Tread: **A Study in Ephesians – wk 5 – Where I Don’t stand**

**A person must learn to run! But first you must learn to walk and stand. One does not come before the other! When you understand one, you find yourself in a strong position to do the others.**

**This is Ephesians Ch 1-2 Where we stand in Jesus.**

**Ch 3-4 - how to walk it out. Ch 5-6 - how to run the race!**

**MAP / pics \*\* Back story - Ephesus was a large port city. Paul started the church, lived there 3 yrs and wrote this while in a Roman prison**

**Last few weeks - where we stand** **as a child God, chosen, adopted, forgiven, enlightened, heirs, saved, included, secure!**

**Where you stand in Christ is important – but equally important is to know where you don’t stand…**

**WHAT WE’D ALL LIKE TO BELIEVE ABOUT US (even Christians)**

* **At our core, we are all BASICALLY GOOD**

**Classic humanism. We are all good at our core – and given a chance we do the right thing. Society, culture, poverty, etc. creates problems…**

* **The path to heaven is found in SINCERITY and MORALITY**

**All roads lead to God, as long as were sincere. We must all find our own path – as long as it brings you peace and you are good to others.**

**Many like to believe everyone goes to heaven. That is until you mention really bad people. Which leads us to the next one…**

* **God grades on a CURVE, and I’m clearly ABOVE AVERAGE**

**Well, they’re not… but I am. And are you, but not them. Most of us are good people, and all good people go to heaven. We think highly of self.**

**Ch 1 - Paul ended with a declaration of the awesome power of Jesus – he is God, king, sovereign, rules all, and is all good!**

**But - Ephesians 2:1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 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, (Satan) the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 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. 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 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. 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

**We know what we want to believe – Using this passage, lets walk through this to see what the Bible says in response…**

**WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT US (very politically incorrect passage)**

**1. You are not God – stop acting like it.**

**(1 Tim 2:5, Is 44:6, 43:10-11, 1 Cor 8:6, Jam 2:19, Det 6:4, Rev 1:8, Mark 12:29)**

**Eph 2:1 - “As for you…” / “And you…” / “But you…”**

**There’s a clear separation from what he was saying about Jesus & you**

**We like to say we know that… but yet many (even Christians) live like we are our god, on our own throne, ruling our own life. That we have the power to determine our life and future.**

**(Job) Do you have that power? You’re not, stop acting it!**

**2. At our core, we are all spiritually dead (Eph 2:1-3, 5, Gen 3:1-24, Ro 5:12, 3:10-12, 23, 2 Cor 4:4, 1 John 5:19, 1 Cor 2:14, 2 Timothy 2:24-26, Proverbs 3:5-6, 14:12, 16:25)**

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

**While some would like to believe that we are all good people - Watch the news / read history, you see it’s not the case at all - genocide, abuse, torture, slavery, violence, crime. Even in isolated cultures.**

**The bible says we have a fundamental problem – we are born dead- in a state of sin, selfishness, & depravity - the real issue.**

**Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, (Adam) and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned… (missed mark) 3:23 all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.**

**Doctrine of original sin – Adam passed down to everyone a sin nature - bent towards sin and selfishness. Born with a bent…**

**Romans 3:10 …it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God. 12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”**

**It feels right to me…This is what I think… Proverbs 14:12 There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.**

**Left to ourselves we are not better, but worse…**

**Born spiritually dead – with have a problem we cannot fix.**

**We live in a fallen world – in chaos…**

**Next - Eph 2:2 …youfollowed 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.**

**3. Satan is real and at work in the hearts of people today (v.2)**

**Who and what is Satan? Is he real? Many names in the bible.**

**Devil Fundamentals / Satan Essentials (Isaiah 14:11-15, Revelation 12:7-9)**

**\*\*Satan is a fallen angel - He is a created spirit – like all angels.**

**Angels are created spirits designed to be worshipers, warriors, and workers of God to glory of God. We are not and will never be angels.**

**\*\*Satan is not equal to God - in anyway**

**Like all angels he is a created being with very limited powers & abilities. Motivated by pride and self-glory he seeks to discredit God.**

**\*\* Satan is in charge of - NOTHING!**

**Not this world, not the next, not hell – nothing. Satan’s final place will be hell as an inmate – he does not want to go there.**

**Matt 25:41 …the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.**

**Eph 2 calls Satan - “Ruler of the kingdom of the air…”**

**\*\* This does not mean Satan is a king – If I might quote the great theologian Elf, “He sits on a thrown of lies”**

**2 Corinthians 4:4 The (false) god of this age (figuratively) has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (1 John 5:19)**

**Understand this… All gods are false gods. It is mocking.**

**Like a dog - that thinks he is in charge of his master.**

**\*\*\*Dispensational view – Jesus king in this age vs. the next?**

**Jesus crushed Satan at the cross – and is victorious now.**  **(Eph 1, Ro 8:37-39, 1 Jo 3:8, Heb 2:14-15, Ps 7:10, 18:2, 1 Jo 4:4, Col 1, 2:13-17, 1 Cor 15:56-57, Jude 1:9)**

**\*\* Satan’s greatest weapons are deception & fear (2 Cor 11:14-15)**

**He does seek for you to worship him – he is happy if you worship anything other than the Lord God Almighty. Lies and fear!**

**Next thing - Ephesians 2:4 But because of (God’s) great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved…**

**4. The only path to heaven is through Jesus (Ma 8:36, John 1:4, 17, 10:9, 11:25, 3:16-36, 17:3, Acts 4:12, 10:43, 1 Tim 2:5, Romans 3:22, 5:2, 10:9, Heb 10:20, 1 John 5:20)**

