**Ephesians 2:1-10**

**Series: The Immeasurable Greatness of His Power**

**Title: The Gift - Immeasurable Riches of His Grace**

**Description: Who can demonstrate what is Immeasurable? God can. By the work of His Holy Spirit.**

*Series on the Ministry of the Holy Spirit - not a systematic study, but ministry as it relates to God's Power in the Church. For a thorough Systematic Study, also see John 14-16, Act 2, Rom 8, 1Cor 2, 12, 2Cor 5, Gal 5*

# Read Eph 1:15-2:10

# Proposition

"Immeasurable" - never the 2 ends can be joined; Illus: contrast Our Power and God's Power

**Point today**: His immeasurable Power comes to us from **His immeasurable Grace**. This word "Grace" is the conclusion, See it 'break out' in **v5**, repeated in **v8**. (**read**). DEF **Grace** = 'favour, undeserved, surprising joy, delight - sinners deserving wrath of God, receiving riches of God'. **in v7 we see WHY** He works His Immeasurable Power to us: '*that He might show the immeasurable riches of His GRACE toward us* [which comes] *in Christ Jesus*' - i.e. **WHY** this Immeasurable Power to us: ... To demonstrate to us and leave no doubt in our minds, To *hold out* in His hands, *Immeasurable Hands*, the Riches of His Grace toward us... Riches we cannot measure, because 'what our grace is', and 'what His grace is', is that far apart. It surpasses all.

If we don't come away today feeling overwhelmed and puzzled by His Grace, flummoxed at it, we've missed it.

# Context

* (FCF:) Our main text 2:1, often start reading there. But the thought begins in v19
* you remember from 1:15, his prayer for 'spiritual revelation' of this 3-fold work by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (*hope of his calling, riches of his inheritance, greatness of his power*), which, in **v19b, is "according to the working of His great might**" - [kratos - from where we get demo-cratic, auto-cratic, theo-cratic: power of dominion.]
* We can't read 2:1 until we've seen the flow with what is said before...: **With** **His great power of dominion, God did 4 things**: God...
	+ 1. 20 - **worked** in Christ - making alive, raising, seating in Heaven,
	+ 2. 22 - **put all under** his feet [the whole world]
	+ 3. 22-23 - **gave all** to the ministry of the world-wide church
	+ and now for our attention, 4. ch2:**5** - **made us alive** together with Christ
	+ ... God's great might has had on one hand a large-scale effect - "the Whole Universe" and "the Whole Universal Church", but it is as powerful in the life of **1 single individual person**. *The Immeasurable Greatness of His Power* ***is Personal****, because of the Immeasurable Riches of His* ***Grace***
* This is a series on **the Ministry of the Holy Spirit**...You won't find mention of the Holy Spirit in v1-10 - but Jesus said, it is exactly the Holy Spirit who brings this immeasurable, live-giving, power to a person.

**John 3:5-6**, "Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"

* **>> A Congregation who want to see the power of God affecting in the individual people within it, needs the work of the Holy Spirit**
* So our GOAL this morning is to appreciate His Immeasurable Power in an Individual. But we can only do that by comparing it with our own. And this is the outline: Our power, 2:1, "*You were* **dead**"... His Power, 2:5, "*even when we were dead in our trespasses,* **made us alive** *together with Christ*" ... **'by grace you have been saved**'.

# Contrast the power of the Dead and the power of the Living (1-3)

## Authority over the Dead (2)

(Sobering - without the Work of the Holy Spirit). **Read**,

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, [following] the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.

What this says:

* 1st: Quite clearly, there is an **'authority' (**in contrast to God's), which is **at work,** in **the world**.
* 2nd: that authority has a person, '*the prince*', also called '*the spirit*', i.e. a person without a body (- *not* 'the Spirit who is holy', in contrast to God's), but another spirit who, we read in v2, is *'now at* *work in the sons of* ***disobedience***'/ or we could say '***rebellion***' / **'obstinacy' [EXPL]**. And that spirit is none other than Satan.
* The first statement Paul makes about **the dead** is their AUTHORITY. .. It is Satan, the first Rebel. And those who imitate him, responding to God as he does, are fairly called '*the sons of... rebellion' [daughters of]*
	+ [[notes: The translators have chosen the words, 'this world', and 'the air' - but don't think of the planet, and the clouds - Paul's writing about the this 'age' or aeon'. Satan, has an authority in this age (we know there's a coming age where this will not be the case). Point: The Dead are "following" (x2), Satan, their authority 'in this age'.
* Praise God!, he writes: the Ephesians are NO LONGER under that power, now that they are under God's Immeasurable Power. **But the sobering truth is that** until they came to Christ, **Satan** was their Authority.
	+ **APP**: Many might picture the authority of Satan as people bowing to a little red character with a pitchfork and pentagrams... but the authority of Satan looks like **obstinacy** - believing in **the power and authority of self** [[ and not of God]].
		- **ILLUS:** Incredible that the one message in this world which continues to gain a deeper and deeper root is, "Believe in Yourself" [see example media, *'believe in yourself and you will succeed', 'you cannot believe in god until you believe in yourself' - the worst: "I am" by J. Osteen*. ]. It is the most absurd proposition but gains immediate and wide acceptance - believe in yourself who is not all-knowing, all-powerful, everywhere-present but deficient in both knowledge and power and located in time and space, let alone sinful. "I know better, I will decide what's best for me, and I will accomplish it by my sheer determination, and trample whoever gets in my way".
	+ So we can say, based on v2, one sign of "obstinacy" is **irritation** at the thought of **obedience** to God... And that's something we can relate to. Recognise where that attitude comes from! Satan's motivation is not a Pitchfork, but a Promise of **self-determination**. Which is a pipe-dream lie, It only brings death : That is the **power** of Satan's **authority**.
* [illus] We're measuring the depth of being "Dead in transgressions and sins" - Firstly, although someone who lives like this may *think* he is his own authority, he is but a follower, indeed a slave of another.

## The Desires and Deeds of the Dead (3a)

Let's read v3a

...among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind (Eph 2:3)

* + [[Notes: notice the change from 'you " in v2 to 'we all', to see, this is true of every person until they come to Christ. And without Christ, every person is trapped under this authority... All who are not under the authority of 'the Spirit who is Holy', are under 'the spirit who is unholy'.
* The point here is : authority affects behaviour. In v2 "***following"*** the authority, in v3 "***carrying out"***...( Just like a servant. What the Master directs the servant works. )
* "*we all once lived in the passions of our flesh*". **What are Passions?**
	+ "Heat". The stuff that excites and bubbles and rushes. Now God has passion and God created us for passion.. But the spiritually dead live only '*in the passions of our flesh*' - meaning physical stimuli and emotions have controlling power of us - the Spirit of God is not shaping and steering
* "*carrying out the desires [WILL] of the body and the mind*" **What is the Will?**
	+ This is the part that reasons, judges, chooses, applies wisdom. God created Adam and Eve with minds - beautiful minds, to imitate His will. But the spiritually dead carry out the *will* of the flesh [[notes: that's what *the body* translates]]and its mind - meaning a mind disconnected from God and under control of the passions - where it's supposed to be the other way. [ILLUS: A thermometer tells you the temperature in the room. A thermostat regulates the temperature. It's like our thermostat is replaced with a thermometer]
* As an example: As a sexual being, I'll be controlled by the arousal of sexual desire and choose what interests me regardless of what is good. As a reasoning being, I'll be irritated by childish children and despise them. As a being who understands justice, I'll consume in fire whoever offends me. As a social being I'll say to people only what improves my standing. I may think one thing but speak the opposite. I'll be crushed under disapproval, and dominate to survive. As a sentient being I'll be indignant at those who correct me. I'll be unpredictable, living by instinct, like an animal. I'll be kind when I'm receiving the right stimuli, and a monster when I'm deprived, ... whether I'm a young child, an aging grandmother or a husband in his prime. That's "living in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and mind." That's the normal world ... but it's all dead "in transgressions and sins" under the authority of Satan.
* We're measuring the depth of being "Dead in transgressions and sins". Praise God this is NO LONGER the case for a person under God's Immeasurable Power!

