

# What happens when someone is converted; born again in the Holy Spirit

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Date: 03 April 2016

Preacher: Rev Roddy Morrison

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning everyone and welcome to our service this morning. Special welcome to visitors who are with us today. And we welcome Reverend Rodney Morrison to preach to us again this morning as our own minister is away on a much deserved holiday.

Tea and coffee will be served at the close of the service. So visitors are very welcome to stay with us and we'd love to get to know you and to share with you. There will be a holiday Sunday school for kids of primary school age and that will leave after the second singing.

So any visitors with children, please you're very welcome for your children to attend the Sunday school. The evening service at 6pm will be conducted by Mr John McSween, one of our elders.

The Ladies Bible Study meets at 8pm on Monday at 32 McQueen Street. The Road to Recovery meeting meets on Tuesday at 8pm in the Community Centre.

The Prayer meeting on Wednesday at 7.30pm in Kilda Cruises. And the service is next Sunday the 10th of April. Morning service at 11am will be taken by Reverend Rodney Morrison once again.

[ 1 : 20 ] And at 6pm by Dr Anthony Latham, if I'm willing. There will be a fundraising cafe on Saturday the 16th of April to raise funds for this year's Challenger Bus Mission and Fund Day.

If anyone is able to help with the cafe, please speak to Tini. Accommodation for the mission has mainly been arranged for volunteers who needed to accommodate members of the team for one night on Friday the 27th of May.

If you are able to offer accommodation or wish to help with this year's mission, please speak to Marion McLean or Lucy Tuer. And these are all the intimations. We pray for God's blessing upon our service and upon our preacher.

Thank you. Good morning everybody.

It's good to be with you once again. Good morning.

[ 2 : 48 ] Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning.

Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Good day. Good morning.

Brilliant. GisesSTEIN. Good morning.

Good morning. That's six stanzas altogether. In order none can reckon them, to thee if them declared, and speak of them I would be more than can be numbered out.

One, two, the end of verse five, six stanzas. I waited for the Lord my God, and patiently did bear. I waited for the Lord my God, and patiently did bear.

[ 4 : 03 ] A plan to be he did in crime. My voice and guide to hear.

He took me from a fearful pit, and from the mighty grave.

And on a rock he set my feet, establishing my way.

He put a new song in my mouth, a God to magnify.

Many shall see it and shall fear, and on the Lord rely.

[ 5 : 25 ] O blessed is the man whose trust upon the Lord relies, respecting not the proud nor such, as turn aside to lies.

O Lord my God, O many are, the wonders have us done, thy gracious thoughts to us were found. above all thoughts are gone. In order not God recommend, to thee it's heavenly prayer.

And speak of them, I would they more, that God be numbered out.

Now let us draw near to God, let us all pray.

[ 7 : 16 ] O Lord our God, our gracious, loving, heavenly Father, how our hearts fill with gratitude and with praise to your great and holy name.

When we are able, by your grace, to identify with the words that we have just sung in that psalm, written three thousand years ago and yet, so new and so fresh in the experience of your people, in every age and in every generation.

For they are the ones that you took from that fearful, awful pit, and set their feet upon the rock that shall never move or be shaken.

You are the one who put a new song in their mouths. We bless you, O God, for everyone within these walls who can identify with those words, and can truly say, He did that for me.

He did that for me as well as for the psalmist long ago. We were wallowing in that fearful pit, and sinking in that mighty clay, and we were, Lord, not conscious of our danger, and knew not how much we were an offence to a holy and a just God.

[ 9 : 01 ] We were happy enough the way we were, going on from day to day and from week to week, and from year to year, and sinking further and further into that clay.

And, O Lord, you opened our eyes by your grace, and you showed us what a fearful place it was that we were in. And we cried to you in prayer, and you came and you rescued us.

And we will never cease to praise you as long as you give us breath in this life. And when we will be in eternity, we will continue to praise you, surrounding the throne of God on high, and having more reason to bless you and to praise you than even the angels and the archangels and the cherubim and the seraphim.

