

Key to Everything Week 1 Small Group Guide



Week 1: "Give Up!"

Small Group Guide

Dayspring Church Sermon: Pastor Cody Winkler, September 13, 2026 Text: Ephesians 2:1–10 (MEV) | Reading: *The Key to Everything*, Jack Hayford: Chapters 1–2

Big Idea: *The key to everything is giving: growing a heart attitude in giving, which gives the right thing at the right time in the right way for the right reasons.*

Leader tip: if the group goes quiet, resist filling the silence. Count to ten. The best answers in a group like this usually come after the pause.

Before You Start (Leader Notes — 5 min)

- Open with prayer and have someone read **Ephesians 2:1–10** out loud, slowly. Consider having a second person read verses 8–10 again at the end.
- Warm-up question to get everyone talking: *"What's the hardest thing you've ever had to let go of — and did you let go willingly or did it get pried loose?"*
- Suggested timing: Talk It Out (20 min) · Work It Out (25 min) · Live It Out (20 min) · Prayer (10 min). These times are suggested and not rigid. You know your group and flow best.
- You won't get through every question. Pick the two in each section that fit your group and let the conversation breathe.

1. Talk It Out

1. Hayford opens the book by pointing out that *give* is a word that makes people want to run our fears have taught us that to give anything is to be left with less. When you hear the phrase "give up," what's the first feeling that rises in you? Where do you think you learned that response?
2. Pastor Cody described the old life as "*I want what I want, when I want it, no matter what*" and used the picture of a backpack full of bricks. What bricks were you carrying before Christ? Are there any you've quietly picked back up?
3. Ephesians 2 spends three verses describing death and then pivots on two words: "*But God...*" Which part of that passage lands hardest on you right now *dead, mercy, love, grace, kindness, or workmanship* — and why that one this week?

2. Work It Out

1. Verses 8–9 say salvation is a gift, not of works, so no one can boast. If it truly can't be earned, why do so many of us still live like we're paying God back? What does that quiet "paying Him back" look like in your actual week?
2. Hayford's aim is giving **the right thing, at the right time, in the right way, for the right reasons**. Which of those four do you get wrong most often? What happens to your giving and to the people around you when that one is off?
3. The sermon said we are *elevated in surrender* raised up and seated with Christ. That's backwards from how the world works. Where have you watched someone go lower and end up lifted? And where does surrender still feel more like losing than gaining to you?
4. *(Optional, if the group has appetite)* Hayford ties giving and forgiving together you give when you learn to forgive, and you forgive because you've been forgiven. Why do you think unforgiveness is one of the hardest things for people to release, even after they've received grace themselves?

3. Live It Out

1. Verse 10 says we're His workmanship, created for good works *God prepared beforehand*. What's one good work you suspect He's already set in front of you something you keep walking past?
2. **Name one brick.** What's one specific thing you're willing to hand over this week a grudge, a habit, a plan you've been gripping, a resource, a right you've been insisting on? Say it out loud, and name who in this group you'll tell when you've let it go.

3. God gave you mercy and kindness while you were still dead in it. Who is one person you can give that same thing to this week? Get specific in your answer: *who*, *what day*, and *what you'll actually do*.

Close in Prayer

Pray these back over each other:

- Thanksgiving for the "But God" that grace came before we ever moved toward it.
- Courage to set down the brick each person named.
- That this group would become people known for open hands.

Between now and next week: Read Chapters 3–4. Do the one thing you named in Live It Out #2 and be ready to tell the group what happened.