

**OPEN THE CONVERSATION**

Take some time to build relationships with the students:

* Ask for each student’s high and low from the week.
* **Optional RBQ**: What’s your favorite Easter tradition?
* **Optional Icebreaker Activity:** *Observation Challenge*
	+ Have everyone partner up (or form small groups of 3–4 if the group is large)
	+ Then have everyone face their partner and take 10 seconds to observe as much as they can about how the other person looks.
	+ Partners then turn around and secretly change one thing about their appearance. (e.g., untuck a shirt, swap a bracelet to the other wrist, flip their hoodie up, roll a sleeve, etc.).
	+ After 20 seconds, have them turn back around and try to **guess what changed**.
	+ Go as many rounds as you want with ALL playing or invite 1–2 brave volunteers to try it in front of the group.

**INTRODUCTION**As we reflect on the meaning of Easter, we’re reminded of the incredible sacrifice Jesus made on the cross and the power of His resurrection. Easter isn’t just about what happened to Jesus—it’s also about what happens to us because of Him. In **Ephesians 2:1–10**, Paul paints a clear before-and-after picture of our spiritual condition. He says we were **dead in our sins**, completely separated from God, with no way to fix ourselves. But because of God’s great love and mercy, we have been **made alive with Christ.** The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in those who believe, giving us new life, identity, and purpose. As we study this passage, we’ll explore what it really means to move from death to life—and how that changes the way we live every day.

**What stories in the Bible can you think of that show how a person’s life was transformed after he or she came to believe in and follow Jesus?**

**READ: EPHESIANS 2:1-10**

1. What are some of the things this passage tells us about life “Before Christ” (v 1-3)? How does having this understanding help you grow in appreciating God’s grace?
2. What does verses 4-10 reveal about the kind of life God offers us through Christ? Has there been a moment when God’s grace became real to you personally, not just something you’ve heard about?
3. Verse 10 says we are “God’s workmanship.” How should that influence the way you think about your identity, talents, and future?
4. What are some “good works” God might be calling you to walk in right now—especially in your school, family, or other relationships?
5. What are some ways you could begin to share the good news of Jesus with someone who doesn’t yet know Him this week?

**WRAP UP**

**Put today's lesson into action:** This week, consider writing out your own “before” and “after” story of how Jesus has changed your life!This is a great way to be ready to share the good news of Jesus with others by talking about what God has and is doing in your life.
 *Ask for any prayer requests and pray for one another.*

**EXTENDED CUT**

1. **What are some of the things this passage tells us about life “Before Christ” (v 1-3)? How does having this understanding help you grow in appreciating God’s grace?**In verses 1–3, Paul gives a clear and sobering description of our condition without Christ. We weren’t just struggling or imperfect—we were spiritually dead in our sins. Deserving of God’s judgment and completely unable to save ourselves. Remember, sin simply means to miss the mark, or fall short. Scripture talks about our relationship with sin as being one of bondage. In the gospel of John, Jesus said everyone who sins is a slave to sin (John 8:34); and James 1:15 teaches that sin leads to death. This desperate state is the one we all live in apart from Jesus. Before we knew Jesus, we did what we deemed to be right according to worldly wisdom. We followed the ways of the world and were influenced by the enemy, living to satisfy our own selfish desires. Understanding the reality of our life *before* Jesus is important because it helps us see just how deep and amazing God’s grace is! If we don’t recognize how lost we were, we won’t truly appreciate what it means to be found. Realizing the depth of our need makes the gift of grace that much more beautiful—it wasn’t something we earned; it was a complete rescue.
2. **What does verses 4-10 reveal about the kind of life God offers us through Christ? Has there been a moment when God’s grace became real to you personally, not just something you’ve heard about?**Verses 4–10 shift dramatically from who we were to what God has done for us and the life he offers through Christ. Because of His great ***love*** and rich ***mercy***, God made us alive with Christ—even when we were still dead in our sins. Mercy means we don’t get something we deserve. Though deserving of God’s wrath, in His mercy, He instead offers us the gift of salvation thanks to Jesus’s work on the cross! This was God’s loving plan all along. We were dead, but Jesus’s loving sacrifice takes us from death to life. This passage highlights that our salvation is by grace through faith; it is not something we could ever earn, no matter how many “good” deeds we check off our list. And scripture tells us the key to receiving that grace personally, is to confess with our mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead (Romans 10:9). For many, grace becomes real in moments of failure or brokenness, when something causes us to finally recognize we can’t be good enough on our own. But it’s a work of the Holy Spirit that ultimately moves it from head knowledge to heart reality. Encourage students to think about if or when God’s grace has become personal to them—not just something they’ve heard about, but something they’ve truly put their faith in and accepted for themselves.
3. **Verse 10 says we are “God’s workmanship.” What does this mean and how should it influence the way you think about your identity, talents, and future?**Paul describes us as “God’s workmanship” meaning we belong to God. In the context of this passage, it’s a reaffirmation of God’s work of salvation in us. He is the one who gives us new life in Christ, and not our own efforts. But it’s also a reminder of his work in creation. We are the result of his work to knit us together (Psalm 139:13). We have been intentionally created with *care* and with *purpose*. This truth speaks directly into our identity: we are not random, and we are not mistakes. It also speaks to our value and purpose: God handcrafted each of us with unique talents, personalities, and passions that are meant to be used for His glory. Knowing this should change the way we think about our identity and outlook on our future. Rather than chasing success or approval, trying to “fit in” with the world around us - we can live confidently in the new life he’s given us. We don’t have to earn or try to achieve what’s already been given to us through Christ! The next time we struggle with comparison or find ourselves wrestling with insecurity, we can look to the truth of this verse and be reminded that our lives already have meaning because we were created by God and he’s invited us to a life of purpose - living out the good works he’s planned for us to do.
4. **What are some “good works” God might be calling you to walk in right now—especially in your school, family, or other relationships?**The “good works” mentioned in verse 10 are not random tasks but specific things God has prepared for each of us. They aren’t about earning God’s approval but are a response to His grace! Paul has emphasized already that salvation comes through grace alone. But it is also true that our faith should lead us to living differently! James 2:26 reminds us, “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.” These good works might look like showing kindness to someone who feels left out, speaking encouragement into a friend’s life, forgiving someone who’s hurt us, helping a younger sibling, or standing up for what’s right at school. It could also mean using a talent—like music, sports, or creativity—to serve others or bring God glory! When we start to view everyday opportunities through the lens of *purpose*, we begin to see how God can use us even now, right where we are.
5. **What are some ways you could begin to share the good news of Jesus with someone who doesn’t yet know Him this week?**Sharing the good news of Jesus doesn’t have to be complicated or intimidating—it often starts with simply being intentional. One of the best places to start might simply be to identify who God has placed in your life that doesn’t yet know Jesus. It’s no accident that they are there! Once we experience God’s transformation in our own lives, we are meant to share the good news of Jesus with others. So, who is it that God might be asking you to share with? Once you identify that person or people, begin to pray that he would give you opportunities to care for them, encourage them, or have deeper conversations. Sometimes it’s as simple as listening well, being kind when others aren’t, or sharing how your relationship with Jesus has made a difference in your life. When the time is right, you can talk honestly about what you believe and why it matters to you. You don’t need to have all the answers—just be real, loving, and open about what God has done in your life. God can use your words, actions, and even your story to help someone move from spiritual death to life in Christ!