

DOTA 013 BIBLE STUDY 03
A DISCIPLE KNOWS WHO HE IS (EPHESIANS 2:1-22)

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T = teacher 1 S = teacher 2

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this Bible study series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two teachers will do Bible study together about one important aspect of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. We will use a very easy Bible study method called the five steps method. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. The first series of 6 Bible studies is about 6 fundamental questions in life: “How do I respond to God’s Word?” “Where do I come from?” “Who am I?” “Why am I here?” “Where am I going?” And “How do I bear fruit?” Today’s Bible study is: A DISCIPLE KNOWS WHO HE IS. The fundamental question is “WHO AM I?”

(S) **STEP 1. READ**

Let us read Ephesians 2:1-22. Let us take turns to read one verse each.

(T) Ephesians 2:1-22. “As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, **(S)** 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. **(T)** All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. **(S)** But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **(T)** made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved. **(S)** And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, **(T)** 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. **(S)** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - **(T)** not by works, so that no one can boast. **(S)** For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. **(T)** Therefore, remember that formerly you who were Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (that done in the body by the hands of men) - **(S)** remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. **(T)** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. **(S)** For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, **(T)** by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, **(S)** and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. **(T)** He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. **(S)** For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. **(T)** Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow-citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, **(S)** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as their chief cornerstone. **(T)** In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. **(S)** And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

(T) **STEP 2. DISCOVER**

Let us discover and discuss some important truths in this Bible passage. “Which truth in this passage is important for you?” or “Which truth in this passage touches your mind or heart?” Think and write your answer in your notebook. After a few minutes take turns to share your discoveries with one another.

(S) An important truth for me is in Ephesians 2:8-9. I discovered that I have been saved by grace, not by anything I have done! Before I accepted Jesus Christ into my heart and life, I believed that I must do many things in order to please God. I believed I had to visit the religious place of worship and pray there every day, give gifts, fast, visit special holy places, make vows, hang up particular texts in my house and do good works. I thought that if I do all these things, maybe God would make my life prosperous and successful on this earth and accept me into Paradise when I die. I regarded my relationship to God as a contract relationship. If I do something for God, then God must do something for me! After I heard the gospel, I realised that the Living God of the Bible does not save people by what people do, but that he saves people by what he has done for them through Jesus Christ. He saves them by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. God’s salvation is a free gift and cannot be bought or earned by any amount of religious works.

(T) An important truth for me is in Ephesians 2:18. I discovered that I actually have access to the Living God! Before I accepted Jesus Christ into my heart and life, I thought that God was so exalted and so far away that no human being could have a personal relationship with God. Many people wish they can have personal contact with God, but no matter how much they try, they never experience any relationship with God. Some people even argue that God does not exist, because they never hear his words, never see his works and never experience God. But the Bible says that there is one way to get contact with God. That way is Jesus Christ. When I believed that Jesus Christ died on the cross for my sins and accepted him into my heart, the Spirit of

Jesus came to live in me. It is the Spirit of Jesus Christ that brings me into contact with God. The Spirit of Jesus Christ reveals God to me and helps me to have fellowship with God. The Spirit of Jesus Christ lives in me and makes me experience the reality of God, the presence of God and the nearness of God! Through the Spirit of Jesus Christ I have access into the presence of God. And in God's presence I can hear him speak to me and I can speak to him.

(S) STEP 3. QUESTION

Let us try to understand all the truths in this passage and ask our questions about the things we still do not understand. "Which question about anything in this passage would you like to ask?" Think and write your question in your notebook. Then discuss the questions and try to find answers.

1st Question from verse 1. What is the meaning of being "dead in my trespasses and sins"?

(T) This verse describes who you were before you believed in Jesus Christ. Without Jesus Christ a person is *physically alive, but spiritually dead*. Such a person can eat, drink, work and sleep, but his spirit inside him is dead. When the spirit is dead, a person cannot know God nor can he have a relationship with God.

(S) Does God call a non-Christian that has good moral values and does good works also "dead"?

(T) A non-Christian can have moral values and can do good works, because he still is a creation of God! God gave him these abilities, even if he does not acknowledge that. But he does not do his good works for God. The difference is that a non-Christian does not do anything because he trusts in God or obeys God. He does not thank God for anything nor does he want to glorify God in anything. Everything he does has no relationship to God. He lives completely independent from God. This independence from God and this separateness from God are called spiritual death.

2nd Question from verse 1-4,11-12. Who were you before you became a Christian?

(S) Before I became a believer in Jesus Christ, I had the following characteristics:

First. I was spiritually dead. My spirit had no awareness of God. I did not really feel any need for God.

Second. I followed the ways of the world. I copied the life-style and habits of the people around me. Like everybody else, I lived for myself.

Third. I followed the ways of the devil. I told lies and sometimes went to fortunetellers.

Fourth. I gratified the cravings of my sinful nature. I was greedy for money. My inward nature was corrupt.

Fifth. As an unbeliever, God was angry with me. God hated my independence, disobedience, worldliness and inner corruption.

Sixth. I was separate from Christ. I did not know God was working through Christ. I spoke evil of Christians.

Seventh. I was excluded from the citizenship in Israel. I did not belong to God's people and therefore could not share in their privileges. God did not protect and guide me.

Eighth. I was a foreigner to the covenants. God said, "I will be your God. I will be your Friend and Saviour. I will carry you as a father carries his son all the way you must go." But I never experienced these things.

