

"Saved by Grace"

Ephesians 2:1-10

Part 5

Introduction: Last week in our study of Ephesians we looked at two verses that explain very clearly the way of salvation.

Notice Ephesians 2:8-9

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.

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.

John 3:16

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.

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.

3. We are NOT saved by works!

4. Salvation is a GIFT.

These verses are here to show us that our position as described in chapter 1 is not because of our righteousness or our good works. We are who we are in Christ because of the grace of God. These first 10 verses of chapter 2 show us what we were before salvation and how we became who we are in Christ today. Let me give you a quick outline of what we have looked at in this chapter.

I. Amazing Depths

Ephesians 2:1-3

II. Amazing Heights

Ephesians 2:4-7

III. Amazing Grace

Ephesians 2:8-9

This now brings us to one more verse in this section.

IV. Amazing Works

Ephesians 2:10

Notice Ephesians 2:10

When we begin to understand what Paul is saying here, I can assure you that you will be blessed richly. The meaning in this verse is beautiful. Now let me explain why the word "FOR" is at the beginning of this verse.

Verses 8-9 show us that God gets all the glory for our salvation. That is why we are the riches of His glory. For all eternity we shall be trophies of God's grace because of what we were in our sins as compared to who we are in Christ.

Remember that I told you "the heavens declare the glory of God, but the GRACE of God will be magnified through our position and our character and His grace will be exemplified more so than the wealth of His skill as reflected by the creation." The heavens declare the glory of God now, but we shall declare the GRACE of God in our position for all eternity even more than the heaven declare His glory.

So, Ephesians 2:8-9 show this and now verse 10 gives a more detailed explanation.

Let us consider Ephesians 2:10 in sections.

1. For we are His workmanship.

The word "WORKMANSHIP" is the word "**poiēma**". This is the very word that we get the word POEM from. The idea here is that we are God's POEM which He is writing.

Let me show you the only other place where the word is used:

Romans 1:18-20

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

¹⁹ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

*²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood **by the things that are made**, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:*

This phrase is one word and it is the word "**poiēma**". God's power is on display through creation for creation is a poiema/poem which God has written. In the same way we are a poem that is being written and we are an even greater display of the power of God.

*Listen to the words of A. C. Gaebelein on this thought - "It is a beautiful thought in itself to think of those who are saved by grace, and united to Christ as "the poem of God." But the word "Poïema" may also be rendered "Masterpiece" or "Masterwork." Only once more is the same word found in the original language of the New Testament Scriptures. In **Rom. 1:20** it is used in connection with the physical creation. God has produced two great masterworks in which He manifests His power. He called the universe into existence out of nothing. What He, as the omnipotent One can do, is seen in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the sustenance of His creation. His eternal power and Godhead are revealed in creation (**Ro 1:19-20**). But the creation of the universe out of nothing is not the greatest masterpiece of God. God has done something greater. He has produced a work, which reveals Him in a far higher degree. That greater masterpiece is the redemption of sinners."*

God is currently writing this poem.

Philippians 1:6

⁶ Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Now let me show you how God does this poem writing.

Romans 8:28-29,35-39

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

²⁹ For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

³⁶ As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

³⁷ Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

³⁸ For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

³⁹ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Every situation that we experience is the pen through which God uses to write His poem.

Listen to the words of **Joni Erickson Tada** who became quadriplegic after a tragic accident, alludes to herself as a "poiema" in her book **A Place of Healing**:

"God has a plan and purpose for my time on earth. He is the master artist or sculptor, and He is the One Who chooses the tools He will use to perfect His workmanship. What of suffering, then? What of illness? What of disability? Am I to tell Him which tools He can use and which tools He can't use in the lifelong task of perfecting me and molding me into the beautiful image of Jesus? Do I really know better than Him, so that I can state without equivocation that it's always His will to heal me of every physical affliction? If I am His poem, do I have the right to say, "No, Lord. You need to trim line number two and brighten up lines three and five. They're just a little bit dark." Do I, the poem, the thing being written, know more than the poet?"

We are being sculpted by God's own hand. Every day we live He is writing another line of the poem. Don't EVER feel as though you are not important in this world for you are the greatest display of the power of God which exists. Even far greater than creation itself.

Let us now notice the second part of the verse.

Notice Ephesians 2:10 again.

2. Created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

Now we know that we are not saved by works but when we are saved, we will produce good works. We are saved UNTO good works. These works are the result of God's power working in us.

2 Corinthians 5:17-18a

¹⁷ *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

¹⁸ *And all things are of God,*

These works are the result of the Holy Spirit working in our lives. Someone who says they are saved and there is no works of righteousness in their lives is deceived.

James 2:14-20

¹⁴ *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?*

¹⁵ *If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,*

¹⁶ And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

¹⁷ Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

¹⁸ Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

²⁰ But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

Works of righteousness are the evidence of salvation in the believer's life. Let me show you what this looks like.

1 Thessalonians 1:6-10

⁶ And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.

⁷ So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

⁸ For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

⁹ For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

¹⁰ And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

These people were examples to all who believed because of their works.

- a. They proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- b. They turned away from the idols.
- c. They lived in expectation of the return of Jesus Christ.

The works of righteousness that come from our lives are evidence of the power of God as He constantly changes our lives.

Matthew 5:14-16

¹⁴ Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

¹⁵ Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Let me now show you the last part of the verse.

Notice Ephesians 2:10 again.

3. Which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

God has ordained our path and He has ordained the works which we are to walk in on that path. Our lives are full of opportunities do good works which will bring glory to God.

We need to live our lives looking for these opportunities. Many times, our focus is upon ourselves and for that reason we often miss the works which are set before us. Let us seek the will of God each day so that we might see the opportunities which are placed before us in which we can glorify our Lord.

Listen to the words of Stedman on this thought:

"Do you have any idea how many good works God has prepared for you? They are waiting for you to enter into as you walk in faith and trust and dependence upon Christ. The situations are there, ready and waiting for you to step into. This is what God has called you to. As you do so, you become a vivid display of the greatness and the glory of God."

Conclusion:

I will end with the words of Paul to the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 3:2-3

² Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

³ Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.