

FROM DEATH TO LIFE, PT. 6; EPH. 2:8-9 (Ed O'Leary)

INTRODUCTION.

GRACE, ~ GRACE, ~ GOD'S GRACE, ~ GRACE THAT WILL PARDON AND CLEANSE WITHIN;
~~ grace, ~ grace, ~ God's grace, ~ grace that is greater than all our sin!

▶▶ Today we begin to look at the end of this paragraph that we have been working on, ~ Eph. 2:1-10, ~ specifically, ~ verses 8-10.

▷▷ As we've noted before in our summaries of 2:1-10, ~ in verses 8-10, ~ Paul explains that our salvation, ~ this new spiritual life that God has given us, ~ is totally by His grace alone.

↳↳ Paul writes, ~ ^{8a} For by grace you have been saved ~ ^{8b} through faith. ~ ^{8c} And this is not your own doing; ~ ^{8d} it is the gift of God, ~ ^{9a} not a result of works, ~ ^{9b} so that no one may boast. ~ ^{10a} For we are his workmanship, ~ ^{10b} created in Christ Jesus ~ ^{10c} for good works, ~ which God prepared beforehand, ~ that we should walk in them."

▶▶ Today, ~ we will concentrate on verses 8-9.

IN VERSE 8a, ~ PAUL EXPRESSES HIS MAIN POINT OF VERSES 8-10. ~~ HE SAYS, ~ "For by grace you have been saved."

▶▶ "grace" here means free and undeserved favor. ~ Saved by God's

▶▶ Paul emphasizes "by grace." ~ "For by grace you have been saved."

▷▷ Paul does not want us to miss this, ~ that the source of our salvation is God's grace, ~ and His grace alone!

▶▶ Even though we were 100% sinful, ~ even though sinning was a way of life for us, ~ even though we were following the standards of this world and Satan, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ even though we were enslaved to our sinful nature and its sinful desires ~ and carried those sinful desires out, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ and even though we were subject to, ~ deserving of, ~ and destined for ~ God's wrath, ~~~ God's mercy and love led him to offer humanity the gift of salvation.

▶▶ Recall, ~ in 1:8 Paul said that God "lavished" His grace "upon us."

▷▷ The Greek word for "lavished" there means ~ more than enough, ~ to provide in abundance, ~ to cause to overflow. ¶¶ 1/8

▷▷ God is infinitely rich in grace. ~ But He is not stingy with it. ~ Not like some cosmic Scrooge.

↪↪ God does not give His grace to us in limited measure, ~ carefully weighed out. ~ He causes His grace to overflow, ~ to abound to us. ~ Gives it in overflowing measure.

▶▶ And God's grace is sufficiently abundant to cover the sins of all ~ and is adequate for the worst of sinners.

▷▷ Some might think, ~ "Oh, ~ God could never forgive me for what I've done"

▶▶ Consider Paul, ~ before his conversion, ~ he persecuted Christians.

▷▷ Stephen's murder

▷▷ When Jesus saved Paul

▷▷ But Jesus didn't hold this against Paul. ~ Jesus didn't refuse to forgive Paul. ~ Jesus didn't withhold His grace from Paul.

↪↪ Jesus abundantly bestows His grace on all who come to Him in true repentance.

▷▷ Paul testifies to this ~ in 1 Tim. 1:12-14. ~ Paul writes, ~ "I thank him who has given me strength, ~ Christ Jesus our Lord, ~ because he judged me faithful, ~ appointing me to his service, ~ ¶¶

↪↪ though formerly I was a blasphemer, ~ persecutor, ~ and insolent opponent. ~ But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ~ and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus."

▶▶ No one, ~ in this life, ~ is beyond the reach of the Savior. ~ Is. 59:1 declares, ~ "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, ~ that it cannot save."

▷▷ If you've never accepted Christ, ~ it doesn't matter what you've done ~ or are doing. ~ In this life ~ you are not beyond God's grace.

▷▷ Paul says in Rom. 5:20, ~ "Now the law came in to increase the trespass, ~ but where sin increased, ~ grace abounded all the more."

↪↪ "Marvelous grace of our loving Lord, ~ Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt! . . . Marvelous, ~ infinite, ~ matchless grace, ~ freely bestowed on all who believe."

"FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED," ~ PAUL TELLS US. ¶¶ 2/8

▶▶ I.e., ~ by God's grace, ~ believers have been freed from sin and our sin nature; ~ freed from all the powers of evil; ~~ every one of our sins have been forgiven [as far . . .]; ~~ 77

▷▷ we have been reconciled with God [peace . . .]; ~~ we have been delivered from God's wrath; ~~ and we are now new creations. ~~ Truly!, ~ God's grace is amazing, ~ isn't it?

IN VERSE 8b, ~ PAUL STATES HOW WE RECEIVE GOD'S GRACE FOR SALVATION.

FOR CONTEXT, ~ START AT BEGINNING OF VERSE 8. ~~ PAUL SAYS "8a FOR BY GRACE you have been saved ~ [and here's how we receive it:] ~ 8b through faith."