For they were not in that fearful pit, they were never in that mighty clay, they were never washed in the blood of the Lamb the way we were.

And so, Lord, we will sing in a nobler, sweeter song, your power to save in those glorious mansions up above.

[ 10 : 35 ] And it is amazing, the longer we are gone in the Christian life, the more wonderful the Christian life seems to be to us.

And the more we marvel that you did not pass us by as we deserve, and left us where we were. Lord, out of your great, great grace, you found a desire in your heart to stretch out your hand to us. And therefore we shall praise you forever and ever. Forgive us for taking these things so lightly, and forgive us for thinking that we ourselves managed to scramble out of the fearful pit in some way or other.

Oh, Lord, we deserved nothing but to be left there, and we could never save ourselves. That you took the initiative, you moved towards us.

And we pray, Lord, that we will never forget that. And we long, oh Lord, to see others who are still in that state that we were in, saved by grace and brought out of that awful, fearful pit of sin.

[ 12 : 01 ] And we made your children and your followers in this world. So bless us this morning and help us to rejoice in the Lord.

To lift up our voices in praise and in prayer, and in worship, gladly and joyfully to worship you this morning.

So hear us, Lord, in our prayers and bless the rest of the service to us. And all the things that we do within these walls here this day.

Bless the evening service as well. And grant that there will be great liberty and a great sense of your presence here and then in the evening.

So that your name might be exalted. And at the end of the day we will say it was good for us. Oh, it was good for us to have been there. Because it came to be none other than the house of God and the gates of heaven to our souls.

[ 13 : 10 ] These things we ask with the forgiveness and cleansing of our sins. In Jesus name. Amen. I believe that many of the children are away on holiday at this time.

So if there's any of you here, you come forward to the front. And you'll be going off to the holiday Sunday school in a while.

I just want to say a few words to you before you go off to the holiday Sunday school. That's good. You know boys and girls, this is the time of the year I like best than any other time. The summer is good and you enjoy yourselves during the good weather.

And autumn is nice too when the colours seem to be changing on the trees. Winter is great because in the midst of winter there's Christmas with the Christmas service and all the Christmas presents.

[14:20] But I love springtime. Most of all because it tells me a lot of things. It was at this time that we remember that Jesus rose from the dead.

The Easter time is in the springtime. And there are other things too that make my heart glad. I see the crocuses, I see the daffodils, I see the snow drops appearing.

I see birds arriving on the trees. And I see many things like that that give me encouragement.

I see the little birds busy making their nests. And I see them getting ready for their babies to arrive so that they'll be nice and cosy in the nests.

And I see also wee lambs being born in the parks and on the crofts. I saw my first lamb last week over in Ewyk.

[15:24] It was beside the road with its mummy. How many of you have seen a lamb already this year? There may be a wee, you saw one or two.

That's good. Well, I thought to myself, what am I going to say to the children this morning when I go to the service? And I thought of how important it is for lambs to be caught and marked by the owner as soon as possible.

So I brought along here a stick that the farmer or the crofter uses to catch the lambs. It's awfully difficult to catch even newborn lambs because they run so fast.

And this is how the crafter catches them with his stick which is called a crook. And it's amazing, I was thinking of that on the way over here, how the lambs run away from the crafter or the farmer.

And they also run away when they're older too. And the farmer is wanting to help them. The farmer is wanting to give them an injection or to keep them healthy and get the lambs run away as fast as they can.

[16:50] And this is the way that the crafter catches the lambs and he marks them with the colours. He's got his own colours. And he also does something else. You remember what other thing the doctor does.

He puts a red or blue mark on the lambs. And there's something else he does. What's the other thing? He puts a mark in the ear of the lambs. It's not very nice but it's something he does with a knife and he cuts a wee bit out of the ear of the lambs.

It doesn't harm the lambs at all. But that mark will be there till that lamb is a big growing sheep. And it never changes.

It's a hole or a wee bit of the ear taken off. It'll be there until the lamb is growing. And a big sheep.

