

Harris Creek Baptist Church
Grant Troutt
Series: Ephesians
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The Simple Gospel

Ephesians 2:1-10

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

My people right there. Let's go! Harris Creek, how are we doing this morning? Blessed to be in church. Blessed to know Jesus. It's a good, good morning. My name is Grant. If we haven't met yet, I get to serve here on staff. And man, just to jump in, I don't know if you guys, anybody, Cowboys fans in here? Man, it's been a long journey. It's been a journey. I'm one, too. I love the NFL. I grew up Pro. I didn't grow up in Waco. So, I didn't grow up kind of in a college town. So, I love the Cowboys, and if you guys know anything about the NFL, there was a play that happened last year that took the world by storm. If you weren't watching this live, you definitely saw it on social media.

This was a play on January 2nd, 2023, that the entire world started talking about. It was the Buffalo Bills were playing the Cincinnati Bengals. This is a normal NFL game. You know, plays are being made, tackles are being made. And all of a sudden, one play in the first quarter, no one expected anything different. Joe Burrow, smooth Joe Burrow, threw a pass. The Receiver caught it, and he's going down. And all of a sudden, the Bills Safety... boom, hit him! They both went down. They both got up, and it seemed like a normal play and both teams go on back to their huddles. The Bills Safety, Damar Hamlin, took two steps, and then he collapsed on the field and went straight back on his back.

And as everybody just kind of sat here, that's not a normal, or typical response from a play, especially when you get up, going, "What's happening? What's happening?" And as you see, more and more doctors were on the field, the cameras are still on Damar. And so, nobody knows

what to say. “Is it a concussion? Is he knocked out? What's happening?” Well, what had happened is immediately upon the hit, he went into cardiac arrest and the doctors ran out to him on that field, pronounced dead. Damar Hamlin pronounced dead. Maybe some of you remember this. The entire stands are standing up and now you see players are not just watching, but they're praying, and they're kneeling, and they're crying. And what seemed like hours, 20 minutes had gone by. And all these doctors are around him, and they're just pressing on his chest, conducting CPR. And somewhere within that 20 minutes, Damar had breath in his lungs and his heart began to beat again. And then they took him to a local hospital and there they put him on a ventilator. And a week later, Damar was out and what he would say in multiple interviews that we've looked at and that I've seen is, “Man, I always thought that my purpose was football, but there was a much bigger purpose at hand.” And I think a lot of us, right? If we see someone like that, who literally almost tasted death and now has life given back to them, we go, “Man! They are not going to waste a second of what God's given back to them.” Right? Like, they're not going to take for granted anything. But Damar Hamlin on that field, that's a picture of you and I. That is our spiritual condition before the Mighty Physician put His Hand on our heart and woke us up.

So, I don't know where you're at in the room today, but the subject is very simple. It's just from death to life. And right now, if you're anything like me, you've grown up in church and heard a gospel message a lot of times. And maybe you're thinking, “Man, I should've brought my non-believing friend. You know, I should've brought my cousin. I should've asked my barista to come to this one. This is the Gospel.” And what I would remind you through studying this text is Paul was not writing to non-believers. Paul was addressing believers.

As we make our way through the book of Ephesians, we've just finished chapter one. And if you're new here, and you haven't been tracking with us – a recap: Nate jumped us off with how to change a city. God first changes the person. And then JP came in, and as we walked through verses 3 through 14, we saw all about who we are in Christ. Our inheritance, we're predestined, we're chosen before the foundation of the world. And then Paul shifts from that moment, and he begins to teach us a prayer. He's praying over the Ephesians, and he says, “I pray that you would know more of God, but not just know more of God. You would know the value you are in His eyes. And not just that, you would know the power that is working in you from God.” And it wraps up with the supremacy and the authority of Jesus Christ. And now, it's like, Paul, who has just built us up, the Ephesians, takes a moment, puts his hands on the shoulders and he goes, “Hey guys, we're going to go back to the basics.” Because if we do not understand this passage in Ephesians 2:1 through 10, nothing else matters. Nothing else matters. And if you get away from this text right here, in church, we will begin to do all the right things with all the wrong heart. And we will do things for God without knowing God. And so, if you're taking notes, the subject is from death to life.

