

'Our Salvation: Received yet Relayed'

Small Group Discussion Guide

September 29, 2019

Series Overview: *The Letter to the Ephesians (with accompanying ESV Journal)*

- *Our Adoption: Cosmic yet Close (chapter one)*
- **Our Salvation: Received yet Relayed (chapter two)**
- *Our Family: Inlaws yet Outlaws (chapter three)*
- *Our Sending: United yet Unique (chapter four)*
- *Our Love: Personal yet Profound (chapter five)*
- *Our Stance: Submissive yet Strong (chapter six)*

Getting Started:

1. What's the sickest you've ever been? Share stories (without getting into too much medical detail!) of what that time was like. If you've been blessed with great health your whole life, think instead of a loved one who endured a time of illness. Talk about what stands out to you from that time.
2. How much were you able to do for yourself during that time? In what ways were you limited by the illness? Who else helped you? What emotions do you feel toward the person who helped you in your time of need?

Digging Deeper:

3. Let's take a minute and review from last week. In Ephesians chapter one we soaked in the fact that God the Father...
 - blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing
 - chose us in Christ before the foundations of the world
 - predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ
 - redeemed us in Christ through his blood
 - gave us our inheritance in Jesus Christ
 - united us together with all things in Christ
 - sealed us in Christ with the promised Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:3-14)

+ Which of these points strikes you the most personally? Why?

+ What would you say to the person who argues you can find your way to God apart from Christ (look again closely at each of the points above; what common denominator do you find in each of the phrases?)
4. As Ephesians chapter two begins, we are struck with 'a beautiful letdown.' Immediately following a rich description of Christ and what He has done 'in the heavenly places,' what is the reality we are confronted with in chapter two? Read Ephesians 2:1-3.

5. Think back to the opening questions about being sick. According to this key Scripture, we were not just 'sick' because of our sin; we were dead! To what degree can a dead person participate in their salvation? What emotions are triggered in recognizing that God reached out to us when we were helpless to help ourselves?
6. Verse 4 in Ephesians chapter two changes the direction of the story with two simple words: "But God." What makes these two words so powerful?
7. God has taken action! Spend a few moments in your group to discuss what each of these powerful phrases means to you. Read them slowly, leaving maybe 30 seconds to share immediate reactions to the meaning of each phrase:
But God... being rich in mercy... because of the great love with which he loved us... even when we were dead in our trespasses... made us alive... together with Christ.

Living it Out:

8. One of the key marks of discipleship of the Christian life is 'Growing in Grace.' In what ways does this week's section from Ephesians encourage you to RECEIVE God's grace more fully? What does this / might this look like?
9. In what ways are you encouraged by Ephesians chapter 2 to RELAY God's grace (pass it on)? A great story that will help you think more deeply on what this means, and why it's so important, is found in Matthew 18:21-35. Read the parable and discuss the question.

Lifting it up:

Together, read this section out loud from Ephesians 2:

17 And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

10. As you prepare to close in prayer, collect any specific prayer requests. Beyond those personal concerns, thank God for redeeming sin-sick people through the healing work of Jesus. And praise Him that He has brought all of us together through His Body, the Church!