

The Biggest But's in the Bible

"We Were Dead BUT God Made Us Alive"

Week 2 – July 13, 2025

Scripture: Ephesians 2:1-5

Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Read the Scripture, reflect on the questions below, and share your thoughts. It's that easy!

Share: Have you ever received unexpected kindness when you didn't think you deserved it? What happened?

Read the scripture noted above together: Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

Discuss the following context:

As human beings, we were once spiritually dead in our sins and there was nothing we could do to save ourselves, BUT in his great mercy and love, God made us alive through the death of his son. We are now called to live in the fullness of life, not for ourselves, but reflecting his power, love, and purpose for the world.

Consider our condition apart from Jesus. Without him we are lost, empty, and disconnected from our true purpose. But no matter how lost and broken we may feel, God's grace is greater. It has the power to give us new life. Being alive in Christ means we are not simply forgiven but empowered to live a life of greater purpose and power.

Share your thoughts about the following questions:

1. Grace can be described as this: even though we're supposed to pay, we don't have to. It is only by God's grace that we are saved (**Ephesians 2:1-5**). God came to us when we were incapable of saving ourselves.
 - a. What does it mean to be spiritually dead (**Ephesians 2:1**) and under the control of the world (**Ephesians 2:2**)?
 - b. As a result of our condition, we were subject to God's judgement (**Ephesians 2:3**). In your relationship with Jesus, how have you experienced being defined by sin versus being defined by God's love and grace?
 - c. BUT God (**Ephesians 2:4**) are two words that change everything. God initiated the rescue process motivated by mercy and love. Have you ever been motivated to do something by a sense of obligation? How did that make you feel?
 - d. We are alive by grace (**Ephesians 2:5**), not by our works. How have you been caught up in proving yourself or trying to earn favor? Share your experience.
2. God invites us to move away from a life characterized by sin, selfishness, and apathy, and embrace the transformed life Jesus offers, however, there are many things that shape what we believe, how we think, and the choices we make other than Jesus (bosses, spouses, parents, our own wisdom, or philosophy of life, etc).
 - a. What is the final authority that decides the direction in your life? What piece of advice informs the decisions you make?
 - b. How can we actively pursue a relationship with God that will overcome the effects of sin, selfishness, and apathy?

Pray together: Ask each other to share what is on your heart today. Thank God that he is a God of great mercy and love. Thank God that he makes us alive to live a life of greater purpose. Pray for those who do not have a relationship with Jesus- that they would understand what God has done for them and say yes to a life transforming relationship with him. Pray for those who are distant from God, to re-engage in their relationship with him by recommitting to the life he calls them to live.

The Biggest But's in the Bible

"Easter in July"

Week 1 – July 6, 2025

Scripture: Acts 13:29-30; Deuteronomy 31:6;

Hebrews 13:5; Psalm 23:4; Matthew 28:20

Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Read the Scripture, reflect on the questions below, and share your thoughts. It's that easy!

Share: Think about a time when you felt truly alive and energized. What were you doing?

Read the scripture noted above together: Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

Discuss the following context:

In this series called "The Biggest But's of the Bible" we will highlight moments in scripture where the word "But" changes everything. Today, even though it's July, we are celebrating Easter. Jesus died, BUT he rose from the dead! This is what Jesus does – HE BRINGS THINGS TO LIFE.

In our lives, there may be something dead (a relationship, business, or dreams, etc) BUT *in Jesus*, it can be brought back to life. Jesus gives us renewed hope when we turn to him, know his presence, and receive his help for our lives. The one who died and rose from the dead can give us new life.

Share your thoughts about the following questions:

1. In **Acts 13:29-30** Paul is preaching the gospel: *"When they had done all that the prophecies said about him, they took him down from the cross and placed him in a tomb. **But** God raised him from the dead!"* Jesus is alive, and he can be alive in our lives too.
 - a. Share an example of one thing that changed you. Perhaps it was a goal, a day, a person, a risk, or a word. Did this change make you more alive? Why or why not?
 - b. This "But" could be labeled as the biggest of all buts. The power of Jesus' resurrection signifies victory over death, sin, and despair, and it provides hope for the future. To access this power, we must be connected to Jesus himself. What does it practically mean for you to be connected to Jesus?
2. You might feel alone, BUT God is with you. Scripture offers several promises of comfort and security. Read and discuss what each passage contains, and the hope revealed in it.
 - a. **Deuteronomy 31:6**
 - b. **Hebrews 13:5**
 - c. **Psalm 23:4**
 - d. **Matthew 28:20**
3. Everything might be going wrong, BUT God can still make it right. Your life might be upside down and look hopeless, but it can be raised back to life. Are you carrying around any shame, hurt, guilt, or regret that needs to be laid down as a first step? Share if you are comfortable.
4. The grave writes "The End", BUT God writes "To Be Continued". Life on earth is not the end, it's the beginning. Just like one word can change everything, one commitment can change everything. What could God be calling you to commit to today? Maybe it's something around your workplace, your prayer life, or a relationship. What in your life could be brought back to life?

Pray together: Ask each other to share what is on your heart today. Thank God that he gives us renewed hope when we turn to him, know his presence, and receive his help for our lives. Ask him to give us eyes to see where he can bring new life to our lives, and the courage to cling to his promises as we pursue him.