



New International Version is used for questions

1. Pastor Rick said that we should proclaim that we belong to God because we believe, not because we behave, what does that mean?
2. Read Ephesians 2:8-10. What does this verse tell us about our salvation? What is grace? Can you name any other passages in scripture that tell us our salvation is not by good works? If you can, look them up and read them to the group. Suggestion: Right besides Ephesians 2:8,9 in your Bible, write down all of the other references that you can come up with that say salvation is not by good works, this is called cross-referencing.
3. Do you ever consider how far God has already brought you as a Christian? Share some ways that you have seen God change you since you became a Christian. Why do we tend to always focus on our negative characteristics instead of celebrating what God has already done in our lives?
4. Read Philippians 1:6. What is the promise is in this verse? What two critical realities did Pastor Rick say are true about this promise? Does this give you hope? Why?
5. Read Psalm 103:8-14. What does this passage say is God's attitude toward us as his children? Do you agree with Pastor Rick that we never have to wait until we are better to be loved by God? How is this different from what most religions teach about God? Which view of God's attitude toward you have you accepted as true?
6. Read Philippians 1:9-11. What is Paul's prayer for the Philippians? Does spiritual growth happen in a short period of time? Does spiritual growth happen automatically, or is it possible to not grow as a believer? How does our free-will affect our spiritual growth?

behavior. How we live does not determine if we belong to God, what we believe is necessary to receive salvation, faith alone in Christ alone, is what determines whether or not we belong to God.

2. *Ephesians 2:8,9 tells us that our salvation is based on God's grace and not our good works. Grace is to receive unmerited favor, to get something that you do not earn or deserve. God gives us eternal life as a free gift that we accept by placing our trust in Christ and his death for our sins as our only hope of going to heaven. Some other great passages that tell us salvation is not by works are Romans 3:28; Romans 4:5; Romans 11:6; Titus 3:5; Galatians 2:16; Galatians 3:11; Galatians 5:4; Philippians 3:9; Isaiah 64:6.*
3. *It is Satan who wants us to focus on our failures, not God. When we sin, and we will sin, God says just to confess it to him, accept his forgiveness as his child, and then move on. Our society also tends to magnify our failures and our own sinful nature will condemn our failures.*
4. *The promise in this verse is that the work God began in you when you became a Christian will never stop as long as you are alive. God will never give up trying to change you into the image of Christ, he never gives up on you. Pastor Rick said that two critical realities are: A. I can rest because my growth does not rely on me being perfect and B. I know when I am struggling that God is still active and not absent.*
5. *Psalm 103 tells us that God realizes our frailties and imperfections and does not treat us based on those but based on his unending love for us. He is compassionate even when we fail. Most religions teach that God is waiting to judge and condemn you when you make a mistake, that he is angry at you.*
6. *Paul's prayer for them is that they would continue to grow in their love for God and each other and that they would continue to grow in their understanding of what it means to live a life pleasing to God. Spiritual growth is like physical growth—it takes time and does not happen overnight. Unlike physical growth, spiritual growth does not happen automatically—we have to decide every day to practice the habits that cause us to grow spiritually, it is a choice of our will we must make. There are four habits that cause spiritual growth: A. Spend time in God's Word, it is our spiritual food; B. Pray, it is how we converse with God on a personal level; C. Give of our time, talents, abilities, and treasure. God is a giving God, to be like him we must give also; and D. Fellowship together as brothers and sisters in the family of God.*