

## Life Group Bible Study

# But God: From Dead to Alive in Christ

Ephesians 2:1–10 (NKJV)

### Key Thoughts

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1. Before Christ, we were not spiritually sick, weak, or struggling. We were dead. Paul uses nekrous, the same word for a physical corpse. A corpse cannot reach for help. A corpse cannot decide to live.
2. We did not drift; we walked. We walked according to the course of this world, to the cadence of the prince of the power of the air, in the lusts of the flesh. By nature, we were children of wrath, not just by what we did but by what we were.
3. Two words hinge the entire chapter: “But God.” His richness in mercy (not getting what we deserved) and lavishness in grace (getting what we did not deserve) moved Him to make the dead alive, raise them up, and seat them with Christ in the heavenly places.
4. Salvation is by grace through faith, not of yourselves, not of works. The wage of sin is death, and someone had to pay it. Jesus did. He took the death we earned and rose, and now those who trust Him share in His life.
5. Good works are not the cause of salvation but its consequence. We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works that He prepared beforehand for us to walk in.

### Discussion Questions

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1. Paul uses nekrous, the Greek word for a physical corpse, to describe our spiritual state before Christ. How does that picture change the way you think about salvation compared with self-improvement?  

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2. Read Ephesians 2:1–3. What three forces directed our walk before Christ (the world, the prince of the power of the air, the lusts of the flesh)? Why is it important to name all three?  

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3. Verse 4 opens with “But God.” How does that single hinge reshape the whole chapter? Where in your story have you experienced a “But God” moment?  

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4. Pastor Chris drew a clear line between mercy (not getting what we deserve) and grace (getting what we don’t deserve). Why do we need both, and why is it nearly impossible to feel either deeply without first seeing how dead we were?

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5. Verses 8–9 say salvation is “not of yourselves” and “not of works, lest anyone should boast.” Where are you most tempted to add yourself back into the equation of your standing with God? What does that temptation reveal?
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6. Verse 10 says we are God’s “workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.” If good works are the fruit of salvation rather than the root of it, how does that change the way you serve this week?
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## Applications

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1. **Name your “before” honestly.** Take ten minutes this week to write out what your life was, or would still be, without Christ. Then write “But God” and what He has done. Let the contrast fuel your worship.
2. **Reject self-saving in one specific area.** Identify one place where you are still trying to earn God’s favor (performance, comparison, religious effort). Bring it to Him in prayer and rest in the finished work of Christ.
3. **Walk in the works prepared for you.** Ask the Lord every morning this week, “What good work have You prepared for me to walk in today?” Then obey what He brings to mind, however small.

## Closing Prayer

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*Father, we were dead and could not raise ourselves. We walked in the course of this world, marched to the cadence of an enemy, and earned nothing but wrath. But You, rich in mercy, because of Your great love, made us alive together with Christ. Thank You for mercy we could not earn and grace we did not deserve. Thank You for Jesus, who paid the wage of sin we owed, who took the death meant for us, and who rose so that we could share His life. Help us this week to stop trying to save ourselves and to walk in the good works You prepared for us beforehand. Be glorified in the lives You have raised from the dead. In Jesus’ name, amen.*