

## Dead Man Walking

Ephesians 2: 1-3

Often as those condemned to death by execution are led from their cell toward the death chamber, the other prisoners will say, “Dead man walking.” For the condemned, and all who face a similar fate, the reality of the situation begins to take hold. The condemned is enjoying the last few hours of life, facing a sure and certain death.

Our text deals with a sobering reality for all of humanity. Apart from Christ, being saved by His grace and reconciled to God, we are all dead men walking. We may not meet our physical death as soon as the condemned on death row, but those apart from Christ are literally in more a state of “deadness” than the condemned inmate. Those apart from Christ may enjoy a long and successful physical life, but spiritually they are dead in their sin.

This eternal truth is confirmed in Scripture, but it continues to be rejected by most. The Gospel has been watered down to such a degree, that many in America assume they are Christians, simply by association, if nothing else. Unfortunately, many do not even realize the severity of their situation.

I trust you will agree with the Bible and admit that all are born in sin, thus separated from God, and in danger of eternal judgment and condemnation in hell. Within ourselves, we are hopeless to do anything about our desperate situation. In fact, we are dead in sin. A dead man can do nothing about his deadness. [Jer.13:23 – Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.](#) Man is not a sinner because he sins; he sins because he is a sinner. We do that which comes naturally. Our spiritual condition dictates our behavior.

As we examine the serious [indictments](#) raised in the text, I want to preach on the thought: [Dead Man Walking](#).

**I. Man is Dead** (1) – [And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.](#) Paul speaks of the spiritual condition of those apart from a relationship with Christ. Notice:

**A. The State of his Existence** – Paul reveals that prior to salvation in Christ, being quickened (*made alive*) in Him, we were [dead](#). That is strong language, but we cannot ignore it; it is right there in the text, easily understood. Now, I am not speaking of physical death, but spiritual death. All who are apart from God are dead in sin. They are a living corpse, walking about without the

presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. A corpse can't enjoy the beauty of the day, the fragrance of a rose, the kiss of a loved one, or the simple pleasures of life.

- Just as those who are physically dead can't respond, those who are spiritually dead can't either. The lost man doesn't see the beauty of the Creator, hear the still, small voice, experience the loving touch of the Savior, or see His great love for all. The lost don't interact with the things of God: the church, the Bible, or other believers; they are dead. We were all in that state. [Rom.3: 23 – For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.](#) The world may not like it, and even choose to deny it, but the fact remains apart from Christ humanity is dead.

**B. The Severity of his Existence** (1) – [And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.](#) Prior to salvation we were all dead in trespasses and sins. You may be here lost and say, “Pastor, I'm not a bad person. I live a good moral life; I just haven't been saved.” Well, I've never heard of degrees of deadness; dead is dead!

- We are all guilty of trespasses and sins. [Trespasses](#) speak of “*falling by the wayside; a fault, error, or lapse; committing a mistake or wrongdoing.*” You may have been a good person, but I am certain we have all committed trespasses. We are also guilty of [sins](#). This literally means “*missing the true meaning and scope of God.*” How can one possibly understand the Lord and live according to His will apart from a relationship with Him? We cannot; and while living in sin, we live contrary to what God desires.
- We may choose to ignore or deny it, but the fact remains we are dead in sin apart from Christ. The evidence is there and cannot be denied. The consequence of our sin is separation, thus spiritual death. If you've never believed in Christ as Savior, you're dead in sin. Your only hope is to be resurrected a new creature in Christ Jesus. [Rom.6:23a – For the wages of sin is death.](#)

**II. Man is Disobedient** (2) – [Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.](#) Man, outside of salvation, is at enmity with God. He has no desire for the things of God. His is a life filled with disobedience. Consider man's disobedience:

**A. His Desire** (2a) – [Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world.](#) Prior to salvation, man walks according to the course of this world. Apart from a relationship with God, he has no desire for the Lord or the things of God. He has one desire and that is to please the flesh.

