

## Blessings in Christ - Purpose (Part 2)

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[ 0 : 00 ] Ephesians 2 We can't really plumb the depths of it.

It's an incredible doctrine, theology that Paul is giving us. And it's about the Lord. It's about us. Who we are.

And this is what we're going to be looking at tonight. You know, we've divided this section of Ephesians into three parts, remember? First, praise. Then, prayer.

We end chapter 1 with the substance of Paul's prayer. And then we have purpose. As we enter into chapter 2, we have the purpose.

And again, these three emphases are all connected to the believer's blessings in Christ Jesus.

That's the subject here. That's how Paul began this section of the letter.

[ 1 : 24 ] These blessings, these great riches and blessings that we have in Christ Jesus. All right, so the third emphasis then is what we're looking at tonight. I actually started it a couple of Wednesdays ago.

And the emphasis again, defined this way, God's purpose for blessing us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ.

Now we're going to talk about the purpose for that. And again, we began looking at this emphasis two Wednesdays ago. And so I wanted to review just a little bit.

Now this is in your notes. It's actually in your notes from last time. But I want to, I feel the need to kind of review just real briefly so that we can set all this up again and just continue on somewhat seamlessly, even though we've had to skip a week.

And so just review a little bit. Remember, and I said this last time, Ephesians 1 really reveals that God's creation of a new society or his redeemed community or whatever term you want to use, it reveals that this redeemed community of which we're a part originated in eternity past.

[ 2 : 39 ] That's the subject of Ephesians 1. And then, now we get into chapter 2, and it reveals just how God is actually creating this redeemed community.

And so God creates this redeemed community through regeneration, or a term that's probably more familiar to us, the new birth.

The new birth, being born from above. Jesus said to Nicodemus, you must be born again. He's talking about regeneration, being birthed anew. And so, in relation to this redeemed community, you must be birthed into it.

You can't just join it if you want to and sign up for it or fill an application to be approved or something. God is the one who takes the initiative.

He births you into this community through the new birth. This is regeneration. That's what happens at salvation. Regeneration. Regeneration. The Bible calls it again, the new birth.

[ 3 : 50 ] And so that's what Paul is talking about in these 10, more specifically in these 10 verses, the first 10 verses of Ephesians chapter 2. So the regeneration of individuals into God's new society, his redeemed community of people is the subject of these 10 verses.

So let me go ahead and read the 10 verses there in Ephesians chapter 2. And then we're going to start kind of running down through this, picking this apart. And you he made alive.

And I mentioned last time he made alive. It's not in the original text. Not in the best manuscripts. It's been added here. He's going to say this definitely a little bit later.

But you, we could read it this way. You were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.

Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. And we're by nature children of wrath or children deserving wrath, just as

the others.

[ 5 : 05 ] But God, who is rich in mercy because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved.

And raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Of course, the last few verses in that text are perhaps the most familiar. At least verses 8 and 9 are certainly the most familiar, possibly the most familiar, most quoted in all of the book of Ephesians. All right, so this is the text, and so in these 10 verses we could divide, really these verses actually do divide what Paul says about regeneration into two very distinct parts.

[ 6 : 22 ] Or movements or so forth. And we looked at the first one last time, what we once were.

Verses 1 through 3, what we once were. And then the second part is, very naturally, flows from the first, what we now are in verses 4 through 10.

All right, so these would be the two divisions of these 10 verses, again, under the subject of regeneration. All right, now we've already considered what Paul says about what we once were, and what were we.

Well, he says we were spiritually dead. We were spiritually dead. Okay, it's past tense. It's past tense. We were spiritually dead. Verse 1, and you were, past tense, dead in trespasses and sins. So that's what we once were. Second, we were enslaved to the powers of evil. Verses 2 and 3, you once walked according to the course of this world.

That's enemy number 1. The world. At least the first one that he mentions. I'm not sure that it's enemy number 1 for most of us. Probably for most of us, it's enemy number 3.

[ 7 : 36 ] We'll get to him in just a minute. Anyway, he walked according to the course of this world.

According to the prince, that would be Satan. That's enemy number 2. Prince of the power of the air.

We all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh. There's enemy number 3. I think we could probably say we've met the enemy and it's us. Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.

Alright, so we were spiritually dead. We were enslaved to the powers of evil. And third, as a consequence of all of this, Third, we were objects of God's wrath.

Verse 3, latter part of verse 3. We were by nature children of wrath just as the others. Alright, so what we once were.

That's what we studied last time. Now we're up to speed and you can now look at your nose.

