

Thankful (1)
(Ephesians 2:5)

Thankful to be Alive in Christ

Introduction: We begin a new sermon series this morning, I have entitled, “Thankful.” As we are entering that thanksgiving season, I want to remind us of some things we are to be so thankful for. Today, I want to remind us of what it means to be thankful we are alive in Christ, and what exactly that means.

There are only 2 spheres of existence: in Adam, or in Christ. There is NO third option, no neutral ground. In Adam all died spiritually (Rom. 5:12). But now comes heaven's counterattack: Because of Adam's trespass, many died; *because of Christ's obedience the grace of God abounds to many bringing life.* (Rom 5:15, 18).

Paul here in our text introduces the most astounding interruption in human history in verse 4, “*But.*” “*But God is rich in mercy! He has intervened in the destiny of man; He has interrupted the doom of death and judgment and made us alive in Christ!*”

If you are in Christ today, you can be thankful to be alive in Christ! What does this mean?

I. *We can be thankful He loved us: (v.4)*

The Apostle Paul spoke often of the love of God.

A. He spoke of the depth of His love for us – (3:14-19)

1. These measurements most likely describe not the *thoroughness of comprehension but the immensity* of the Christ's love to be comprehended.
2. In his letter to the Romans, he exposed the depth of Christ's love for us – (Rom 5:6, 8, 10)
3. John expressed similar teachings about the love of Christ – (Jn 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:10 *When did God display such love to us – before we knew Him, before we loved Him, while we were still enemies of him!*)

a. *When we were dead in our sins we were under Satan's sway – (vv. 2-3)*

A lot of people like to think, They are in charge of their lives, charting their own course, the master of their soul... but they are not, they are under Satan's influence!

b. *When we were dead in our sins we were condemned - Yes, there is a real Satan – and he has a whole host of demoniacs (Eph. 6:10) he uses to manipulate the minds of men, and control wills, and telling us truth is a lie, and the lies are the truth! All leading to a life of disobedience and death.*

c. *When we were dead in our sins - Christ loved us with a great love. (isn't that just amazing?!)*

B. *He spoke of the description of Christ's love – “...Because of His “great love...”*

1. *God is the designer and definer of LOVE. [1 Jn 4:8] says, “The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love.*
2. In Romans 5:8, it says, “*But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*”

B. How should we respond to His Love?

1. When we truly grasp the depth of His love, it changes everything.
2. We should respond with Joy -

3. We should respond with gratitude -

4. We should share that love with others.

After all it is because of His great love, we are no longer dead in our sins, but rather, “alive in Christ!” Secondly...

II. *We can be thankful He liberated us: (v.5, the word “with” Christ, (lit.) “in Christ”...*

A. *In Christ, He Freedom us from sin- Before Christ brought us to spiritual life, we were enslaved to sin, ...*

1. *Jesus is our substitute, and sin bearer transferring us from death to life. (Jn.5:24; Col. 2:13-14) and ...*
2. *Through His sacrifice, Jesus has liberated us, set us free! (Jn. 8:36)*

B. *In Christ, we should be walking and living in our freedom - Thanks to the great love of God, we are alive in Christ!*

Let's embrace the freedom He offers and ride boldly into the life He has planned for us by His help!

III. *We can be thankful He lifted us: (v. 6)*

Just as God raised Jesus from the grave to a new incorruptible life, He has also raised us up from the depths of our past and sin – to new life in Christ!

A. Our position in Christ

1. When we accepted Christ as our Savior, we're not just given life; we're elevated to new heights. You were not just made a better old you...
2. Ephesians 2:6 tells us, “*And raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places.*”
 - a. The believer has two addresses – one here on earth, and another in the heavenlies...
 - b. We are no longer Citizens here – but we are there! (Rom. 12:2; 1 Jn. 2:15; Jn. 14:2; 17:16; Phil. 3:20-21; Eph. 2:19; 2 Cor. 5:1-8; Heb. 13:14-16)
 - c. Heavenly places (lit) means the heavenlies – As Jesus is in the heavenlies, so the believer who is alive in Christ, is to live in the heavenlies;
 - It is where the believers' spiritual blessings are (Eph. 1:3) .
 - The heavenlies are where the believer's affections should be (Col. 3:3)
 - The heavenlies are where our eternal inheritance is – (1 Pe.1:4-5; Mt. 25:34; Ac. 26:18; Eph. 1:11; Col. 1:12; Heb. 9:15; Ps. 16:5;23; 26; 72; Lam.3:24)

B. What does living in our new position look like?

1. It's like having VIP access at a concert—you don't just stand in the back with the regular crowd; you get to enjoy front-row seats!
2. Living as though we are lifted means we carry ourselves with all the confidence and joy that come with being in Christ, where Christ is!
3. It means we should approach life knowing we are beloved children of the King, not as mere survivors of our circumstances.
4. Notice the contrast – between our former life, dead to God, mired in sin, destined for hell, but now, thanks to the great love of God, we are made alive in Christ, raised to new life, raised to live right next to Christ where Christ lives...
5. We are His ambassadors for Christ, carrying His light into the world!