

Small Group Guide:

"How the Gospel Transforms"

Week of April 5, 2026

Series: "The Purpose of the Gospel"

Text: Ephesians 2:1-10



Opening Icebreaker

Before we dive into today's discussion, share one word that comes to mind when you hear the word "gospel." Why did you choose that word?

Sermon Overview

*This Easter Sunday sermon explores the transformative power of the gospel through Ephesians chapter 2. Pastor Peter emphasized that the gospel is not merely information to be acknowledged or a religious routine to follow, but rather a transforming power that changes lives completely. The message addresses three primary transformations: the gospel transforms **our way** (direction in life), **our worth** (identity and value), and **our worship** (response to God's grace). The sermon underscores that before Christ, humanity was spiritually dead in sin, following the world's patterns and destined for wrath. However, through God's rich mercy and grace, believers are made alive in Christ, raised up with Him, and seated in heavenly places. This transformation is entirely God's work—a gift received through faith, not earned through works—which should produce lives of gratitude, obedience, and worship. The resurrection of Jesus serves as the foundation for this transformative power, making new life possible for all who believe.*

Key Takeaways:

We were spiritually dead, unable to save ourselves—we needed resurrection, not just resuscitation

God's grace is the foundation of our worth, not our performance, morality, or achievements

Salvation is a gift that produces gratitude and worship, not pride or complacency

We are God's workmanship, created for good works that glorify Him

The gospel produces transformation—it changes our direction, our identity, and our devotion

Discussion Questions

1. The Gospel Transforms Our Way (Ephesians 2:1-5)

Paul uses strong language—"dead in trespasses and sins." Why do you think he chose such a dramatic word? How does understanding our spiritual "deadness" help us appreciate God's grace?

The sermon mentioned we were "following the world," "gratifying our flesh," and being carried by "the current of culture." What are some specific ways people in our culture today follow these patterns without realizing it?

Discuss the significance of the phrase "but God" in verse 4. Can anyone share a personal "but God" moment from their own life?

The story of Robert Robinson (who wrote "Come Thou Fount") shows someone who was "prone to wander." How can we guard our hearts

against spiritual wandering while still extending grace to ourselves when we struggle?

2. The Gospel Transforms Our Worth (Ephesians 2: 6-7)

The Scripture declares that "We are raised with Christ and seated with Christ." What does this positional truth mean for how we should view ourselves on a daily basis?

The sermon contrasted three false foundations for worth: performance, morality, and achievement. Which of these do you find yourself most tempted to build your identity on? Why is grace a more stable foundation?

Paul mentions God's "rich mercy," "great love," "grace," and "kindness" multiple times. Why do you think Paul piles up these words? What does this tell us about God's character?

How would your daily life change if you truly believed your worth comes from God's grace rather than your performance?

3. The Gospel Transforms our Worship (Ephesians 2: 8-10)

Verse 8 says salvation is "not of yourselves" and "not of works, lest anyone should boast." Why is it important that we can't earn our salvation? How does this humble us?

V 10 says we are "created in Christ Jesus for good works." How do we balance the truth that we're saved by grace (not works) with the call to live out good works?

Pastor Peter said, "Obedience isn't how we earn God's love; obedience is how we reflect God's love." What's the difference between these two motivations? How does this change the way we approach Christian living?

Has the gospel changed your life? How would you answer that question? What evidence of transformation can you point to in your own life?

Practical Application

This Week's Challenge:

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Daily Declaration: Each morning this week, before you do anything else, speak this truth aloud: "*I am chosen. I am adopted. I am secure in Christ.*" Journal about how this practice affects your day.

From Striving to Resting: Identify one area where you've been trying to earn God's (or others') acceptance. Pray specifically about releasing that striving and receiving God's grace. Share your struggle with one trusted person who can pray with you.

Gratitude List: Create a list of specific "spiritual blessings" you have in Christ (use Ephesians 1:3-14 as a starting point). Read this list daily and add to it as God brings things to mind.

Worship Response: The pastor asked, "Did I worship today?" Each day this week, intentionally pause to worship God—through song, prayer, Scripture reading, or simply speaking His praises. Note how this regular worship impacts your perspective.

Share Your Story: If you've never shared your salvation story with your small group, take time this week to write it out. Be prepared to share it next time you meet. If you're not yet a believer, consider talking with your group leader about what's holding you back from receiving Christ.

Closing Thought *Because Jesus walked out of that grave, transformation is possible. New life is available. The question is: has the gospel truly transformed YOUR life?*

For Further Exploration

Additional Resources

Book Recommendation: "The Case for Christ" by Lee Strobel
(mentioned in the sermon)

Hymn to Listen To: "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" by Robert Robinson

Further Study: Look up other "but God" passages in Scripture (Genesis 50:20, Acts 2:23-24, etc.)