

The Book of Ephesians.

Chapter 2.

(Verse by verse study.)
Un-edited

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Part 2

Eph 2:8 For 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.

Last week we saw an overview of the above scriptures, by grace alone we are saved. Today we will see the significance of these two verses.

Conversion is the work of God. By the power of God we are delivered from sin and wrath. We are saved by grace alone. The grace in context here is God's unmerited favor in salvation, underserved favor from a superior to an inferior, God's divine grace to man.

It is different than Justice and Mercy. Justice is getting what we deserve. Mercy is not getting what we deserve. Grace is getting what we do not deserve. Salvation by grace is which we do not deserve. Grace is God's love and kindness manifested in Jesus on the Cross, we receive the great blessing of redemption. Grace rules out all human merit. Grace is of God given by God, because of who He is not because of who we are.

By grace you are saved through faith.

Eph 2:8 For by grace (charis) are ye saved through faith (pistis); and that (touto) not of yourselves: it is the gift (doron) of God:

Now it is very important to understand the word faith has a broad meaning. But I want to stick to our subject. When the scripture says, by grace you are saved through faith, many believe faith is a feeling. There are many who does not believe what the Bible say and yet they that in their heart that they are Christians as they go by the gut feeling.

Norman Vincent Peale in his best selling book, 'The power of positive thinking' a spiritual power that is in man. Which he is really talking of the self confidence in man. He took many scriptures out of context and taught this false teachings that was embraced by many churches. If you see history it really came through Pelagian and people like Charles Finney.

Also there are many Christians who make faith a work itself. As they see the scripture, 'By grace you are saved through faith.' We are speaking of saving faith. Is this faith comes from man or is it from God?

Let us see in context in the book of Ephesians we studied that we were spiritually dead to God but alive to sin but it was God who made us spiritually alive so regeneration or the new birth comes first.

(Eph 2:1 and 2:5) Naturally spiritually dead do not have faith. (2 Thes 3:2; 1 Cor 2:14) Remember we are speaking here only of saving faith.

Ephesians 2:8 does not end when it says by grace you are saved through faith but continues with the word and.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

Faith is a gift

This faith is a gift from God, we are saved by grace through faith and it is not of ourselves. There is no room left for us to boast and say it is my faith that I am a Christian.

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

So grace is not a work and saving faith is not a work.

Ro 11:6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Yes, my friends faith is the means and the instrument or channel which the grace of God comes to us. This faith is not the produce of man's free will or man's power but it is the free gift of God.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne (1813-1843) said the following:

When a man chooses an apple off a tree, he generally chooses the ripest, the one that promises best. It is not so with God in choosing the soul He saves. He does not choose those that have sinned least, those that are most willing to be saved; He often chooses the vilest of men, "to the praise of the glory of his grace". This is proved by the instances given in the Bible of brands plucked out of the burning. Why did God choose Manasseh, who "caused his children to pass through the fire", set "a carved image in the house of God", and filled Jerusalem with the blood of holy men, while many of his deluded people, who had sinned far less, perished? (2 Chronicles 33). Why did God save Zaccheus the hoary-headed swindler, "the chief of the publicans"? (Luke 19: 1-10). Why did Jesus tell the Pharisees, "the publicans, and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you"? Why did Jesus enter into the pearly gates of paradise with a poor thief, who had never done anything but sin up to his last hour? (Luke 23:43, comp. Matthew 27:44). Why did He leave the other thief, who was no worse than his fellow (both were hell-deserving), to sink into perdition within an arm's length of an Almighty Saviour? All these things happened unto them for ensamples, to show us that God saves according to the good pleasure of His will, not for our goodness, but to show His own free adorable grace.

There is an interesting story when Spurgeon was very young he was invited to preach in a country town. He was very punctual and tardy when it came to appointments but railway delays and breakdown of the train he reached the place of worship late and the congregation had proceeded in their worship.

When he neared the chapel he saw someone from the pulpit preaching and to his amazement it was his grandfather preaching. When he saw his grandson, at once he said, "Here comes my grandson! He may preach the gospel better than I can, but he cannot preach a better gospel." He insisted that his grandson Charles should take the sermon but young Spurgeon refused as he said, "You can preach better than I can." But his grandfather insisted young Spurgeon to preach where he left.

He told Spurgeon, "I was preaching on for by grace you are saved, I have shown the source and the fountainhead of salvation and now I am showing the channel of it, through faith, now you can take from here."

Spurgeon in his story tells that he was so much at home with these glorious truths, he did not feel any difficulty in taking from his grandfather the thread of his message and joining my thread to it so as to continue without a break.

Nobody will be saved if it was left for our free will, my decision to come to Christ. Because the natural man in his fallen condition is not willing to come to Christ, just like Adam when he sinned against God he was not willing to come to God but running away and hiding from the presence of God.