▶▶ Whereas God's grace is the objective source of our salvation, ~ "through faith" is the subjective means ~ or channel ~ by which one receives God's grace and is saved.

▶▶ This is important, ~ for the salvation that was purchased by Christ's death is universal in its provision, ~ but it is not universal in its application.

▷▷ One is not automatically saved because Christ died, ~ but one is saved when one puts their faith in God's gracious provision.

↪↪ Jn. 3:16 points this out. ~~ "For God so loved the world, ~ that he gave his only Son ~ [God's gracious provision], ~ that whoever ~ [universal provision, ~ i.e., ~ available to all] ~~ 77

→→ But one has to believe in Jesus ~ i.e., ~ to apply God's gracious provision to him/herself: ~~ "that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

BUT HERE WE MUST CONSIDER THE QUESTION, ~ WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THIS faith to which Paul refers, ~ this belief in Jesus that Jn. 3:16 is talking about?

▶▶ Well, ~ "faith" here is not just any kind of faith ~~ This is biblical or saving faith ~~ Biblical or saving faith is not merely a matter of intellectually agreeing with truth.

▷▷ In James 2:19 ~ James deals with solely intellectual faith regarding demons. ~~ He says, ~ "You believe that God is one; ~~ you do well. ~~ Even the demons believe—and shudder ~ [i.e., ~ tremble with fear]!"

↪↪ The behavior of demons demonstrates that someone can believe the right thing and still have an evil character. ~~ Demons simply intellectually agree with the truth that God is one.

→→ TPID, ~ demons believe all the right stuff ~ but aren't saved. 11 3/8

▶▶ Biblical or saving faith is not merely believing the "right stuff" about Jesus.

▶▶ In Rom. 10:9-10, ~ Paul says, ~ "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, ~ you will be saved. ~ For with the heart one believes and is justified, ~ and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."

▷▷ Paul makes it quite clear ~ that saving faith is an acknowledgement of who Jesus truly is and all that that entails, ~ and also a positive heart response to message of the gospel.

↪↪ Includes acknowledgement of one's sinfulness & recognition of Jesus' work on cross.

→→ Indeed, ~ not just merely a matter of intellectually agreeing with truth.

▷▷ And a positive heart response to the gospel implies a willingness to obey God's word ~ and to live a new way of life; ~ i.e., ~ a way of life that is pleasing and glorifying to God.

↪↪ In fact, ~ obedience . . . 1 Jn. 2:3-4 🙏🙏

PERHAPS TO EMPHASIZE HIS POINT, ~ THAT GOD'S GRACE ALONE IS THE SOURCE of our salvation, ~ ¶¶

IN VERSES 8c-9a, ~ PAUL EXPLAINS THAT OUR SALVATION DOES NOT ORIGINATE with humans in any way, ~ shape, ~ or form.

IN VERSE 8c, ~ HE SAYS THAT IT DOES NOT ORIGINATE WITHIN US.

HE SAYS, ~ "AND THIS IS NOT YOUR OWN DOING; ~ IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD."

▶▶ The word "this" refers to the general idea of salvation in the immediate context, ~ where Paul says ~ "For by grace you have been saved."

▷▷ We could paraphrase it this way: ~ "And this salvation is not your own doing."

THE PHRASE ~ "IS NOT YOUR OWN DOING" ~ EXPRESSES THAT SALVATION DOES NOT have its origin or source with humans.

▶▶ Could paraphrase verse 8c this way: ~ "And this salvation is not from you as a source."

▶▶ How could it be?

▷▷ Remember, ~ when unsaved, ~ we were "dead in [our] trespasses and sins." ¶¶ 4/8

↪↪ As we noted, ~ just like physical death, ~ spiritual death is a state from which people cannot break free on their own.

→→ When we were unsaved, ~ we had no capability to generate spiritual life.

▷▷ Add to this the fact that we weren't even looking for salvation.

↪↪ In Rom. 3:11, ~ Paul says that "no one seeks for God." ~ Remember Adam and Eve's reaction to hearing God after they sinned?

→→ Gen. 3:8, ~ "And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, ~ and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden"

▷▷ What's more ~ we were unable even to understand the things of God ~ let alone act on them.

↪↪ In 1 Cor. 2:14, ~ Paul writes, ~ "The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God ~ [i.e., ~ the things that come from the Spirit of God], ~ ¶¶

→→ for they are folly to him, ~ and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned ~ ¶¶

↳↳ [i.e., ~ only those who have been given spiritual life can understand what the Spirit means]."

▷▷ Like Adam and Eve, ~ in our unsaved state, ~ we had all heard "the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day," ~ ¶¶

↪↪ and had hidden ourselves "from the presence of the Lord God." ~ So, ~ there's no way we could be the source of our salvation.

"AND THIS SALVATION IS NOT FROM YOU AS A SOURCE; ~ IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD," ~ Paul says. ~ In the Grk. text, ~ "of God" means "from God."

▶▶ Paraphrase verse 8c this way: ~ "And this salvation is not from you as a source; ~ it is the gift from God."

▷▷ In Rom 3:23-24a, ~ Paul says, ~ "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ~ and are justified by his grace as a gift."

