

Week of Sept 2-8

CHEAP SEATS?

Scripture Reading: Read Ephesians chapter 2

If you're a Yankee fan, you probably remember the bleacher seats at the old ballpark, the house that Ruth built. They were quite far from the infield, to be sure, but they were also dirt cheap at less than \$10.00 a ticket to see the Yankees play. With the team's move to a new state-of-the-art stadium, the bleacher seats are a little more expensive now but they still remain quite a bargain, especially when compared to the seats behind home plate. Tickets for those Legends Suite seats were originally priced at \$2,500 per ticket when the new stadium first opened!

As Christians, we have been blessed with sweeter seats than the Legends Suite. Notice what Paul says in verse 6: *"And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus."* We're not stuck in the cheap seats. In fact, the seats we have are a far cry from the horrible seats we had before coming to Christ. In the opening verses of today's chapter reading, Paul informs us how bad things were in our pre-Christian life. We were dead in our sins. We following the ways of the world and gave in to all kinds of evil practices. We followed the leadership of the devil through our disobedience. And what did we get for it? According to Paul, we became objects of God's wrath. In other words, we originally had the worst seats in the house.

But thank God for His love and mercy. He made us alive in Christ even though we were dead in our sins. He raised us up with Christ. He seated us in the heavenly realms. He gave us the best seats in the house and they were provided freely to us as a gift of grace (Ephesians 2:8-9). But, just because they're free doesn't mean the seats were cheap. They were costly, far more costly than the Legends Suite seats.

Interestingly, shortly after the Yankees moved into their new stadium and charged such exorbitant prices for their Legends Suite seats, they realized they had made a major miscalculation. When the television cameras filmed the games, the seats behind home plate were empty. Why? Very few people were willing to shell out \$2,500 to see a game, especially in the midst of a recession. The prices were quickly reduced.

In contrast, out of love for us, the Father was willing to pay full price for our sweet seats. He redeemed our lives and rescued us from the clutches of the enemy when He offered His Son on our behalf to suffer and die on the cross for our sins. We never could have paid that kind of price, not in a million years. If He hadn't done it for us, those seats would have remained unfilled for eternity. But he did pay a premium price and now we are seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. Praise the Lord!

Action Step & Prayer Focus: Where are you sitting today? Are you in the bleachers or are you seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus? If you haven't received Christ as Savior by faith then you are dead in your sins and heading for the worst seats in the house. It's time to repent and put your faith in Christ. If you don't know Christ, pray to receive His salvation today. If you are already a believer, live your Christian life from the victorious position of your new seats in heaven rather than from the defeated perspective of your old seats of sin on earth.

Take-a-way: *Christians have the best seats in the house!*