And I was thinking of this how important it is for young boys and young girls to be earmarked and marked out as belonging to Jesus as early as possible in their lives.

[18:05] And the outward mark on the sheep, well, it can fade away with the weather and other things. And especially when the sheep is shorn at July or August of the year.

But the mark that is put in the ear of the sheep, it never changes. And how good it would be if boys and girls were marked out for Jesus early in their lives.

And if God would place that mark in their hearts. Because when that happens, the outward mark may fade and grow dim, but the inner mark would be there forever and ever.

Now when a lamb goes out through a hole in the fence and it escapes and the farmer can't find it. It might be for months and months and months out on the moor.

And when the frank time comes and the lamb is gathering with the rest of the sheep, people will be wondering, who does this lamb belong to?

[19:18] It's got no mark and there's nothing in the ears, the ears haven't been touched. What are we going to do with it? Well, what I used to do in the U.S. when I was young was, they would sell that lamb to anybody that wanted it in the frank.

And the money was put to one side so that the frank could be kept in good repair. But the person whose lamb was, who it belonged to, was losing out on it.

He had lost his lamb. And the same thing is so true spiritually as well. And if we're not marked for God, when the great day comes and all the people of the world are met before the judgment throne of God, to see whose we are and to see what we have been doing with our lives.

The person who has not marked the mark of Jesus in their hearts will be lost. Lost to God, the maker and the owner of all of us.

And how good it is when we are marked by God in our hearts. That's what we call conversion. Or being saved. Or being born again.

[ 20 : 44 ] Some people can go to the church and they can go to the session at communion time and profess Christ as their saviour.

And that's the outward mark. And it's good that the inner mark is what is important. The change that has taken place in our hearts.

And I hope that we would all today would be asking, have I been marked for God? Have I been earmarked for Jesus in my heart?

Not anything outwardly about good, but inwardly. And when God sees that inward mark in our hearts, when we appear before him at the last, he will recognise us as his own.

Jesus said, I know my sheep. I know them. And he knows his own mark on all of his sheep.

[ 21 : 47 ] And it's good to be trusting in Jesus as early as possible in your lives. One of the great commentators, and many are reading his books yet, Matthew Henry, he was called.

He was converted when he was six years old. And God marked him out as his lamb at that age. And he was a man greatly used of God.

And it's often said, you're not too young to die. And neither are you too young to give your heart and life to Jesus.

And that's the prayer of all God's people in this church for you. They're there on Wednesday night praying for you.

The minister is praying for you. And he would love to see many more coming to know Jesus as their saviour. And the way God catches men and women and boys and girls is with the help of the Bible, the teachings of the Bible, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

[ 23 : 03 ] That's what's going to catch us for God, so that he will hear not this for himself. So we continue to come to the church and to the Sunday school, hearing the word of God.

And that is the most important thing of all. And that's the way we'll come to know Christ. When the Holy Spirit of God comes and takes the teaching of the Bible and applies it to our hearts.

Now you listen to what the teacher has to say to you today when you go to your classes. Because that's the way you get to know God as your saviour. And you've been marked as belonging to him. So you remember that, will you not? We'll have a wee prayer then, and then we'll have the singing of the next hymn. Heavenly Father, we thank you for these children before us.

And all the other children in this church. Some are away on holiday. Some are older. And all the young people, we thank you for them.

[ 24 : 12 ] And we pray that they would all come to be marked in their hearts by the power of your grace and of your spirit.

And wherever they may roam after that, they will belong to you. Because that mark will never fade away. And you'll recognise it when you see them on that great day.

Hear us in our prayers. Bless them all. And bless their teachers and their families and all their loved ones. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Now we're going to sing to God's praise in hymn 93. Hymn 93. Loving shepherd of thy sheep, keep me, Lord, in safety keep.

Loving shepherd of thy sheep, keep me, Lord, in safety keep.

[ 25 : 29 ] Nothing can thy power withstand. None can pluck me from thy hand.

Loving shepherd thou didst give. Thy own life that I might live.