But how many times you hear the evangelist or the pastor telling people now it is up to your decision to accept Christ, they make the faith a work and tell people to raise their hands, come forward and repeat a prayer. It is something you have to do to be saved. There is nothing in New Testament this kind of teaching and the apostles never practiced this kind of teaching, this is new teaching very strange to Historical biblical Christianity.

Let me give you some illustrations. Let's think about a hungry lion and you make two different plates for the Lion, one a nice green salad pour Ranch Dressing over it, then another plate just raw meat. Which one will the Lion choose, yes the raw flesh. Why it is because of his nature, it is the same with the fallen man. The fallen man loves darkness, the pleasures of sin rather than the God of the Bible. Go to the streets and offer the drunkard a bottle of Whisky or the Bible which one will he take? Offer man a delicious meal or the word of God, the fallen man is controlled by his appetite, he is a slave to his own emotions, feelings and desires unless God give a new nature then man will follow the will of God, God ways not his ways.

The carnal mind is enmity with God. (Rom 8:7) The fallen nature of man the unbeliever does not want to come to Jesus on his own will.

The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. Psalm 10:4

Joh 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

When the multitude saw how a demon possessed man was healed but Jesus they did not come to Jesus for repentance and tell him to stay with them, no, they told him to leave from them. (Luke 8:37)

The gospel command is to repent and believe in Jesus addressed and invitation is to all but all will not come to him.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

So salvation is of grace but not by the power of man's will.

Ro 9:16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

It is not man's will but salvation is from the will of God. Faith comes by hearing and hearing of the gospel. God is the one who opens the mind that is blinded, the heart to receive the gospel and for us to understand the word of truth.

Jas 1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of

his creatures.

I want to show you in scripture that Salvation is of God and from the beginning to the end he is the author and the finisher of our faith. Let me show you briefly some scriptures.

1. God regenerates the spiritually dead man.(Eph 2:1;5 Ac 16:14)
2. When you are regenerated your mind is opened by God and trust in Jesus and repent of your sins and in 2Co 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance. Ungodly man cannot repent. It is that God grants repentance and faith to the regenerated man. (Acts 11:18; 2 Tim 2:25; Philp 1:29; Acts 13:48)

Repentance is a gift of God as much as saving faith is. Both the positive turning to Christ and the negative turning from sin must be present in the mere Christian. You see this, for example, in I Thessalonians 1:9: "you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." The two graces of faith and repentance together constitute real divine conversion.

2. We are saved by grace alone. (Eph 2:8-9)

Saving faith is a gift of God William Cowper said in one his hymns

"Of all the gifts Thine hand bestows,
Thou Giver of all good!
Not heaven itself a richer knows
Than my Redeemer's blood.

Faith too, the blood-receiving grace,
From the same hand we gain;
Else, sweetly as it suits our case,
The gift had been in vain."

Grace was given to the believer before the world began.

2Ti 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Eph 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

The elect were chosen and grace was given to them before the world began but yet they did not have salvation, they too were born in sin and salvation comes in our time.

No wonder the gospel is called the gospel of grace.

Ac 20:24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Yet many prominent evangelists and teachers have turned the gospel into a gospel of works, yes their churches are packed who loves to hear the fleshly gospel that brings much feelings and pride to the flesh but not profit the soul.

When the Christian is ready to die the godly Christians cannot say that I was saved because of my decision by my repentance by my righteousness, by my merit, by my works but all the glory goes to God alone. As the man who wrote 'amazing grace' John Newton at 82, Newton said, "My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things, that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior."

Conclusion is that God does not save sinners by works so they can be saved. Adam was given a commandment to obey and Adam failed, the human works failed so glory goes to God of his grace. Faith is only the channel by which the grace comes to us. It is not a deserving action or an attitude on our part, it is not from yourselves but the gift of God. It is not grace plus works but by grace alone.

We are saved from the wrath of God, the dominion of sin. How are we saved from these things? Through Christ and in Christ alone.

Augustus Toplady was only thirty-eight when he died **on this day, august 11, 1778**, but his short life-span was enough to produce one of the most beloved of all hymns: Rock of Ages

Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to the cross I cling,
Naked come to thee for dress,
Helpless look to thee for grace,
Foul, I to the Fountain fly,
Wash me Savior, or I die.

Augustus Toplady said the following.

And thus it will be when God has accomplished the number of His elect, and completely gathered in the fulness of His redeemed kingdom. What, do you think, your song will be, when you come to heaven? "Blessed be God, that He gave me free-will; and blessed be my own dear self, that made a good use of it"? O no, no. Such a song as that was never heard in heaven yet, nor ever will, while God is God, and heaven is heaven. Look into the Book of Revelation, and there you will find the employ of the blessed, and the strains which they sing. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

*Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, by
Thy Blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation
(Revelation 9:10).*

All the glory goes to God alone.

Ps 115:1 Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

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