Number 2, what we now are. This is very logical. What we once were.

[ 8 : 36 ] Verses 1 to 3. And what we now are. Verses 4 through 10. Now, before we really launch out into what Paul has to say about what we now are, we really need to pause a moment and consider how verse 4 begins.

And it begins famously. It begins with the words, but God. Two words that, when they're put together, are wonderful.

Now the word but, of course, is just a simple conjunction. It's a common conjunction. Hey, you have that conjunction in every human language. Of course, it's not pronounced like we pronounce it.

But they have the word but, that conjunction. It's not the only conjunction, but but. There's a conjunction right there. It is a conjunction. Yet, when, and I said it was a common conjunction.

But when God gets a hold of it in his word, when he's revealing certain specifics about his truth, about truth, it's greatly enhanced.

[ 9 : 44 ] This phrase, but God, it's greatly enhanced. We might call it, and I decided to call it, the grace conjunction. And I think you would agree with me.

But, God. And you'll find in a number of places in scriptures. And I've given these to you down there. And there are others. Even pulled one from the Old Testament.

There are a few others in the Old Testament. They were a little bit more complex. And I, you know, I just decided to kind of pare it down to a few here. But, Psalm 73, verse 26.

David said, my flesh and my heart fail. How many of us have experienced that? What we do all the time. My flesh and my heart fail. But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

See, the conjunction. It's a grace conjunction. It's the grace of God. Yeah, my flesh and my heart, they fail. They fail all the time. But God. So, it's wonderful.

[10:42] Acts 13, 29. And just to kind of set the context. Paul has been asked to say a word in the synagogue in Antioch on the Sabbath day.

And he took that opportunity to preach a pretty lengthy sermon, as a matter of fact, in the synagogue. You know, some preachers do that kind of thing. And he gave them a kind of brief, not brief, well, lengthy, but still, in terms of his subject, it was a brief summation of the plan of redemption.

It goes all the way back to the Old Testament, to the beginning of it. And he concluded it by identifying, giving quite a bit of copy to identifying Jesus as the Messiah.

And he said this. He said, now, when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in the tomb.

Now, what are we talking about there? We're talking about the cross, right? They took him down from the tree and laid him in the tomb. So it's the end of the story, right? Of course not. Not the end of the story, because then Paul says, but God raised him from the dead.

[11:55] Raised him from the dead. So it's an incredible conjunction. Grace conjunction. Romans, and I'm sure you remember this famous one, Romans 5, 6 to 8.

For when we were still without strength. In due time, Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man. Though perhaps for a good man, someone would dare even to die.

But God demonstrates his own love toward us. And that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. There's perhaps one of the most famous uses of this conjunction.

Attached to theos, God, but God. And then you have his grace. And how about this one? 1 Corinthians 10, 13.

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able.

[12:54] But with the temptation will also make the way of escape that you may be able to bear it. Great, great example of the grace of God. And then this one is especially precious to me right now, for sure.

I was reading this just the other day. Well, actually, when I was putting together all of these examples of but God, I came across this one I've never noticed before.

But in Philippians 2, 27, Paul's talking here about Epaphroditus. And he called him his brother, his fellow worker, and fellow soldier.

And here in this passage he mentions that the Philippians had heard that Epaphroditus had been sick, had been ill. And this is what he said. He said, For indeed he was sick almost unto death.

Anyone want to know what the problem was, but he was near death. He was very sick, very ill. Almost unto death. But God, but God had mercy on him.

[13:59] And not only on him, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. And there are, of course, many other examples of this.

And so this is what we, this is the kind of thing we have here in Ephesians 2, 4. And to get the full effect of it, we need to make sure that we keep it attached to the preceding verse or verses, especially the latter part of verse 3.

And let me read it again. We all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath.

We were children deserving God's wrath. But God, and here comes grace. But God, but God who is rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, what did he do?

He made us alive together with Christ. You see, what we now are, what a contrast, I mean, what a tremendous turnabout of things for us.

[15:11] What a gracious change has taken place from what we once were to what we now are. And what we now are is all about God's work in our lives and in our behalf, all of it undeserving.

And so I would say, what a perfect response to what we once were. And that's what we have in verses 4 through 10. Now think again, we're going to put this all together again. We were spiritually dead.

Dead in trespasses and sins, remember? And because we were spiritually dead, we were enslaved to the powers of evil. Right? To this sin-dominated world.

Are we not enslaved? We were enslaved to this sin-dominated, saturated world. Also to sin's progenitor, creator, promoter, Satan.

