

GROWTH GROUP GUIDE: EPHESIANS 2 (CSB)

Mission: Challenging one another to find everyday opportunities to pursue and point to Jesus.

PART 1: THE FOUNDATION (Ephesians 2:1–10)

Loving God's People: One New Family In this passage, Paul reminds us that we were all "dead in our trespasses" before God made us alive together. Our community is built on the fact that we were all equally desperate for grace and are now equally raised with Christ.

- **Group Discussion:** Paul emphasizes that God made us alive *together* with Christ, raised us up *together*, and seated us *together* in the heavens (vv. 4–6).
 - If we are spiritually "seated together" in heaven, how should that change the way we view "seating ourselves" next to people who are different from us in the church?
- **Diagnostic Questions:**
 - How are you pursuing authentic community with other believers right now?
 - What gets in the way of community with other believers in your current season?

Looking to God's Word: Our Wealth in Christ Paul transitions from our past state (death) to our current wealth: we are saved by grace through faith, a gift that prevents any boasting (vv. 8–9). We are described as God's "workmanship"—His masterpiece.

- **Group Discussion:** Verse 10 says we are "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time."
 - How does knowing that God has *already* prepared your "good works" for this week lower your stress levels?
- **Diagnostic Questions:**
 - How is God's Word (specifically the reality of being His "workmanship") challenging you right now?
 - What can you do to prioritize God's Word this week to remind yourself of your "wealth" in grace?

PART 2: THE WALK (Ephesians 2:11–22)

Listening to God's Voice: Walking in the Spirit Paul explains that those who were "far off" have been brought near by the blood of Christ. We now have "access in one Spirit to the Father" (v. 18) and are being built into a "dwelling place for God by the Spirit" (v. 22).

- **Group Discussion:** Since we are being built together into a "dwelling place for God," we must listen for the Spirit's guidance on how to maintain the "peace" Christ purchased (v. 14).
 - When your schedule is loud and busy, what practical steps do you take to listen to the Spirit's promptings regarding your relationships?
- **Diagnostic Questions:**
 - How is God directing you to pursue peace or reconciliation this week?
 - What do you need to quiet in your life to hear God's voice better?

Living Sent: The Armor of Mission Christ is our peace, having broken down the dividing wall of hostility to create "one new man" (vv. 14–15). We are no longer strangers but fellow citizens and ambassadors of this new kingdom.

- **Group Discussion:** Verse 17 says Jesus "came and proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near."
 - Who is the person in your life who seems the most "far away" from God right now, and how can you represent Christ's peace to them?
- **Diagnostic Questions:**
 - What everyday opportunity have you used to point someone to Jesus recently?
 - What opportunities did you miss to tell someone about Jesus, and how can the truth that Jesus "broke down the wall" help you next time?

GROUP PRAYER & SUMMARY

- **Closing Thought:** We pursue Jesus by remembering we were dead but are now His workmanship (Our Wealth), and we point to Jesus by breaking down walls and living as one new family (Our Walk).
- **Final Action:** Identify one "dividing wall" (a prejudice, a grudge, or a social barrier) in your life and ask God for the strength to let Christ break it down this week.

FACILITATOR CHEAT SHEET: EPHESIANS 2

The Structural "Lens" (The Vertical and Horizontal) As a leader, help the group see the two movements in Chapter 2:

- **Verses 1–10 (The Vertical):** Our reconciliation with God. This is 100% grace. We were dead; He made us alive.
- **Verses 11–22 (The Horizontal):** Our reconciliation with others. Because we are right with God, we must be right with "the other."
- **Facilitation Tip:** If the group gets stuck on "doing good works" (v. 10), remind them of verses 8–9. We don't do works *for* salvation, but *from* it.

Applying the Lead Practices to the Text

1. **Loving God's People (The "One New Man")**
 - **The Concept:** Jesus didn't just save individuals; He created a new humanity (v. 15).
 - **Leader Insight:** Community isn't an "add-on" to the Gospel; it *is* the Gospel on display. If the group is struggling to connect, ask: "Which part of your 'old self' is most likely to build walls between you and others in this room?"
2. **Looking to God's Word (The "Gift of Grace")**
 - **The Concept:** The "Indicative" (what God did) is that He made us alive while we were still dead (vv. 4–5).
 - **Leader Insight:** Help the group see that their identity as a "masterpiece" (v. 10) is based on the Craftsman's skill, not the canvas's quality.
3. **Listening to God's Voice (The "Access" to the Father)**
 - **The Concept:** Verse 18 says we have "access" through the Spirit. The Greek implies a formal introduction to a King.
 - **Leader Insight:** Encourage the group that prayer isn't a chore; it's using the "all-access pass" Jesus bought with His blood.
4. **Living Sent (The "Peace Proclaimer")**
 - **The Concept:** Jesus is the primary missionary who "came and proclaimed peace" (v. 17).
 - **Leader Insight:** We often think mission is about convincing people to be like us. In Ephesians 2, mission is about showing people they can be "at home" with God.
 - **Challenge the group:** "Who is the 'stranger' in your workplace or neighborhood that God is calling you to treat like a 'fellow citizen'?"