May I love thee day by day. May I love thee day by day. Luckily thy sweet will obey.

Loving shepherd ever near. Teach me still thy voice to hear.

Suffer not my feet to stray. Suffer not my feet to stray. From the straight and narrow way.

[ 26 : 32 ] Where thou layest may I go. Walking in thy steps below.

Lead me for thy father's throne. Jesus, bend me for thy own.

Let us now hear the word of God. We're going to read in the New Testament in the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, chapter 2 and reading from verse 1 down to verse 10.

Ephesians chapter 2, verse 1. Ephesians chapter 3, verse 1, verse 1. Ephesians chapter 3, verse 1. according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the earth, the Spirit who now works in the sense 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 well by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

[ 27 : 59 ] 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 to 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 towards 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, in Christ Jesus for good works, and that not of works, and that not of works.

And we begin the reading there. Amen. May God bless to us the reading of his own holy word, and to his name be all the glory and praise.

Amen. Let us pray. Now we come to the second prayer, and it is in Kaelic. Let us run here to garden prayer. High-end Why Jesus Christ is using blood That kids coming out.

Someone is consistently, or everyone. Heiming Absolutely.

[ 29 : 54 ] Light. Light. Light. Light. Light.

Light. That can become an image of our love insistities andTyards, because there aren't any new covenant.

That Crusoe was powerful, was as the Jewish cycle of Repressions. We are also Catholic in exempelhouses andists.

I love starting to see a reflecting of the masculine together.

Your love, Mached, Zia, courses that you're among the people involved in that EXCOMMEL during chest. Your love my God.

[ 31 : 12 ] Your love is when you are a human, sick girl and aren't broken into one or another.

If we can change the way down we should love that so much, and are or most of us, It may no longer be played in us, but it's been eased away from us.

It can be heard of us prepared after all the matters of us but in our invisible situation, because the shes of the mach, the tiv, and shir, the ias a kriyesta.

And I can't be a man, because all the paul is a hoi naf, and the shabuch lenaading, chlambe techa yamach as a misk, and again yedon a char kondah din yedio, and again and yekos, kekendachis, amashok.

And I can't be a man, oh shir, the shir ptih shal haad achut, and again dthfash iy.

[ 32 : 24 ] Yekher bought and bought su, nor Bros & Ashera blen kin Emily T. She used similar to her x, as if I did not know, thank you for your74ft and yourself, God, we came andstarterasini, and I saw how much thank you and to his wife and the atmosphere, how many gay men incense hick the water?

Yes to be, how cominetsch arall the water. Bank of America.

...to be expand elemento to knowledge. Theples are Pullman, that our God is with all her privileges, since we both have a pixelated column on Slarts speaking the Vatican.

Does it seem Back ...s ...

Determuras ... I was thinking about the spirit of God and the spirit. I didn't want to say that I was born.

[ 33 : 59 ] I didn't want to say that I was born. I was born. I was born. I was born. I was born.

I was born. I was born. My name is my name and I was born. I was born.

I was born. I was born. I was born. This is my life.

My life. the between verse This Amen.

I shall now sing again to God's praise. Hymn 103.

[ 36 : 11 ] Fill me with life anew, That I may love what Thou dost love, And do what Thou would do.

Fill me with breath of God, Until my heart is pure, Until with Thee I will, And will one will, To do and to endure.

Fill me with breath of God, Till I am holy, Thine, Until it's every part of me, Close with Thy fiery light.

Freedom be breath of God, So shall I never die, And live with Thee the perfect life, Of Thy eternity.

Let us now turn, To God's word, And to the passage that we read together, In Ephesians, Chapter 2, And the first ten verses of this chapter.

[ 38 : 12 ] Chapter 2 of Ephesians, Paul begins by saying, And you he made alive, And you he made alive, Who were dead, In trespasses and sins.

In the first chapter, In the first chapter, In the first chapter, In the first chapter, You see Paul, There teaching about God's great salvation, And he makes it clear that it is all of God, And all of grace, And all in Christ.