Ninth. I was without hope. I had no goal for my life and life seemed absolutely meaningless.

Tenth. I was without God in the world. I lived a life in which God had no place.

3rd Question from verse 4-7. God in his love and mercy made me alive with Christ, raised me up with Christ and seated me with Christ in the heavenly realms. What is the meaning of being made alive, raised and seated with Christ?

(T) The Bible often says that the believer dies with Christ, is resurrected with Christ and is exalted with Christ in heaven. This means that *whatever happened to Christ has an immediate effect on Christians!* God the Father gives believers in Christ a new "position" and a new "condition".

First. God gives Christians the same "position" or legal status as Christ. God the Father looks at Christians as he looks at Jesus Christ. Because Christ died, the old sinful nature of the Christian has died. It has been tried, condemned, crucified and buried together with Christ. Because Christ was made alive, the Christian also has been made alive, that is, he has been "born again" and now has a new spiritual nature in him. Because Christ was exalted in heaven, in the future the body of the Christian will also be resurrected and he will be given a place in heaven. What happened to Christ will happen to everyone who believes in Christ! His position guarantees the future fulfilment of all God's promises of the new life.

Second. God also gives Christians a new "condition". Through the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the Christian, the Christian actually dies to sin and already now lives a new life on earth! His condition guarantees the present experience of that new life more and more.

4th Question from verse 8-10. If good works does not save me, why should I care about doing good works at all?

(S) No one is saved by his good works!

First. Christ already did the one good work that leads to my salvation! He died, was resurrected and exalted in heaven for me. He completed doing everything necessary for me to be saved. By his death, Christ took away God's anger against my sins, forgave my sins and set me free from the slavery of sin. So, what is left for me to do? When I believe in Christ, I can only accept salvation as a gift. I do not deserve salvation. I cannot earn salvation. Salvation is given to me because God loves me and is merciful to me!

Second. If it were possible for good works to save me, my good works would belittle Christ's good work and rob him of his glory. Then I would be able to boast to God and say that I saved myself by my good works. Anyway, my good works are not good enough. They fall short of God's perfect standard of righteousness. The Bible says that good works does not save me, so that I will not be able to boast.

Third. I still want to do good works as an expression of your gratitude for God's gift of salvation. I certainly do not want to do good works in order to contribute to my salvation. God prepared many kinds of good works that Christians should do in the world. These good works are all described in the Bible. On the one hand, I praise the good work of Jesus Christ that resulted in my salvation. On the other hand, I do good works as an expression of my thankfulness for what God has done to me through Jesus Christ. I thank him for his free gift of salvation.

5th Question from verse 16-22. Who are you now that you believe in Jesus Christ?

(T) Now that I believe in Jesus Christ, I have a new identity. I have the following characteristics.

First. I have been reconciled with God and now have peace with God. I have also been reconciled to people from other races, which are also believers in Christ. I can now live in peace with people from any nation in the world.

Second. I have free access into the presence of God. I may dwell in the presence of God and experience his reality and nearness. I may talk to God and listen to him speaking to me.

Third. I am a fellow-citizen with God's people. I am a member of God's kingdom. I now belong to the most important kingdom in all the history of mankind! This kingdom is growing every day and will soon be the only kingdom in the universe!

Fourth. I am also a member of God's household. God's household or God's family in the world is the Christian Church. I have the privilege to call God "our Father in heaven". And I have many "Christian brothers and sisters" all over the world! It is the biggest and most wonderful family in the world!

Fifth. I am a part of God's new temple. God's temple is not a building of dead stones, but a dwelling made of living stones. Every Christian is a living stone. Together they form the temple of God and God dwells in this temple through the Holy Spirit. God himself lives in me through the Holy Spirit!

(S) STEP 4. APPLY

Let us brainstorm with one another and record a list of **possible applications** from Ephesians 2:1-22.

(T) Be constantly aware that when God looks at you he only sees the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

(S) Read the Bible and discover all the good works, which God has prepared for us to do.

(T) Afterwards consider which possible application does God want you to turn into a **personal application**.

(S) My personal application is the following. I want to remember my new identity in Jesus Christ. I will memorise Ephesians 2:18-19, "For through Christ we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow-citizens with God's people and members of God's household."

(T) My personal application is the following. God gave me a new position and a new condition in Christ. In my position as God's child, I want to enter God's presence every day in prayer to receive his mercy, love and his plan for me for that day. In my condition as God's workmanship, I want to do the good works he prepared for me each day.

STEP 5. PRAY

Let us take turns to pray about one truth that God has taught us in Ephesians 2:1-22.

(S) Dear Father in heaven, thank you for giving me this wonderful identity in Jesus Christ! Thank you that I am precious in your eyes! Thank you that I belong to your great family in the world, the Church! Thank you that you need me to do your good works in this world!

(T) Dear Father in heaven, thank you for giving me the privilege to enter in your presence whenever I want. Allow me to experience your reality, presence and nearness. Each day, let me hear what is your will for my life that day. We pray in Jesus name. Amen!

(S) ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. Meditate on the question. "Who are you? Are you still spiritually dead or does the Holy Spirit live in you?"

Second. Prepare next week's Bible study from Ephesians 4:17 – 5:17. Join a house fellowship that does Bible study. See the workbooks "Go and make disciples" and Internet on www. etc

Third. Listen on short wave radio every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY to "Discipleship training on the air".