

Salvation Begins and Ends with God's Grace (Ephesians 2:7-10)

1. **PURPOSE** of Our Salvation: God saves us to glorify His grace forever (v7)
 - a. God's purpose in our salvation is that the riches of His grace and kindness toward us would be glorified forever
 - i. His purpose in regenerating us, raising us up, and seating in the heavens with Christ is so that He would demonstrate His wealth of grace
 - b. God doesn't work *merely* for the happiness of man as the end of His purpose, but primarily so that He is known *through* the happiness of the Redeemed
 - i. When we treat the happiness of man *as the end purpose* of God, then we have made an idol out of man
 1. God's primary purpose is to glorify Himself
 2. In the saints, His love is set forth to save and redeem so that all would know of the great wealth of His grace
 - ii. In His saints the riches of His grace are demonstrated for all of eternity
 1. His grace in kindness (goodness) TO US
 - a. We are the beloved!! His kindness and goodness are REAL, they are genuine and they are effective.
 - b. He has set His great love upon you, O Saints of God! You are His, and He has graciously saved you completely.
 2. In Christ: our salvation is centered in and dependent upon Jesus as "the Christ" for all of eternity as proving God's superlative grace
 - a. We are accepted because we are united with Jesus, one of the major themes of these first chapters ("in Him")
 - b. Our own efforts have been rejected by God, but we are accepted and adopted because we are united with Jesus.
 - c. It is HIS GRACE that is expounded in these first 2 chapters of Ephesians, the focus is on His work and His actions
 - i. This is why "by grace you have been saved" is so abruptly shoved into v5 and expounded here in 8-10.
 - iii. In unbelievers the fullness of His holiness are known in justice/wrath
 1. Romans 9:22-24
 - c. Our salvation is completely sourced and originated in God Himself. This is the grace of God!
 - i. All of the verbs in the preceding section have God as the actor/performer and we as the passive/recipients of His actions
 - ii. This is why His grace is established and demonstrated for all of eternity
 1. He expounds His own wonders and goodness through our salvation
 2. We, as His adopted children, reveal HIS EXCELLENCE as our Father
 3. Ephesians begins w/facts of God's gracious goodness toward us in Christ as a reason to PRAISE Him
 2. **CAUSE** of Our Salvation: God's grace (v8-9)
 - a. "For" is an explanatory word, explaining verse 7 and more likely the previous 7 verses
 - b. We are saved by grace alone
 - i. God's grace is the objective basis, the source of our salvation
 1. Grace: Unearned favor or gifting; the goodness of God without any cause outside of Himself
 - ii. "have been saved" is in the perfect tense, indicating the action of salvation has been completed and has continuing results
 1. This completed action with continuing results is so that God would be glorified into all eternity (v7).

- 2. All of our salvation, from election to faith to eternal glorification, finds its source and foundation in His gracious and effective work.
- c. God's goodness in Christ is what saves us
- d. All of salvation is rooted in and accomplished in God

3. MEANS of Our Salvation: faith (v8)

- a. God's grace and His salvation is appropriated through faith
 - i. Faith, in the Bible, means "trust, dependence" not merely knowledge of truth or an assent to facts
 - 1. "through" faith, faith is the means of God's grace to His people
 - 2. Our trust in Jesus is the means that we are saved
 - a. Humble, not self-reliant, Christ-reliant
 - ii. One must trust Jesus completely to save them by His grace
 - 1. There is no salvation without trust in Jesus Christ (John 14:6; 1 John 5:12)
 - 2. There is nobody who believes that will not be saved (Acts 16:31; John 6:37)
 - iii. One must trust the Father to save them without any help from within them (of yourselves) or by them (of works)
 - 1. "not of yourselves" is literally "not out from yourselves"
 - a. The preposition, *ex*, indicates a source of emission "out of" and is usually translated as "from, out from" or "out of"
 - b. This shows that there is nothing that comes from within us, or out from us, that saves us, it all has its source in God and His objective grace toward us
 - 2. "not as a result of works" or "not by works"(NIV) uses the exact same grammatical language as "not of yourselves"
 - a. Works are not the basis for our salvation. Nothing we can do or perform is the basis for our salvation, it is all by God's grace alone.
 - i. No acts of goodness make us OK with God
 - ii. No rejection of evils make us OK with God
 - iii. We obey, as redeemed believers, because we have been made for good works, by God, that we should walk in them
 - b. This shows (*ex*) that just as works are not the basis for our salvation, neither is anything within us or coming from us
 - iv. Salvation is a gift of God
 - 1. "this" in verse 8 refers to the whole salvation package (which includes faith) is a gift of God, not from anything within us (such as wisdom or insight, or even humility) or from anything that we have done (no religious ritual, no moral high ground)
 - 2. Gifts are received, but never earned or expected
 - v. All of the redemptive act is from God, as a gift, the whole package is His for His glorious demonstration of the wealth of His grace for all of eternity.
 - 1. 1 Corinthians 1:16-31
 - 2. Titus 3:3-8
 - 3. Eph 1:7,10 – we cannot read 8-9 without 7 and 10!!
- b. The result of this grace is that nobody can boast
 - i. The result of understanding the *complete* grace of God in our salvation (from election to eternity) is that nobody can boast:
 - 1. Of anything from within them (out of yourselves)
 - 2. Or done by them (out of works)
 - 3. We cannot even say that our faith is the *reason* that God saved us, for it is a gift of God
 - a. Faith cannot be thought of as a work, but also of grace, for it continues that we have nothing to boast in

