



Ephesians 2 v 1-10

Dead or alive? Leader's version

Check in – ask everyone how they are and how they're feeling about studying the Bible today.

1. Read Ephesians 1 v 22-23. What do we learn about Jesus?

Jesus is in authority over all things for the church. The church is His body.

Think about Jesus' majesty, splendour and sinlessness. Then read 2 v 1-10 and see the contrast between Jesus and us.

What does the passage say and mean?

Read Ephesians 2 v 1-10

This passage is split into three topics – **sin**, **grace** and **good work for us to do**.

Sin

2. How does Paul describe mankind without God? (v1)

Dead in their sins.

3. Read v1. What does it mean to be dead in our sins? Also look at Genesis 3 v 19. What can we do about this?

To be as unresponsive to God as a corpse (Stott 2008, p72). Death is part of the curse – physically (dust you are and to dust you will return) and spiritually (separation from God). We can do nothing to fix this (it's not even our faith in Jesus that fixes this situation, it's Jesus Himself. We can do nothing!).

4. Whose ways do people follow, that is, who and what is mankind naturally influenced by? (v2-3)

The ways of the world, and the ruler of the kingdom of the air – Satan. And we 'gratify the cravings of our flesh' i.e. do what we want to do, not what God wants us to do. Sin is in our hearts: we naturally turn away from God (Mark 7 v 20-23).

?

What does it mean to 'follow the ways of this world'? Do you follow 'the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air' or do you follow Jesus? How is this seen to be true in your life'?

'The ways of this world' = peer pressure, culture, modern ideas / attitudes etc.

The ruler of the kingdom of the air = Satan

?

Read v3. Which groups of people ('the ways of this world') have influenced you in the past?

Try to get the group to think about specific people or groups, particularly those who led them into trouble. Try to help them see that keeping away from bad influences in the future will help them to stay out of trouble.

5. What does God say is the result of living for our sinful nature? (v3)

Being the object of God's wrath. God is angry at sin, He's not just a bit offended, He's ANGRY. God's wrath '... is never arbitrary, since it is the divine reaction to only one situation, namely evil. Therefore it is entirely predictable, and it is never subject to mood, whim or caprice. ...God's personal, righteous, constant hostility to evil, his settled refusal to compromise with it, and his resolve instead to condemn it.' (Stott 2008, p76).

Grace

Questions 6-8 are **SELF-DIRECTED QUESTIONS**. Let the group to work on them in pairs.

6. **SDL** So far, it's all bad news. What's the good news in v4?

'But ...God'! God has stepped in and done something, because of His great love for us and His rich mercy (mercy = not giving us what we deserve).

7. **SDL** Read v5. What did God do for us?

He made us alive with Christ! Repentance and belief in Jesus' life, death and resurrection is the only way for sinners to be reconciled to God.

nb. Mercy = not receiving what we deserve. Grace = receiving what we do not deserve.

8. **SDL** What is so amazing about God making us alive in Christ, even when we were 'dead in transgressions' (still sinners)?

We didn't deserve it. We just deserved His wrath. Explain that this is grace - a gift, something we don't deserve. The gift is forgiveness and eternal life, through Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

9. Verse 5 says 'it is by grace you have been saved.' What have believers been saved from and to?

From God's wrath at sin, leading to eternity in hell. To a restored relationship with God and eternity with Him.

?

Are you trying to earn your way into heaven, or trying to impress God, by doing certain things, or not doing other things? What kind of things would these be?

Church attendance, being a good person, staying out of trouble etc (all good things, but none of them will make us right with God).

10. How 'big' is God's grace (v7)?

Incomparable (NIV). Immeasurable (ESV). Too big to understand fully.

11. Read v8&9. Can you rephrase it?

e.g. There is nothing we can do to add to what Jesus has done for us on the cross – Jesus has already done everything! And our attempts to contribute, by doing good things / not doing bad things etc have no value at all – these attempts just highlight our lack of understanding of grace.

12. What do you think v10 means when it says that we are God's handiwork?

We are God's works of art! He loves us just as we are, but too much to leave us as we are.

Good work for us to do

13. What does v10 tell us about why we were created?

One reason we were created is to do good works for God – God has a good plan for each of us which will bring glory to God. The first part of this is repenting and believing.

Another, even more important, reason that we were created is found in Ephesians 1 v 12, 'in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.'

?

What do you think are the 'good works that God prepared in advance for us to do'?

Simple obedience to God's word, out of love for Him. A vocational calling may one day become clear, but this refers primarily to our day to day lives of following Christ.

Check out – ask everyone how they found the study and whether they are safe to go back to the cell.

Ephesians 2 v 1-10

Dead or alive?

1. Read Ephesians 1 v 22-23. What do we learn about Jesus?

What does the passage say and mean?

This passage is split into three topics – **sin**, **grace** and **good work for us to do**. We'll look at them step by step.

Sin

2. How does Paul describe mankind without God? (v1)
3. Read v1. What does it mean to be dead in our sins? Also look at Genesis 3 v 19. What can we do about this?
4. Whose ways do people follow, that is, who and what is mankind naturally influenced by? (v2-3)

?

What does it mean to 'follow the ways of this world'? Do you follow 'the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air' or do you follow Jesus? How is this seen to be true in your life?

?

Read v3. Which groups of people ('the ways of this world') have influenced you in the past?

5. What does God say is the result of living for our sinful nature? (v3)

Grace

6. **SDL** So far, it's all bad news. What's the good news in v4?

7. **SDL** Read v5. What did God do for us?

8. **SDL** What is so amazing about God making us alive in Christ, even when we were 'dead in transgressions' (still sinners)?

9. v5 says 'it is by grace you have been saved.' What have believers been saved from and to?

?

Are you trying to earn your way into heaven, or trying to impress God, by doing certain things, or not doing other things? What kind of things would these be?

10. How 'big' is God's grace (v7)?

11. Read v8&9. Can you rephrase it?

12. What do you think v10 means when it says that we are God's handiwork?

Good work for us to do

13. What does v10 tell us about why we were created?

?

What do you think are the 'good works that God prepared in advance for us to do'?