

A New Life Through Christ



MEMORY VERSE: “God saved you by his grace when you believed... it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done.” Ephesians 2:8-9

DAY 1 EPHESIANS 2:1-7—Made Alive with Christ

1. What does Paul tell us we were like before we became Christ followers?

v. 1

v. 2a

v. 3

2. Who is the devil/satan? What does he do? v. 2b

3. What did God do for us (*“dead because of our sins”*)? Why? vv. 4-5

4. What happened to us (believers)? v. 6

5. What can we be examples of? v. 7

DAY 2 EPHESIANS 2:8-18—Saved By Faith

6. What is God’s gift to believers? vv. 8-9

7. What is our part in responding to what God has done for us?

8. What is salvation not a reward for? Why?

9. What are we to God? Why did He create us anew? v. 10

10. How would the following affect the way you live your life:
thinking of yourself as God's masterpiece?

knowing He has things planned for you to do?

DAY 3 EPHESIANS 2:11-18—Need for Reconciliation

11. How did the Gentiles live before knowing Jesus? vv. 11-12

12. Now that the Gentiles have been united with Christ, what has Jesus done? vv. 13-14

13. God had the Jews live differently for His purposes until Jesus came. Through Jesus, salvation is possible for everyone. How did Jesus do this? vv. 15-16

14. What can happen now? vv. 17-18

DAY 4

EPHESIANS 1:20-23—The Great Power of God

15. In closing, Paul gives three pictures that illustrate the unity of believing Jews and Gentiles.

What are your thoughts on being included in each?

Heavenly citizenship:

Members of God's family:

We are His house (with Jesus as the cornerstone):

16. Read verse 22. How aware are you of the Holy Spirit's dwelling inside you? How have you seen the Spirit work in your life?

DAY 5

EPHESIANS 2—Wrap Up

17. How does salvation take us to good works?

18. How is Jesus the only hope for everyone?

TAKE AWAY

Choose to believe what God says about you, and know that you've been created to do good things! What good work is God giving you to do, with His power, this week?

BLESSING

Jesus Christ died so you could be reconciled with Him!

A New Life Through Christ

Ephesians chapter 2 emphasizes the theme of being rescued and made right with God (salvation) by grace through faith in Christ Jesus. First, Paul describes the process of salvation as the result of God's grace through faith (Ephesians 2:1–10). Man's effort, and goodness, are completely ineffective in our salvation. Second, Paul transitions to a focus on unity in Christ (Ephesians 2:11–22). This includes tearing down the previous divide between Jews and Gentiles who are now one spiritual family.

The first section (Ephesians 2:1–10) Paul reminds the Ephesians of their former condition: "You were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins" (2:1) and "in obeying the devil" (2:2). This is true of all believers before coming to faith in Christ (Ephesians 2:3). Yet God's mercy (Ephesians 2:4) has made us alive in Christ (Ephesians 2:5). This is Paul's first mention of being saved by grace. The contrast between death and life offers a stark contrast between the unsaved and saved.

God has a perfect right to heap judgment on everyone who has ever lived. The only way of escape from deserved judgment was for Him to offer undeserved mercy and favor — His grace. God's unconditional love (Greek *agape*) is an overflowing of His generosity (See 1 John 4:10.) God's love is greater than human love in quantity and quality — different in its very essence. He loves those who do not love Him. The biblical record, from Genesis to Revelation, is the story of God's reaching down to fallen humanity in love. God performs the ultimate miracle. He resurrects the spiritually dead and unites them with Christ. We remain here on earth physically, but our spiritual position is exalted with Christ in the heavenly realms. This elevation is in accordance with God's eternal purpose.

Ephesians 2:6 continues with a focus on believers being raised up with Christ, mentioning grace a second time (Ephesians 2:7). Ephesians 2:8–9 are some of the most well-known words in the Bible, emphasizing salvation by grace through faith. It is not the result of works, so no one has reason to brag. God does not repair the believer; He creates a new person within (2 Corinthians 5:17). A believer is God's product — regenerated, completely made new, in and through Jesus Christ.

Verse 10 ends this section by noting that we are God's workmanship or "artwork" and have been created to do good works. In fact, God prepared in advance for believers to accomplish these tasks. He has work for each person that his or her particular talents, gifts, and experiences have uniquely equipped that one to do.

Paul figuratively puts up a barrier with a sign saying, "Stop, look, think!" to people going mindlessly down the road to destruction. He challenges the Ephesians and us to remember God is rich in mercy and waiting to make us alive. We need only ask.

The second section (Ephesians 2:11–22) transitions to unity in the body of Christ. Writing to Gentiles, Paul notes that they were once called "the uncircumcised heathens" (Ephesians 2:11). They were separated from Christ, without hope and without God (Ephesians 2:12). The phrase "without God" is a translation from the Greek *atheoi*, literally atheists. Yet through Christ they have been "brought near" (Ephesians 2:13). The dividing wall has been taken down (Ephesians 2:14), with the law with its commandments and regulations abolished to make one new family (Ephesians 2:15), creating reconciliation and ending hostility (Ephesians 2:16).

Jesus came to reach all people (Ephesians 2:17). In verses 18-19, Paul describes the marvelous privileges of the members of the body, the church: direct access to the Father by the Spirit, fellow citizens of the kingdom, and members of God's household. He writes in 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19 that we are the dwelling place or temple of God's Spirit. The amazing truth is that Christ's atoning work regenerates people spiritually and, at the same time, reconciles them to God and to each other. This is the gospel that has had such an impact on countless people, changing lives and societies, ever since the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Bible always speaks of our being reconciled to God. He did not need to be reconciled to us, for His love for us has never changed. Living the victorious Christian life in unity with other believers is not automatic; we make choices every day. As members of God's family, we are brothers and sisters in Christ no matter what racial, national, or physical distinctions we may possess. The Holy Spirit is available to live the life within us that is consistent with the peace to which God has called us.

This united family, the church, is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Jesus as the cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20). Everything grows from Him and for Him (Ephesians 2:21–22).

Notes
