

Week #3: God's Grace Changes Everything

CHECK-IN	We learned in Ephesians 1:15–23, from the apostle Paul’s prayer that we would really know God, experience His power, and live in the hope we have in Christ. How have you seen God at work in your life this week?
BIG IDEA	After celebrating in Ephesians 1 all that God has blessed us with in Christ—His grace, redemption, and power at work in us—the apostle Paul now shows in chapter 2 how that grace changes everything. By God’s mercy, we who were once spiritually dead have been made alive in Christ. Our salvation is completely His work of love, not our own doing. Because of what God has done for us, we now live with renewed purpose—no longer defined by our past, but by the new life we’ve been given in Christ; a life meant to reflect His goodness and hope in our families, workplaces, and communities.
DISCUSS	<p>Read Ephesians 2:1–10 together.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Looking back at our lives. Before knowing Christ, Paul says we were “dead in sin.” Can you relate to what that might have felt like in your own life? We receive God’s grace. The apostle Paul (in verses 8–9) reminds us that salvation is a gift from God, not something we earn. How easy or hard is it for you to accept God’s grace? We are called by God to live out our new life. In verse 10, the apostle Paul says we are God’s workmanship, created for good works. What is one way you feel God calling you to live out your faith this week?
APPLY How do we respond to God’s teaching in meaningful ways?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> In reflecting on God’s restoration in your life, how does knowing that God has made you alive in Christ change the way you treat or connect with the people around you?

What might God ask of us in mind, spirit, or actions?

2. God can use everything in your life—your struggles, failures, gifts, and even your background—to do good works that only you can do. How have you seen God use your experiences, talents, or challenges to make a difference in someone's life or in your community?
3. What is one small step you can take this week to reflect God's grace in your everyday life?

**PRAYER
PRACTICE**
(15 minutes)

Please use **ONE** of these two options to lead your group through prayer. Choose the one that fits best with your group:

1. Palms Down, Palms Up Prayer Practice

Step 1: Sit in a comfortable position with as little background distraction as possible. Turn off cameras and audio on Zoom. Take a few deep breaths.

Step 2: (Allow 2 minutes) Put your palms down as a symbol of letting go. Talk to God as if he was sitting across from you. Tell Him what's on your mind as if your best friend were sitting beside you. Talk about your hurts, your distractions, your cares, what happened today or what made you happy or you are looking forward to. Share whatever comes to mind.

Step 3: (2 minutes) Now, turn your palms up as a symbol of surrender and receiving. Sit in silence listening to God. It is natural for your mind to wander. When it does, gently bring it back to focus on God, listening to what He has to say in response to you.

Step 4: (5–7 minutes) Debrief with the group. Let the following questions guide you:

- What was your experience during this exercise?
- What did you hear God say to you?

OR

2. Write down prayer requests for the group.

Either leader or another member can write.

Step 1: Begin the time of prayer by asking each member of the group to share one thing they need help with.

Step 2: Explain to the group that we will be praying for each other's prayer requests. Ask those who feel comfortable to pray for one of the requests given.

Step 3: Ask someone to pray first, then allow others to join in and pray afterwards.

Step 4: After all requests have been prayed for, the leader will allow a time of silence (approx. 1 minute), then will close the meeting by praying for any missed prayer requests and close the practice in a final prayer.