3. We know that God has worked for our salvation, we cannot be taken away from Him
 4. We seek Him as our Father, for we are His sons and daughters with all the privileges of the holy children of God, so we go forth boldly and without fear to do His will, for our Father is God
- iii. The root of all obedience is the Christ-reliant understanding of God's sheer grace
1. I can forgive those who hurt me because God graciously acted to forgive me
 - a. Even when I didn't seek Him, He sought me by His grace
 - b. Even when I didn't prove to Him that I was worthy of forgiveness, He forgave me by His grace
 - c. When I earned His wrath, God gave me sonship in Jesus by grace!
 - d. I can extend grace to those who wrong me, for I have been saved by sheer grace
 2. I can love those who are different than me, for God loves me by His grace
 - a. There is nothing in my work ethic, my clothing, my cleanliness, my job, my house, my wisdom, my intellect; nothing in me or done by me to make me OK with God
 - b. Sheer grace of God leads me to love those whom I perceive to be unlike me, for they are just like me!
 - c. I am not accepted based upon my political stance, morality, or "holiness" so how can I look down on those different than me?
 3. I can love and respect those who do not believe in Jesus, for my faith is not based upon my wisdom, spiritual insight, righteousness, knowledge, or effort
 - a. Even my faith is God's gift and all that I can respond with is gratitude
 - b. The righteousness of God has been *given* to me in Christ, by God's grace, for God's glory! How can I steal God's glory by acting as if it is because of something in me or done by me?
 - c. If it's all of God, it's not of me, so I cannot compare my righteousness to another person in judgment as if it were my own!
 4. I don't have to defend my reputation
 - a. I am completely saved by God's grace, what can man do to me?

Conclusion:

All of salvation is a gift of God, given out of the riches of His grace. We have done nothing to earn it and we cannot do anything to merit His blessing. His love is set upon those who believe because He is a God who loves and loves to gift His children to show the wealth of His grace.

Pride rejects having to accept God's gift as by grace. In the sinful human nature, we want to earn it, and we suppress the truth of the gospel of grace and believe and act as if our own performance or wisdom is what makes us acceptable people. We defend our "rightness" before others by attacking them, belittling them, shaming them, gossiping about them, slandering them, because we functionally believe that we have earned our good verdict by our "rightness." This is not grace! Let us live in humility for we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone! His sheer grace leads us to humbly serve others, to rest secure in His work and not need to defend or attack others, but rather to hope.

We believers rejoice in the gift of God given to us in Jesus Christ. Let us humble ourselves before the gracious God of mercy. Through Him we know that God's grace has condescended down to us in order to save us from ourselves and our sins. We rejoice that we know God's love and it is all of God's doing. We rejoice in the grace and goodness of God! Take away my reputation, my family, my vacations, and I will still rejoice, not in the happiness of some inherent divinity within me, but in the gift of MY Savior, the One who saves me from MY sins. May we learn to rejoice in His grace toward us and relish His spiritual blessings in the heavenlies as gifts from our Father. May we praise Him for His amazing goodness toward us, for when there was nothing in me or that could be done by me to make me worthy of His presence...Jesus saved even me.