

I. We Are in a Different Situation than Nicodemus, the Woman at the Well, and Matthew

- A. They could speak directly to Jesus
- B. Matthew could get up and literally follow the Lord
- C. Jesus is no longer visibly present
 - 1. Our situation is different
 - 2. Our situation is much better

II. John 12:24

- A. Jesus' picture
 - 1. A seed remains by itself if it is kept out of the ground
 - 2. If it dies in the ground, it produces a plant that ultimately will mean more seeds
- B. The outworking of the picture
 - 1. Jesus fell into the ground by going to the cross to pay for sin
 - 2. Jesus did not remain dead but rose from the grave as a testimony that He was victorious
 - 3. Jesus ascended into heaven as victor
 - 4. Through the work of the Spirit using the gospel, men and women are coming to true life

III. How Does This Work Out? –Ephesians 2:1-10

- A. And you were dead in your trespasses and sins
 - 1. Walked according to culture
 - 2. Lived controlled by the devil
 - 3. Lived doing what you wanted
 - 4. Were by nature the children of wrath – just like everyone

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”

- John 12:24

“And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

- Ephesians 2:1-10

B. But God

1. Because of His love
2. Made us alive
3. Caused us to share in the life of Christ

C. Saved by grace through faith

IV. What Is Faith?

A. Personal trust in a person

B. Illustrations of an airplane

1. We have no innate ability to fly
2. We must believe the plane is capable
3. We must believe the pilot is competent
4. We must get on
5. Once on, our whole experience is out of our control

C. To have faith for salvation we must:

1. Realize we cannot save ourselves
2. Believe that God has a plan that will save us
3. Believe that Jesus can bring that plan to pass in us
4. Entrust ourselves to Him
5. Once we do that our experience is in His control