**That is narrow minded and judgmental! Talk to Jesus... He said it.**

**John 14:6 Jesus answered, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (No other religion, person, faith, or system – no other way. Satan’s goal is to get you to not believe this.)**

**Progressive Christianity is creeping in – Universal (Jesus a way), Inclusive (Jesus uses many ways), exclusive (Jesus the only way)**

**5. When it comes to our salvation, all the credit is God’s**

**Colossians 2:13-14, Isaiah 64:6, Matthew 18:21-35**

**Eph 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 - 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.**

**It’s God’s love, grace, mercy, gift of Jesus, not you – that rescues you. Not good works, efforts, being a good person, not church attendance - in, thru, and by Christ. All the credit!**

**Eph 2:1 … you were dead in sin… 2 …in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world… 3 All of us (the redeemed) 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.**

**This part tells us two things**

**6. Never forget where you were before Jesus (v.2-3)**

**The enemy is a liar and he is lying to them - that was you once.**

**You were once blinded, have grace, mercy, patience…**

**2 Timoth 2:24 And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. 25 Opponents (non-Christians) must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.**

**We are wasting our time if we are trying to get non-Christians to act Christian. They are blinded by the enemy, we are to be patience**

**It is foolish to expect non-Christians to act like Christians (swearing, drugs, sex) Listen we are not asking you to act like a Christian. We are simply asking you to listen to the message and make a decision.**

**But if you make a decision to follow Jesus, realize this…**

**7. A new life in Christ, results in living a new life thru Christ (v.1-3,10)**

**Ep 2:1 You were… 2 …in which you used to live… 3 All of us also lived… at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts.**

 **You used to live like that, at one time… but now you don’t.**

 **In Jesus we not only think and believe diff – we live diff.**

**Check out the next part - 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.**

**In Christ we are remade with a purpose to do amazing things**

**When you know who you are not (you’re not good in yourself and not able to save yourself) then you are able to discover yourself!**

**In Christ you are - God’s masterpiece – remade & designed for good works (not saved by being good – but reborn to do good.**

**Last thing this passage tells us - Eph 2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 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.**

**8. There is a great day coming for all of us. (V.3, 6-7)**

**Great and wonderful for some – Great and terrible for others**

**Paul mentions the reality of Hell for those without Christ**

**Eph 2:3b Like the rest, (BC Jesus) we were by nature deserving of wrath. (Hell)**

**Hell was talked about by Jesus more than anyone in the Bible. It is a real place, an eternal place, a conscience place. (Matt 5:22-30, 25:41, 10:28, Luke 16:23, Col 3:6, 2 Thes 1:8-10). It is a place of:**

* + **Unspeakable suffering (Rev 14:10-11)**
	+ **Unsatisfied cravings (Luke 16:23-24)**
	+ **Unquenchable flames (Mar 9:48, Rev 21:8, 20:10, Mat 13:41,42)**
	+ **Unknowable presence of others (alone) Luke 13:28**
	+ **Unending (eternal - forever) Revelation 20:10**

**Jesus created it - rules over it - (Paul tells us this in Eph 1, Matt 11:27,** **John 3:35, Eph 1:22, Acts 10:36, Col1:17)**

**His presence is there, but not in the way you would want. He is there w/ righteous justice & judgment (Jo 1:3, 10, Col 1:16, Rev 14:10)**

**So, the question is... Who Goes to Hell? Everyone... without Jesus**

**All who fail to respond to God’s saving plan (Romans 6:23)**

**Revelation 21:8 But cowards who turn away from me, (those who reject Christ – afraid to surrender to Jesus) and unbelievers, (those who do not accept the truth – see it as fiction or have a diff belief) and the corrupt, and murderers, (evil people) and the immoral, (people who live outside God’s standards) and those who practice witchcraft, (pagans, wiccans, pantheists, those who practice the occult) and idol worshipers, (those who worship any god other than the Lord God) and all liars (those who lie about the truth – deceivers) - their doom is in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur. This is the second death.”**

**\*\*I thought just bad people go to hell… let’s see that the bible says…**

**Revelation 20:14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.**

**John 3:3 Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.**

**\*\*\* But - as long as we are sincere – there is no area in life where sincerity ever makes a bad choice right. (Wrong medicine, surgery, flight route, etc. why do we think it does in our spiritual life)**

**\*\*\*Will God give grace to those who have not heard?**

**(John 3:3, 14:6, Ro 8:1, 10:13-16, 11:6, Act 8, Eph 2:17, Acts 10, Acts 4:12)**

**This goes back to what we would like to believe (that God grades on a curve) but the bible says there is a fundamental problem - we are dead in sin and rebellions in heart.**

**\*\*\* Jesus not come to make bad people good – but to make dead people alive.**

**- Sins we commit are a result of the sin nature we are all born with…**

**- Because of this sin we are due punishment - as is every crime.**

**If they were not he God would not have - perfect justice**.

**- Because of this punishment we are in need of salvation – even all of creation awaits redemption** **(Ro 8:21-22)**

**God thru Jesu Christ extends to us - perfect mercy**

**We will either give account for our sins - OR – through faith we look to Jesus to pay that debt. The account has been paid thru his blood.**

**Hell is a place of wrath, justice, and love… how is it love?**

**Hells reality and pain are what lead Jesus to the cross to suffer. Hell points to the cross (God’s love rescuing from that wrath) God does not enjoy seeing the wicked perish (Ez 18:23)**

**Ephesia 2:3b Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved.**

**God is good, perfect in justice and mercy and everyone will answer to God – even you.**

**Psalm 89:14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne. Love and faithfulness go before you.**

**Paul mentions the reality of Hell for those without Christ and reminds us of the reality of Heaven for those with Christ!**

**Who are and who we are not. Understanding this truth brings clarity to the urgency of our mission - and the urgency of our short life and God’s love for us / you!**