

## *Bad News, Good News*

Ephesians 2:1-10\*

Against the somber background of our world today this passage stands out in striking relevance. Paul first plumbs the depths of pessimism about us, and then rises to heights of optimism about God. It is a combination of pessimism and optimism, of despair and faith, which constitutes the refreshing realism of the Bible. This passage paints a vivid contrast between what we are by nature and what we can become by grace.

### The Bad News: our human condition (1-3)

*Three appalling truths . . .*

#1.(1-2) *We were* \_\_\_\_\_

#2.(3a) *We were* \_\_\_\_\_

#3.(3b) *We were* \_\_\_\_\_

### The Good News: God's divine compassion (4-10)

*1.(4-6) What God has done*

*2.(7-10) Why God did it*

## **Valor For The Battle**

So many times when the circumstances of life threaten to engulf us and we become occupied with what we are going through, we forget that we are in the hand of Christ. And Christ is in the hand of God [the Father], so we are doubly secure and doubly safe. We forget that God has a purpose for His child that involves every single detail in His child's life. We forget that He is conforming us to Jesus Christ and has selected just the things to bring in our experience to do that perfecting in order that Christ's image might be revealed in us. Because we forget God's purpose, power, and program, we become occupied with the method He is using to accomplish His purpose, and become defeated and discouraged and give way to despair.

When we focus our attention upon Christ and obey the injunction of the Apostles, "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," and "run with patience the race that is set before us," we can run assuredly and triumphantly without the plague of discouragement because we know that we are in God's hands, and that He will fulfill His purpose, and provide, direct, and accomplish His perfect will in and through us. . . . Look away from yourself and look to the Lord Jesus Christ; He is the one who removes faintness from the heart and gives valor for the battle.

*Citation: J. Dwight Pentecost, Man's Problems - God's Answers, (Chicago, Moody Press), pp.98-99.*

\* These notes are prayerfully provided to aid, not replace, your personal study of God's Word.