



NG Study Guide: Ephesians 2:1-10, "Alive" [11.5.17]

Love God + know the Bible better:

1. Read the passage cited above, and try to answer the questions below before your group meets.
2. **Leader note:** *Please review the brief instructions for leaders at the bottom.*

The Study

Thesis: God's Word reveals there are two different kinds of life: physical and spiritual. Because of sin, every human being is born with physical life, but comes into this world spiritually dead. Only God can make a spiritually dead person alive, and the only way to spiritual life is through faith in Jesus Christ. God has a plan for those He makes alive in Christ.

I. We are dead without Jesus (vv. 1-3)

Paul reminds the Ephesian believers that before they placed their faith in Jesus Christ, because of their sin they were dead spiritually. Scripture clearly reveals sin causes death and separates us from God (Romans 6:23; James 1:15; Romans 5:12; Isaiah 59:2). It also confirms we're all born into sin (Psalm 51:5). Paul describes what this spiritual deadness looks like: walking in the ways of the world, under the authority of Satan, under the influence of the spirit of the antichrist, and fulfilling the sinful desires of our bodies and minds. He acknowledges every one of us used to be dead in this way, and therefore we all deserve the wrath of God.

Q1: Think back on your life before you placed your faith in Jesus Christ. In what ways do you see how you were spiritually dead?

II. God makes us alive with Jesus (vv. 4-7)

The good news is God, in His great mercy and love, even while we were dead in our sins, made us alive with Jesus! Just as God brought Jesus back to life from the dead, He also does the same for those who place their faith in Christ. Paul emphasizes this is only a result of God's amazing grace (undeserved blessing). Not only has God made us alive together with Jesus by raising us up with Him, He also has seated us together with Jesus in heaven, i.e., our identity and citizenship is no longer in this world, but in heaven.

Q2: What are some of the blessings we can experience now that we're spiritually alive in Jesus?

III. We're saved through faith in Jesus (vv. 8-10)

Paul again emphasizes the fact that this transformation from spiritual death to life (salvation) is only because of the tremendous grace of God, and is accomplished through faith in His Son, Jesus (c.f., Ephesians 1:1, 1:12, 1:15). Paul refers to this salvation as a gift from God, and not as a result of anything anyone did, or could ever do. Therefore, no one has any reason to be prideful or boast about his/her salvation. Finally, Paul reminds his readers they were created by God, in Jesus Christ, to do "good works," i.e., things which please God- things which He has planned for us to do. God has a plan for every person whom He makes alive in Christ!

Q3: What are some of the good works for which we're saved which God has planned for us to do?

"Digging Deeper" (optional or alternative study)

1. Read Romans 5:6 to 6:14. What can you learn from this passage about Jesus' death and resurrection, and how they impact our spiritual death and life?

2. In 2 Corinthians 5:15, Paul writes that those whom God has made alive in Christ should no longer live for themselves, but for Jesus Christ. In what specific ways can we stop living selfishly and live our lives more fully for God?

3. Take some time this week to reflect back on your life before you were saved. Can you recognize ways in which God has brought you from death to life? Spend some time in prayer thanking Him for all He's done for you.

Love your neighbor *outside* the group better:

1. Who would like to share how they sought to befriend or build relationship with their neighbors where they live, work, study, or play this past week?

2. Are there some needs that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbor outside the group?

3. Here is a neighboring idea(s) for us to consider for the week(s) ahead:

The holidays are coming! Plan to do something for your neighbor(s) for Thanksgiving or Christmas as a way to show God's love to them.

Love your neighbor *inside* the group better:

1. Are there some needs in our group that can provide us an opportunity to love our neighbor within the group?

2. What might we do about that need to help?

Prayer [Loving God and Neighbors better]:

Close the NG meeting with a time of group prayer. Encourage each participant to pray, but don't force anyone to pray. Encourage the group to keep their prayers brief so that each person can pray.

Leader Notes:

1. Seek to involve as many group participants as possible. A good group discussion time allows people to get to know the passage and one another better.

2. Feel free to pre-select the discussion questions that you want to focus on in case there isn't enough time to answer them all.

3. The "Digging Deeper" section provides some optional or alternative study and discussion activities. As a group leader, you can choose to focus on the "Digging Deeper" section, include part of that section in your group meeting, or not use it at all. Try to give the group sufficient notice so they can be prepared for the meeting.

4. Every time you meet consider asking:

a. What about this passage is particularly exciting, challenging, or confusing? If a leader is uncertain about a question of doctrine or theology don't hesitate to follow-up with your coach during the week. Then revisit the issue(s) when the group gathers next time.