

TITLE AND NUMBER: 175. Rich in mercy

REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S): Ephesians 2:1-2a, 4-5

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.

LOOKING FURTHER: Ephesians 2:1-10; Romans 6:5-7, 19-23; Jeremiah 29:11



What does this Bible passage tell us?

Over time, we come to use phrases or words in different ways. I still have to remind myself that when someone says to me, 'Y'alright,' it is not a question requiring an answer, but just another way of saying, 'Hello.' Recently, someone told me about an elderly lady in church who asked a teenager, 'How are you?' When the teenager replied, 'Good thanks,' the lady responded, 'No you're not, you're a sinner!'

Today's reading shows this statement is not quite true. Once we were all deservedly marked as people who had done wrong things in our lives – every single one of us. Because of those things, we were 'dead,' in the sense that we had no certainty of eternal life with Jesus in Heaven when this earthly life ends. However, once we have come to Christ and accepted Him as our Saviour, we begin a new life.

Criticism and judgement can leave us feeling condemned. Sometimes, God needs to make us aware of our mistakes. But, He always gives us the promise of a way back to Him. The writer of the letter to the Romans tells us that, 'the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

If we read on in Ephesians chapter 2 (see 'Looking further'), we read more about how God saves us and how He has great plans for us. This happens when we choose to put our faith in Him as our Lord and Saviour, not through our own efforts.

Today is Mother's Day. As many of us remember with thanks and love those who nurtured us in our early life and did their best to give us a good start, we can also turn to Jesus who offers us new birth into the wonderful eternal life to come.

Reflections:

- Thank God that He has prepared good works for you to do. He may not yet have shown you what they are, but ask Him to show you how you can be prepared to carry out His plans to use you for good.
- We have all done things that hurt God and others. Even if we have done so many times, we can ask God for forgiveness, knowing that He loves to forgive and give us the promise of eternal life.
- On this Mother's Day, thank God for those who have been precious in your life, and pray for them.

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

