

# The Gospel

Pastor Paul Springer | Ephesians 2:1-10  
January 21, 2018 | Winter Cycle: Week 2 of 10

## Personal Connection (25 minutes)

### Icebreaker

Do you remember a time in your life when you worked extremely hard on a project and felt very excited with the end result, only to find out someone else took credit for your work?

### Ups and Downs

Q. Did you experience Christ's presence this past week? Were you able to spend some time reading the Bible or in prayer?

### Praying for each other

Take a moment to pray for each other and for strength and guidance to grow in areas of vulnerability with the group.

### Sharing Christ

Q. Do you sense that God is leading you to build a relationship with someone so you can effectively share the good news of Christ's love, forgiveness, and grace?

### Review Last Sunday's *What Now?*

Last week we discussed how God can radically change the way we love others. He reveals himself, his very spirit, living in his followers as he provides power and vision to impact the world around us. We are called to be his hands and feet to each other and to our surrounding community. Has the Lord revealed any ideas to you about how you can be used for his glory?

## Digging Deeper (30 minutes)

### **This Week's Key Concept:**

**Because our faith and salvation are gifts from God, we should respond with gratitude, praise, and joy!**

### Read Ephesians 2:1-10

In Ephesians 2:1-3, Paul reminds the church in Ephesus of the conditions of their past, the reality of their sin, and the life from which and to which Jesus Christ saved them.

***Note:** This week's questions assume a relationship with Christ. If you have not yet trusted Christ with your life, listen carefully to what group members are sharing, express your own thoughts and questions, and ask God to reveal himself to you as you read the Bible, interact with others, and pray. He is the one who allows us to have faith in him.*

Q. How often do you look back at your "pre-Christian" life and realize the grace God has given you? (How are things now compared to how they were before accepting Jesus as Lord and savior?)

**Note:** *Gospel* — also referred to as “good news” — is the truth that Jesus Christ, being fully human and fully divine, was uniquely able to pay the penalty for our sins, restoring humans to right relationship with a perfect, holy God. Jesus Christ did this by dying on the cross so that, through faith in him alone, we might become adopted children of God. Simply put, the gospel is the awesome truth that God made a way through Christ’s sacrifice to restore sinners (everyone) to himself. The gospel is revealed in Jesus Christ, confirmed by his Holy Spirit living in Christians, and proclaimed through God’s living word, the Bible.

Q. Do you find it easy to approach unbelievers to share the gospel? How are you most comfortable sharing the gospel?

Q. Does remembering the life you had before receiving Christ as your personal Savior motivate you to share the gospel?

*Ephesians 2:4-7 (ESV): 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—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*

Q. How would you explain the truth of Ephesians 2:4-7 to someone who does not yet believe the message of the gospel?

“*But God*” may be two of the most welcome words in all of Scripture! God could have left us spiritually dead, in rebellion against him and in bondage to our sins, but he didn’t. He saved us, not because of, but rather in spite of, what he saw in us.

Q. What difference does God’s loving example of humble patience and tolerance make in the way you relate to others?

In Ephesians 2:8-10, Paul emphasizes that salvation is a gift. It is not something you can earn by doing good works or taking pride in, since salvation comes from God’s initiative, not our own.

Q. How would truly grasping Paul’s message in Ephesians 2:8-10 change the way you feel about Christ, others and yourself?

## Impact Questions

Q. As believers, we have all been blessed with spiritual gifts. How can knowing and developing your spiritual gifts help you share the gospel with people who have not yet accepted Christ’s forgiveness and invitation to new life?

Q. If we could truly perceive our community through Christ’s eyes, what might we see? How could that impact our ministries?

**It seems normal to think that everything we do in life must be earned: school degrees and diplomas, job promotions, a new car, a better home, etc. It’s true that our efforts do affect those outcomes. If we are honest with ourselves, though, we approach our faith in much the same way. We know from scripture that we cannot earn God’s forgiveness and love; it is a free gift through faith in Jesus Christ alone. But it is easy to fall into the trap of trying to earn God’s favor. Having faith in God, even though it is a choice, is a gift from God. Faith in Christ is evidence of the Holy Spirit living within you.**

## What now? (15 minutes)

This week, pray for the gift of faith. Pray that the Lord would not only remind you that having faith is a decision, but that HE supplies the faith! Ask God to expand your faith in him.

## Closing Prayer (15 minutes)

Please share your prayer requests and praises, so that your LIFE Group may lift you up in prayer. Please pray that the church and surrounding communities would be revived in Christ’s name. Pray that the Lord would help you to see how to put your prayers into action.