



# International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

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Ephesians 2:1-10

New International Version

March 12, 2017

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, March 12, 2017**, is from **Ephesians 2:1-10**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

**(Ephesians 2:1) As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,**

Paul wrote to the Romans about our common condition: "Once I was alive apart from the law, when the commandment came, sin came to life and I died" (Romans 7:9); "through the law we became conscious of our sin" (Romans 3:20); "and where there is no law there is no

transgression” (Romans 4:15). John wrote: “sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4). James wrote: “You commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors” (James 2:9). When we were “dead” we were separated spiritually from God.

**(Ephesians 2:2) in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.**

Before we became Christians, we lived spiritually separated from God, resulting in sin and lawlessness. The ways of this world are contrary to the law of God, the law of love, and we once walked in violation of the law of love—in lawlessness. We followed Satan’s ways instead of God’s ways whether we were aware of it or not. The spirit of the devil works in those who are lawless. Paul explained the behavior of those who are not sincere followers of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

**(Ephesians 2:3) All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.**

In this world, we can make the lawless followers of the devil and his ways our companions in sin, or we can live as sincere followers of Jesus Christ and bear witness with others for Jesus Christ in the world. At one time, we too

followed or lived according to our cravings and desires rather than follow the law of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit according to the Scriptures, Who now indwells those who love Jesus as their Lord and Savior. We deserved God's just judgment, condemnation, and wrath.

**(Ephesians 2:4) But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,**

God's great love for us made the difference in our lives. We learned the truth about Jesus Christ, about the death and resurrection of the Son of God, so God could be rich in mercy and grace while at the same time being just and upholding His law, the law of love, and providing a way through the indwelling Holy Spirit for us to truly obey Jesus Christ and love God and one another. We came to trust in Jesus Christ and gave our lives into His care and service. Oh, to be as rich in mercy as our Heavenly Father!

**(Ephesians 2:5) made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.**

We were dead, separated spiritually from God. God took the initiative and God bridged the gap between Him and us when He sent Jesus Christ into the world to save us from our sins and the consequences of our sins. The Father sent Jesus even though we were transgressing His laws and following the devil. According to the law, God had no obligation to save us from our sins; we deserved

judgment and death. According to the law, God had an obligation to punish us forever unless He could find a way to be just, uphold His law, and mercifully forgive us. God found the only way possible when Jesus, the Son of God, died on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice for us. God made our pardon possible by grace, and that is how we are saved and made alive in Christ.

**(Ephesians 2:6) And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,**

When God brought us back into a personal, loving, obedient relationship with Him by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and all He did for us, God made us alive with Christ. By raising us from spiritual death to spiritual life, God united us with Christ and filled us with His Spirit, which made us spiritually alive. We are so united with Christ that we are where Christ is, seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. Now, when we pray, we are spiritually in the throne room of God.

**(Ephesians 2:7) in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.**

We have this close, living, loving relationship with God through Jesus Christ only because of His love and grace in our receiving Christ through faith. Throughout the rest of

our lives and throughout the ages the Church will show and tell of the radical difference Jesus Christ makes and can make in and through the lives of all who love and trust Him. To tell others about Jesus Christ is to tell the truth about the love and kindness of God in Christ Jesus, Who brought us and will bring all who believe in Him from death to life. Throughout eternity, our salvation will show the riches of God's grace and kindness in Jesus Christ.

**(Ephesians 2:8) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—**

Both grace and faith are gifts of God. We do not produce grace or faith from within ourselves. No one becomes a Christian apart from the truth of God in the Scriptures and the work of the Holy Spirit when we respond to Christ in faith. We receive salvation and the gift of spiritual life with empty hands; we have no works to offer Christ as a payment for our salvation either before or after we are saved. But we are saved to do good works as Christ works within us to bear fruit that will last.

**(Ephesians 2:9) not by works, so that no one can boast.**

No one is saved or comes into fellowship with God because they have done good works or have avoided doing a lot of bad deeds. No one can earn or merit saving faith in Jesus Christ. No one who is dead in trespasses and sins can

make themselves righteous and come into new life with God; only Jesus can make us right with God and bring us to His and our Father. No one who is a slave of demonic forces can free themselves from slavery to devils; only Jesus can free us. Only Jesus can give someone new life and only Jesus can free a believer from slavery to sin or the devil. No one has any basis for boasting that they are better than someone else, because believers are saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, not by their achievements or good works.

**(Ephesians 2:10) For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

If we ever wonder who we are or what value we have, in addition to the fact that God created us in the image of God, we are also God's special handiwork with a God-given purpose. God is involved personally in our creation, which began in God's mind before our conception, and by grace through faith in Jesus Christ will continue throughout eternity. God created us in Christ Jesus to do good works, to bear good fruit that will bless others and us. Good works supernaturally follow our new birth as followers of Jesus Christ. Before God created us and recreated us in the image of Christ Jesus, God planned and prepared in advance what He wanted us to do and how He wanted us to do it. In advance, God made all the necessary preparations and provisions so at the proper time we could fulfill His goals for us. All that we are and will become in

the future through Jesus Christ is the free, unearned gift of God; therefore, God deserves all the praise and glory for who we have become in Christ Jesus and for all the good works we do—God does good works through those who love, trust, and obey Him for His glory.

### **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further**

1. How did we once live and why?
2. Why were we once deserving of God's judgment and wrath?
3. If Jesus is our Lord and Savior, why are we now alive with Christ?
4. Where is Jesus Christ today and where are all true Christians spiritually?
5. Why are we alive in Christ on the earth today?

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Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly  
*International Bible Lesson.*

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