

GROWTH GROUPS
WEEK 5
WEEK OF MAY 21ST

Spring
2017

GROWTH GROUP SPRING 2017

WEEK 5 – MAY 21, 2017 - EPHESIANS 2:1-10

GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

1) When have you ignored directions and gotten lost, or gone the wrong way?

SETTING THE CONTEXT

Ephesians 2 starts by talking about our reality before God without the hope and assurance of Jesus Christ. As the apostle Paul says we were “dead” in our transgressions / trespasses and sins. A trespass / transgression is a false step, a crossing of a known boundary or deviating from the right path. ‘Sin’ has to do with missing the mark, or falling short of a standard. The two words cover the extent of our wrongdoing and the ways we fail to live fully for God.

Verse 4 is a strong verse. After summarizing our dilemma, Paul says now we need to talk about what God has done. Out of God’s great love, he has had mercy on us. He has made us alive in Jesus and raised us up with him and seated us in the heavenly places with Jesus. This is quite a change from the first three verses of Ephesians 2. God hasn’t just done these things for Jesus, but for all who follow him.

God did this, not because of anything that we have done or earned, but instead because of his favor that he wanted to share with us. God has shown us favor and done for us what we could not do. We have been rescued and saved by his grace.

The beauty of this is seen when the apostle Paul describes us as God’s workmanship, which has to do with a work of art or a masterpiece. As Psalm 119 says, we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Paul wants his readers to see that salvation is not just about the resurrection from the dead, but that it is also connected to the work that we are all called to do. Good works are a part of salvation. They do not earn us salvation, but they flow out of salvation. We have been saved in order that we might serve.

Paul concludes by talking about our walk, which in the Hebrew understanding would not have been concerned with our actual steps, but more on the manner of our life. We used to “walk” in transgressions and sin, but now we “walk” in freedom and good works. The grace and power of God has accomplished this for us.



EXPLORING THE TEXT

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

^{2:1} As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh[a] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- 2) The apostle Paul describes a change that can happen to people because of what Jesus has done. He is describing transformation. Can you think of a time in your own life when you have experienced the transforming power of God at work in your life?
- 3) Jesus helped to bridge the gap when he gave his life on the cross. He did something that we could never do on our own. Talk about a time when someone bridged the gap/stood in the gap for you. What did that mean to you?
- 4) What does the apostle Paul mean in verse 8 when he says that we have been saved by grace through faith?
- 5) What do you think about the idea of being God’s masterpiece? Does that impact the way you think about the way you live your life in the world?
- 6) What sort of good works do you think Paul had in mind when he wrote about them in verse 10?
- 7) Talk about someone whose “work” inspires you. Why?

BRINGING IT HOME

- 8) Is there some sort of work that God has been calling you to that you have been putting off? Or, is there some sort of work that you are doing right now that you feel really good about?