And also to our own sin-polluted flesh. We were enslaved to the powers of evil. And then therefore, all of this is progressive, therefore we were objects of God's wrath, just like everyone else.

[16:27] But God. But God made us alive together with Christ. And then parenthetically he adds, by grace you have been saved.

What we now are. Alright, so what we need to do is see what Paul says about all of this in verses 4 through 10. Alright, now we're ready to get into the meat of these verses and we won't even get through all of it tonight.

Okay? He says some pretty amazing things here that we need to understand. And actually he says four things. Four things about regeneration.

Remember that's our subject here. That's Paul's subject rather. Regeneration. Alright, so. First of all then. Paul gives us the why of regeneration. The why of it.

Why God saved us. Why God birthed us into his new community. His redeemed community.

[17:32] The why of regeneration. Now I use the word why here. And there are two ways to use the word why in communication. One way points forward.

And it asks for what purpose. Okay, that's the first way that we can use it. And one way we can use it. For what purpose. You know. Why. Why.

For what. The why for. I guess we could say it that way. What purpose. And again. I'll say this.

We're going to get to that use of the why later in my outline.

The other way points backward and asks for what reason. Now you got that one, didn't you? Alright, now it is the second usage of this interrogative why that describes what Paul is talking about here in verse 4 and a little bit later in verses 5 and 8.

Alright, so here's the why of regeneration. Or to put it more accurately and I think I did put this in your notes the basis upon which God regenerates the believer.

[18:33] The basis upon which God regenerates. And there are three words in this passage that identify the basis upon which God regenerates the believer.

Three words. Simple words. Words that are very familiar to us and words that are very doctrinal even though they're very simple words.

And the first word is mercy. Why? Why regeneration? What's the basis upon which God would regenerate me, you, a sinner, sinners as we are?

Mercy. Mercy. Verse 4. But God who is rich in mercy. Now the word mercy is the Greek word *Elas* and it means what it means basically, it'll differ to what it means when we would use the word mercy in any other context.

it means to show kindness. To show goodwill towards the miserable. Those who are hurting. Those who are afflicted. Those who are hopeless.

[19:40] Those who are needy. We show mercy. You see. Now in the context of God's word, of course, mercy is God's compassion for helpless, hopeless sinners.

sinners. And I know that this is, I've mentioned this before and it's really a gross oversimplification, but it still is helpful in understanding the meaning of mercy in the context of God's relationship to us or God's mercy toward us.

And I think it is this, mercy is God withholding from us something we deserve. Withholding what we deserve.

Namely what? His judgment and wrath. That's how we can characterize mercy, God's mercy, because we're not deserving of anything from Him.

We're actually deserving of, well, I say anything, we're actually deserving any good thing, we're actually deserving of His judgment because of our sin, our rebellion, our rejection of Him.

[20:51] And God withholds that in His mercy from those who are objects of wrath, children of wrath. He shows mercy, He withholds that.

Now, when Paul says that God is rich in mercy, because he adds the word rich here, it's an adjective, a rich mercy, when he says He's rich in mercy, He means two things.

And it's important that we understand this. The first thing he means, and it's implied here, is a serious reality. The serious reality about us is this, our condition is hopeless, dire and hopeless. For Paul to say that God is rich in mercy implies that we are, we're in dire straits.

We are absolutely hopeless. But secondly, it speaks of a glorious reality, and the glorious reality is that God's mercy is unconditional and is limitless.

[ 21 : 59 ] He doesn't run out of it.

He doesn't come to a certain case where there is such gross sin and such deliberate unbelief that God's mercy cannot be extended to him or her.

Or so, the why of regeneration, God's limitless wealth of mercy. The second word is love. The second word is love. And so the basis upon which God regenerates the believer is, according to verse 4, his great love with which he loved us.

And as you probably guessed, the Greek word Paul chose to convey, God's love is what? Agape, clearly. I mean, you know that. What you may not know is that agape, well, you certainly know that agape refers to unconditional love, unconditional sacrificial love.

It's a, it is a self-sacrificing and unconditional love. You know that, I'm sure, about the word agape, but maybe what you don't know is that this type of love is unique to God.

[ 23 : 34 ] It's unique to God. It's not something found in man. Not, not, not, not inherent in man. It's unique to God, but, but by extension, it is unique to an extent in those who belong to God through the new birth.

And what I mean is that God is the only one who can truly love unconditionally. You say, well, I've seen examples of unconditional love all the time. Yeah, we see it all the time, but not purest, not in the purest sense as God's love is unconditional.

unconditional. What, our problem is that we're, we don't have a desire to look deeper into our motivations when we love, when we love. You say, well, I'm loving unconditional.

But there's always an element of self, self-centeredness or something for self when we extend love to others. We want to be loved back and so forth.

But God's love is absolutely unconditional. And as far as, being sacrificial of God's son is the only one who truly loves sacrificially.

[ 24 : 45 ] And, and yet, I would again add that God does give his redeemed children this kind of love. He gives that to us and even commands us to love in that way.

But he's literally working or expressing his love through us. And so we can experience and, and also express agape love.

One day, when we get to heaven and we'll be completely cleansed of any pollution of sin, we'll be able to love in, in this way in the purest sense.

Then Paul added an adjective to, to this word as well. Much like he added rich to the word mercy, here he adds great to the word love.

And, and so, it could read because of his large love. The word great literally means large. His large love without any, any, any qualification of how large.

[ 25 : 50 ] His large love. So, you know, the idea is God's love is huge. I've told this story before and, it's, it's such a perfect way to illustrate this, about a father and his son.

And, this father took his son on a little hike up into, up to a pretty tall hill or mountain. It was so tall that, that, you know, it was high above all the ground all around them.

And so they could see for a long, long way. And, the father decided to teach his son a little bit, a little lesson and he ended up being taught a lesson himself from his son. And, he pointed to the north and he said, son, look out there.

You see how far you can see? Yeah, you can just see for miles. And, his son looked out there, yeah, you can just see forever and ever. And, then he, and then he turned and pointed to the east and he said, look, look over that way.

Look how far you can see. I mean, he just, he just, like we can see for miles, hundreds of miles.

And, then he turned around and pointed to the south and the west and he said the same thing.

[ 26 : 53 ] In all directions, all around them. And, then he said, son, that's kind of like God's love.

How big God's love is. It's huge. He said, to the son, his eye, you know, the son's eyes are so wide open and he's looking all around again.

He said, you know what that means, dad? We're right in the middle of it. It's just a great, great story. And, that's where we are.

Not because we deserve to be there or ever could deserve to be there. No one is deserving of it.

And, and quite often we even rebel against it and buck against it and do things that we might think would be worthy of losing that love.

but it's unconditional. And, God has, by his mercy and love, placed us right in the middle of that and it's a huge love.

John MacArthur in his commentary, I always like to consult John MacArthur. Let me, let me quote something that he wrote. Did I give you this? Okay.

[ 28 : 02 ] Because God was rich in mercy toward us and had great love for us. He's kind of putting both mercy and love together. He provided a way for us to return to Him.

And that's what all this is about, you see. If a person, and he gives us the illustration, if a person were driving down the street and carelessly ran down and killed a child, he probably would be arrested, tried, fined, and imprisoned for involuntary manslaughter.

But after he paid the fine and served the sentence, he would be free and guiltless before the law in regard to that crime. But paying his penalty before the law would do nothing to restore the life of the child or alleviate the grief of the parents.

And we know that would be true. The offense against them was on an immeasurably deeper level. Immeasurably deeper level. The only way a relationship between the parents and the man who killed their child could be established or restored would be for the parents to offer forgiveness. forgiveness. No matter how much the man might want to do so, he could not produce reconciliation from his side. Only the one offended can offer forgiveness and only forgiveness can bring reconciliation.

[ 29 : 20 ] That is so true. So true. And you see how that totally removes from the equation anything that we could do for ourselves.

Anything that we could merit on our own. And it just elevates in our minds and our hearts and our understanding the grace and love of God to the level where it belongs in our minds.

It's incredible. So the why of regeneration. The why of God birthing you into his new community of people. Mercy, love. And by the way, both of those are not attached to anything in us.

It's all directed toward us. And directed toward us from the heart of God. And so mercy and love and then we come to the third word and it's of course grace.

Grace. And we find grace in several places in this passage. We find it implied in many other places. But in verse 5, by grace you have been saved.

[ 30 : 29 ] Verse 7, the exceeding riches of his grace. Already seen Paul say the riches of his mercy and here the riches of his grace.

Verse 8, for by grace you have been saved. So the word grace appears specifically, explicitly, three times in these verses. And you know, I gave you a simple definition for mercy.

Let me give you one for grace and it kind of helps us see a distinction between the two. Though really in scripture they come together and they're inseparable.

