

Membership Covenant



A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: Ephesians 2:1-10

Message for the Week: New Purpose

Sunday, January 14

Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week?
Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

How did you come to believe in Jesus? Was it through school? Parents? Church? Youth Group?
What role does God have in your belief about Jesus?

Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [Ephesians 2:1-10](#) out loud.

[Clicking the link will bring you to multiple translations.]

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, take note of, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

Respond / Reflect:

What does Paul mean when he says you/we are dead in our transgressions? What does this mean? How does this apply to you/us, if at all?

Paul gives us the impression that you/we are bad or evil. Is this true of you? Reflect and explain.

How are grace and faith connected? How are they important to you/us?

Can I/we please God? If so, how?

Read the text again, look for the descriptions of God. What does this tell us about God? What does this tell us about your/our relationship with God?

What is your/our purpose? What does this mean and how does it work? What does this have to do with your/our salvation?

Try It:

God has gifted you in a unique way, and you are in a unique setting in your home, church, and school/place of work. Now, God wants you to be a gift to others as a follower of Jesus. Try to make a difference wherever you are, as a gifted child of God through God's grace.

Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Pray this prayer together:

Father, I/we praise you for your lavish gifts to me/us; gifts of your grace, riches, faith, and yourself. Help me/us to fully live out our lives as your handiwork here on earth according to what you have planned for me/us to do.
AMEN

Missional/Spiritual Practice: Gifts

I commit to discovering, developing, and deploying the spiritual gifts God has entrusted to me for the building of the body of Christ.

I commit to using my spiritual gifts to be a witness in this world and to usher in the Kingdom of God.

Ephesians 2:1-10

New International Version

2 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.

Footnotes

- a. [Ephesians 2:3](#) In contexts like this, the Greek word for *flesh* (*sarx*) refers to the sinful state of human beings, often presented as a power in opposition to the Spirit.

The Message

2 ¹⁻⁶ It wasn’t so long ago that you were mired in that old stagnant life of sin. You let the world, which doesn’t know the first thing about living, tell you how to live. You filled your lungs with polluted unbelief, and then exhaled disobedience. We all did it, all of us doing what we felt like doing, when we felt like doing it, all of us in the same boat. It’s a wonder God didn’t lose his temper and do away with the whole lot of us. Instead, immense in mercy and with an incredible love, he embraced us. He took our sin-dead lives and made us alive in Christ. He did all this on his own, with no help from us! Then he picked us up and set us down in highest heaven in company with Jesus, our Messiah.

⁷⁻¹⁰ Now God has us where he wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It’s God’s gift from start to finish! We don’t play the major role. If we did, we’d probably go around bragging that we’d done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing.