

"Saved by Grace"

Ephesians 2:1-10

Part 4

I. We were Dead in our Sins

Notice Ephesians 2:1

II. A Detailed Description of the Believer's Past Condition

Paul gives us the details of what controlled our lives and why we were enemies of God. This is also a description of the unbeliever's life right now.

- 1. We were controlled by the course of this world.**

Notice Ephesians 2:2

- 2. We were controlled by the Prince of the Power of the Air.**

This is Satanic influence.

- 3. We were controlled by the spirit that NOW works in the children of disobedience.**
- 4. We were controlled by the lusts of the flesh.**

Notice Ephesians 2:3

- 5. We were children of wrath.**

Notice Ephesians 2:3 again.

This is the dark picture of who we were and if you are not saved this is the dark picture of who you are presently.

III. God's Mercy

Now in 2:4-10 we are going to see what God has done for us.

Notice Ephesians 2:4-5

God loved us EVEN when we were dead in our sins. God chose to love us despite our sinful condition and despite the fact that we were His enemies. In the book of Genesis, we can get a picture of what God has done for us.

Genesis 3:6-12

⁶ *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

⁷ *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

⁸ *And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*

⁹ *And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*

¹⁰ *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*

¹¹ *And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?*

¹² *And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*

IV. God's Grace

Notice Ephesians 2:5-7

Listen again to the words of Meyer on verse 7:

"The word "exceeding" might be rendered "beyond throwing distance." Fling your thoughts forward as far as you can, and there will always be an immense beyond; throw them as high as you may, till they out soar the stars, and there will always be an above; let them sink for ever, and there will always be a beneath--in the exceeding riches of God's grace."

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork"; but the glory of the position and character of the saints, contrasted with the degradation from which they were raised, will be accounted in coming ages a more extraordinary exemplification of the riches of Divine grace than the splendour of the heavens is of the wealth of his skill."

Let us remember Paul's prayer for these believers in chapter 1.

Ephesians 1:16-18

¹⁶ *Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;*

¹⁷ That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

¹⁸ The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

We are God's inheritance and we are the riches of His glory. Because He has taken us, who were dead in sin and from our lives He has brought forth righteousness. So, for all eternity we shall show forth the riches of His glory and His grace.

Now as we continue, we shall see why we are and will be trophies of God's grace for all eternity.

Notice Ephesians 2:8

The word "FOR" introduces the reason why we shall reflect the riches of God's grace in eternity. Let us consider several points from this verse:

1. We are saved by grace.

Grace is unmerited favor. It means to receive something which we do not deserve. God has given to us that which we do not deserve. Last week we looked at what we do deserve and that is WRATH and JUDGMENT.

Listen to what **Wuest** says concerning "grace" -

"In its use among the pagan Greeks it referred to a favor done by one Greek to another out of the pure generosity of his heart, and with no hope of reward. When it is used in the New Testament, it refers to that favor which God did at Calvary when He stepped down from His judgment throne to take upon Himself the guilt and penalty of human sin. In the case of the Greek, the favor was done to a friend, never an enemy. In the case of God, it was an enemy, the sinner, bitter in his hatred of God, for whom the favor was done. God has no strings tied to the salvation He procured for man at the Cross. Salvation is given the believing sinner out of the pure generosity of God's heart. The Greek word referred to an action that was beyond the ordinary course of what might be expected, and was therefore commendable. What a description of that which took place at the Cross!"

Out of His love for us, God extended His grace at the cross so that we could be set free from the power and the penalty of sin and enter into a personal relationship with Him.

2. We are saved by grace THROUGH FAITH.

Faith is the channel through which God's grace enters into our lives. Jesus Christ died on the cross for all mankind, but it is only those who place their faith in His finished work who have the grace of God applied to their lives.

1 John 2:1-2

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

*² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, **but also for the sins of the whole world.***

John 3:16-19

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

¹⁷ For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

¹⁸ He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

It is faith that opens the gates for grace to flow into our lives.

Now FAITH and BELIEVING need to be defined here because there are many people who believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for their sins and the sins of the world, but they are not saved. The FAITH spoken of here is a complete reliance upon Jesus Christ, trusting completely that His death on the cross was the payment for your sin.

Charles Swindoll explains genuine belief writing...

"My favorite illustration of what it means to believe is the true story of Ann Seward, a resident of Portland, Oregon. She was asked to costar with high-wire artist Philippe Petit at the opening of the Portland Center for the Performing Arts. Intrigued by the opportunity, she responded, "I'd like to meet this man and see if I trust him." Her stage would be on an eighty-foot wire between the new theater building and the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. On August 31, 1987, the ninety-one-pound Seward placed her life in the hands of the high-wire artist and was carried on his back while he performed high above the street. She said that her performance had a lesson for those who witnessed it. "I think that one of the most beautiful things about the performance was that it took a lot of trust—absolute trust—to do that," she said. "I think in the world that is a very profound issue... Here it is—I'm putting my life in someone else's hands and trusting the whole crowd not to do anything to distract him."

*Many of those who witnessed the performance "**believed**" that Petit could successfully complete the performance with someone on his back. But their **belief** was merely*

*intellectual and did not feature the **absolute trust** and **total commitment** exhibited by Ann Seward. She expressed her belief by placing her very life in the hands of the artist. This is the kind of "belief" referred to in the words of Paul, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved". This belief is not merely head knowledge; it is the response of a heart to the person of Christ saying, "I trust Your redeeming work to deliver me from sin and carry me safely to heaven."*

Remember Paul and the jailer? There was an earthquake which freed Paul and Silas and the jailer then feared for his life.

Acts 16:30-31

³⁰ And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

*³¹ And they said, **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ**, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*

I want to take you back to the Old Testament to see a picture of our salvation and the need for faith. But before we do, I will show you that Jesus pointed to the same text when speaking with Nicodemus.

John 3:14-15

¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

¹⁵ That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Numbers 21:4-9

⁴ And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.

⁵ And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.

⁶ And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

⁷ Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.

⁸ And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

⁹ And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

Why a serpent? The serpent represents sin. Why brass? The brass speaks of judgment. They had to believe if they were going to be healed. The same is true for man today. In order to be saved he must believe/trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ to save them.

Notice Ephesians 2:8-9 again.

3. We are NOT saved by works!

Salvation is not of works and so there can be no boasting on our part.

4. Salvation is a GIFT.

Now there is much controversy over the statement here for many will say the gift is FAITH. But if we search the Scriptures, we see that many times SALVATION is referred to as the free gift.

Romans 6:23

²³ For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:12-17

¹² Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

¹³ (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

¹⁵ But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

¹⁶ And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

¹⁷ For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

Conclusion:

Salvation is a free gift from God to ALL the world. But it must be received. You can know all about it and even know that it is for you but if you do not repent and accept Jesus Christ as your Savior it does you no good at all.

John 1:11-12

¹¹ He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: