

SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY

EPHESIANS 2:1-10 (KJV) · AUGUST 26, 2026

FROM DEATH TO LIFE: THE RICHES OF GOD'S SOVEREIGN GRACE

1. STUDY TITLE

From Death to Life: The Riches of God's Sovereign Grace

2. FOCUS PASSAGE

Ephesians 2:1–10

Key Verse:

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved..." — Ephesians 2:4–5 (ESV)

3. BIG IDEA / MAIN POINT

We were spiritually dead and under God's righteous wrath, but God, in His sovereign mercy and love, resurrected us to spiritual life through union with Jesus Christ—saving us by grace alone through faith as an unearned gift, so that we may walk in the good works He prepared for us.

4. SESSION OVERVIEW (FOR THE LEADER)

- **Suggested Time:** 60–90 minutes
 - **Goal:** Help group members grasp the utter helplessness of our condition apart from Christ, marvel at God's unmerited grace in regenerating us, rest in the eternal security of salvation, and walk out the good works God prepared for us.
 - **Special Notes:** Verses 1–3 deal with sobering realities: spiritual deadness, Satanic influence, and divine wrath. Be sensitive to new believers who may find this language striking. Remind the group that the dark backdrop of verses 1–3 is intentional—it makes the radiant light of verse 4 (“But God...”) shine all the brighter!
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5. OPENING (10–12 MIN)

WELCOME

"Welcome, everyone! I'm so glad you're here tonight. Today we are looking at one of the most breathtaking passages in all of Scripture—Ephesians 2:1–10—which shows us the depth of where Christ found us and the height of where He has seated us."

ICEBREAKER QUESTION

- Think of a time you received a gift that was completely unexpected and totally unearned. What was it, and how did you feel receiving it?

OPENING PRAYER

"Father, thank You for gathering us around Your Word tonight. Open our eyes to behold the greatness of Your grace and the richness of Your mercy toward us in Jesus Christ. Soften our hearts to receive Your truth, and transform us by Your Spirit as we study together. In Jesus' name, Amen."

6. CONTEXT & SETTING THE SCENE (3–5 MIN)

Share this background with your group in your own words:

Paul wrote this letter around AD 60 while imprisoned in Rome to the church in Ephesus, a bustling pagan city famous for idol worship and occult practices. In chapter 1, Paul marveled at God’s eternal redemptive plan—how He chose us before the foundation of the world, redeemed us through Christ’s blood, and sealed us with the Holy Spirit. Now in chapter 2, Paul zooms in on how that eternal plan converts an individual heart. He contrasts who we were by nature outside of Christ with who we are by grace in Christ.

Let’s read the passage together.

7. READ THE PASSAGE

Read the passage through twice. Have one person read it first, then ask another person (or read around the circle) to read it a second time.

EPHESIANS 2:1–10 (ESV)

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 body 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.

8. OBSERVATION QUESTIONS (“WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?”)

1. In verses 1–3, what specific terms and phrases does Paul use to describe our condition before Christ saved us?

2. According to verses 2–3, what three influences guided our lives before we knew Christ (look for references to the world, the devil, and the flesh)?
 3. What two-word phrase in verse 4 marks the dramatic turning point in the passage? What motivated God to act?
 4. According to verses 5–6, what three actions did God take on our behalf in connection with Christ?
 5. In verses 8–9, how does Paul describe salvation? What does he explicitly exclude as a cause for salvation?
 6. In verse 10, what does Paul call believers, and what purpose does he give for our new creation in Christ?
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9. INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS (“WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?”)

1. Paul describes unbelievers as “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (v. 1), not merely sick, confused, or needing advice. Why is the imagery of spiritual death essential for understanding our inability to save ourselves? (*See also Romans 3:10–12*).
 2. Look closely at verse 4 (“*But God...*”). How does this highlight that spiritual rebirth (regeneration) is entirely an act of divine mercy and power, rather than a joint effort between God and man?
 3. Verses 8–9 emphasize that salvation is “*by grace... through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.*” How does understanding that even saving faith is an unmerited gift from God eliminate self-righteousness and pride? (*Note: While some traditions view faith as man's independent contribution, Scripture roots even our capacity to believe in God's initiating grace*).
 4. Verse 6 states that God “*raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*” How does our spiritual union with Christ secure our eternal safety and guarantee our ultimate glorification? (*See also Ephesians 1:13–14; Romans 8:30*).
 5. Verse 10 calls us God’s “*workmanship*” (or masterpiece), created for good works “*which God prepared beforehand.*” How do good works serve as the *fruit* or result of salvation rather than the *root* or cause of it?
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10. APPLICATION QUESTIONS (“HOW SHOULD THIS CHANGE US?”)

1. **Head / Heart:** Reflecting on the reality that you were once spiritually dead (vv. 1–3), how does this truth deepen your personal gratitude for God’s mercy toward you today?
 2. **Heart (Personal):** Is there any area of your Christian life where you fall into “performance mode”—trying to earn God’s love or favor through your own moral efforts? How do verses 8–9 bring rest to your soul?
 3. **Gospel Reminder:** How does knowing that your salvation rests entirely on Christ’s finished work—not on your good days or bad days—give you steady assurance when you experience spiritual weakness or failure?
 4. **Community:** Since every believer in our church was equally saved from spiritual death by sovereign grace alone, how should this eliminate gossip, judgment, or comparison within our group and church family?
 5. **Hands:** Verse 10 says God prepared good works beforehand for us to walk in. What is one practical opportunity (serving someone in need, sharing the gospel with a friend, encouraging a fellow believer) that God might be calling you to walk in this week?
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RESPONSE PROMPT

Close the application discussion by asking everyone to fill in this sentence silently or share aloud:

“*This week, because God has saved me by grace alone, I will rest in His favor by...*”

11. RESPONSE & CLOSING (10–15 MIN)

SILENT REFLECTION

Take 60 seconds of silence. Invite the group to quietly thank God for saving them when they were helpless and dead in sin.

GROUP RESPONSE PRAYER

"Lord God, we were dead in our sins, captive to the world and our own fleshly desires, deserving of wrath. But in Your rich mercy and great love, You made us alive in Christ. Thank You that our salvation is Your gift from start to finish, so that we have nothing to boast in except the cross of Jesus. Help us to walk with joy in the good works You have prepared for us this week. Amen."

PRAYER REQUESTS & GROUP INTERCESSION

- Collect personal prayer requests across the group.
- Pray specifically for friends or family members who are still "spiritually dead," asking God in His rich mercy to grant them life and faith.

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader prays over the group, committing their needs to God and asking for grace to live out these truths throughout the coming week.

MEMORY VERSE TO TAKE HOME

Ephesians 2:8–9
"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."
