



## **GROWING – Growing Needs Godly Choices 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020 Brian Greenaway**

This Study Guide provides a summarised study with additional discussion questions based on the scriptures mentioned in the sermon.

### **Connect:**

**“We were dead in our sins, but alive to our flesh and controlled by the prince of the power of the air. But God’s rich mercy and great love for us caused Him to intervene, brought our spirit to life and killed the flesh and renewed the mind so that we can know God. He has repositioned us. Now we are alive in the spirit, able to communicate with God and on a new course. We need to actively begin to walk in this newness of life and make the right choices. As we do this, we set a new atmosphere for our lives.”**

Brian Greenaway

1. Do you want to grow spiritually?
2. Have you already begun to grow spiritually during this lockdown?
3. We live in an environment that is hostile towards the Christian faith. Our culture, our media, our education system, our moral framework is hostile to the teachings of Jesus. It is not designed to encourage us to grow as followers of Christ. Since this is the case, how do we grow?

### **Engage:**

- The book of Ephesians deals with the state of the Ephesians before conversion and the state of all men – Spiritual death.
  - Ephesus was the centre of worship for the cult of Artemis – or Diana. A 420 square metre temple was built around Shiny black meteorite that had loads of bumps over it which was considered to be Diana – the goddess with many breasts. There was a powerful spiritual stronghold on this place that Satan did not want to give up.
4. If you are looking for a hostile environment where the kingdom broke into people lives and changed them, then look no further. God had broken the stronghold through the ministry of the apostle but Paul bore the scars.
  5. Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 15:32
  6. We see in Ephesus due to the environment, there were more people who were in unbelief, than belief. So, maintaining and encouraging yourself in the faith of Jesus Christ would have been a challenge at the best of times.
  7. Have you ever been in a position where you felt you have stood alone in your faith?
  8. After receiving Christ, have you felt bold enough to profess your faith?

9. Do people in your environment (work etc) know that you are a believer or do they have to ask you what your faith is?
10. If they have questioned you, how has that made you feel? And what do you think this demonstrates? *(Please take a moment to discuss this.)*
11. How do you keep focus on your faith when everyone around you is against your faith and they don't believe?

## Framework:

- Brian's preach is a 3-point sermon. You may summarise it as "the before", "the intervention" and "the after". And it all centres around one word: But.
- **ONE** - Let us look first at the state of the Ephesian people:
  12. Read and discuss Ephesians 2:1-3
  13. V2 – uses terms: 'in which you once walked'  
They walked in sin, daily conversant with it, devoted to it, surrounded and clothed in it. Living according to the course of this world.
  14. It was their character (not personality) and the governing principle which controlled their conduct. They lived according to and under the control of the spirit of the world.
  15. This subjection to sin was in fact a subjection to Satan. The Bible speaks of Satan as the Prince of the power of the air. 2 Corinthians 4:4 - god of this world, John 12:31 - prince of the world. He is the prince of the power of the air – he sets the atmosphere. This was their state.
- **TWO** - But God
  16. Read and discuss Ephesians 2:4-9 (This is God's intervention strategy)

**An intervention is a combination of program elements or strategies designed to produce behaviour changes or improve health status among individuals or an entire population.**

- But God who is rich in mercy and great love, intervened in our lives. We were completely spiritually dead - only alive to our flesh - God intervened and made our spirits alive, and killed the flesh.
- He made us alive. And raised us up! God has repositioned us, however, we need to learn to live from that position.

**"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."**

Galatians 2:20

17. How do we live from that position?
18. *We walk. It's simple. We take one step in front of another. As we walk in the steps that God has prepared for us - then we set the atmosphere in our lives and create the environment for growth. (Position determines outcome.)*

**“Salvation brings responsibility.”**

Witherington

➤ **THREE**

19. Read and contrast; Ephesians 2:2 with Ephesians 2:10

**“This was my most radical experiment yet. It affected everything I did: the way I ate, talked, dressed, thought, and touched my wife. No mixed linen. Ceremonial law high priest Hardest: Avoiding the sins we commit every day: no lying, no gossiping, no coveting. I’m a journalist in New York. That’s like 70 percent of my day.**

**Should I read the gossip magazine about Cameron Diaz’s latest sex romp? No.**

**Should I give 10 percent of my money to the needy? Yes.**

**Should I turn off my email on the Sabbath? Yes.**

**Working at Esquire wasn't easy. I love Esquire, but it's not always the most biblical of magazines. And my bosses decided to up the ante by making me interview the actress Rosario Dawson. The idea was Tempt the Bible Guy. I had to conduct the entire interview while averting my eyes. And I should have brought ear plugs because Rosario, God love her, has the dirtiest mouth in Hollywood.**

**Rent movies: *Kill Bill*. seven minutes long. All Bill, no Kill.**

**After a year of praying, I started to believe there’s something to the idea of sacredness. It was remarkable. So if you want to become someone different, just start acting like the person you want to be.”**

AJ Jacobs; The Year of Living Biblically

20. Read and discuss Colossians 1:9-10

21. Read and discuss John 6:28-29

➤ This is the starting block of the walk; ‘believe’. The walk is the evidence. It is a consequence of our new life.

Good works are Gods design and a consequence.

Good works are a result of the salvation experience.

Good works are the goal of the relationship

22. Read Micah 6:8

➤ Here are 3 Principles to pursue:

- **Do what is right and truthful - Philippians 4:8-9**
- **Let mercy govern your behaviour - Mathew 9:13**
- **Be humble - Philippians 2 and James 4**

➤ **BEFORE:**

**We (us)**

**But now**

Once walked according to the course of this world,	For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,
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according to the prince of the power of the air,  the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,  among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh,  fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,  and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others	which God prepared beforehand  that we should walk in them
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**Prayer:**

Lord, help me to realise what Jesus has done for me, and respond to that by making a decision to walk in this newness of life. In Jesus Name Amen

**Extra Resources:**

*The Screwtape Letters – CS Lewis*

*Kaiser The walk, Wealth and warfare of the Christian – Ruth Paxson*