

Topic: Personal Ministry

Scriptural References

Ephesians 2:10, Gen 1:27-28, Luke 4:1-12, Luke 12:48

Biblical Explanation

You were made to reflect God's image and no amount of sin within you or the environment around you can change the purpose or reason you were created. Ephesians 2:1-10 communicates a spiritual reset, a spiritual adjustment, or as kids say when they play video games, "a do over". Ephesians 2:1 articulates that while we were physically alive we were spiritually dead because we lived sinful lives. Verse 2 communicates an important truth that many ignore which is that Satan is the ruler of this world. This truth is important because many would lead you to believe that Satan either doesn't exist or because he was defeated by Jesus has no influence in this world. Don't be fooled, Satan has systems of lies and structures of injustice that exist on earth. Satan even tried to tempt Jesus by giving Jesus authority over his earthly kingdom if Jesus worshiped him (Luke 4:1-12). And that story of Satan tempting us to choose Satan's way over God's way continues to plague us today. But all Satan can do is tempt us, nothing more, because verse 5 says that we are alive in Christ, no longer spiritually dead, and this salvation happens because of God's grace. Hallelujah!

So now the question is simple, "what does it look like to reflect God's image while doing life in Satan's kingdom?" Our hope is that each of the previous Foundations studies has helped you answer that question. That in understanding who Jesus is you became saved. In understanding the Holy Spirit you realize the power that lives within you and desires to lead you daily. As you learned about Fellowship you realize importance of doing life with other believers and the value of sharpening one another for God's glory. This study helps us understand how your personal ministry is another aspect of reflecting God in a broken world.

A personal ministry is your godly response to a need or broken aspect of our society that God has made you aware of. It is rooted in Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." We are God's workmanship, the result of His creative effort. Like an artist that stands back after making a sculpture, we, the people of God, are His workmanship. And because Jesus Christ is our source, the purpose for which we were created is to do the good works that flow from Jesus and

return glory to Him. We are remade, or re-born as a new creation with a new purpose, which is to do good works. God goes before us laying the ground work, preparing the path for us to follow. All that is left for us to do is...follow. We must walk in the path God has prepared for us to do good works. These good works counter Satan's kingdom and bring forth justice in an unjust world. These good works shatter systems of lies with truth. These good works empower and build up when Satan seeks to kill and destroy.

The term "personal" denotes that this godly response is unique to you. This does not mean you are the only person that cares about this or should be doing this good work by yourself. It simply means that God has made you aware of the need to respond and your awareness is not dependent on anyone else. Maybe you see a family on your street that routinely struggles with having enough food. Maybe that statistic about the rate of men of color going to prison just bothers you. At the school meeting hearing that kids don't have pencils or teachers don't have paper to make worksheets for students just won't leave your memory. Your response may be to care for one individual or to care for thousands. The impact is the same, it is a good work for Christ's glory. You can start your own or join something like MACC Development that is responding to felt needs. And these good works are not dependent on your age, wealth, color, gender, or anything else. God is with you, going before you so who or what can stop you? These ministries are just like our salvation, things we don't boast about (verse 8), but opportunities for us to boast about God.

But there are a few things that lead us to stand paralyzed instead of walking in the path God has prepared. We can become fearful and believe lies that God may do these types of things, He just wouldn't use someone like us. Or we can become overwhelmed by the amount of injustice and do nothing because in choosing one response we are denying many others. Or we can just be lazy, selfish Christians that would rather indulge in fulfillment instead of choosing to impact others. The root of all these reasons and others that are not described is Satan's ability to focus us on circumstances instead of His promises. Where in Ephesians 2:1-10 does the text speak to some Christians being God's workmanship or other Christians not being His workmanship? It doesn't! We are all His workmanship—yes you—fearful, worried, anxious, depressed, beautiful you are His creation and He has a good work for you to do. Where in Ephesians 2:1-10 does the text ask you to solve all the problems of the world. It doesn't! So trust that God is working in the hearts of others to respond to injustice just as He is working in yours and as you do your part, responding to the need you see, they will respond to the need they see and we as an army for Christ will advance His kingdom. You can't respond to all brokenness and you are not expected to. We were given salvation (verse 5), a gift of grace, and now God has remade you so

that you can be a blessing to someone else. To whom much is given much is required (Luke 12:48) and selfishness or laziness is result of you not grasping the magnitude of the salvation, or the promise of eternal life. Focus on God, focus on His promises and walk in the opportunity He is preparing for you.

Main Points

- We are made to reflect God's image.
- Satan has limited authority on earth.
- God has created you to do good work and goes before you preparing a way for your good works.
- We must act or walk in the way God has prepared.
- A personal ministry is your godly response to a need or broken aspect of our society that God has made you aware of.
- Focus on Christ and not the obstacles that seek to steal your attention away from God using you to do good works

Questions

1. Can you explain the difference between being dead (Eph 2:1) and alive (Eph 2:5)?
2. Name some of the bad works, or broken aspects of our society that flow from Satan?
3. How would you define a personal ministry?
4. Name two or three aspects of brokenness that God has brought specifically to your awareness or just don't sit right with you.
5. If you had everything you needed how might you respond to one or more of those situations?
6. Do we have everything we need?

Walk In Them

Pray with someone and ask for accountability in responding to how God would use you for His good works.

Additional Resources

<https://maninthemirror.org/2008/12/10/13-how-to-develop-a-personal-ministry/>