to affirm that a life without God (however physically fit and mentally alert the person may be) is a living death, and that those who live it are dead even while they are living” (John Stott)
- Here is the bad news for everyone without Jesus:
 - Without Jesus we are dead in our sin.
 - Without Jesus we enslaved to disobedience through three forces: the world, the flesh, and the devil. (course of this world, the prince of the power of the air, and the spirit of disobedience)
 - Without Jesus we are children of wrath.
- Here is the good news in the midst of the bad news
 - You were loved in your sinful nature.
- The song Amazing Grace was written by William Wilberforce. The famous lyrics say: Amazing Grace How Sweet The Sound That Saved A Wretch Like Me - I once was lost but now I am found was blind but now I see!
- John Newton was born into a Christian home, but his godly mother died when he was seven, and he joined his father at sea when he was eleven. His degenerate and tumultuous sailing life included a flogging for attempted desertion from the Royal Navy and captivity by a slave trader in West Africa. After his escape he himself became the captain of a slave ship. Several factors contributed to Newton's conversion: a near-drowning in 1748, the piety of his friend Mary

Catlett, (whom he married in 1750), and his reading of Thomas à Kempis' Imitation of Christ. In 1754 he gave up the slave trade and, in association with William Wilberforce, eventually became an ardent abolitionist.

Loved Into Life

Even when we were dead in our transgressions, ***made us alive together with Christ*** (by grace you have been saved), (Eph 2:5 NASB95)

- There is a new song that came out a couple years ago by Seven Hills Worship entitled "Loved Me Back To Life."
 - And love me back to life Every single time In Your presence I'm alive
Because of Your mercy Because You are kind
You love me back to life.
- Quote: the bedrock of the Christian faith is the unearned fathomless marvel of the love of God displayed on the cross. A love we never can and never will deserve. Oswald Chambers
- Love gives us life and purpose - remember two weeks ago in Chapter 1 we read verse 4 that says "even before He made the world, God loved us. One of the reasons we can be sure that God will never cease to love us is the fact that He never began. He is love - it is not something he starts and stops. His love brings us life.
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Loved In The Age To Come

so that in the **ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us** in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:7

- The Surpassing Riches - so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Eph 2:7 NASB95)
- Hyperbole (hooperballo)
 - to surpass in throwing, to throw over or beyond any thing
 - to transcend, surpass, exceed, excel, superabundantly
 - excelling, exceeding, very exceeding
- Suzanne Seymour Testimony -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45ZzgqVD0sM>
 - When you meet Jesus in heaven you immediately know that He knows everything about you. She felt completely understood, loved and accepted in a second so there was no fear. I was in a state of love, joy, and bliss - unlike anything I have ever experienced.

- Show the testimony of love in eternity:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xneG2dARKEw>

