

Then and Now

Scripture Reading — Ephesians 2:1-10

*God ... made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions.
Ephesians 2:4-5 —*

A greater contrast than that of night and day is the contrast of past and present, then and now. In the past, Paul explains, we were “dead in transgressions.” But now, because of God’s grace, we are “alive with Christ.”

Before the days of modern communication, a treaty might be signed between warring nations exhausted by combat, and yet fighting might continue in places where the news of a ceasefire had not arrived. War-weary soldiers would still have to endure skirmishes and wounds inflicted by the enemy.

In some ways, spiritual warfare is like that. Though the ultimate victory has been won in Christ, we still face the skirmishes of spiritual combat. Our enemy, the devil, still uses every opportunity to inflict pain on the people of the victorious Savior. To our benefit, though, we know not only the reality of our struggle with sin but also the glory that makes us alive in Christ. The forces of darkness want to pull us down by pointing to our continuing failures. But because we are “alive with Christ,” we see the signs of victory.

We are prepared to look ahead to the future consummation of the age and the great resurrection at Christ’s return. But Paul states that we begin to experience that vitality now. The war is over, the victory won—and we are alive in Christ today!

Prayer

Lord of life, raise the banner of your victory in our lives! Because you have secured glorious life for us forever, support us now in times and places of struggle. In your name, Amen.

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