

The Essentials: Ephesians

Session 3

Opening Collect

Together: Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Watch Video

Read: Ephesians 2:1-10

Discussion Questions (30-40 minutes)

1. Many Christians have described our reading as one of the most basic expressions of the Christian Gospel. How would you describe Paul's presentation of the Gospel?
2. Paul describes Gentiles as "dead in their trespasses" (v. 1) and his own Jewish family as "children of wrath" (v. 3). What do you think about this description? Why would he use such strong language?
3. Some people are tempted to think of God as being angry with sinners *until* Jesus atoned for our sins. But read verses 4 and 5 carefully. When does God start loving us? What do you think about it?
4. How do people typically gain status in the culture in which we live?
5. Verse 8 is likely the most famous verse in Ephesians. How does this declarative statement about our status contrast with our culture's understanding of status? How do you actually claim this reality in your life?
6. In the video, Margery mentioned how doing good works isn't about parading one's good actions, but is about testifying to the grace of God. It is saying look at what God has done for me! What might that look like to testify to God's grace in your life?
7. Is there something in this passage that you sense God intends just for you to hear?

Closing Prayer

Ephesians 2: 1-10

You were dead through the trespasses and sins ² in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³ All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵ even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ^[a]—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— ⁹ not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.