

Ephesians 2:4-7

God Made You Alive

Main idea: When we were dead, God made us alive.

Polls taken of Americans in the last couple years show that depression is at an all time high, and that happiness is at a near record low. [poll 1] [poll 2]

- Even believers, since we're surrounded by the depressing state of our world, can be affected by this.¹
- Maybe you've been affected by this as well.²
- God promises to be with us during those times. [Psalm 34:17-18]
- And ultimately, God promises to take all of our sadness away. [John 16:20]
- I think one of the greatest victories of the gospel, from our perspective, is that for all eternity, we will be happy in Jesus.

Read Ephesians 2:4-7

Last time, we talked about how we were dead because of our sins.³

- I showed you this picture of the Corpse Flower.⁴ [picture]
- And I showed you this picture from the Princess Bride.⁵ [picture]
- So our situation in our sin was not just bleak, but hopeless.⁶
- But when there was no way for us to have hope, God made a way.⁷

The first two words of verse 4 say "But God."⁸ [slide that says "But God"]

- God steps in because He is merciful. (v. 4a)
 - In 2014, a man named Mustafa Al Shakarji tried to fight a speeding ticket in court. [video]
 - He says that he wants justice, and has spent over \$100,000 to clear his name.
 - If we insist that we haven't sinned, God will show justice. [1 John 1:8-10]
 - When we call out to God for His mercy, He gives us His mercy. God loves to show mercy!⁹
- God steps in because He loves us. (v. 4b)
- Every parent knows that they would do anything to rescue their child.¹⁰

So this is what God did for us. (v 5)

- When we were dead, God made us alive.¹¹
- Deserts aren't exactly known for being places full of life.¹²
- But a man named Lance built a flourishing garden in the high desert of Colorado. [video]¹³
- God does the same in each one of us!¹⁴ [Isaiah 43:19]
- God gives us new life so that we can flourish.¹⁵
 - God makes us alive, reborn, a new creation in Jesus. [Galatians 5:1a]
 - Having new life in Jesus means that with Jesus, we have hope.¹⁶
 - And having new life in Jesus means that with Jesus, we begin to serve God and one another.¹⁷
 - Having new life means that we begin to praise God for the way that we can live and move and have our being in Jesus.¹⁸
 - He makes beauty from ashes, turns graves into gardens, and turns our mourning into dancing.¹⁹

But God didn't just raise us from death in order for us to live here on this earth forever. (v. 6-7)

- We were made for another world! Heaven is our home! [CS Lewis quote]²⁰
- Forever and ever, we get a front row seat to see how much God loves us, and how much Jesus has done for us.²¹
- Jesus died for us. He made a way for us when there was no way.²²

Endnotes

1. We are surrounded by it, but not overcome by it. 2 Corinthians 4:8-9
2. Maybe your circumstances or your insecurities have haunted you, and you've felt all alone. This is all too common.
3. Ephesians 2:1
4. It may be physically alive, but it gives off the stench of death.
5. In contrast to the line from the movie, we were not merely mostly dead, but all dead.
6. Ephesians 2:12
7. Jesus Himself is the way. John 14:6
8. You may have no hope, but God gives you hope. You may feel worthless, but God gives you worth, and sees you as His Beloved. You may be dead, but God makes you alive.
9. Luke 6:36
10. We'd pay any price. We'd go to any length. We'd even die for them, which is exactly what Jesus did for us. 1 Peter 3:18
11. We should understand this literally. We were dead, buried, and rotting in the grave. But God gave us life! Romans 6:4
12. While some plants and animals survive in the desert, we wouldn't say that they flourish there. Deserts are known to have harsh conditions, limited resources, and they are certainly not places we tend to thrive.
13. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5yUPau-F1c>
14. 2 Corinthians 5:17
15. Psalm 92:13, Proverbs 14:11
16. Romans 15:13
17. Romans 12:1
18. Acts 17:28
19. Isaiah 61:3
20. "If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world." -CS Lewis
21. 1 Corinthians 13:12
22. John 14:6