

We don't have to rely on our own power to do God's will because He does the heavy lifting. In fact, when we try to do it on our own, we can get in God's way.

God created you with a unique set of gifts and talents that He will use for His glory. Don't worry, if you are an introvert God probably isn't calling you to be an evangelist. But it helps if you are aware of your natural strengths and purposeful design as you look for opportunities to do God's will.

*What are some of the things that bring you the greatest joy in life?
How do you see God using that for His purposes?*

WRAP-UP

It is not enough to lead a "just ok" life. God wants you to be fully alive in Him. He has plans to do good works in and through your life. As you become more fully alive you will grow in being loved by Jesus, shaped by Jesus and doing the works Jesus did.

Memory Verse

4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved. - Ephesians 2:4-5 NIV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members' needs: _____

Challenge- Every one of us has been called to build up the Body of Christ. Take the Five Fold Ministry Test to discover your Kingdom Strengths – for free. We recommend this site: <https://www.fivefoldministry.com>

“Dead or Alive?”

Fully Alive #1

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes in life we just settle for less. But God has great plans for each of us to live a vibrant, dynamic life of significance for His Kingdom. Unfortunately, sometimes we settle for just an ok existence. If you have chosen to follow Jesus, you have moved from death to life. But are you living fully alive? Are you loved by Jesus, shaped by Jesus and doing what Jesus did?

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

What place or activity makes you feel fully alive?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

1. We were Dead in Sin

Ephesians 2:1-3 NLT - 1 Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. 2 You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil--the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. 3 All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else.

As you reflect on the impact Jesus made in your life when you first came to faith, you may think of a changed attitude, new friends, or good habits, but the change was far more dramatic than any of that. You were dead! Maybe you didn't realize you were dead, but there was no life in your spirit, and so you were spiritually dead.

John 1:37-38a NLT - 37 When John's two disciples heard this, they followed Jesus. 38 Jesus looked around and saw them following. "What do you want?" he asked them...

In John 1:38 Jesus asked His disciples “What do you want?” Let’s take some time to ask ourselves the same thing.

What would you say was the reason you first decided to follow Jesus? What are you seeking from your relationship with Him now?

Ephesians 2:3 tells us before we followed Jesus, we confidently followed the desires of our flesh and our minds. Maybe you thought you were doing alright before you became a Christian. If so, you might have been trying to find your purpose in life in one of these ways:

- o Consumerism (Good Life=More stuff/success)
- o Secularism/Intellectualism (There’s no God/Education and knowledge reveal the meaning of life)
- o Nationalism (Best nation will lead to best life)
- o Progressivism (if we can just progress, live woke...we will be alive)
- o Cynicism (Nothing can be trusted)

Which of these influenced you most before Christianity? Do any of them still tend to draw you in? What are the pitfalls of each?

2. Alive with Jesus

Ephesians 2:4-7 NLT - 4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, 5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) 6 For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. 7 So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.

According to the passage above, how did God express His love for us?

Being alive in Christ is evidence that you are loved by Jesus.

Ephesians 2:8-10 NLT - 8 God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. 10 For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Our salvation clearly wasn’t earned by us, it is a gift. And our lives are the work of the creator. We are His masterpiece.

What is the most impressive man-made work of art or craftsmanship you have ever seen? When you looked at the beauty and detail did you reflect on the creator of that piece and recognize the skill or talent displayed before you? That is how God intends others to view our lives as well.

The closer we draw to God, the more we are a reflection of Him. If you don’t feel your life is a masterpiece yet, find ways to spend time with your creator and let Him refine His work in you.

3. Doing What Jesus Did

In Ephesians v.10 Paul tells us we were created so that we can do good things God planned for us. The verses below reassure us God is at work to fulfil His plans for our lives.

Psalms 138:8 NLT - 8 The LORD will work out his plans for my life--for your faithful love, O LORD, endures forever. Don't abandon me, for you made me.

Philippians 2:13 NLT - 13 For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

Hebrews 13:21 NLT - 21 may he equip you with all you need for doing his will. May he produce in you, through the power of Jesus Christ, every good thing that is pleasing to him. All glory to him forever and ever! Amen.