↪↪ Our salvation is a free & undeserved gift from God. ~ Originates w/ God

NOT ONLY ARE WE NOT THE SOURCE OF OUR SALVATION, //~ IN VERSE 9a PAUL says that neither are our works the source of our salvation.

PAUL SAYS THAT THIS SALVATION IS ALSO "NOT A RESULT OF WORKS."

▶▶ "works" here refers to any good deed by which a person might seek to gain God's favor and attain salvation.

▷▷ In brief, ~ we **cannot** earn salvation by doing good works. ~~ And it's definitely not earned by a person's good works outweighing their bad.

▶▶ As Paul says in Rom. 11:6, ~ "But if it is by grace, ~ it is no longer on the basis of works; ~~ otherwise grace would no longer be grace."

▷▷ If we could earn salvation through works, ~ then God's grace would not be what it really is, ~ free and undeserved.

▶▶ Paul reinforces this truth in Titus 3:4-7.

▷▷ "But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ~

↳↳ he saved us, ~ not because of works done by us in righteousness, ~ but according to his own mercy, ~ ~ 77

→→ by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ~ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ~ 77

↳↳ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

▷▷ Paul makes it quite clear.

↳↳ Our salvation is **not** a result the righteous things we had done. ~~ It is because God is rich in mercy and loved us with a great love that we are saved. ~~ Not that we

SINCE NEITHER WE ~ NOR OUR WORKS ~ ARE THE SOURCE OF OUR SALVATION, ~ none of us has bragging rights when it comes to our salvation, ~ Paul says in verse 9b.

FOR CONTEXT, ~ LET'S TAKE IT FROM VERSE 8.

▶▶ ^{8a} For by grace you have been saved ~ ^{8b} through faith. ~~ ^{8c} And this is not your own doing; ~~ ^{8d} it is the gift of God, ~ ^{9a} not a result of works, ~ ^{9b} so that no one may boast."

▶▶ Paul puts it this way in Rom. 3:27-28 ~ "Then what becomes of our boasting? ~ It is excluded. ~ ~ ¶¶

▷▷ By what kind of law? ~ By a law of works? ~ No, ~ but by the law of faith. ~ For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law."

↳↳ Since righteousness is based on faith in what God has accomplished in Christ alone ~ boasting in ourselves is ruled out.

▶▶ Paul used Abraham as a prime example to make this point.

▷▷ In Rom. 4:1-3, ~ Paul writes, ~ "What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, ~ our forefather according to the flesh? ~ ~ ¶¶

↳↳ For if Abraham was justified by works, ~ he has something to boast about, ~ but not before God. ~ ~ ¶¶

→→ For what does the Scripture say? ~ 'Abraham believed God, ~ and it was counted to him as righteousness."

↳↳ Abraham was not justified by works, ~ so he had nothing to boast about.

↳↳ Likewise we are not justified by works ~ so we have nothing to boast about.

▶▶ Our boasting can only be in the Lord and what He has done for us.

▷▷ As Paul puts it in 2 Cor. 10:17, ~ "Let the one who boasts, ~ boast in the Lord."

↳↳ I.e., ~ Let the one who boasts, ~ boast about what the Lord has done.

▷▷ In Mark, ~ chapter 5, ~ we read about Jesus freeing a man from a legion of demons. ~ After Jesus had freed the man, ~ the man wanted to go with Jesus.

↳↳ But, ~ Jesus wouldn't let him, ~ and Mk. 5:19 tells us that Jesus said to him, ~ "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, ~ and how he has had mercy on you."

→→ Then in verse 20, ~ Mark records the man's reaction.

↳↳ "And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis ~ [i.e., ~ the Ten Towns of that region] ~ what great things Jesus had done for him; ~ and everyone was amazed." NASB ¶¶ 7/8

↪↪ The point is, ~ it's not, ~ "Hey, ~ everyone, ~ look what I've done," ~~ ¶¶

→→ but, ~ "Hey, ~ everyone, ~ look what great things Jesus has done for me and how He has had mercy on me!"

↪↪ As the chorus to the hymn "Lift High the Name of Jesus" says, ~ "Oh sing my soul, ~ And tell all He's done, ~ Till the earth and heavens are filled with His glory!" ~~ Not

CONCLUSION.

FOR BY GRACE WE HAVE BEEN SAVED. ~~ BY GOD'S INCREDIBLY FREE AND undeserved favor ~ we have been saved.

▶▶ Even though we were utterly sinful, ~ even though sinning was a way of life for us, ~ even though we were following the standards of this present evil age, ~ even though we were following "that ancient serpent, ~ who is called the devil and Satan," ~ ¶¶

▷▷ even though we were enslaved to our sinful nature and its sinful desires ~ even though we carried those sinful desires out, ~ ¶¶

↪↪ and even though we were subject to, ~ deserving of, ~ and destined for ~ God's wrath, ~~ ¶¶

→→ God's mercy and love led him to offer humanity the free and undeserved gift of salvation.

↪↪ Amazing grace! ~ how sweet the sound, ~ That saved a wretch like me! ~~ I once was lost, ~ but now am found, ~ Was blind, ~ but now I see.

LET'S PRAY 8/8