God's mercy and grace. But mercy is God withholding from us something we deserve. His judgment, his wrath. Grace is God giving us something we could never deserve.

Now we don't deserve God's mercy either so that's why it's difficult to make a separation here but it's more the substance of God's kindness toward us.

[ 31 : 29 ] Mercy withholding, grace giving. Something we could never deserve namely his forgiveness. His forgiveness and salvation. I may have given you this quote from John R. W. Stott too.

Did I give that to you? I like this. We were dead and so helpless to save ourselves. Only mercy could reach the helpless for mercy is love for the down and out.

We were under God's wrath. Only love could triumph over wrath. We deserved nothing at God's hand but judgment on account of our trespasses and sins.

Only grace could rescue us from our desserts. For grace is undeserved favor. Why then did God act out of his sheer mercy, love, and grace.

Alright, so then Paul is telling us four things about regeneration. I better get to the second one here. We'll get the second one and then we'll reserve the other two for next time.

[ 32 : 39 ] First of all, the why of regeneration. That is the basis upon which God did this for us. And second, Paul gives us the what. The what of regeneration.

I'm getting kind of to the substance or what we could call the nature of regeneration. The nature of it. The nature of the new birth. And Paul uses three expressions to identify this.

To describe what God has done for believers. And they're interesting expressions. And there's something very interesting about how they, how Paul connects these three things.

And we'll get to that after we look at these expressions. But verse 5, here's the first expression. Verse 5, made us alive together with Christ.

This is the water of regeneration. He made us alive. And by the way, we need six English, at least in this version, we need six English words to translate just two words in the Greek text.

[ 33 : 43 ] Made us alive together with is one word. One Greek word. Let's see if I can pronounce it. Suzo apoeio.

Did you write that down? That's a long word and it takes five English words to translate it. I think King James uses a few less than that.

In fact, in the King James, the word is actually, they use an old English word or English expression quickened. Now that's probably some of us who are a little bit older.

That's a lot of us here. A little more familiar with the King James version of this you know, he has quickened you, you know, it's quickened.

That's an old expression. But the meaning is simply to impart life. He imparted life. And in this context, of course, it's spiritual life. Spiritual life is what he has imparted into us.

[ 34 : 41 ] And why did we need that? Because we were dead. You know, that's what dead people need. A dead person needs to be made alive. Now, of course, only God can raise a dead person to life again.

Only God can do that. Whether we're talking about physically dead or we're talking about spiritual death. And that's what we're talking about here. This is regeneration.

Romans 6, 4. Paul called it newness of life. A newness of life. This is a new life that God has imparted to us.

Now, Paul is referring here to something quite amazing. And actually, to see what he's saying, this amazing thing he's saying, we have to get all of these together and then we'll kind of put it together and notice this.

It's something quite amazing. All three expressions come together to tell us something incredible. The second expression is, verse 6, raised us up together.

[ 35 : 52 ] Alright, so he made us alive together with Christ. And then verse 6, raised us up together and we could insert there, it's implied with Christ.

Alright, now, this then, we already can see a progression of events that are taking place here. Not, you know, separated by time, but things that are happening here.

First, we have the impartation of a new life made us alive. That is, from being spiritually dead in sin to now spiritually alive in Christ.

Alright, so the first expression we've already looked at is the impartation of a new life. Second one here, this raises us up together, is pointing to the manifestation of that new life.

The manifestation of it, raised us up. When you raise up a person, they stand and walk. I mean, it's talking about what comes after life has been restored, and then you're raised up and you go on with life.

[ 37 : 04 ] Raised us up together. It's the manifestation. So, the idea is this new life is a real life. It's a real life. It's not just a concept. It's not just some internal thing that takes place.

It's something that is manifested, observable. It's something that is substantive, the believer's life. It's like Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15, he's talking about the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

He said Jesus was raised from the dead, and then he said Jesus was seen. So, he really was raised. I mean, he really was alive, and so are believers.

As one theologian put it, it is bringing the new life out into manifestation. As when the living one, he's speaking of Jesus, stepped forth into the morning air in Joseph's garden, the garden where the tomb was.

Now, you can tell that theologian used some flowery language. He was an old, old theologian.

That's the idea here. Now, in a moment, we're going to tie all this together with this amazing truth, so just keep that in mind, but let's add the third expression.

[ 38 : 20 ] Third expression, verse 6, made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Now, Paul is referring to something that really is ours right now.

He's speaking of it as past tense has been done. To sit, made us to sit, sit, past tense. Past and present, past and ongoing. To sit, and so it's something that belongs to us right now, but it will only become a reality, actual reality that is in the sense of our experience, actual experience in the future.

