



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Fully Alive: Ephesians

April 6-12

Ephesians 2:1-10

Things to Know

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Gospel Connections and Conversations

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Studying God's Word *In Community*

Reminder: The goal of group time is not to re-preach the sermon, but to understand and apply God's Word together.

Sermon Recap

Ephesians 2:1-10 reminds us of the radical transformation that only Jesus can accomplish. We were not just struggling; we were spiritually dead in our sin and unable to save ourselves. But because of His great love and mercy, God stepped in and made us alive in Christ by grace through faith. Now, as His workmanship, we have been given new life and a new purpose to walk in the good works He has already prepared for us. Only Jesus can bring the dead to life, and that changes everything about who we are and how we live.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Paul describes our condition as “dead” rather than just “lost” or “broken”?
2. What stands out to you most about God’s character in verses 4–7?
3. Why is it important that salvation is described as a gift and not something we earn?
4. In what ways do people (even Christians) try to “earn” what God has already given freely?
5. What does it look like practically to live as someone who has been “made alive” in Christ this week?

Read

Read Ephesians 2:1-10 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
- What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?
- Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
- What do you need help understanding about this passage?

Scripture

Ephesians 2:1-10

By Grace Through Faith

[1] And you were dead in the trespasses and sins [2] in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—[3] among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. [4] But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, [5] even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—[6] and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

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Ephesians 2:1-10

Living on Mission In Community

Living on mission as a group begins with remembering who we were and celebrating what God has done. Ephesians 2 reminds us that we were once dead in our sin, but God, in His mercy, made us alive in Christ—not because of our works, but by His grace. As God’s workmanship, we now live with intentionality, looking for the good works He has already prepared for us. This means encouraging one another to see everyday spaces—neighborhoods, workplaces, schools—as opportunities to share the gospel with others. As a group, living on mission looks like praying for specific people, caring for tangible needs, speaking the gospel with boldness, and holding each other accountable to step into obedience. We don’t go on mission to earn God’s favor—we go because we’ve already been brought from death to life, and we want others to experience that same resurrection power.

How is God leading me to respond to His Word this week?

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

1. How did you feed yourself?
 - *(What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)*
2. How did you feed others?
 - *(How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)*
3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - *(What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)*

Leader Resources - April 6 - 12

Small Group Curriculum - Ephesians 2:1-10

1. Session Overview

Ephesians 2:1–10 reminds us of the stark reality of our spiritual condition apart from Christ and the overwhelming grace of God that rescues us. Paul paints a vivid picture: we were not merely struggling or searching, we were spiritually dead. Dead in sin, enslaved to the world, the flesh, and the enemy. But into that hopeless condition, God stepped in.

This passage is one of the clearest summaries of the gospel in all of Scripture. It moves from death to life, from wrath to mercy, from separation to purpose. Salvation is not something we achieve. Salvation is something God accomplishes by grace through faith. And that grace doesn't just save us from something; it saves us for something. We are God's workmanship, created for a life of purpose and good works that reflect Him to the world.

2. Opening

Prayer:

Father, You are so powerful. You are powerful enough to raise the spiritually dead to life. Thank You for making that possible through Jesus, and for moving toward us while we were still sinners. Please speak to us through Your Word. In Jesus' name, amen.

Icebreaker question:

Ask:

“Before coming to Christ, how would you describe your understanding of your spiritual condition?”

3. Scripture Reading

Have someone read Ephesians 2:1-10 out loud.

4. Teaching Points (Systematic Walkthrough)

1. Dead in Sin

Ephesians 2:1-3

In Ephesians 2:1–3, Paul begins with a sobering reality: apart from Christ, we were spiritually dead in our sin. This isn't language meant to exaggerate—it's meant to clarify. We weren't just struggling or distant from God; we were completely unresponsive to Him, unable to pursue Him on our own. Our lives were shaped by three dominating influences: the world around us, the enemy against us, and the sinful desires within us. This means our problem wasn't merely behavioral; it was deeply rooted in our nature. We didn't need to be cleaned up or coached. Instead, we needed to be brought to life.

2. Alive in Christ

Ephesians 2:4-9

But then comes one of the most hope-filled turns in all of Scripture: "But God..." (vv. 4–9). Because of His great love and rich mercy, God intervened in our helpless condition. He didn't wait for us to move toward Him. He moved toward us. Through Jesus, He made us alive, raised us up, and seated us with Christ. This is the heart of the gospel: salvation is by grace through faith. It is not something we achieve, but something we receive. It is a gift, not a reward. This removes all pride and redirects all glory to God. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the power that brings us from spiritual death to life.

3. Made for More

Ephesians 2:10

Finally, in verse 10, Paul reminds us that this new life comes with purpose. We are God's workmanship—His intentional creation, formed in Christ Jesus for good works. These works are not what save us, but they are the evidence that we have been saved. God has already prepared a path of obedience and purpose for us to walk in. Grace doesn't just rescue us from death; it gives us a new identity and a new direction. We are no longer defined by who we were—we are now called to live in light of who we are in Christ, walking daily in the life He has given us.

5. Discussion Questions

1. What stands out to you most in Ephesians 2:1-10?
2. Why do you think Paul describes our condition as “dead” rather than just “lost” or “broken”?
3. What stands out to you most about God’s character in verses 4-7?
4. Why is it important that salvation is described as a gift and not something we earn?
5. In what ways do people (even Christians) try to “earn” what God has already given freely?
6. What does it look like practically to live as someone who has been “made alive” in Christ this week?

6. Application

Take time this week to reflect on your story:

- Where do you still think or live like your old self?
- Where is God calling you to step into the “new life” He’s already given you?
- What is one “good work” you sense God has prepared for you this week?

Write it down and act on it.

7. Closing Reflection and Prayer

Reflection:

Once you were dead. Now you’re alive. And that changes everything. Only Jesus can bring the dead to life, and if He’s done that in you, your life now has purpose, direction, and eternal significance.

Prayer:

“God, help us live as if we believe this is true. Thank You for sending Your Son to make us alive. Please help us live lives to the praise of your glory. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

8. Memory Verse

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,”

Ephesians 2:8