



## LEADER GUIDE – January 12, 2020

### PRIMARY PASSAGE

2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,<sup>2</sup> in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.<sup>3</sup> All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.<sup>4</sup> But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,<sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.<sup>6</sup> And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,<sup>7</sup> in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.<sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast.<sup>10</sup> For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:1-10 NIV)

### ICE BREAKER

- Share a story of when you’ve experienced the grace of God. What were the circumstances? What did grace mean to you in that setting? How did you respond to God’s grace?
- If you meet before the LSU Tigers dominate the Clemson Tigers, have everyone give score predictions for the game! (Kevin -> 44-35 LSU // Andrew -> 38-31 LSU)

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#### 1) How does grace set Christianity apart from all other religions?

- All other religions have a “do/earn” mentality to them // Grace is completely unearned and undeserved favor -> we don’t do anything to receive God’s grace and forgiveness, Jesus already did it all and freely offers it to us
- Definitions that might help:
  - Grace -> completely unearned and undeserved favor // getting what you don’t deserve // what we receive in Jesus’ resurrection
  - Mercy -> not getting what you do deserve // what we receive in Jesus’ death on the cross
  - Judgment -> getting exactly what you deserve // what Jesus satisfied in both the cross and empty tomb

**2) Paul states in verse 1 of our passage that we are dead in our transgressions and sins? What does he mean by that?**

- Sin is a condition not just an action – We're not sinners because we sin, we sin because we are sinners // Illustration of the flu -> we cough and sneeze because we have the flu, not vice-versa
- The death Paul references is spiritual death -> complete and utter separation from God

**3) The hinge point of the Gospel Message starts in verse 4 with “But God...” What do verses 4-10 say about God's character and what God does for those who believe the Gospel?**

- Rich in mercy, full of love for us, kind toward us when we least deserve it
- Made us alive, raised us up with Christ, seated us with Him in heavenly realms, shows us the incomparable riches of His grace, saved us, created us to do good works which He prepared in advance, etc.

**4) What do verses 8-10 teach us about the relationship of faith, grace, and good works?**

- Salvation is by God's grace alone! Nothing we can do to earn or deserve it
  - NOT “Grace + Faith + Works = Salvation” but “Grace + Faith = Salvation -> Works”
- We aren't saved by our works, but we are saved to work
- Because of the grace we've been shown, we can't help but do the works God has prepared for us

**PERSONAL RESPONSE**

1) Kevin and Andrew discussed on Sunday that grace can only be experienced in the context of a relationship – this is why Jesus came to earth to dwell among us. Have you ever entered into a relationship with Jesus? Have you ever responded in faith to His grace? If not, what is holding you back or what questions do you have?

2) How present is grace in your everyday life? Is God's grace as sweet to you today as it was the day you were saved? If not, why not?

3) Is there a circumstance in your life where you feel you need grace from others but aren't experiencing it? Or, is there anyone in your life that needs grace from you, but you are withholding it? If so, why?

4) Ephesians 2:1-10 gives possibly the clearest presentation of the Gospel in Scripture – who in your life are you “**Praying** for” and “**Investing** in” that you can share the Gospel with and “**Invite** them to say YES to Jesus” over the next few weeks?