

LIFE GROUP GUIDE

EPHESIANS: In Christ

SERIES BIG IDEA:

Ephesus was an important coastal city, well-known for its rich history, economic hubs, religious temples, as well as the arts, not unlike Cape Town. Paul's letter to the Ephesian church illuminates how the gospel grows our faith and discipleship, and gives practical insights into living a life pleasing to God, and shows how the gospel engages with culture. Join us as we start our Ephesians journey with the series "In Christ".

Week 5

GOALS

- Deepen our understanding and love of Scripture
- Grow in relationship with each other
- Grow in our understanding of salvation and work

TIPS

- This series is theological, it is preferable to have listened to the Sunday messages, especially the person leading the Life Group discussion.
- Life Group Leaders, we suggest doing a little more reading of Ephesians commentary over this series to equip yourself for leading well. It is our hope that over these series, our leaders are going deeper in Scripture to be able to lead out of a richer depth of pursuit and understanding of God and his word. Some good commentaries to consider reading over this time:
- <http://www.slices.org.uk/Slicesforall/sfeEphesians.html>
- <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/ephesians/>

HEADLINES FROM SUNDAY

WHAT WE ARE SAVED FROM (2:1-3)

1 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 sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.

WHAT WE ARE SAVED INTO (2:4-7)

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.

HOW AND WHY WE ARE SAVED (2:8-10)

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.

PRAYER

Open in prayer.

DISCUSSION

1. We are in the last week of our first sub-series in Ephesians. How have you found the journey so far? What is the one thing that has impacted you about being 'In Christ'?

Get some members to read **Ephesians 2:1-10**

2. On Sunday we saw the big themes of this passage being – what we are saved from, what we are saved to, and how and why we are saved.

Someone read **Luke 15:11-32**

3. This story looks at two brothers and the two extremes of being dead in sin – one was self-righteous and legalistic, the other licentious and immoral. Which brother do you feel you most relate to, has it changed at different times?
4. Take a minute each to share a quick story about how you came to salvation. If you haven't yet made a decision to become a Christian, share about how you came to be on the journey to explore Christianity.
5. How has your life changed since you made the decision to become a Christian? What are you most grateful for? What has become more difficult for you? (Life Group Leaders, prepare to lead this section vulnerably).
6. We are saved by grace – there was nothing we did to warrant God's scandalous grace towards us – but Ephesians 2 suggests that we have work to do, set for us by God. What do you think God is specifically calling you to do in your spheres?
7. How does it impact your faith in God's calling on you and where you find yourself, that Ephesians teaches us that God has prepared this work for us in advance?
8. Are there any people you would like to pray for?

PRAY

Spend some time thanking God for his salvation and the work he has prepared for us to do. Pray for the people who came up in question 7 and for each other.