# Experience Grace

## Reading 1 of 4 • Whose am I?

Read this before the Meaningful Membership class. Look up the key Bible passages, reflect at your own pace, and bring your questions. The final page gives you space to write; you may keep personal reflections private.

Key Bible passages: Ephesians 2:1-10; Romans 3:21-26

Welcome to Meaningful Membership at Christchurch Miami. Before we talk about our church, our denomination, our leaders, our ministries, or anything we may ask of members, we begin with Jesus Christ.

Church membership does not save us. Baptism does not save us. Serving, giving, family heritage, religious activity, and moral effort do not reconcile us to God. Our hope rests entirely on Jesus. So before asking, “Do I want to join Christchurch Miami?” We begin with a more important question: “Whose am I, and in whom am I trusting?”

Our prayer is that this pathway will help you experience grace, find community, and discover purpose. But grace comes first, because everything else grows from what God has done for us in Christ.

### God made us for Himself

Read Genesis 1:26-27; Isaiah 43:7; Revelation 4:11

The Bible begins with God. He created all things, and He made human beings in His image. That gives every person dignity and worth. We were made to know God, reflect His character, enjoy His goodness, and live for His glory.

The deepest, most foundational truth about your life is not your job, your success, your failure, your family, or what other people say about you. You were created by God and for God. You belong to Him.

### Sin separates us from God

Read Romans 3:10-12, 23; Romans 6:23

Sin is more than making occasional mistakes. It is our refusal to trust, love, and obey God as He deserves. We have loved created things more than the Creator and placed ourselves at the center of our lives - our own selfish wants, desires and overall self-centeredness.

Because God is holy and just, sin brings real guilt and judgment. Our problem is not simply that we need better habits, or that we need to try harder to be better people. We need radical forgiveness, reconciliation, and new life.

### Grace does what we cannot

Ephesians 2 says we were dead in our trespasses and sins. Dead people do not rescue

themselves. Then come two of the most hope-filled words in Scripture: “But God.” Because of His great love, God made us alive with Christ.

Grace means God reaches out to people who cannot rescue themselves or earn His favor. Salvation is not God rewarding the impressive. It is God rescuing the helpless.

### Jesus accomplished our salvation

Read John 1:1-14; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21

Jesus Christ is truly God and truly man. He lived the life of perfect obedience we have not lived. At the cross He willingly bore the judgment sinners deserve. He truly died, was buried, and rose bodily from the grave.

On the cross Jesus said, “It is finished.” The gospel is not advice about how to save yourself. It is good news announcing what Christ has accomplished for sinners.

### We receive Christ by faith

Read Mark 1:14-15; Ephesians 2:8-10

Faith means receiving and resting on Jesus Christ alone for salvation. We are saved by grace through faith, not because of work. Good works are not the root of salvation; they are its fruit.

A Christian is not someone who has become perfect. A Christian is someone who has repented of his sins (repentance means turning from sin toward God), been united to Christ, forgiven by grace, given the Holy Spirit, and turned toward a new direction of life.

### Grace forms a people

The gospel does not merely reconcile isolated individuals to God. Jesus gathers a people. Ephesians 2 moves from “made alive” to “one new humanity” and “members of God’s household.” Grace brings us home to God and gives us a family of brothers and sisters the world over.

That is why membership begins with Christ and naturally moves toward His Church. We do not join to become Christians. Because we belong to Christ, we learn to belong to His people.

### Before you move on

As you finish this reading, do not rush past the central question: Have you received Christ as your Savior, and are you trusting in Him alone for your salvation? If you believe but have questions, tell us. If you are still trying to understand, tell us. If you want to speak privately with a pastor or elder, we would be honored to listen. You do not need to perform for us. This is a place to experience grace.

# Reflect and prepare

These questions are invitations to conversation, not a test. Write as much or as little as you find helpful. You may discuss sensitive matters privately with a pastor or elder.

**1. In your own words, how can a sinner be made right with God?**

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**2. Which best describes you today: trusting Christ alone; believing but carrying questions; still trying to understand; or desiring a private conversation?**

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**3. How and where do you most need to experience God's grace right now?**

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**A question I want to bring to class**

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