

Salvation- The Gift of God
Ephesians 2:8-10

INTRO: With this passage, we come face to face with one of the most crucial statements in all the Word of God. There is no clearer statement anywhere in Scripture describing what it really means to be a Christian. If you can understand Ephesians 2:8-10, you will know what it means to be saved by grace.

- I. VS. 8, WE ARE SAVED ENTIRELY AS THE RESULT OF THE GRACE OF GOD
 - A. "For by grace are ye saved..."
 1. Grace, God's grace. Grace is one of the most beautiful and meaningful words of the New Testament. It appears 156 times in the New Testament. Paul uses it 102 times; it is one of Paul's favorite words. The word grace appears 12 times in Ephesians.
 2. Grace means unmerited, undeserved favor. It is all of God. Salvation is of the Lord.
 - a. Salvation comes to us entirely from God's side.
 - b. It comes to us in spite of ourselves-- unmerited, not because of ourselves.
 - c. God does not respond to our goodness, for we have none. Grace is bestowing the greatest gift-salvation- upon those who deserve the greatest punishment- hell. We have no right to salvation for we deserve eternal banishment from God. Yet God of His own love, mercy, and grace has granted us salvation. That's grace.
 3. That salvation is by grace is emphasized by the description of man's condition in verse 1-3 of this chapter. Man, as he is in his sin, deserves eternal punishment: hell and banishment.
 - a. Man by nature is a child of wrath (vs 3).
 - b. By nature man lives according to the course of this world.

- c. By nature man is governed by the prince and power of the air.
 - d. By nature man is a creature of lusts: lusts of the flesh- “fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.”
 - e. Does such a creature as described above deserve anything?
 - 1.) Does such a creature have a right at all to enter God’s presence?
 - 2.) Can such a creature demand anything of God?
 - 3.) Such a creature deserves nothing but hell.
 - 4. “God is perfection; and, therefore, only perfection is good enough for him. Man by his very nature cannot bring perfection to God; and so, if ever man is to win his way to God, it must always be God who gives and man who takes” (Barclay 104).
- B. Verses 1-3 truly paint an awful picture; then in verse four, we read, “But God.”
- 1. Man’s terrible situation exalts the grace and mercy of God. How else could such a creature be saved? (vs 7)
 - a. “Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me....”
 - b. “Alas, and did my Savior bleed? And did my Sovereign die? Would He devout that sacred head for such a worm as I?”
 - 2. “By grace are ye saved...” This is emphasized in verse 5.
 - a. We were dead without any life at all.
 - b. We were dead, without any ability at all.
 - c. Can a dead man raise himself?
 - 1.) To be saved, we had to be given life; we had to be quickened. And that is what God by grace did for us.
 - 2.) “By grace ye are saved.”
 - d. We are Christians only because of and entirely by the grace of God. We are not

saved by good works; we cannot be lost by bad works.

3. Paul never tired of the word grace for he understood it well. He at one time hated Christ and the church. He blasphemed the things of God and did his best to exterminate the Christian faith (Acts 9:1). He held the coats of those that stoned Stephen.
 - a. As Paul looked back on his life and at what God did for him, what else could he say but: "I am what I am by the grace of God" (I Cor. 15:10).
 - b. Do you feel as Paul did? If not, why not?
 - 1.) God saved us "while we were yet sinners" (Rom. 5:8).
 - 2.) While we were enemies of God, He saved us (Rom. 5:10).
 - 3.) Your salvation is utterly undeserved; it is the result of the goodness of God. Salvation is a gift and not a reward!

II. VS. 9, THERE IS NO GROUND WHATSOEVER FOR BOASTING.

- A. Note closely verse 9. Salvation is not of works, "lest any man should boast."
 1. In verse 8, the Bible says that salvation is "not of yourselves."
 - a. Your salvation is all of God if you are saved.
 - b. Salvation reflects no credit on the part of the creature: "Not of yourselves....lest any man should boast."
 2. "Not of works." Works will not save, but grace will.
 - a. Romans 3 puts it clearly into view. In verses 24-26, Paul declares that Jesus is our mercy seat, and all who believe on Him are saved.
 - b. In Romans 3:27, Paul asks the question: "Where is boasting then?" And he answers by saying: "It is excluded." It is shut out, put out the door, and the door locked. There is no room at all for boasting.

- c. The best works of any man are not good enough in God's sight. We are all condemned (Rom. 3:10, 23).
 - d. If anyone had something to boast about, it was Paul. Before his conversion, he had things to boast about; and he did boast. But oh what a change salvation made.
 - 1.) In Philippians 3:4-10, we see that boasting was excluded! He counted it, all his earthly attainments as dung.
 - 2.) Paul saw himself as the "least of the apostles" (I Cor. 15:9-10).
- B. The Gospel strips us all of any self- sufficiency. The Gospel makes us poor and needy. The Gospel "is the power of God unto salvation." It is not your works that saves; it is the Gospel. It is belief in what Christ did for us.
- 1. If we rely on anything we have done, we deny the grace of God.
 - 2. Salvation is by grace.

III. VS. 10, BEING BORN AGAIN IS THE RESULT OF GOD'S WORK

- A. "We are His workmanship."
- 1. It is God who has done everything; we are His workmanship.
 - a. Not our works; His works.
 - b. Not our good life– His sinless life.
 - c. Not our efforts– His finished work.
 - 2. Herschel H. Hobbs says, "The point here is that our salvation is a finished work" (41).
- B. "Created in Christ Jesus."
- 1. A Christian is a new creation, a new creature, a new man: "created in Christ Jesus." II Cor. 5:17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature..."
 - 2. The life of Christ comes into the believer for we are "partakers of the divine nature" (II Pet. 1:4). This is God's workmanship.

- C. “Unto good works...”
1. God makes us Christians in order that we may do good works.
 2. “It is not a question of good works leading to Christianity, but Christianity leading to good works” (Lloyd-Jones 135).

CONCLUSION: Salvation:

1. It is not of works
2. It is not of yourselves
3. It is by grace.
4. It is the gift of God.
5. It is through faith.

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March 9, 2008