## The Reward for the Dead (3b)

and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind

A worker is rewarded for his works. The reward for the dead is **wrath** : cf **Rom 1:18,** *the wrath of God is revealed* ... Spiritual death in life, becomes physical death in the grave, becomes eternal death in hell, the full expression of God's just and good wrath. (Rom 6:23, *the wages of sin is death*  - you can't get less powerful than death). That's the *Reward* of Satan's authority, and the resulting transgressions and sins in our life. **He promises power, but it's a sham**!

You can't compare the our power with God's immeasurable power, because we have none.

* It's important to see in this verse, the words, ***'nature'*** and **'*like the rest*** *of mankind*'
	+ **Nature** means, your essential substance. We're born in sin. Until any 1 single individual person comes to Christ, they are spiritually **dead**. Whether apostle Paul or me or you.
	+ Robert Culver (Systematic Theology, Biblical and Historical) cautiously summarises our powerlessness from this sin-nature: **Defilement** before God, **Perversion** of design, **Paralysis** to overcome it, **Bondage** in it, **Misery** from it, **Guilt** under it, **Death** because of it.
* **ILLUS: Zombie?** Interesting words: *You were* ***dead***... *among whom we all once* ***lived***.
	+ Describing a state of existing in a habitat, going about to and fro, but not moving beyond, Actually **lifeless** = Accurately '***the living dead***': Like 'Zombies!'- scary fictional characters, people who have died, but are still functioning in lost consciousness - respond to stimuli, empowered by evil and doing evil. Until we came to Christ, we were Zombies.

# Contrasted with Grace - the power of the Living God (4-10)

Now the reason for writing this to them was to encourage them! Perhaps what they appreciated of God was limited - to their food on the table, a job to put it there and the health of their grandkids. These were true believers. **v15** says They had faith in Jesus, and loved the saints. They were saved from sin. But whatever they did appreciate, their measuring was too small. There was **more** about God's Power to understand - especially **the Measure of His Grace** that brought it to them.

**[What do you appreciate most about God in your life?]**

Let's read **v4-10 (READ)**

**The best way we can measure His Grace is to contrast our Authority, Works and Reward with His.**

This is what His Grace does/ HAS DONE!:

* **Firstly, while Satan has an authority, Grace has established a greater Authority** 1:21, "[God has seated Christ] *far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this* ***age*** *but also in the* ***one to come [[GRACE***
* **Secondly, while we worked the will of the flesh, Grace worked his miraculous Will**, *8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boat. For we are his* ***work****manship, created in Christ Jesus".* **cf 1:5, predestined for adoption according to His WILL", 1:7, "In him we have redemption ..., the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace...making known to us the mystery of his WILL**, 1:11 "Him who **works** all things according to the counsel of his **WILL**/[desire]"... God's work is US
* **Thirdly**, **though we earned His Wrath, Grace gave us Christ's inheritance**, 13-14"guaranteed until it comes"

What was once true, is no longer for those who Receive Christ. Grace is 'favour, undeserved, surprising, joy, delight - sinners deserving wrath of God, receiving riches of God'. Can there be anything greater than for us to appreciate!

GRACE in its fullness means, If Anyone is Saved, there is absolutely nothing of their cause, their work, in it - even Faith in Christ is a gift from God (8).

**We were dead, but God made alive.** **v4** Before the foundation of the world, God chose YOU; **v5** He pre-destined YOU to adoption; **v9** He pre-purposed in Christ; **v11** YOU are predestined by God who Pre-planned His will and **2:10** Pre-prepared good works for YOU. While you were dead. You can't measure it - it goes beyond us; Praise and Honour to Him

If you trust in Christ, there is more grace to discover; You are the recipient of His Immeasurable Power because of the Immeasurable Riches of His Grace, in Love. He loves you. He is demonstrating it to you today with Glimpses - Grace too Great to Measure, in Hands held out, physically pierced

* Titus 3:5-6, "he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of **the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us richly** through Jesus Christ our Saviour"

PRAYER, Call to Repent and Receive Christ, rejecting Satan and receiving the Holy Spirit.