Before we jump in, one of my best friends in the entire world, his dad had cancer and his dad was a pastor. And as he was on the last couple days of his life, he wrote his son a letter in his Bible. And I never got to meet his dad, but I was very close with his son, and he showed me one day what his dad wrote. And out of 10 years of being a pastor, this is what he left his son with. He said, “Son, never forget to preach the gospel to yourself every single day, because without it,

you have nothing.” I don't think we preach the gospel to ourselves every single day. And so, there's multiple groups in here. For one, you know Jesus. This is a moment to just remember gratitude. If you don't know Jesus, this is your day, your morning to respond and repent to the beautiful, Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So, where we're going to be at in this chapter, it's three clear breaks: who we were before Christ, who we are now because of Christ, and our rightful response to this reality.

Let's jump in. Ephesians two, verse one says this, **“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.”**

Okay, we're going to park. There's a lot there. It's a lot there, but we're going to park on verse one. Tim Keller, great theologian of our age, who has since passed, said this in response. He said, “There is a big difference between being sick and being dead. In sickness, you still have something to contribute. We are not sick in our sins in need of Dr. God. We are dead in need of a resurrection.” Who are we before we encounter Christ? Point number one, very simply, we were dead in our sins.

1. We were dead in our sins.

Anybody grew up hunting? Anybody like to hunt in here? Yeah! So, I'm not a hunter. I'm not. I wish I was. I just never grew up hunting. But my dad had one of his best friends in the entire world. He was a professional hunter. He wasn't go to the land in Texas. He was go to Antarctica, go to Africa. He was doing it big. And as a kid, I would walk through his man cave, and guys, this was unbelievable! From the ceiling, the beams, leopards hanging off; cheetah in the corner; rhinoceros on the wall. There's a lion holding down a hyena, growling at another hyena. I'm like, “What is happening?” And I'm a kid and I'm walking through this, and I had seen that at the museum. So, I'm watching their eyes. I'm like, “Did you blink? Did you just move?” And I'm terrified. But as I walk in this room, I'm just reminding myself, “They're dead, Grant. They're dead. They're dead. They're dead. That polar bear, he's dead.” I walk up to a scene. And as I was working through this message, the scene clearly came to me. There's the alligator coming out of the water with a dead monkey in its mouth. Okay, and this monkey lost the battle this day. Okay! He was leaning back. I mean, it was intense. It's gruesome. There's blood on his face. And you know, as I think about Ephesians two, it's really, really easy to look at lost people out in the world and go, “Man! They need Jesus. There are some people that really need Jesus.” You know, some people look more dead, but to be honest, both that crocodile and that monkey in the room, they were both dead. There are levels of decay, but we're all dead in our sins. And if we don't remember where we start, we will begin to look at people away from God and go, “Man! How could you possibly? Why would you? How would?” And where we look, and Paul says if we don't start at the base of the cross, we will miss the goodness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:23, it says this: **“for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.”** Okay, me, you, JP, everybody in the world, we've sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. What

does it mean to sin? Sin, that word, it means to miss the mark. That's what it means. And so, to miss the mark of God is to miss the mark of perfection. We've all lied. We've all stolen. We've all done things. So, we've all sinned, fallen short of God's glory. What's the result of that? Romans 6:23, **“for the wages of sin is death.”** Wage is what you earn, what you deserve for that sin is death. So, our starting point at the foot of the cross is we do not have what it takes to resurrect our body. Like Damar, he had nothing in himself to resurrect himself off that field. It took the hands of a doctor on the outside to touch his heart and bring him back. And so, there are three ways that we're going to look at that. Paul explains, “Okay, I know that I've sinned, but how does that actually look? How do I lead to death?”

And so, the first way that he lines out is following the world. We follow the world. It says this at the end of one and two, **“and you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you once walked.”** “Okay, well how? Following the course of this world. Anybody like The Chosen? Anybody watch The Chosen? I love The Chosen, the series on Jesus's life. The beginning, like the opening credits. It's this picture of all these fish that are swimming in one direction. And then in a moment, one of the fish changes colors, flips around, and begins to go against the current. And what I would say is there is a pattern of this world that left to our own desires, our natural, neutral state, we will never drift towards God, but towards self-centered, selfish sin. That's why Paul says in Romans 12 verse two, he says, **“do not be conformed to the patterns of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”** Don't look like the world. That's why Jesus, when he walked up to anybody he encountered, he said, “Follow Me.” There was a change of direction. There's a change of pace. He didn't say, “Raise your hand!” He didn't say, “Pray this prayer!” He said, “Follow Me. We're going somewhere different.” And so, what I want to ask you today is, “Does your life look like the world?”

