

Nov 20, 2022



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

### THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

Paul describes that God's handiwork in creating us would result in our handiwork of creating good works, or expressions of our restored relationship with Jesus, for His glory in our world

### PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Dear Father, thank You for hand making me; help me to show You to my world

### SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them

(Eph 2:10 NKJV)

(From "Our Daily Bread", Mar 21, 2019)

**Series: God's Exceptional Choice**

**UNIT 3: We are God's Artwork**

### NEXT WEEK

**God Gives Tools for Our Protection**  
(Eph 6:10-18)

## We Are God's Handiwork Eph 2:1-10

### Lesson Background and Introduction

Paul was not in a dark dungeon, as we might imagine a prisoner to be. However, his situation still was not pleasant. Being a prisoner meant he could not move about as he pleased. It meant that he faced the threat of a judgment against him that could even mean his execution. Confinement, worry, shame, these were his experience. But Paul's prison letters do not suggest that the misery of Paul's condition dictated his outlook. Even as a prisoner, Paul repeatedly emphasized that Christians have an exalted place in God's plan. Being a prisoner might seem like death, but Paul could only speak of being raised from the dead. Paul's readers, though not prisoners, were also in a difficult position. Their new faith put them at odds with the world around them. Many of their familiar relationships had been cut off: Christians of Jewish background were sometimes no longer welcome in the synagogue; Christians of Gentile background were no longer to participate in the worship rites of paganism. Each group was under additional scorn for associating with the other. Christians were suspected of wanting to undermine the foundations of their communities. Paul's message to the Ephesians emphasizes a different perspective, the perspective of God. From God's throne, Christians are not downtrodden but victorious. They are not rebels against the community but God's agents of renewal for the world. Despite rejection by neighbors or even those in authority, Christians, then and now, are the grateful recipients of everything God has done. We're already experiencing God's eternal blessings and anticipating a still greater future when Christ returns. We live together as God's temple (Ephesians 2:11-22). And Paul himself, proclaiming the gospel despite his confinement, exemplified what the lives of his audience were truly like (3:1-19). But this status was not something they deserved or had earned. The work was all God's. They needed God's work in Christ to rescue them from the helpless state of death and make them alive to all that God had for them.

If we are new to faith, we may feel overmatched by our calling. How can we measure up to expectations? How can we possibly overcome all the wrong in our lives? Paul reminds us to put our focus not on our inadequacy but on Christ's abundance. In Christ God has done everything for us. Forgiveness is full, and his power is sufficient. We need only continue to receive and trust, doing moment by moment what the Spirit directs and enables. If we have followed Christ for a long time, we may fall into a habit of thinking we deserve any good things or benefits we have. Paul reminds us that our best was never good enough; that we stand with Christ by his action, not ours; and that whatever is good in our lives is now the result of freely receiving God's gift. And if we are still considering faith in Christ, Paul gives us a powerful introduction to what God offers us. God has done all for us. But as we receive his gift, we will be forever different, set on a path to become what God, the good God of grace and mercy, has intended for us since before the beginning.

*(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **Handiwork Even When Dead in Sin (Eph 2:1-3)**

#### *Dead in trespasses (1)*

Dead in trespasses because of being separated from the life of God (Eph 4:18)

Dead in trespasses because of living for pleasure (1 Tim 5:6)

Dead in trespasses because of not loving (1 John 3:14)

Dead in trespasses because of wicked deeds (Rev 3:1)

#### *Satanically influenced (2)*

Satanic influence through false teachings (2 Peter 2:1-3)

Satanic influence through spiritualism (Col 2:18-19)

Satanic influence through a different gospel (Gal 1:6-7)

Satanic influence through fine-sounding words (Col 2:4)

Satanic influence from within (Acts 20:30)

#### *Under God's condemnation (3)*

Condemnation for those who exploit others (2 Peter 2:3)

Condemnation for preaching a false gospel (Gal 1:7-9)

Condemnation for those who have not believed the truth (2 Thess 2:12)

Condemnation for those who deceive (2 Cor 11:15)

Disbelief that could lead to condemnation (Mark 16:16)

A consequence of unbelief is condemnation (John 3:18)

### **Handiwork Because of Love and Mercy (Eph 2:4-7)**

#### *Beloved by God (4)*

Beloved by God because nothing can separate us from His love (Rom 8:37-39)

Beloved by God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 John 4:15-18)

Beloved by God because love is one of the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22)

Beloved by God because God gives comfort through His love (Phil 2:1-2)

Beloved by God because He provided Jesus as our sacrifice (John 3:16)

Beloved by God expressed in mercy (1 Tim 1:15-16)

#### *Alive with Christ (5)*

Alive in Christ because it pleased Jesus (John 5:21)

Alive in Christ through the Holy Spirit (John 6:63)

Alive in Christ through baptism in Jesus (Rom 6:4)

Alive in Christ in a mortal body (Rom 8:11)

Alive in Christ because of living by faith (Gal 2:20)

#### *Exalted with Christ (6-7)*

Exalted with Christ in the heavenly realms (Eph 1:3)

Exalted with Christ in glory (Col 3:2-4)

Exalted with Christ that was predestined (Rom 8:30)

Exalted with Christ because our citizenship is in heaven (Phil 3:20-21)

### **Handiwork That Results in Good Works (Eph 2:8-10)**

#### *Gift of grace (8-9)*

Gift of grace that saves (Acts 15:11)

Gift of grace that guarantees the promises of God (Rom 4:16-17)

Gift of grace that provides access to God (Rom 5:1-2)

Gift of grace that belongs to a remnant (Rom 11:5-6)

Gift of grace to teach (Rom 12:5-7)

Gift of grace that makes one work harder (1 Cor 15:10)

#### *God's creative work (10)*

Creator of things both visible and invisible (Col 1:16)

Creator through being the Word (John 1:1-3)

Creator through whom all things live (1 Cor 8:6)

Creator through whom all things were made (Heb 1:2)

Creator who built everything (Heb 3:3-4)