- It is not within the sinful nature of man to obey God. He walks according to the course of this world. Man is encouraged by the world (society, world view) to live for self. Most live a life of self-gratification. If you are saved you have been delivered from that course of life, but I am sure that we all can identify with those desires. Prior to salvation I had no desire for a relationship with the Lord; I had no interest in church or living in a manner that honored Christ. When one comes to know Christ, his desire will change. [Rom.12:2 – And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.](#)

**B. His Domination** (2b) – [Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air.](#) The lost commit their loyalty to the prince of the power of the air, the devil. Unknowingly, their lives are totally dominated by Satan. I know many do not like to consider that thought, but it is true nonetheless. Our lives will be lived for the Lord or for the devil. You will either live in a way that pleases the Lord or in a way that submits to the influence of Satan. Our allegiance will be to one or the other; man cannot serve two masters. [Mat.6:24 – No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.](#) The context of this thought deals with the love of money, but the principle is the same. Unless you have a personal relationship with Christ, you will not seek to serve Him, but rather the desires of the flesh and the devil.

**C. His Determination** (2c) – [Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.](#) Being dominated by the influence of Satan, those dead in trespasses and sin are determined to live in rebellion toward God, in order to satisfy the lusts of the flesh. Some even boast of their rebellion, having no desire for the things of God, publicly rejected any semblance of righteousness. Their lives are lived in absolute disobedience to God and His will for their life. [Prov.21:16 – The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.](#)

**III. Man is Depraved** (3a) – [Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.](#) Paul reveals the depraved nature of the lost. Consider:

**A. His Character** – [Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh.](#) The lost man is dominated by his desires. All his [conversation](#) is consistent with those fleshly

desires. This involves much more than one would think. It is not limited to the words we speak and the conversations we have. It has the idea of “*our conduct, conversation, and our dwelling; literally all our being.*” In essence the lost man’s entire being is consumed with pleasing the flesh.

- Each of us were born with a fallen nature; one that desires to control body and mind. That nature has one purpose – fulfill the desires of the flesh. Isn’t that evident in the lives of millions around the world? Their main concern is to satisfy the flesh. A dog behaves like a dog because it has the nature of a dog. It can’t behave any other way; it’s a dog. Sinners behave like sinners because of their nature. [Psalm 58:3 – The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.](#) Man isn’t a sinner because he sins, he sins because he is a sinner!

**B. His Corruption** (3a) – [Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.](#) Man, in his sin, has one objective in life, one priority, and that is to satisfy the lusts of the flesh. He is not concerned with the needs or desires of others. He is not concerned with tomorrow or the life to come. He is selfish and only seeks to satisfy the hunger and cravings of the flesh. He will stop at nothing to satisfy his desires.

- You may disagree with that, but the evidence proves this truth without fail. Take a moment to consider all of the relationships, homes, and lives that are ruined because of the insatiable appetite of the flesh. I know the dangers involved. I have experienced the ruin that sin will bring. I was raised in a broken home due to a commitment to the flesh and a determination to satisfy it. Jesus can change the desires of the heart, but apart from Him most will continue their quest to bring satisfaction to the flesh.

**IV. Man is Doomed** (3b) – [and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.](#) Paul referred to the lost as children of disobedience in [V.2](#) and now we see them as the children of doom. Those who haven’t accepted Christ are the children of wrath. As God looks upon them, He sees a life of sin, disobedience, and rebellion. There is no middle ground; you’re either saved or lost. [John 3:36 – He that believeth on the Son hath ever-lasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.](#)

- If you haven’t been saved, born again through the blood of Jesus, you are lost and under the wrath of God. The only thing preventing you from an eternity in hell is the grace and mercy of Almighty God. You aren’t guaranteed another breath; don’t be condemned to hell. That sin must be atoned, and it can be. Christ paid the sin debt on the cross. You can enjoy that cleansing today!

**Conclusion:** I will admit this type of message is little heard in our day. They are not enjoyable to hear and they are not enjoyable to preach; but I can assure you, they are needful. No one will ever come to a saving faith in Christ until they first realize their lost condition and need for a Savior. The world needs to understand the severity of being lost and undone before God.

The lost man is in a wretched condition, doomed to eternal separation and torment in hell. It doesn't have to be that way. Notice [V.4](#), **But God**. He has made a way for all to come to repentance and be born again. The sinful state of man is terrible, but it doesn't have to be eternal. Salvation can be found in Jesus, thus giving life to those who are dead in sin. If you have never been saved, I urge you to come to Christ and receive salvation.