

The Former State of the Christian

Ephesians 2:1-2 - 1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 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. NASB
A. you were dead in your trespasses and sins – Here is the former state of the Christian believer – DEAD! And that, in “transgression and sins!” This is a theme in the teaching of the Lord Jesus who frequently refers to unbelievers as “dead” and in desperate need of regeneration. (Matt 8:22, Luke 15:24-32, John 5:21-24) This is the reason for the great need of REGENERATION, without which “no one can SEE the kingdom of God.”(John 3:3-6, John 6:65) Here is seen the consequence of sin and transgression, DEATH! Not that they were physically dead, but in that wretched state of spiritual death which rendered them helpless to hear or understand the things of God and His kingdom (1 Cor 2:14, Rom 8:5-8) Here is the definitive statement in the bible on depravity or natural inability.

John 5:21-24 - 21 "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so **the Son also gives life to whom He wishes**. 22 "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, 23 in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. 24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but **has passed out of death into life**. NASB

B. 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 – Here is seen the direction of the unbeliever, their ruler and lord, as well as the spirit which is working in them. This also is the former state of every Christian. They were living for this world, followers of Satan, and driven by the spirit of sin were “sons of disobedience.” This is the truly wretched state of all who are not in Christ! They are without hope and without God in the world (v-2:12), destined for hell (2 Thess 1:8-9) and storing up wrath (Rom 2:5) for the day of judgment! Woe to one who rejects God’s free grace in Christ!

Colossians 1:21- 21 And although you were **formerly alienated and hostile in mind**, engaged in evil deeds, NASB

1 John 5:19 - 19 We know that we are of God, and **the whole world lies in the power of the evil one**. NASB

Ephesians 2:3 - 3 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. NASB

A. we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind – The flesh is defined as the “*sinful nature*” and here “*ALL*” of us formerly lived “in the lusts of the flesh” and “indulging the desires of the sinful nature.” This is the state of every person apart from REGENERATION. ***Because the unbeliever has not received the Spirit, he/she is in bondage to the flesh (Rom 6:17-23), they always and continually live after the flesh.*** Until we have been raised from our dead state, we have no communion with God and live to please the SELF, satisfy SELF, and follow and indulge in the desires of SELF, rather than the desires of God. Indeed before Christ, we cannot see (John 3:3), cannot understand (1 Cor 2:14), cannot accept (John 14:17), cannot obey (Rom 8:7) and cannot hear (John 8:43) God.

Romans 6:17-20 - 17 But thanks be to God that though **you were slaves of sin**, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, 18 **and having been freed from sin**, you became slaves of righteousness. 19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as **slaves to impurity and to lawlessness**, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. 20 For when **you were slaves of sin**, you were free in regard to righteousness. NASB

Romans 8:7-8 - 7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for **it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so**; 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. NASB

Colossians 3:5-7 - 5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, 7 **and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them**. NASB

B. were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest – In the former verse we were “sons of disobedience” and here repeated “children of wrath.” *This is our “natural state”, by NATURE objects of God’s wrath, or destined for death*, eternal separation from God (2 Thess 1:8-9). We were subject to wrath because of our transgressions and sins, and were headed straightway for the wrath of God, for the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23). We were “even as the rest”, that is, all the rest of the people in the world who have not been raised up with Christ and saved by grace through faith v-8.

Romans 5:12 - 12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so **death spread to all men**, because all sinned NASB

Psalms 51:5 - 5 Behold, I was **brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me**.