

Intro:

1. We Were Sons of Disobedience from the Kingdom of the World

- a. We used to be dead to God and living independently according to two things
 - i. The age of this world
 1. Temporal period characterized by ungodliness in this world
 - a. Walking *according to* this age means that we were unconcerned with the things of God and were concerned with the values of this idolatrous age
James Boice says that in this age, “*sin* does not mean rebellion against God and his righteous laws, to which we are held accountable; it means ignorance of the oppression found in social structures. The way to overcome it is by social change, new laws or revolution. *Jesus* becomes not the incarnate God who died for our salvation, but rather the pattern for creative living. He is our example, not our Savior. *Salvation* is defined as liberation from oppressive and authoritative ideas or systems. *Faith* is becoming aware of this oppression and doing something about it. *Evangelism* does not mean carrying the gospel of Jesus Christ to a perishing world, but rather working through the world’s power centers to overthrow injustice.” (James Boice, *Two Cities, Two Loves*)
 2. Contrasted with the “age to come” which has a different character
 - a. Walking *in* this age (not according to) means that we are unconcerned with the idols of this age and are deeply concerned with the pleasures and purposes of God.
 - b. Right now we are in both ages at once: one ultimately (in the heavens), one temporarily (in this age), but neither one fully, so we long for heaven
 - i. See battle of Spirit/Flesh (Gal 5),
 - ii. longing for redemption (Rom 8),
 - iii. degrees of glory (2 Cor 3:18),
 - iv. partial understanding (1 Cor 13:12; 1 John 3:1-3)
 - ii. The ruler of the domain of the air (of this world, John 14:30; 12:31; 16:11; 2 Cor 4:4; 1 John 4:4; 5:19)
 1. the spirit at work in the sons of disobedience (see 5:6)
 - a. 2 Tim 2:24-26 – “held captive by him to do his will”
 2. “air” is the realm of spiritual powers, between heaven and earth
 - a. wrath comes upon those of the family of disobedience (5:6)
 - b. Satan is the father of this family (John 8:43-44)
- b. This former life consisted of living in the controlling sphere of our overdesires
 - i. This is the “how” were held captive by Satan and lived according to this age:
 - ii. We, too, dwelt (“wander to and fro”) in the “overdesires” of our flesh
 1. We were “busy” trying to prove our righteousness and worth, wandering back and forth performing for our idols (whatever we “overdesired” as a means to show ourselves as worthy and significant)
 - iii. Doing the overdesire of the flesh (willing self-rule and self-centered “salvation”)
 1. Romans 8:7-8 – “mind” set on the “flesh” is hostile to God and incapable of submitting to Him
 - a. What we *wanted* to do
 2. Self-Power

- a. Religious: “I convince God to accept me by my sacrifices and righteousness.”
- b. Irreligious: “Why does anybody need to be saved?”
- c. Both are ways of getting rid of Jesus AS SAVIOR
 - i. Religious: He shows me the way to live so that I can go to heaven.
 - ii. Irreligious: He shows me the way to live so that I can make this world a better place.
 - iii. In neither instance is Jesus the Savior, He is merely the teacher.
- iv. Doing the overdesire of our thoughts (mind, understanding)
 - 1. Eph 4:17-20
 - a. What we *deemed right and good* to do (Pr. 14:12)
 - 2. We did not accidentally oppose God, but rather it seemed right and reasonable to make God into our own image and to worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator (Rom 1:18ff)

2. We are Now Sons & Daughters of God in the Kingdom of Heaven

- a. Made alive together w/Christ (body/Head) BY GRACE
- b. Raised up with Him BY GRACE
 - i. Col 3:1-4 – Set your minds on things above, where Christ is
- c. Seated with Him in the heavenlies BY GRACE
 - i. “Seated” indicates work that is finished
 - 1. In Christ we are complete (Col 2:10), there is no more wandering back and forth in “busyness” for the work has been done.
 - ii. Presence of the Father, wrapped up in the Son (Eph 2:18; 3:10-12; Heb 10:19)
 - iii. Transferred from the domain of darkness into the Kingdom of the Beloved One (Col 1:13)
- d. Two Cities: Two Loves
 - i. City of God: City of Man
 - 1. Do not love this world (1 John 2:15-17)
 - 2. Run the race with eyes fixed on Jesus (Heb 12:1-2)
 - ii. This Age and the Coming Ages
 - 1. Domain of Darkness and Kingdom of Light (Eph 5:8)
 - 2. The reality is that our culture, and every culture who walks according to this age, has distorted God and made Him into how it thinks God should be.
 - a. View of God’s Love & Wrath
 - i. Conservative – God loves those who do the right thing...like us
If Jesus appeared on the earth today as He did 2000 years ago, many churches would not elect Him to their official boards. He would have been disqualified because He ran with the wrong crowd. ~Dr. Haddon Robinson
 - ii. Liberal – God loves every person the same way and would never punish anyone...like us
The result, of course, is that the love of the God in our culture has been purged of anything the culture finds uncomfortable. The love of God has been sanitized, democratized, and above all sentimentalized. ~D.A. Carson, *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God*
- 3. Each of these distortions of God ends up making God man-centered instead of God-centered. This spawns a distorted worldview of creation as well:
 - a. Power – In this age the world strives for power as the means to happiness and fulfillment, to truly living