These are the things that he says in the first chapter. It's all of God because he planned it, And because he accomplished it, On the cross of Calvary, In his son Jesus Christ.

He chose us in him before the foundations of the world, And he accomplished our salvation, In time, on Calvary. It's all of grace because it's something we could never earn, We could never merit by our own efforts, Or anything we do ourselves.

We couldn't plan it, And we couldn't accomplish it, And we couldn't deserve it. And so he says, In verse 7 of chapter 1, That it is according to the riches of his grace.

[ 39 : 40 ] And all this is in Christ. The salvation that God has worked out is all in Christ, For in him we find all the blessings that we need, For time and for eternity.

Verse 5 of chapter 1, Verse 3 rather, Chapter 1, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

And now Paul begins in chapter 2 to describe in more detail that great salvation that we mentioned in chapter 1.

He describes the nature of the experience of God's salvation to the sinner. He spoke about what God does in the life of the man and the woman that has come to experience the blessings of God. What happens when a person is converted? What happens when a person is born again of the Holy Spirit? What happens when a person becomes a Christian?

[ 40 : 58 ] And these are questions that Paul answers for us in chapter 2. We hear a lot about the falling pound in these days, And the fact that the Chancellor and the government have to keep inflation as low as possible.

But in the church there is the danger of devaluing the miracle of the new birth, Devaluing the miracle of conversion.

And indeed some people look upon conversion as if it was a kind of a plague, The Kurum they call it in Lewis anyway.

And it's as if it was a disease you caught. And you better keep away from services and meetings in case you got the Kurum as if it was some kind of disease.

And in the church there is the danger of devaluing the miracle of the new birth, Or the doctrine of regeneration. We lose the sense of awe and the sense of wonder that we ought to have regarding conversion.

[ 42 : 18 ] Conversion, becoming a Christian, is the greatest thing that can ever happen to anyone in this world.

When the marvellous miracle of grace comes and takes place in the heart of a sinner, That has done nothing to deserve it and done nothing to receive it, Then all of a sudden it's there.

And it happens. By God's sheer sovereign grace. In verses 1 to 10 of this chapter Paul speaks of it as being like a resurrection from the dead.

And in verses 11 to 22 of the chapter he describes it as a reconciliation. Being reconciled to God. Being brought back from the dead. That's the way Paul in these verses describes conversion.

Chapter 2 verse 5 Even when we were dead in trespasses made us alive together with Christ.

[ 43 : 40 ] Verse 13 speaking of reconciliation. Now in Christ Jesus, You who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Now Paul in verse 1 describes the sinner as he was and as he is in his natural state. And the picture he draws shows us what happens when God comes effectually and savingly by his spirit to touch the sinner's life.

Very often Paul explains and describes the riches that we have in Christ by telling us what it means to be out of Christ.

To be without Christ. And this is the reason why when you read through this letter to the Ephesians you find him saying again and again remember.

Remember what you were before. Remember how empty, how awful your state was. But now in Christ things are different.

[ 44 : 50 ] Verse 11 Therefore remember that you once Gentiles in the flesh. Verse 13 But now in Christ Jesus have been brought near.

Now many of the translations that you come across fall far short. Far, far short of the actual meaning in the Greek in verse 1.

And it may surprise you as it surprised me to know that it is the Knox Catholic translation that is the most accurate and the clearer of all the translations on this verse.

What it says is, What it says is, He found you dead. When God came to you and to me as sinners, He found us dead.

Like a dead body lying there. Unable to move, unable to hear, unable to see, unable to feel. We were dead when He came to us.

[ 46 : 02 ] And that is exactly what Paul is saying here. And what a good translation that is of this one verse anyway. Paul is saying, this is how God found you.

Found all of you. This is how you were when God stood down and found you. And I think it would be useful if we would all realise afresh that this is how man is by nature.

It's not that we are away from God and that we need to be guided back to Him, although that is true. And neither is it that we are in need of forgiveness and cleansing from sin, although we admit that that is necessary.

The most awful thing about man, as he is in his natural state, is that he is spiritually dead. And that is how it is so wrong to think that you made a decision yourself to follow Christ.

You couldn't make a decision to follow Christ of yourself. You were dead. Of course we decide to follow Jesus, but God enables us to decide to follow Jesus.

[ 47 : 27 ] And that is something that we seem to forget. We were dead. We couldn't follow Jesus until he made us willing in the day of his power.

So the glory belongs to him and not to us. So the most awful thing about man's status as he is by nature is that he is dead in the spiritual sense.

And that he needs to be resurrected from that state of death. And when we grasp that truth properly, we will begin to realize that it is God and God alone who saved us.

Nothing of ourselves, all of him. The only thing that we contributed towards our salvation is the sin that made us in need of salvation.

Nothing more. Others can influence our minds and our thinking. We can be brainwashed, as many are.

[ 48 : 41 ] Other people can help us and our lives can be improved, vastly improved. And that is good. Think of the great work that the colleagues anonymous does everywhere throughout our land.

The number of people they have. The number of people they bring to sobriety. But that is as far as they can go.

Only God is able to give life, where there is nothing but death. Only God can make a Christian of our passion. Others can encourage us to come to church, even drag us to church and tell us we have got to go.

But having done that, they can't make us a Christian. Only God can do that. Now the person who is upright and honest and good living and careful in his walk and talk, is everybody as dead in trespasses and sins as the worst of the worst in society.

The drug addict, the alcoholic, the down and out sleeping rough on the streets. We seem to think that it takes more grace to save a poor wretch like that, who has made a mess of his life, than a person who has been good living and honest and upright all his days.

[ 50 : 17 ] But we forget this. That the person who is upright and honest all his life, and the poor person who has succumbed to the evils of the drugs and things, are in the same boat.

Spiritually. They are dead. Dead spiritually. He found you dead. It could be that the miracle of God's risk is seen more clearly in the conversion of one who was so full of his own self-righteousness and good works, than in the conversion of the other person who was a poor specimen of humanity.

What is spiritual death and what is spiritual life? Well, Jesus spoke about spiritual life. And he said, this is eternal life. That they may know you, the only through God and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

The hallmark of spiritual life is to know God. And to go on in that knowledge, to go on to grow in grace and in further knowledge of God.

These are the signs of spiritual life. It's not what we do or what others think of us. It's not the intellectual grasp that we may have of the great doctrines of the faith.

[ 51 : 59 ] The hallmark of the spiritual life is that we go on to know God and his will for us better and better. And that our appetite for the word of God grows and grows as the days go by.

On the other hand, the marks of spiritual death is lack of knowledge of God. The verse 12 says that we are without Christ, having no hope and without God in the world.

That is what made Christ say to the Father, the night he was betrayed, O righteous Father, the world has not known you.

The world does not know God. They don't know him. Only those that have been brought alive spiritually know God.

And want to know him better and better and better. And this should fill our hearts then with love and with sympathy towards those that are still unconverted.

[ 53 : 17 ] Oh, how our hearts should go out. And how our prayers should go up for those in our midst who are still unconverted and still do not know God as their saviour.

It ought to drive us to live in such a way that others would see something in us that they would want to have for themselves.

That they would see something of Christ in us. That they would, by God's grace, desire to be Christians as well.

And some years ago, there were a crowd of men walking at the Barnas Church, laying a kind of a pathway towards the hall and round about the church.

They talked about spiritual things. They were young boys, apprentices, some of them and others who were helping them along.

[ 54 : 29 ] And they talked about the Christian faith and what was involved in it. And one boy said, well, if I would become a Christian, I would like to be the kind of Christian that William Huxing is.

That said a lot about William Huxing was one of the elders of the church there. If I'm ever going to be a Christian, I would want to be a Christian like William Smith.

And they say that about you and about me. If I would become a Christian, I hope I would become the kind of Christian that Donald is, or Yohing is, or whoever his name might be.

Now, however, to say all this is to describe spiritual death in negative terms only. Without God, without hope dead.