Do you guys know the first time the word Christian was ever used? It was in Acts 11 verse 27. And the Greeks actually first coined this phrase for followers of “The Way.” And so, if you were a follower of Jesus, it was called “The Way” back then, people would look at you and it was kind of a degrading thing, like, “You're a Christian!” and they would kind of belittle that. But what's so interesting, as I studied that, is in that age, in that culture, if you had similar beliefs, a center of what you operated out of, where you were from, culture, how you spoke, all these things, they would typically just group you. And so, the Church of Ephesus, we call them the Ephesians; the Church of Colossi, we call them the Colossians; Corinth, Corinthians. And when they looked at these people who had completely surrendered, devoted, and given everything to Jesus, they said, “Well, they're Christians. They lived their entire life centered around the teachings of Jesus Christ.” And what I want to just ask you is, if you could not claim Christian yourself, if back then the outside world looked at you and looked at your life, would they place Christian over you? Would everything about the way you operate, and handle your finances, and handle how you give, and handle where you go, and what you say, would they say that they're in that Christian thing. All they can talk about is Jesus Christ. Is that true in your life? What are you marked by?

The second way that we see our sin lead to death is following Satan. Verse two, Paul says this, **“following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of**

disobedience.” I was 21 years old, grew up in church my whole life, but not following Jesus. Completely in the world. I had a career-ending injury in college that took a sport that I loved away freshman year. And I turned to everything the world said it was supposed to heal me and fix me. And I'm drinking and I'm trying drugs, because I'm just searching for anything to give me a sense of hope. That's where I'm at 21 years old. And if you were to ask me in that moment, “Grant, are you following Satan? I'm like, “What are you talking about, man? I'm not following Satan! Why are you even talking about Satan?” And that's how crafty Satan is, because most people that follow Satan don't know they're following Satan. And here's what I would say is, you are either being entertained by the things of God, or you are being entertained and led astray by Satan. What are you listening to? What are you watching? Because Satan's crafty, and he'll play the long game. He'll play the long game with you, because he knows his fate, eternal torment, eternal hell. And he has a short amount of time, and he is on a murder spree with the time that he has left. And he's like, “I'm going to take as many as God's children to hell with me. That's what I'm going to do.” And we have to be aware. And so, at one time, Paul says we were following the course of this world. We were following Satan.

And the third way, we were following our flesh. Verse three. **“Among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature, children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.”** Our bodies, our minds, we have desires. And if you've been anyone like me, you have seen moments where you give total way to what your body and your flesh desires. Have you ever indulged in sexual sin, in pornography, overeating, overdrinking, online affair that just fills you with something? It is so clear that in our natural state, we are led away from God. Because the Bible says in Romans five, Paul actually talks about because of one man's sin, Adam, we all now inherit a sin nature. And what we've seen is that sin leads to death. So, my question for you right now is, what can this person, dead in sin, following the world, Satan in their flesh, what can they do to please God? Nothing. Why are you in church today? Why do you know about Jesus? Only because of what Paul is going to write next in verse four.

Right before we jump into this, I just want to imagine, like imagine with me. When I read the Bible, it's helpful to like, make a movie out of it. And so, I'm like, “Okay, he was real. Paul was a real person.” So, he's writing this from a prison in Rome, and he just said, “You were dead in your sins.” And I imagine Paul just taking a moment after he wrote that, closing his eyes, and starting to remember all that God had brought him from. And if you're not familiar with Paul's story, when he would close his eyes, you know what he would see? He would see the bloody face of Stephen, the first Christian martyr that Paul oversaw. Paul commissioned the first martyr ever. He watched him get stoned to death. You know what Paul would see? Paul would see the families he ravaged, the Bible says, because they followed Jesus. He would take them, women and children, from their families and put them in jail, because they followed Jesus. If anyone knew what it was like to be dead, Paul knew what it was like to be dead.

