

Eph22b-3 when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, following the ways of this world--doing what everyone else is doing, living as the world lives, according to what is popular, encouraged, and supported by the world; playing the game, going along to get along. Although the world will praise you and “love it’s own” if you are of the world, this kind of is exactly what separates people from God. Remember James 4:4 **4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.** Worldly wisdom instead of Godly wisdom can only lead away from God to sin and death in the end because it’s Satanically organized to be a system that draws people away from God. It causes people to praise “rulers and authorities and powers and dominions, and every named that is named—all of the “superstars” and singers and athletes—every name that is named, except the one name that should be praised—Jesus Christ! The people who are doing this, thinking that they are in with the “in crowd”, are sitting with “the cool kids”, are going along with the currents of our society, are concerned only with activities and values of the present age and are not concerned with God and eternal values or with the judgment to come. Those who would practice deception and evil, who spend their time playing social games and amassing personal power are being set up by the “the god of this age” for destruction. You can’t have both! You are either for or against Christ, and if you’re of the world, you’re against Christ. 2 Cor 4:4 **3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they will not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.** We are called to be set apart, sanctified, holy, different from the world, not to go along with it. Romans 12:2 says **And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.** We are a new creation—we have been changed and we are being transformed into the image of Jesus! We are not walking as we used to walk!

according to the ruler over the realm of the air. Our walk before we were saved, the standard that we lived by, was not only unregenerate in conformity and in accordance with the temporal values of the world, but was also in accordance with or under the control of the ruler of the realm of the air. The term “air,” was thought in ancient times to be that which filled the space between the earth and moon. The Greeks thought this term referred to the lower impure air, the home of the spirits, as opposed to the higher pure air, the ether. It is the place or sphere of the activity of the devil. The air is that abode of angels or messengers of the devil, and thus the spirit of the devil through his emissaries. In Paul’s day the air was considered as “the dwelling place of evil spirits. Eph 6:12 **12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.** Therefore, the unregenerate not only walk according to the values of the present age but also under the control of the leader who rules over this evil world. Job (1:7) speaks of Satan going to and fro on the earth with a purpose. And we know that that purpose is to kill, steal, and destroy. He is working in people’s lives, and NOT for their good.

the spirit that now works.

The enemy is not resting. He doesn’t take days off, and death does not take a holiday. This could be translated “the ruler over the realm of the air, [the ruler over] the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience.” But, either way that you translate it, if “spirit” refers to an evil spirit, then Paul is saying that the devil is the ruler over the evil spirit.

The word for working here is from ἐνεργέω, energeo (energeow) from which we get our English word “energy.” This means that the enemy works with supernatural power in the lives of unbelievers, and even more-so if they give up their will through alcohol, drugs, or other forms of sin.

in the sons of disobedience.

This influence of the enemy on the lives of unbelievers, and dependence upon him for power or guidance instead of God is here called sonship by Paul. The word “son” has “the thought of individual freedom, and the responsibility of personal choice. They are the sons of the disobedient one, the unbelieving one, the enemy the devil. Disobedience comes from unbelief, for the person is not persuaded or convinced to trust that God is who He says He is. So, the unregenerate are characterized as disobedient because they do not believe in Jesus, God’s provision for salvation.

among whom also we all were formerly living

Paul reminds us that we lived just like the unrepentant and unsaved Ephesians used to live before we were saved--that this was our lifestyle too, before we became a Christian.

in the desires of our flesh

We also live in the desires of our flesh, just doing whatever we wanted to do, not caring what God’s will was, and even if we did know, opposing the Will of God most of the time. Even when we desired to do good, it was mostly out of wanting to feel good about ourselves, or get a pat on the back, or look good and “virtue signal” to those around us. Our desires of the flesh, before we were saved were evil, just like everyone else. As he says in Romans 3:9-12 **9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; 10 as it is written: “There is no righteous person, not even one; 11 There is no one who understands, There is no one who seeks out God; 12 They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, There is not even one.”** That Not even one, includes US before we were saved. Just like all the rest, we lived according to the desires of our flesh, by sinfulness, in the weakness and corruption of our limited abilities, opposing God.

doing the wishes of the flesh and mind

We were not only living in the sphere of the desires of flesh, but we were doing the wishes or dictates of the flesh. Thus, our life in the flesh was not accidental or forced but desirable and natural to us. We wanted to sin. Elsewhere, Paul expresses it as the mind-set of the flesh which opposes God and his moral character Rom 8:5–7 **5 For those who are in accord with the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are in accord with the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.** Our actions were an outward manifestation of the inward wishes of the flesh and thoughts.

and we were by nature children of wrath. The term τέκνα Tekna, “children,” is similar to “sons,” mentioned in verse 2, but this word children denotes a closer relationship to the parent. The word “child” depicts a close relationship and dependence on the parent. And this is our nature--“left to ourselves,” we are destined to suffer wrath, the consequence of sin. This is our inheritance of sin as sons and daughters of Adam. This is our natural condition.

even as the rest.

Paul is showing that we are dead in transgressions and sins. We did what everybody else did—walked according the era of this ungodly world. We did what the devil wanted—walked according to the ruler of the realm of the air. We enjoyed it because we did what pleased our flesh and thoughts. So the fleshly values we had before conversion not only fit into the pattern of the world and satanic forces but it also into the pattern of our desires. We did what came naturally because it naturally fit into the patterns external and internal to us. This is evidence that we were dead in transgressions and sins and we, with all other people, were children destined for God’s wrath. There was no way that we by ourselves could escape. It is only God’s intervening grace that delivered us.