

Sermon 3-11-18 We are God's Workmanship Ephesians 2:1-10

Dear God's Workmanship:

What do you expect to see first when you get to heaven?

Ancient theologians say that when a believer first enters heaven that believer will have a...

- Beatific Vision
- A Happy-Making Sight

So, what will you see first when you reach heaven? Ever thought about that?

The Bible says this is what we shall see when we reach heaven...

- We "...will see God's face..." Revelation 3
- We "...gaze upon the beauty of the Lord." Psalm 27
- We "...will see God." Matthew 5
- Job says "...in my flesh I will see God...with my own eyes."

Not only will we see His face and live, but we will likely wonder if we ever lived before we saw His face.

To look into God's eyes will be to see we have always longed to see...

- The Person who created us...
- Seeing God will be like seeing everything else for the first time

St. Augustine said:

"God is the end of our desires."

Our experience of God in heaven will never become stale.

- it will deepen and develop
- it will intensify and amplify
- it will unfold and increase

- it will broaden and balloon

I. We were once dead but now are a new creation vv1-3

Because of original sin and our sinful nature

We all started out with this dead sinful nature. v1 And this dead sinful nature produces “evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony and slander.” Matthew 15:19

We all came from a world that had rebelled against God and those who refuse to believe in Him are still rebelling against Him. v2

We are “alive in Christ” and no longer “dead” in our sins but we still live in a world that is...

- disobedient to the Lord
- led by the “ruler of the kingdom of the air”
- “gratifying the cravings of ...sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts.”

The ways of this sinful world can be seen with the 4 ism’s.

- **Materialism** – Possessions satisfy --- provide for yourself!
 - objects make us happy and comfortable and satisfied
 - he who dies with the most toys wins
 - materialism is futile
- **Epicureanism** - Life is a ball --- enjoy yourself!
 - eat, drink and be merry...for tomorrow we die
 - if it feels good, do it
 - be free and unaccountable
 - Epicureanism is nothing more than -- “hell at home”
- **Humanism** - Humanity is glorious - -- exalt yourself!
 - there is no such thing as depravity
 - humans possess great and grand potential

- humans are masters of their own fate, captains of their own souls
- unconquerable and invincible
- **Fatalism** – The game is fixed --- resign yourself!
 - accept whatever comes
 - Aw, what's the use
 - Why go on living
 - everything is out of control --- we know God is in control

The ways of this sinful and lost world...

- By nature we were once locked into this world
- By nature we were once objects of wrath v4
- By nature we once belonged to a world on its way to hell

God saved us from hell. People make jokes about hell but it is a real horrible place where there will be no joking.

Not only will the unbeliever be in hell, but hell will be in him too. Cravings will go unchecked. Worries will fret and never find peace. Thieves will steal and never have enough. None will be satisfied....hell is reserved, not for those souls who seek God yet struggle, but for those who defy God and rebel. For those who say about Jesus, "We don't want this man to be our king." In hell there will be no Spirit of God, no voice of God, no voice of God's people." - Lucado

But, God rescued us from hell and its eternal torments and suffering.

As God's workmanship....

II. We are now alive and walk with Him vv4-5

We are no longer under sin's power and control.

- Christ on the cross destroyed sin, death and the devil
- Our thoughts, plans and wishes are controlled by the Spirit of God

- We walk in the Spirit
- Galatians 2:20 **“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live,** but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

Ponder God’s great love for us here in verses 4-7 “Who is rich in mercy...made us alive...and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus...riches of His grace, expressed in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.”

Even though we still live in this flesh on this earth in a spiritual sense we...

- are with Christ in the heavenly realm
- are now heavenly-minded
- have been transformed from death into life

When did this happen to us?

- 1, When God chose us to be His children before the world was created --- Ephesians 1:4
2. When Christ died on the cross for us and said “It is finished.”
3. When the Holy Spirit brings us to faith through the “Water and the Word.”

All this came about by God’s work and not ours.

“It was love, deep, true love...this love was mercy...our wretched condition...because of our birth and nature...held us captive by Satan and the world, but God was touched and moved to pity.”

God has showered us rescued sinners with pure kindness, love and favor. All this through Christ Jesus...whom we shall one day see face to face and whose gentle countenance we shall behold without hindrance through all eternity.

III. We are God's workmanship vv8-10

When someone gives you a gift, do you say: "That's very nice---how much do I owe you?"

When we receive a gift we say: Thank You!

- our salvation is a gift from God
- our faith is a gift from God

We become believers through God's grace = unmerited gift

- not the result of any effort on our part
- not the result of our ability or choice

We are not saved by good works, but we are saved to do good works.

"Christ, in whom we live and move and have our being, bestows upon us a share of His gifts and virtues, He is, as it were, formed in us, in our life and walk, so that His holiness, purity, humility, meekness, goodness, gentleness, kindness, etc, shine out brilliantly our walk and life."

Out of gratitude and moved by the Holy Spirit we will...

- seek to help and serve others
- 'seek to serve and praise our Lord
- "Do not live the rest of our earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God." I Peter 4
- Solomon says: "Remember your Creator." Eccles 12

Life without the Lord is a pathetic, hollow drag. Life with the Lord is the Way, the Truth and the Life! He is the One who takes away our sins and gives us a whole new perspective on life!

"Whoever believes in Him, shall not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16

Paraphrasing the Apostle Paul "...assures salvation to the most unlikely folks; not to the worker, but to the trust-er; not to the able-bodied, but to the unable; not to the affluent saint, but to the bankrupt and unemployable --- the child who will trust..." in the Lord as Savior.

We are God's Workmanship: Our spiritual legs have no strength. Our morality has no muscle. Our good deeds cannot carry us across the finish line, but Christ can. We are God's workmanship.