There is a positive side to spiritual death too. As it is God's judgment on sin.

[ 55 : 46 ] God said to Adam, before he sinned in the Garden of Eden. Look at that tree there in the middle of the garden. The day, the moment you eat of it, you will surely die.

And Adam ate of that tree. But Adam did not die. Right away. Why did Adam not die and fall down dead as soon as he ate of the fruit of that tree?

Because the death that God was speaking about then was not physical death. But death which means separation from himself.

And he said to him, he said, He could have said in other words, Adam, the day you eat of that tree, your communion with me will be broken.

You will die spiritually. And we can have no communion with one another anymore. That will be the end of it. Adam lived for another 900 odd years.

[ 57 : 02 ] He was 930 years old, was he not, when he died. But the day that he ate that fruit, he died spiritually. And he had no communion with God anymore.

And himself and Eve were expelled from the garden. Physical death followed the fall in the course of time.

But the real judgment was that he was cast out from the presence of God. And he could have no fellowship with God anymore.

The communion Adam had with God was now broken. And that is spiritual death. And that is how the unconverted person can't have communion with God.

Oh, he can't pray, but it's as if the heavens were brass and the earth was iron. He's not getting close to God. He's not getting near to God.

[ 58 : 03 ] He can't say that he feels the presence of God with him. Physical death is only the earthward sign of the spiritual inner death that takes place.

And if that soul dies, and he is still in that state of spiritual death, he will be cast forever out of God's presence, which is eternal death in the lake of fire with the devil and his angels.

But spiritual death also means that we are brought under the dominion of evil forces, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

The word walked there that Paul uses stresses that in particular. Verse 2, in which you once walked.

Walk, how, according to the course of this world, under the authority of the world. According to the prince of the power of the air, in subjection to the devil.

[ 59 : 25 ] We all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, under the jurisdiction of the flesh.

For the unconverted person is under the power of the devil, under the power of the flesh, and under the power of the world around.

This is the place to which the fall has taken every one of Adam's race. And that is why when we speak about man's free will, as we often do, we must remember that for the unconverted person, his free will is fallen.

Free will. A free will that is in bondage to the world and the flesh and the devil. And it's not free will at all. It's not free will at all.

Because he is under the dominion of the world and the flesh and the devil. And so it makes nonsense to argue that the doctrine of election is interfering with man's free will.

[ 60 : 39 ] He hasn't got free will. He hasn't got it. Man in his natural state without grace is carried along as a slave, doing the will of the world and doing the will of the flesh and doing the will of the devil.

Notice how we listen to the voice of the world from day to day. How we always invariably listen to what the world says.

And we are slaves to the world, slaves to fashion. And we follow the latest trends. We stop wearing certain clothes because they're not fashionable.

When I was young, in my teenage years and later on, all the boys had their hair down to their shoulders.

Why did they have their hair down to their shoulders? Because the world said that's the way it's going to be. It's the fashion of today.

[ 61 : 57 ] And so they wore their hair down to their shoulders. After the example of the beetles. And when you see the beetles today, you think, my, they're very short in the hair.

There was nothing wrong with them, but they found an awful lot wrong with them. In the 1960s when they appeared on the scene. They tut tut it and all the rest of it.

Because the world sets the standard and we obey. And the same is doing with the flesh. We are slaves to the flesh.

And that includes more than the sins that we call carnal sins. It means carnal sins right in the... It means also living to please ourselves.

How often we find that it is self that people see and hear when we do Christian service instead of seeing Christ.

[ 63 : 02 ] Because, you know, we give flesh the place instead of giving Christ the place.

And we are enslaved to the flesh. We are enslaved to the devil. The power of the air. This is really what is behind all the things you see happening.

The murders, the rapes, the wars, the riots, the rebellions, the bombings. The anarchy that's around in the world. Those who fight against this and fight against that.

Think they are free and led captive. They are saved. They are saved. At the same time by the prince of the power of the air. And that is Paul's picture of the person who is yet unsaved.

