Sermon Summary | Sunday 1st November 2026 | Ephesians 2.1-10

We could not give ourselves spiritual life. But God has made us alive with Christ, by grace, and given us a new life to walk in.

We are surrounded by promises of self-improvement: better routines, healthier habits, more efficient lives. These may help, but Paul describes a problem no amount of improvement can fix. Christianity begins with the God who raises the dead.

What sin has done to us (2.1–3)

Paul describes our former condition as being "dead in trespasses and sins". This does not mean people cannot do generous or admirable things. It means that, separated from God, we could not restore our relationship with him or give ourselves the life we needed.

We were shaped by the world's assumptions, caught up in spiritual opposition to God, and following our own sinful desires. Sin involves forces outside us and desires within us: making ourselves the centre, resisting God's authority, seeking control or protecting our comfort at others' expense.

Paul includes himself: "we all" lived this way. We are accountable to God and face his just judgement. None of us can save ourselves. That leaves no room for superiority or contempt. We all need rescue.

What God has done for us (2.4–7)

Two words turn the passage around: *"But God."* Even when we were dead, God acted because he is rich in mercy and great in love. He made us alive with Christ, raised us with Christ, and seated us with Christ.

Jesus bore sin and judgement at the cross and rose from the dead. Everyone who trusts him shares in his risen life, with a new standing and future before God. This does not promise trouble-free lives or constant feelings of strength. Our security rests in belonging to Jesus.

If we are conscious of failure or weakness, our hope rests in God's mercy. For all eternity, he will display the immeasurable riches of his kindness to us in Christ.

What does this mean for us? (2.8–10)

Salvation is God's gift, received through faith. Faith is the open hand receiving what God gives. There is no room for boasting.

We are not saved *by* good works, but we are saved *for* them. God's grace begins to change how we think, speak, pray and treat others. Following Jesus reaches into home, work, relationships, money and life online.

That change may be slow. We depend on God's strength, seek help from one another, and return to his mercy when we fail. The next step will differ for each of us; it may mean living differently within responsibilities we already have.

For the week ahead

1. Where do I need to rely on God's mercy rather than my own efforts?
2. Choose one area of ordinary life and ask: What is shaping me? Where is Jesus calling me to trust and obey him? Who has he given me to love?

Father, thank you for making us alive with Christ. Help us receive your grace with humble trust and walk in the good works you have prepared for us. Amen.