

Connect Group Discussion Guide

LEADER
EPHESIANS - PT 3
9/27/2026

PASSAGE SUMMARY

Today's verses begin with us in a dire situation. We are dead, following the natural course of things, with no hope of resisting our passions or escaping wrath.

Then there is the iconic **"But God"** moment. Everything past that is full of hope, resurrection, and being shown grace, kindness, and mercy.

While works do not get us to grace, kindness, and mercy, they flow out of it in a path of good things in which we can walk every day. What once was far off is now brought near by the blood of Christ.

WARM UP

Open your group time with casual fellowship/questions. Taking a few minutes to connect before jumping into discussion helps create an environment where people feel known, valued, and ready to engage. See [Series Introduction](#) for tips and ideas.

READ THE PASSAGE

Ephesians 2:1-13 in ESV

Read the passage in the ESV twice, and have people take note of the main point they think Paul is wanting them to understand from this text. Then see how people's readings differ or overlap. This is a great opportunity to talk about lenses--how different people might see different things, but we are all one in Christ.

ENGAGE WITH THE PASSAGE

1. In verses 1-3, we see what death looks like before Christ brings life. What do these verses say about that? What shapes and influences our lives apart from Christ?

When we walk following the natural progression of things, striving for nothing but hot air, living in the passions of our flesh, being just like everyone else, then we look spiritually dead. There is no life working supernatural things only God can do.

BACKGROUND

The first half of Ephesians is focused on our identity and position in Christ.

The second half talks about how we should walk, now that we know who we are.

Paul preached in Ephesus for about 3 years, his longest stay.

Some keywords to look for throughout the book of Ephesians:

1. "Glory"
2. "In Christ" or "In Him"
3. "One" -One Lord, one faith, etc.

TIPS FOR YOUR CONVERSATION

- Remember that your Discipleship/Groups Pastor is here to support you every step of the way.
- Before you read scripture, pray a short prayer asking God's Spirit to help you understand what He wants you to receive from His Word. It is His breath that brings life and opens our minds and hearts to spiritual truth.
- Ask "Holy Spirit, help me/us understand Your word."

2. What is a “But God” moment you’ve experienced, when God stepped into a situation that seemed hopeless or settled and brought about something you could never have done?

Feel free to use examples from scripture but also personal stories of God’s faithfulness in your lives.

For newer groups: Work with your group on sharing their testimony of God’s amazing grace. The emphasis should be on Him doing the work and us receiving His grace and mercy that brings life.

For established groups: You may have heard each other’s stories of God’s faithfulness and each other’s testimonies already. Go deeper by discussing how those “But God” moments have shaped or grown your faith. You could also look at a biblical example of a “But God” moment and discuss what God was teaching that person through it

3. How does this passage overlap with 2 Peter 2:4-12? What are some similarities and differences between the two passages?

Several pieces of these scriptures overlap. There’s the “once you were this, but now you are…” facet as well as the purpose of the good works you do after receiving God’s grace and mercy. See if your group can find more things. This is a good opportunity to point back to the exercise at the beginning, where your group looked at the scripture and probably found different answers to Paul’s main point. Unity is not sameness of thought, but by seeing the same picture from different angles, all of us are given greater insight.

4. Ephesians 2:9 emphasizes that grace saves through faith, not “works, so that no one may boast.”

How does grace eliminate boasting and the burden of pride?

Pride swells things up bigger than they should be. We then have to feed the beast--performing, protecting, and promoting a false image. We have to hide and appear a certain way to satisfy it. Our works prop up the image. When grace saves us, we humbly accept it and boast in Christ alone.

5. How can you walk in good works without becoming prey to pride and boasting?

This is a tough one that gets many people. We start out so well, full of thankfulness and new life in Christ. Then the world’s model creeps in, saying, “Your only value is your productivity. You are what you do. You are what you own. You are what people say about you.” Then the good works you were doing become a hamster wheel you can’t escape from, leading to burnout. Ask the Spirit together to guard you all against these things. We need more grace and more faith--and the only way to get that is to ask of God.

NEXT STEPS

As you consider your next step, reflect on:

- 1) How have I expressed or repressed the things God has done in my life?
- 2) What good works will I walk in this week?

Give your group a few moments to reflect on their answers to the questions above. Then have your group answer the question aloud. Feel free to separate into smaller groups of 2 or 3 for this question, so each person has others praying with them for the needs they’re taking before the throne.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE FOR THE WEEK

Last week, we looked at timelines, asking for prayers for our current context, the future, and the future far past our own lifespans. Ask your group how that exercise went. What prayers have stayed with you through the week? What prayers need to make a comeback?

For this week, make a list of seemingly impossible situations you’re encountering. Someone who will never listen, something too big for you to handle, etc. Then draw a line down the center of the page. Write in big letters BUT GOD. Now ask Him to handle each one of those things. Set the paper aside and see what He does in His timing.