A stranger to grace and to God. Not only does spiritual death bring us under the judgment of God and under the vicious powers of the world and the flesh and the devil.

[ 64 : 12 ] But it also brings us into a state where we are the children of wrath. That is what Paul calls us before we are converted.

Children of wrath. We don't want to hear anything about the wrath of God nowadays. How can you speak about a God of love and at the same time speak about the wrath of God?

Well, the Bible brings those two truths solidly together and simply together when it says in Revelation chapter 6 and verse 16.

The wrath of the lamb. The wrath of the lamb is a fearful thing. My father was loving and kind to us as children growing up and helping us whenever it was possible for him.

But if we did something wrong, we were afraid. All he had to do when we did something wrong was just to loosen the breath that was round his waist.

[ 65 : 27 ] And that was enough to make out legs as jelly. Because although he was loving, he could also be angry. As I found out when I caused running in the fields where the corn was just about to be cut down with the scythe.

You know the mess you can make, the corn is flat and you can't scythe it properly. And I was caught running out of the corn that hadn't been cut and I suffered from it.

When you see that on a human scale, you can also understand from a spiritual perspective that God is a loving God.

But his anger is something to be reckoned with. The awful thing about being without Christ is not the harm that sin does to us passionately.

Or the harm that sin does to other people. The awful thing is what it does to God. That's the awful thing.

[ 66 : 46 ] It causes him to pour out his wrath upon the guilty.

It leaves us without shelter from the wrath of God if we are unconverted. We're without shelter.

Because you see, there is no shelter from the wrath of God except in Christ.

And if we are without Christ, we're without shelter. Then the wrath of God blazes against us. The words, the children of wrath, means the children on whom God's wrath already abides.

And this is the reason why we find Paul relating in verse 4 what has happened to us if we became Christians.

But God. But God who is rich in mercy. He says in other words, you will never understand the good news of the gospel.

[ 68 : 04 ] You will never understand the wonder of salvation until you grasp something of the awful depth and darkness to which sin has taken the human gaze.

If you think lightly of sin, you will think lightly of the salvation that is in Christ as well.

If you have a shallow conception of the fearful pit and the mighty clay then, you will not appreciate what God has done for you.

In verse 4 Paul turns away from the hideous sight of man in his lost state. And he says that in his great mercy and by his sovereign grace, God stepped into the situation and plucked us out of that state.

And gloriously and of his own free will. And for other reasons that we cannot grasp with our finite minds.

[ 69 : 09 ] Raised us up together and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. What an honour he has placed upon us.

He could have passed us by and left us where we were, as he has done on countless others. When I think of the number who were in school with me in Loch Port and in Beuys, and I think how few of them became Christians.

And there are many of them who have died over the past years. I just wonder, and I praise God. God, I never did anything to deserve to be saved.

Nothing. I deserve the exact opposite of you. And then you saved me. Why me? Why me? The amazing grace of God that took us from the fearful pit and the mighty clay.

God, all praise him today with all your heart if you are a Christian. And if you are not yet a Christian, say to God in prayer, Oh God, hear my prayer and rescue me from this fearful state before I die and I am lost forever.

[ 70 : 42 ] God, I am in a state of spiritual death. And I will soon, I will soon be dead physically.

And before that happens, bring me to yourself. Save my soul. And you make that prayer today then, in your heart.

Don't have to get up and sit and shout it out. And this afternoon that's ahead of us, you go away somewhere on your own and seek God's salvation.

For your own sake and for his glory. Amen. May God bless to us as well. Just a wee prayer.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your sovereign grace. And we give you all the praise and all the glory for what you have done in the lives of all your people.

[ 71 : 46 ] And we pray that you would do it in the lives of others as well. Brothers and sisters and cousins and parents and children, Lord, may you do it in their lives as well.

By the glory of your name. Amen. We sing in closing to God's praise in hymn 374.

374. To God, by the glory, great things he hath done. Who loved he the world that he gave us his son. Who yielded his life an atonement for sin.