- b. Money – In this age people strive for money, seeing it as an end or a means to happiness and fulfillment, to truly living
- c. Suffering – In this age suffering is always bad and should be avoided at every cost. You cannot suffer and truly live.
- iii. Do we fully realize that we have a new Father, a New Family, a New Kingdom, a New Position, and have New Priorities?
 - 1. This Truth will change the way that we view the world around us as we live in it, not according to it.
 - a. The circumference of our life is determined by its center. If Christ has priority in our lives and is the center point, then all else will be in perspective. ~Donald A. Jensen
 - b. How do we, seated in the heavens, view God’s love?
 - i. Those who did the right things or of His grace?
 - ii. Grateful or presumptuous?
 - 1. Looking down on those who “don’t get it” assuming that our wisdom gained us this seat in heaven?
 - 2. Looking up in gratitude that He would choose me of His own accord and bring me into His presence to truly live?
 - 3. Liberal or Conservative – Ways to get rid of Jesus as the SAVIOR
 - iii. GOSPEL: I was dead, enslaved, and under God’s righteous wrath, but by His loving grace I live, am raised up, and am seated with Him in the heavens!
 - c. How do we view Power, Money, and Sex?
 - i. Means to happiness, fulfillment, life?
 - ii. Can we give up our power for the sake of the Kingdom of God?
 - iii. Can we give up our money for the sake of the gospel?
 - iv. Can we view suffering as the calling of God, as the means to which we must depend upon Him more and be filled with His life-giving Spirit? Can we see the suffering of Jesus as the power of our salvation?

3. This Age is Not My Home!

Principle: *We have a new Father, making us a new humanity, a new family, a new Kingdom, with a new purpose.*

Application: Shall we live with worship flowing from our hearts and eternity set before our eyes?

Encouraging: Positive reality that I am a child of God, seated in heaven with Christ.

-Sin has lost its mastery of you. (Rom 6:22) You belong to Christ. (Rom 7:4)

-Blessed with every spiritual blessing (Eph 1:3)

-Complete in Christ, “seated with Him” (Col 2:10), there is no work left to do to make you acceptable to God. Jesus has done it all!!

Challenging: Learning to See with Eyes of Eternity, am I living in the Light of God’s Kingdom?

1. Where are my priorities: in THE HEAVENLIES WITH CHRIST or in the age of THIS WORLD?

-To what Kingdom do I invest my thoughts? (Col 3:2)

-To what Kingdom do I invest my wealth? (Is 55:2)

-To what Kingdom do I invest my talents/work? (Eph 4:11-12)

-To what Kingdom do I invest my words? (Eph 4:15; Matt 28:28-20)

- a. Nobody works to fix up a rental b/c you know that it's not yours and your money and work will go to somebody else. You invest in your home.
 - i. Why, however, do we build up our kingdoms in this world as if this was our home and we are going to somehow inherit this world?
 - ii. Should we not be investing in our true home, in eternity, into the heavens where Christ is seated? In His purposes of His glory in His gospel? Are our investments of thought, strength, money, and purpose going toward the proclamation of His Kingdom?
 1. Are you individually?
 2. Is EBF corporately?
 - iii. Do we center ourselves on Jesus as the priority of our lives? Do we really? Do we live gratefully for His grace toward us, or do we take Him for granted and serve ourselves, making Him into our image where we can control Him and He never challenges us?
 1. In America, what are our cultural idols that JC challenges?
 - a. Money – store your treasure in heaven, not on earth, do not covet, you can't serve God and wealth
 - b. Self-sufficiency – Apart from Me you can do nothing, submit to God, members of each other
 - c. Power – Love your enemies, Serve one another, the least is the greatest,
 - d. Sex – let the marriage bed be held in honor, no sexual promiscuity, immorality, adultery, or homosexuality for the sexual relationship images Christ and the Church
 - e. Feelings – truth sets you free, His Word is Truth, He is the Truth, the Way, the Life

FINAL THOUGHT: I have a new life by God's *grace* – are my priorities in line with my new life in God's Kingdom? Am I ultimately *grateful* for what He has done for me, or am I just giving lip service? Have I submitted every part of my life to His glory FIRST and FOREMOST, in my plans, purposes, and priorities? Fix your eyes upon your Redeemer and His glorious gospel of grace, and heed His exhortation to obey Him because He already loves you and your sins are already pardoned and He has blessed you with every spiritual blessing in the Christ! Rest b/c of His grace and Risk b/c of His grace.