

August 22/23, 2026

"I Was Saved"

Pastor Aaron Buer



SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY, + ACT.

2026 Focus: 12 Months of Prayer | **August:** Lament

Each month, journey through a different biblical model of prayer.

Day 1 [Ephesians 2:1–10](#) | Saved

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

Paul writes a letter to believers in Ephesus to strengthen their Christian faith and help them understand their new life in Christ. He spent three years with this church and knows them well. Paul begins by reminding them who they are because of Jesus ([Ephesians 1:1–14](#)). Before they can understand how to live as followers of Christ, they need to understand how desperate their situation was without him. They were spiritually dead because of sin, but God, because of his great love and mercy, made them alive in Christ.

We can easily have too small an understanding of salvation. We often think of salvation as something that happened in the past: Jesus died for our sins, and we were saved from sin's *penalty*. This is justification, and it is wonderful news! But salvation is bigger than what happened the day we first trusted Jesus. Today, God is saving us from the *power* of sin as he changes us to become more like Christ. This is sanctification. And one day, we will be saved from the *presence* of sin forever. This is glorification. Salvation is past, present, and future. Over the next few weeks, we will explore each part of this amazing gift!

TODAY: Pray, "God, open my eyes to see the fullness of my salvation. Help me understand what you have saved me from, what you are saving me from today, and what you will one day save me from forever. Give me a deeper understanding of your grace, mercy, and love. Thank you for making me alive in Christ. Amen."

Day 2 [Ephesians 2:1–3](#) | Saved From

Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. Ephesians 2:3b

Paul reminds the believers in Ephesus who they were before they trusted Jesus. They were spiritually dead in sin, disobedient to God, shaped by the ways of the world, and deserving God's righteous judgement. Paul is not trying to shame them. He wants them to remember what they have been saved from. God created a good world, but sin brought war, murder, greed, jealousy, revenge, and all brokenness into his creation. Every person contributes to that brokenness. All people sin and are objects of God's righteous anger.

God's wrath can be difficult to understand. We want God to judge terrible evil and make things right. But we can struggle to see our own sin with the same seriousness. When we measure ourselves against others, we may feel like we are doing well. But when we measure ourselves against God's perfect standard, we see our need for Jesus. Sin is not simply making bad choices or having areas where we "need improvement." Sin separates us from a holy God, and we cannot fix that separation on our own. Like someone who is physically dead cannot bring themselves back to life, we cannot save ourselves. We need God to rescue us. And that is exactly what he did. God stepped into our hopelessness and made a way for us to be forgiven and brought

back to him through Jesus. We need to understand what we have been saved from before we can fully appreciate the rescue Jesus provides.

TODAY: Take a few quiet moments to honestly name your sin before God. You don't need to hide, minimize, or make excuses. Admit where you have missed God's mark. Then thank him for the rescue you could never provide for yourself.

Day 3 [Ephesians 2:4–9](#) | Saved By

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8–9

Paul continues to teach the Ephesians about the heart of God. God is loving, merciful, and gracious. In love, he gave himself for them. In mercy, he does not give them the punishment their sin deserves. And in grace, he gives them what they do not deserve—forgiveness, new life, and a place with him forever. Paul reiterates the good news of salvation: they are saved by grace alone, through faith alone in Jesus. They cannot earn their way to God by being good, doing more, or trying harder. Salvation is a gift.

Jesus took our place. On the cross, he took our sin and bore the punishment we deserved. He gave his life so we could be forgiven. Then, through faith in him, he gives us his righteousness and makes us right with God. We do nothing to earn this gift. We simply receive it by trusting in Jesus. This leaves no room for boasting. We are not saved because we are better than someone else or because we have worked hard enough. God is the one who saves. Our part is to respond in faith.

TODAY: If you have never placed your faith in Jesus, talk to him now. Admit your need, turn from your sin, and place your trust in Jesus alone. If you are already following Jesus, take a few minutes to thank him specifically for the grace you have received. Then join our worship team in singing "[Jesus Paid it All/Nothing but the Blood](#)" as a reminder that Jesus has done what we could never do for ourselves.

Day 4 [Ephesians 2:10](#) | Saved For

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10

Paul provides a beautiful picture of what happens when believers put their faith in Jesus. He calls them God's handiwork. This points to something carefully made—a work of art, a masterpiece, or something created with great skill and purpose. Like a master artist, God knows what he is creating before the work is finished. He is their Master Designer, and they are his workmanship. He created them on purpose for a purpose.

Sin has damaged what God created, but through Jesus, God makes us new. We are not finished products. We are a work in progress. There may be parts of our lives that still need to be shaped, changed, and restored. But God is not finished with us. As Paul reminds us, "...he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion..." ([Philippians 1:6](#)). And God's work in us is meant to produce something. We are "created in Christ Jesus to do good works." Good works do not save us—that is God's gift of grace through faith. Instead, good works are the evidence of a life being changed by Jesus. As God shapes our hearts, his love begins to flow through us to others.

TODAY: Ask God, "What are you shaping in me, and where do you want your handiwork to be seen through me? Then look for an opportunity to do something good for someone else. Serve, encourage, forgive, or help. Let your life reflect the Master who made you.



Day 5 [2 Corinthians 12:1–10](#) | Paul's Thorn in the Flesh

This year in Beyond the Weekend, journey through different biblical models of prayer—one each month. August's focus is Lament: bringing our grief and struggle honestly to God.

Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” 2 Corinthians 12:8–9a

Paul suffers deep agony. Tormented and desperate for relief, he repeatedly pleads with the Lord in an emotionally charged lament. Then comes a subtle shift: “But he said to me...” God responds! Who is this God who answers Paul's cry? He is a God of power, restoration, and peace. God willingly floods Paul's weakness with grace so his glory can shine through him. God doesn't tell Paul what he's going to do; he tells him who God is!

Pain, whether emotional or physical, can pull our focus inward and tempt us to believe we are alone. But Paul shows us another way. Rather than ignore or deny our hurt, we can come to the Lord again and again with the honest emotions our circumstances call for. We come to a God who not only promises to be with us and give us the grace to make it through, but to come out with a stronger faith. We have a choice when we endure situations we don't want and didn't ask for. We can pull away and harden our hearts, or we can come to God, broken and honest, trusting that his grace might really be enough.

TODAY: Praying out of your pain in lament is a gift because you have somewhere and someone to go to with your burdens. Take some time to bring a hurt in your life before the Lord. Maybe, like Paul, you'll need to bring your need to him more than once. Don't hold back. Remember to listen.