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Leader Guide

Gospel Conversations Part 1: Know the Gospel

October 8, 2023

Main Passage: Ephesians 2:1-10

Theological Theme

Salvation is a gift of God by grace through faith. Jesus paid the full price for salvation on the cross.

Introduction

- ❓ Have you ever struggled to believe salvation was as simple as the Bible claims it to be?
- ❓ What makes this hard to believe?

1. Dead in Sin (Ephesians 2:1-3)

Ephesians 2 begins with a clear explanation of who the Ephesians (and all Christians) were before they came to Christ. Paul could have clearly laid out all the prominent sins in the community around Ephesus, but he painted with a dark and broad brush instead. Before Christ, the Ephesians were dead. What was the source of this death? “Trespasses and sins” (v. 1).

- ❓ How do verses 1-3 help us understand what sin is? How do they show us sin is not just a bad choice but a condition in which we live?
- ❓ The story of God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt in the Exodus is one way of understanding salvation. What other Old Testament stories help you better understand God’s work of salvation in your life?
- ❓ Application: How does a proper understanding of what you have been saved from enable you to live more fully for Christ? How might it help you avoid sin?

2. Alive in Christ (Ephesians 2:4-7)

Dead is what Christians were before they met Jesus. In Christ, Christians have been made alive. Paul wasn’t content with just stating the bare facts. He explained why Christians have been made alive, “But God who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us” (v. 4).

- ❓ How does it make you feel to know God loves you even though you are a sinner undeserving of his love? How does this motivate you to live for Him?
- ❓ How does our love for others become an apologetic (defense) of the Christian faith to the world around us? How have you seen this happen in daily life?
- ❓ Application: What is your “but God” moment? The moment when everything changed for you spiritually? How is your life different now than it was before Christ?

3. For God's Glory (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Sometimes we use words without really understanding what they mean. Sometimes we use the same word to mean different things depending on the context. An example would be the word faith. Many of us have grown up using this word but can't really explain what it means. For example, we might talk about someone "leaving the faith," and faith means a holding a certain set of beliefs. We can say "you need to take a leap of faith," and faith is a blind trust exercise. Some people even talk about "claiming the promises of God by faith," and use their faith to try to get God to do certain things. However, the most important definition for faith is found in the Bible.

- ❓ Does your faith match the faith described in the Bible or have you made faith into something more about you than about how God has changed your life?
- ❓ Read John 10:10. How does Ephesians 2:1-10 reflect the promise of abundant life given in John 10:10?
- ❓ Application: What are the good works God has called you to? How are you seeking to live faithfully before Him considering the good news of the gospel?

Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

1. What does this passage say?
2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about man?
5. What does this passage demand of me?
6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
7. How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC

Here's How to Become a Christ-Follower:

Read the following verses and ask after each one: "What does this say to me?"

- **All have sinned:** Romans 3:23 & 1 John 1:8
- **The wages of sin:** Romans 6:23 & John 3:18
- **But while we were sinners, salvation was provided:** Romans 5:8
- **Become a Christ-follower:** Romans 10:9-10 Confess and Believe

Accepting Christ is Just the Beginning:

Next Steps:

- Publicly profess your faith by being baptized (Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 3:21; Romans 6:4).
- Join a church which follows the Bible, where you can grow in your faith through prayer, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians.
- Get involved in groups for encouragement and accountability.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.
- Share with others what Jesus has done for you. Tell your story (Romans 10:14; Matthew 28:19-20).
- Begin to live for God (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18; James 1:19-27).