

—{1}. **Ephesians 2:8–10** **Saved; Really Saved**

- A. Introduction – our text is well-known; no doubt many of you can quote it; perhaps the Holy Spirit applied it to you in conversion; may it be used in that manner today; here is the familiar Authorized version: ⁸For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

- B. Saved by Grace: **For by grace you have been saved** ... 2:8a (& 5b)
 - 1. literally, it is **'by the grace'** – what does it mean?
 - a. grace is a word with a number of meanings
 - (A) it can mean beauty in form, motion or aptitude; it can mean being pleasant in character or attitude; it can mean the showing or bestowing of favour
 - (B) some reasons why parents in hope name a daughter 'Grace'
 - b. are we talking then of some abstract quality? ... some nice, warm fuzzy which upon possessing it, we are saved? ... No.
 - (A) there is a heresy that has even permeated the church
 - (B) that grace is like a medicine, if should we get sufficient dosage – be baptized, be confirmed, take communion, show repentance or do penance, say prayers, confess sins, and so on – we can accumulate sufficient grace by these **'means of grace'** to receive salvation
 - c. no: this grace is a specific, particular grace: **'the grace'**– hear how this word is used in the context of this Ephesian letter:
 - (A) 1:6-7 – **'to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.**
 - (B) 2:7 – **'so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.'**
 - (C) it is His grace; God's grace; as we found in our Discussions on Titus 2:11 in our Sunday morning

adult Bible class: – ‘for the salvation-bearing grace of God has appeared...’

d. it is God’s grace, His divine attribute whereby He shows and bestows favour, the riches we do not deserve in place of the judgement which we do deserve; that is what is meant

2. to see how salvation comes ‘by the grace’, consider 2 Peter 3:5, ‘For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed ...’

a. God chose to use the instrument of His word, a command, as the means to effect or to cause the creation of the universe

b. ‘by the word’ – is the same Greek construction as ‘by the grace’ – it tells us that grace is the instrument of God’s choice to use as the means or cause of an individual’s salvation

3. For by grace, God’s grace, this instrument chosen by God to effect salvation, we read, ‘you have been saved’

a. Perfect passive tense, like, ‘I have been brought home’ – it has already happened; its effect remains; I didn’t do it

b. salvation, for the believer, is a single event that has taken place in the past and is a present reality – not something gradually being accomplished in his or her life each day

c. salvation of the believer, is done to him, not by him

C. Saved through Faith: ... you have been saved through faith; ... 2:8b

1. it is ‘faith’

a. how hard do I have to believe if I am to be saved?

b. maybe you have asked that question or heard it asked

c. however, faith by its very nature

(A) excludes any idea of merit or capability of the believer

(B) faith focusses on an object

(C) for salvation, that Object is Jesus Christ, the Saviour

(D) if faith depended upon effort – how hard I believe – then it would be works, but the opposite is the case – ‘Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favour, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited

as righteousness,' (Romans 4:4-5)

2. it is 'through faith'

a. now, without delving into the Greek

- (A) the Bible does speak of faith as being the instrument by which means or cause the believer is sanctified, walks and lives with God, and is able to please God
- (B) but in the matter of salvation, of being justified so that we can stand before God's judgement, it is usually 'from' or 'out of faith' or, as here, 'through faith'
- (C) God's grace is the reservoir of His salvation; faith is the spring or the channel, connected to the reservoir, out of which and through which that grace flows^{2}.

3. we in no way twist Scripture when say, with the Reformers, that as salvation is by grace alone, so it is through faith alone

- a. Acts 16:30-31 – 'and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They said, "Believe {have faith} in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."'
- b. Romans 4:16 – "For this reason *it is by* {out of} *faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, ...!*
- c. faith divides mankind into 2 groups: 'He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.' – John 3:36 NKJV

D. Salvation God-Given, not Man-Earned

1. in its Divine source: ... and that not of yourselves, *it is the gift of God*; ...

2:8c

a. grace alone; faith alone; given by God alone

b. the source of salvation is not in ourselves

- (A) literally, 'and that' – the grace, the faith, the whole work of salvation – 'that is not from out of yourselves'
- (B) salvation does not spring from our fallen human nature
- (C) Ephesians 2:1-3 confirm this: we were spiritually dead in sin
- (D) every false religion, every heresy, exalts man's ability and deprecates the grace of God, adding lists of do's and don'ts to these verses as conditions of salvation

- c. BUT, the source of salvation is totally from God
 - (A) ... it is the gift of God; ... and what a gift!
 - (B) as promised in the Old Testament: 'Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost.' (Isaiah 55: 1)
 - (C) as accomplished in the New Testament: 'Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!' (2 Corinthians 9: 15)
 - (D) as now being offered to all: 'Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.'" (Revelation 21:6)

- 2. in its Divine working: ... not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, ... 2:9–10a
 - a. just as it is 'not out of ourselves' it is 'not out of works'
 - (A) if salvation cannot come from within ourselves
 - (1) because we are dead in sin; spiritually dead
 - (B) so also it cannot come from our efforts, our works
 - (1) because the works of a dead man are dead works
 - (2) Christ's work purges the believer's dependence on such works: 'Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ... how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?' (Hebrews 6:1, 9:14)
 - b. but there is a work involved; not ours, but God's in Christ
 - (A) our God is a God of creative activity
 - (B) in fact, what separates the infinite God from every finite being is that He is Creator
 - (1) Satan is the author of lying wonders, but not life;
 - (2) man devises things by his imaginations; but,
 - (3) only God can create out of nothing, life out of death
 - (C) our trust must be in God's Divine work: 'Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the

old things passed away; behold, new things have come.' (2 Corinthians 5:17)

3. in its Divine results: ... good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them²:10b
- a. there are two lies circulated about Christians and works
 - (A) first : Christians are saved by works
 - (B) second : Christian need not do good works
 - (C) One critic said he had gone to many churches and heard the preacher say, "Don't try to impress God with your works," or "Don't attempt to please God with your merits," or "Don't try to keep the rules and regulations and thus win your way." He looked around at nearly slumbering collections of utterly casual Christians and wondered, "Who's trying?"^{3}. – how sad it is when my life so seldom shows Christlikeness
 - b. both of these lies seek to rob God of His deserved glory
 - (A) the first: our boasting would be in ourselves, not God
 - (B) the second: we would fail, 'to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.' (Ephesians 1:12)
 - c. both would rob God of His sovereign purposes
 - (A) the first: that salvation be the free gift of God
 - (B) the second: that the good works he has planned, and for which He has re-created us, prepared us, are neglected

E. Conclusion – an invitation – the work of salvation is complete in every detail, planned and accomplished by God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; waiting to be received through faith; free, yet at infinite cost; difficult because Satan would blind our eyes to its glorious truth to keep us bound in our sin; yet simple because Christ has done it all. Saved; really saved.

Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe
Sin Had left a crimson stain;
He washed it white as snow?^{4}.

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2. Adapted from ‘Grace and Faith that Works’ by Rev. Chris Vogel – Kerux sermon #7127
3. By Martin Marty, Kerux illustrations #7549
4. ‘Jesus Paid It All’ by Elvina Mabel Hall (1820-1889)