This is something in the future, so he's pointing out to the future something we have now, we don't realize it yet, that is in the sense of experiencing it. meaning. And also, I would point out that the preposition in there carries really, though it's not always proper to translate it this way, and that's why the translators have not done so, but it carries the idea of by, it could be translated by, actually. The preposition in could, and in some places is translated by, so, made us sit together in heavenly places by Christ Jesus, even carrying the idea beside Christ Jesus.

Now, that is the what of regeneration. Now, let's put all this together, and very quickly, Paul uses the repetition, and you already noticed a word that is repeated three times here.

[ 39 : 56 ] He uses the repetition of a word to reveal something that is really amazing about regeneration, this new birth, and the word is what? Together. You see, it's repeated.

In all three expressions, you have the word together there, made us alive together with Christ, raised us up together, and again, I would say it's implied there, though not repeated again, with Christ.

Made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, together with Christ, together with Christ, together in Christ Jesus. Now, there's a reason why we have this repetition, and it should cause us to look a little bit deeper, because really, the truth here that Paul is revealing to us goes much deeper than just the truth that everything we are and everything we have is because of Christ.

It goes much deeper than that. I would also say this is more than just salvation because of what Jesus did on the cross. Now, that's great and wonderful, but there's even more than that.

Paul is actually saying, and though it's difficult for us to understand this, he's saying that really in the mind of God, the believer was spiritually present with Christ when he accomplished our redemption.

[ 41 : 24 ] We were actually there in a spiritual sense, not in a physical sense, of course. Spiritually, we were there, vitally there, when Christ accomplished all these things.

And we just run this down, and we have to add a few other places in Scripture, and we can see the whole picture of this. First of all, and Paul doesn't mention this here, but we were together, there together with Jesus at the cross.

We were there with him. Now, I'm not just talking about our sins being there, we were there. Paul, remember, said in Galatians 2.20, I am crucified with Christ.

That is, his salvation, his regeneration, took him all the way back to the cross. He was there with Jesus, crucified with him there.

We've heard the song, when he was on the cross, I was on his mind, heard that. Well, it's much more than that. I wasn't just on his mind, I was there with him. Second, and Paul doesn't mention this here either, actually, these first few are kind of wrapped up into the first thing, first expression that Paul gives us here, but second, we were there together with Jesus when he was buried.

[ 42 : 43 ] When he was buried, Romans 6.4, we were buried with him through baptism unto death. Baptism, we were baptized into his death. We were there with him.

Third, and here in our text, we were there together when life came back into the body of Jesus.

That's what Paul's talking about here. in our text, made us alive together with Christ.

We were there when life, he's lying in that tomb, and life came back into the body of Jesus.

Because he really did die, he didn't faint. He didn't just kind of swoon there.

He had to recover a little bit later, and then found some way to get out of the tomb. He actually died, so then life actually came back into him.

Picturing very much the picture of our death and then life coming back into us, a new life. So we were there, this is what Paul is saying, made us alive together with Christ.

[ 43 : 53 ] Fourth, again here in our text, and here's the second expression, we were there together with Jesus when Jesus walked out of that tomb alive. life. And that is what Paul is talking about here when he says raised us up together with Christ, that's implied, we were raised up together with him.

We walked out of the tomb with him. Our lives were in him. Now, it had not become a reality yet to us. We'll get to that here in just a minute.

Colossians 2.12, you also were raised with him through faith in the working of God who raised him from the dead. These prepositions are important.

With him. Fifth, and this is our future hope, even though it is already a done deal, we will be there together when Jesus sits on his heavenly throne.

Made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus or by Christ Jesus. Now, someone might object. How could we have been there with Jesus?

[ 45 : 06 ] How could we have been there with Jesus? We were not even yet born. We had not even yet believed on Jesus. Well, I'll tell you how.

I'll tell you how. In the mind of God, we were there. I'll tell you, I mean, it's clear how all believers were together with Jesus when he accomplished our redemption.

And it takes us back to Ephesians 1.4. God chose us in him before the foundation of the world.

Now, this is all God's side.

It's lofty. It's beyond our comprehension. It's not even rational to our way of thinking, our fallen, finite way of thinking.

But when Jesus accomplished redemption, we were somehow in him. In him, with him, together. Crucified, buried, raised, walking, and one day ruling.

[ 46 : 14 ] It was incredible. It boggles the mind.

Thank you.