And before we go any further, what I want for the Christian and the non-believer, right now, is just take a moment and remember what God saved you from. And if you're going, “Grant, I don't have the drugs, alcohol testimony. I don't really have that story.” Neither does my wife. Saved at

four, loves Jesus, praying over people at seven, in college ministry, all the things. And as we were talking about it, we have a completely similar passion. Why? Because we both remember at one point, we were dead in our sins. We were done. And so, you can look at someone that may be worse off, but we were all dead. And we need to take a moment and just say, “Thank you, Jesus, that despite my sin, despite my dirt, you chose me.”

And some of us in this room right now are going, “Yeah, Grant, that's great. But I encountered Jesus and I'm back in that mess.” And we're going to address that. So much freedom in Christ. Verse four, beautiful moment right here, all of that death, Good News. **“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved.”** What is grace? Grace is getting something that which you did not earn. That's how we're saved. There's a story in the Chronicles of Narnia where Lucy, one of the main characters, is being surrounded by the enemy, and this is in the silver chair and the enemy is closing in on her. And as she's about to be taken by the enemy, she closes her eyes and she cries out, “Aslan, Aslan, will you save me?” And she closes her eyes, and she hears a roar and movement. And she opens her eyes and she's walking in a forest with Aslan. Aslan represents God, the Father, the Lion. And she's walking with Aslan. And she goes, “Aslan, I can't believe you came to me when I called you. I can't believe you heard me!” And Aslan looked at her and he said, “Daughter, you would have never called for me had I not called you first.” And that is our story. You would have never called for Him had He not, in His awesome power, called you first. Point number two:

2. *By grace, we are now made alive in Christ.*

It's one thing to really hone in on our sin, on our death, on his judgment. But here's what I was reminded of, and maybe it could encourage you. I was at Common Grounds with a friend, and I just ran into him. I actually didn't expect to see him. And he had been drinking. He was sitting there, and he just started talking to me. And I was telling him my story. I was just telling him the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But in this moment, I could just tell, he wasn't with me. Like he just wasn't, you know, when you're trying to do that and it's like, man, he's not. And what I just sensed in my spirit from the Lord was, “Grant, would you just tell him how much I love him? Would you just say that?” So, I'm like, “Hey, let's pause. I just want you to know how much God loves you.” And he looks up at me, and he starts crying, and now he's weeping in Common Grounds, and I'm holding him. And what I was reminded of is there is one word that you could place on God from Genesis to Revelation that he most describes himself as it's the word, compassionate. And that Greek word is *Rahum*. And what that means more literally translated is how a nursing mother looks at her infant, and that's how God looks towards you. That's how God feels towards you. So, if you're like, “Grant, I had that, “but God” moment, but I'm back in that pornography, and I'm back in that. They can't know about that. He wouldn't want anything to do with me.” Do you know you serve a God who is compassionate? Who loves you? He moves into your mess, not away from it. He's not afraid of it. He's rich in mercy, great love with which He loved us. Even when we were dead, he saved us in our transgressions.

And so, what else did His love do for us? If it made us alive, let's look at verse six. **“And raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”** So, he made

us alive. He raised us up, and now we're seated in the heavenly places. Not literally, you're here today. But legally, your standing is now in heaven. Your position is with Christ in heaven. That's who you are. So why did He raise you up and seat you in the heavenly places? Well, it says this. **“So that he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness”** to you forever and ever and ever. Why did He save you? To pour out His grace and kindness forever and all eternity. That's what He did. And that's why He did it.

You know, Jesus took on what we deserve so that we could get what He deserved. Second Corinthians 5:21. It says this: **“for our sake, He made him to be sin who knew no sin so that in him, we might become the righteousness of God.”** Jesus knew no sin. God made Him to be our sin on that cross. Why? So that we might become the righteousness of God. When they lifted Jesus on that cross, His most painful moments were not flesh ripped off His back. They were not crown of thorns in His head or nails in His hands and feet. It was not the spitting and the mocking that hurt Him most. What hurt Him most was the entire sin of the world. Your sin and my sin, in a moment, poured out on Jesus Christ. So, what's the Gospel? We were dead in our sins. So, God said, “I love you so much. I want to pour out My rich mercy on you. So, I'm going to send my one and only Son. And as Jesus went on that cross, He said, “whoever believes in Me will find eternal life.” And so, my question, if you're online, or if you're in this room, “Have you put your faith in that free gift? Have you put your faith in that free gift?” Because it's yours. It's yours. You don't have to earn it. It's given to you.

We went on a teaching retreat where we kind of get away, and we plan all the sermon series for the year. And so, it was me, JP, Dale, and Nate. And someone had gifted us tickets to the Mavs game, and they were really awesome tickets. And so, to enter, we actually went underground. It was a crazy experience. And as we were going underground, we were kind of just like going through the check, all that stuff. And they're going, “Okay, well, how'd you get these tickets?” And what I didn't say is, “Oh man, yeah, I paid for them myself. I got them myself.” I'm next to JP, I'm like, “Oh, no! These were a gift. These were a gift.” “Okay, well, why should I let you in?” “Well, I've got the tickets. They were a gift.” “Yeah, but...” Yeah, that's right. That's right. That's it! And when you get to heaven, the simple answer is, “Why should I let you in?” Not because you paid for it, you were given a ticket, and you just show that ticket. And what's that ticket - that you put faith that Jesus Christ took your sin. The only thing we will do in hell is pay for our sins. That's it. That's it. By grace, we are made alive in Christ Jesus.

You know, I came to Jesus at 21, and I remember the first time I ever was going to go share the Gospel. And it was with this ministry called Unashamed. And Unashamed was where you would meet up at this base, and then you would go out to the city, share Jesus, come back, tell stories. And so, me and my friend, I was giddy, we got sent to North Park Mall. And I'm like, “Okay! You know, I'm born for this! I'm built for this. I can do this!” And I'm getting nervous. And so, my friend takes the first hour. I'm like, “Man! I'm going to watch you share your faith.” Finally, he's like, “Grant, it's your turn. It's your turn.” And I'm like, “It's my turn. Okay!” I don't know if y'all remember the first time you shared Jesus. It's like, it's so crazy. And I walk up to this guy and, I'm like fumbling the whole thing. And, but as I'm doing it, a cop walks up, and he goes, “What are y'all doing?” And, I had just read the book of Acts. And so, everything in my mind is

like, I've seen Peter go to jail for this. I've seen Paul go to jail for this. I'm like, "Is this how I go? Is this it?" And I remember Peter in that moment. And so, I step up and I go, "I'm sharing my faith, sir." And he's like, "Well, you can't do that here." And I was like, "Yes, sir! Okay, that's fine. That's great." But what I remember going home, and I'm with all my friends, my new friends, Christian friends, and they're like, "How was it?" And I'm like, "Dude, it was crazy! Like we almost went to prison. Like, it was amazing! For my faith!" And I remember this room, and they're playing games, and they're doing board games, and all these weird Christian things that you do. But it was so much joy! And the only room that I had ever been in that was that loud and that much laughter... Man! There was alcohol, and there was weed, and it wasn't joy. It was temporary, fleeting happiness. And I remember looking at this room, and I was like, "I'm alive. This is living. I remember what it was like to be dead. I remember it. Man! I almost overdosed two times. Okay, I was banging on a hospital on five different drugs going, "Help me! Help me!" And now, I'm standing at a church on a stage talking about Jesus. And all I'm saying is He brings the dead to life. He brings the dead to life. And man, I can't even comprehend why, why. And it's for no other reason than His grace and mercy. And that's it. That's the only reason He saved me. And there's a response though, okay. He didn't save you, and seat you with Him, and set you apart to sit on the sideline. He saved you for good works. And you're going to walk in them. You're going to walk in them, because He set them up for you before the foundation of the world. Verse 10. **"For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."** You are not saved by good works. You're saved for good works. Point number three. What is our response?

3. We are made alive to walk in our purpose.

Someone did this to me. I thought this was so cool. So, hold out your pointed finger, your index finger. Everybody join in with me. Looking at your index finger. Seeing your fingerprint. That is the only fingerprint that looks exactly like yours out of eight billion people in the world. That's it. Are you special in God's eyes? You are so special to Him.

This word, workmanship, for we are His workmanship. It's the Greek word, poema. Poem. Masterpiece. Art. It's used one other time in the Bible in Romans 1:20, when Paul is talking about the way God reveals himself to the world is through his nature and creation, His sunset, His waterfall. You're not a sunset or a waterfall. You're made in His image. And Psalm 139 says, **"He knit you and your mother's womb."** I talk with young adults and college students all the time. And what I have to say is God did not mess up with you. God didn't mess up with you. "Why do I talk this way? Why do I look this way? Why am I born in that family? Why do I have this?" He didn't mess up! He made you exactly the way He wanted to make you, because there's works that you can do that I can't do. And He's called you, and set you apart, knit you together. And now He's going to just set you free, on fire, to go and change the world. And that's why we can't stay in this room. That's why church is coming to hear the Word of God. And then you go, you go do church. There are people that you see every single day on a road to an eternal hell. And some of us in this room are unfazed by that. Unfazed. They are just as dead as you were. He saved you to set others free. You've been saved to save others.

