

"And Ye Hath He Quickened ..."

"And you hath he made alive (quicken, ASV) when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience ..." (Eph. 2:1f). To this point in this letter, Paul has spoken of "our" blessings in Christ making no real distinction between Jews and Gentile, save for one exception which reference might be interpreted by some (although wrongly, I believe), of Jews in Jerusalem and Jews in Ephesus (Eph. 1:12f). Now, however, the apostle's distinction between Gentiles ("Ye") and Jews ("we") becomes very pronounced in this second chapter.

The KJV states, *"and ye hath he quickened."* The word *"quicken"* is an old word which signifies life or to *"give life."* Modern versions clear up the fussiness the word leaves with some, thus we read, *"And ye did he make alive."* There is a contrast between what *"sin"* does and what Christ does: sin bring death and Christ gives life. The *"death"* and *"life"* in this context is spiritual death and life; not physical death and life.

Notice why these Gentile Ephesians were dead. They were dead because of their trespasses and sins. They were not dead because of what Adam had done; they were not "born dead." They were dead as a result of their sin; *"through your trespasses and sins"* is the way the writer puts it. If sin is defined as the *"transgression of law"* (and it is); then there had been a time in the lives of these Ephesians in which they had not yet sinned and were alive spiritually (1 John 3:4). Paul specifically speaks of such a time in his own life when he wrote, *"I was alive apart from the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I die"* (Rom. 7:9). What Paul records of himself, he tells the Ephesians had happened to them. The Ephesians were dead because they had *"walked"* according to the course of this world. Here appears the first instance of the word *"walk,"* a word which will appear at least seven times more. Walk signifies manner of life and may describe both behavior pleasing or displeasing to God. The Ephesian letter uses it in both senses.

It is interesting to see Paul develop how Gentile Ephesians had embarked on a road which displeased God. First, there is Satan (*"the prince of the powers of the air"*) who entices man to a course of life of temporary pleasure (*"the course of this world"*) which *appeal finds a responsive chord in "the spirit which now worketh in the sons of disobedience."* The phrase *"the sons of disobedience"* is the same as *"mind of the flesh"* which Paul expands upon in Romans 8. There he contrasts the *"mind of the flesh"* with the *"mind of the*

spirit" which is the equivalent of the "*spirit ... of sons of disobedience*" and the "*spirit of the sons of obedience*" -- a phrase not found in Ephesians 2, but necessary implied. The spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience brought spiritual death to the Ephesian Gentiles. They had, through the allures of Satan, succumbed to the temptations he offered. This appeals to the lust of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes and the vain glory of life. They were beguiled by his temptations and so they partook and died.

But, the Gentiles were not alone. Jews also followed the same tragic course or walk. "*Among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest ...*" (Eph. 2:3). The "*sons of disobedience*" become the "*children of wrath.*" Wrath is the natural consequence of disobedience for God will judge all men and render to the disobedient their wages. Paul put it this way in Romans 2:5-8: "*God will render to every man according to his works ... unto them that obey not the truth ... shall be wrath and indignation.*" Next: "By Nature Children Of Wrath."

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