

## BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH // EPHESIANS 2:10

VBS Sunday

As we look at verses 1-10, we'll answer one question: What does it mean to be a Christian?

The Christian trusts that what Christ did on the cross was enough to forgive them of their sin, transform them on the inside, and set them on a course of life to be used by God in real life, true meaning and genuine purpose.

The main idea then of 2:1-10 is that every person is either dead or alive, spiritually. And we are all born spiritually dead. To be a Christian means, therefore, that you have been raised to spiritual life. That you were dead and now you are alive. Such is Paul's aim in these 10 verses to show God's sovereignty in salvation.

### I. The Bad News of Man's Spiritual Condition (vs 1-3)

What is man's problem? He is not sick, nor is he weak. Man is not dumb, nor is he poor. He is dead, disobedient, and depraved. There may be good in them, everything that the natural man does, even with the best of intentions, is marred with rust and dust. Therefore the remedy for his plight is not education, finances, encouragement or a change in environment. What man needs is what only God can give him—life. What we need is God to do something for us that we can't do for ourselves.

### II. The Good News of God's Quickening Grace (vs 4-7)

God takes the initiative. He is the one with intentionality. If it were not for God turning to us, we would never turn to him. Paul speaks of God's character. Because God's actions flow from his character. Paul notes God's mercy, and then he notes God's great love applied to us. God's grace is his undeserved favor towards mankind. Your salvation is God's doing.

He has not just given you something, but done something to you. He has saved you.

### III. The Best News of Works Prepared Beforehand (vs 8-10)

We are drawn away from ourselves, towards God, who he is and what he has done. Grace is not simply available to us on the merit of our works. It is God's work alone that you are saved. This faith is best defined as turning your trust towards God with a deep sense of need, admitting that you're dead and in need of grace. It is the "gift of God." Grace is not the gift. Faith is not the gift. Salvation is not the gift. God is the gift. God is on a mission to remake humanity. Lives marred and ruined by failure in sin or made new in him. God saves us to use us. He redeems dead broken people designing their life for their good and his glory. It is likely not specific works that Paul has in mind here. Rather the very nature, character and direction of the Christian life. Regardless of your life plans, God's plans are better. He has created you to join in his work of redemption and recreation.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between man being sick, and man being dead? Why is that a crucial distinction to make when understanding man's natural condition?
2. What are examples in my life that reflect that God stepped in and took over my life? Has He, in fact, stepped in and taken over my life? If not, what do I need to do or who do I need to talk to about this?
3. Moving forward, in what ways can I live a grace-fueled life? That is, living from God's grace and not for it. How would you articulate God's effective grace in salvation versus his mere common grace in life?