I was watching this movie, and it's on the life of Harriet Tubman. It's called Harriet. It's one of my favorite movies in the entire world. And there's a scene where Harriet was in slavery in the south, and she had escaped slavery. She found herself north, and she was free. She was totally free. People had helped her get free. So, she's up north, and there's a moment where she's like, "But my family is back there. My people are back there." She started to go back. Okay, and what you would get if you were caught was horrific. Cannot even speak it. And she said, "I'm going back." And she began to bring by the droves, 10, 20, 30, 40. They had a hit list out for this person. They thought it was a man. They called him Moses. He's setting the slaves free. It's Harriet Tubman. So, Harriet Tubman is in the north in Pennsylvania, and she's with Frederick Douglass, and with all these people in a room. And there was a new law passed that slave owners in the south could now go up north to find the runaway slave, and it was a horrific punishment. And so, everyone said, "Hey! You're done. You're done. You're not going back. You are not going back there. It's too risky." And what she said is, "You have forgotten what it was like to be in slavery. She said, "You have become so comfortable in your freedom. You have forgotten those who are enslaved." And I do not want us to get comfortable in our freedom and forget those who are in slavery. She said, "I will give every last drop of blood to see this monster called slavery abolished. And that's what we're going to do - to see Satan and death and all what Jesus defeated. We're going to see that through because we have good works for us to do.

In summary, before God's grace in our lives, who were we? We were dead in our sins. We were dead in our sins. Dead people can't resurrect themselves. Who are we now in His grace? We're alive in Christ Jesus. And what is our response to his grace? We walk in the good works prepared for us.

Jesus, in Luke 17, walking through Jerusalem, comes across 10 people. They had a disease that was called leprosy. Leprosy, at this time, was as good as dead. You're separated from all your family, all your friends. You knew no laughter. You knew no joy. You had nothing. And anytime you walked around people, you had rags on your face. And you said, "I am unclean. I am unclean." Desperate. Desperate. And they walk up to Jesus, and they say, "Jesus, will you have mercy on us?" And Jesus, full of compassion, smiles, "I will." And in a moment, He says, "Now go to the temple and present yourself clean." As they turn, Bible says, as they went, skin healed. Total healing. Can you imagine getting life back? You're like, "Oh my gosh! I get to hug my mom again. I get to look at my son again. I get to do all these things. I can't believe it. I can't believe it. Oh my gosh! And as they began to go, and in their joy, one, the Bible says, as he looked and he saw that he was clean, turned back around. One. And it says, he fell before the knee, he fell before the feet of Jesus. And he just said, "Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!" And Jesus said, "Did I not heal ten?" We can never, never, lose our gratitude and our thankfulness for what Jesus set you and I free from.

So, I pray in this moment before we worship, would you just take a moment? And maybe it's later this week, but I don't want you to get away from this passage without having tears stream down your face going, "Jesus, why did you save me?" If you don't know Jesus, all He's asking for is faith. Faith that He took what you cannot pay for yourself. Receive that today. That's the

good news. That's the free gift. That's the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He hung on that cross so that you would let go. Let me pray that we would believe it.

Lord, if there, if there is anybody in here that feels distant from you or far from you, I pray, Lord Jesus, by your power, that the Gospel, by the supernatural power of your Spirit would pierce their souls right now. I pray, Lord, salvation would take place in Waco. Salvation would take place in Waco, but Lord, it would not stay in Waco. It would go to the ends of the earth, God. Would you ignite fire in this room? Lord, you have good works for us to walk in. Father, give us the strength to walk in them. Jesus, you set us free so that we could set others free. So, Lord, open up doors for that. For the person that is holding on to their sin, thinking they need to hold it, would you show them right now you're a merciful God that wants to take it? Oh Lord, you can heal the darkest of souls like mine. And so, would my story give anyone, someone hope that Jesus Christ specifically came for you to take your sin?

Let's respond in worship.