

By Grace You are Saved  
Eph. 2:1-10

Have you ever seen a small child carrying a wrapped present? They are so bubbly and giggly they cannot contain themselves. Even before the person unwraps the gift, the child will blurt out what the gift is. “mommy, we got you a scarf” “my best friend, John I got you a Tonka truck.”

We find Paul bursting forth with two central emotions in his life. 1) Is his great Love to the Saints that he wants them to know the truth, and so he teaches the doctrines. 2) Paul bursts forward and tells us the Gift he is trying to get to ... “You are saved by GRACE”

- Paul can't keep it in. He shouts it aloud, because he knows it is easy for us to confess in this building that our help is in the name of the Lord, but walk out and try to carry the world on our shoulders, relying upon our own merits and our strength.

Paul Loves us and does not want us to be in be such error.

So Paul takes us from Heaven to Hell, teaching us about the Mighty Grace of the Lord and the Gospel he has accomplished.

1. Children of Wrath
2. Extravagant 奢华 Mercy & Love
3. Grace for Life

### Children of Wrath

Why does Paul make these comments? In chapter 1 he uses the most magnificent language to teach us God's salvation. How the Father, Son, and HS, are actively engaged in Accomplishing and Applying Salvation to us.

Paul explains how delighted he is to hear of the their great Love to for all the Saints. He explains how happy he is to see the Fruits of the Gospel beginning to Blossom among them.

So after all that Praise and Lofty Language, why does Paul turn to our 'former' way of life, when we were dead in our sins & transgressions? Why does he turn to the 'bad-news?' Wouldn't it be more winsome 丰盈 if Paul only talked about good things?

Well, it is actually more Loving for Paul to be honest with us. It is for our Good that Paul teaches us the truth.

There is no such thing as a free person in this world.

Paul turns to our former way of life, to teach us that we are either Connected to Christ, or enslaved to Sin.

All who are born in Adam, which is all humans, have this sin nature boiling within them. As God himself points out in Gen 6, 'that every intention of the heart is evil.' We are all prone to evil ... We can often forget or downplay this, but Paul reminds us here.

But let's look closely at what Paul is teaching: he highlights our three major Struggles in this life: vv2-3 WORLD, DEVIL, FLESH If we worship the things of this world we become like them. ... Psa 115:8 'those who make them become like them' When we worship shiny gadgets, having prestige 威望, being liked, being popular, ... we become like the iphones. We are the hot item today, and we are getting everything we want. But we get throne out with the old models. When we let the world tell us what is important and significant, and when we bind our hearts to the things of world ... we will be left empty and hurting for a wasted life.

Paul is not saying the world in and of itself is evil ... we have allowed the things of the World, **draw our hearts away and cheat us from enjoying God.**

But when we rightly turn and Worship the Son and we mature and grow as children of God

2<sup>nd</sup> enemy is the Devil. We are all born dead in ours sins, and Satan is our puppet master. The 'ruler of the realm of air' working in and through the people of disobedience.

Without Christ we are so blinded by our pride and arrogance as humans that we do not know we are puppets.

Satan works so subtly 微妙 and through crafty means ... It would be much easier if he would only showed himself to be the Dragon he is. But instead he disguises himself, lurking behind the smallest temptations and enticements 诱惑 And then he sets the hook and has us on a string.

3<sup>rd</sup> foe that Paul mentions is the worst enemy of all. It is the **front-door** through which all temptation pounces on us. **V.3** Our own hearts deceive us, and the passions of our FLESH carry us away to do their bidding. Do not think you are mightier than this foe? Do not think you have mastered it your inner heart?

Sure you can fight against the World? Sure you could try and fight Satan? But can you really fight yourself?

Can you fight against your own cravings 欲望 .... Not if you Don't have Christ.

So Paul brings all this to Mind, and in V3 says 'we all once lived' ... Leveling every person, and bringing us all to our knees. We are all undone, and are naturally as Children of Wrath.

So why does Paul remind us of this? And what good is it to think about our sinfulness?

So that we might have the proper HUMILITY in heart, and proper reverence, and fear, when we hear what comes *next*.

## Extravagant Mercy & Love

v.4 But God ... BUT GOD- What a transition! God is abounding in Extravagant Mercy---when you remember that you are naturally a sinner and deserving of death what do you need?

We NEED a God who is abounding in Mercy—

Here is a small piece of Scripture, BUT it explodes to show the Jewels of great worth. Causing us to Abound in Doxological 颂赞 Praise, For God alone is what we need. Not the World, not the Devil, and not the things of the Flesh. We NEED a Merciful God, ... and He IS!!

Paul teaches in chapter 1 this Merciful God is LAVISHING 慷慨 upon us: Mercy, Goodness, Election, Redemption, Love, and Intimacy with our Savior.

V5- When we were in Dead and without Hope—We were Made Alive in Christ.

So Paul Cries out—you were guilty and did not deserve it BUT:

BY GRACE YOU ARE SAVED.

And Remember what Grace is—it is not simply kindness. Grace is not merited. Grace is Demerited Favor. Its when the King looks at all your Sins, and —He says, “GRACE.” "By Grace you are saved.”

No longer shall you be condemned, you are found to be in Christ and eternally Justified.

Since Christ went to the Cross in our Place, Since Christ was Raised and is now Reigning in Heaven, there is no condemnation for those who Profess his Name. Through faith in Christ sinners have their sins atoned 赎罪 for, and they are secure in their salvation.

Sometimes it is easy to take these words lightly. Perhaps we have heard it too many times for it to overwhelm us. But look Closely at V6- let the Word of God wash over you:

V6- by Grace he has, “raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

Beloved of the Lord: His Love to US grants undeserving sinners like you and I, union & communion with Christ. He has not saved us to fear. He has not saved us to merely eek by in this life. He has not Saved you unto a Life of DOUBT:

He has Saved us and let us Know the Security of our Salvation-

as Surely as Christ sits on his throne, so are his Children Saved in his Blood.

V7- So extravagant is this salvation and Mercy, that his Glory and Kindness reverberate 回响 throughout all Ages.

His Grace to Us is *soo* Amazingly Divine, that it glorifies Him through all ages

This surprising favor of God is so beyond our comprehension, it is so overwhelming, that Paul must repeat it:

**v.8 READ** – our confession explains, Faith is the Open Hand, the Hand & Mouth of our Soul, whereby we cry out and take hold of Christ with all His beautiful benefits.

It is through this faith that we apprehend 领悟 Christ and are Saved as A Gift of God.

Paul labors to make this clear. He knows we struggle and so he stresses this Gift is NOT BY OUR WORK, it is not of our own doing.

We only deserve death.

No *mere* human has ever fulfilled the Law.

No, we are not saved by who we are, nor what we have done. We are saved by Grace,

We are Redeemed by Receiving Christ as the Gift from God. V8- "Of God is this Gift!"

Lets Try to meditate 默想 upon that Beloved. Try to wrap your minds around something so Kind, something so Beautiful. You are Saved in spite of what you have done, and what you still do.

Think, meditate, and be consumed, by this great truth, and it will vastly change every aspect of your lives.

## Grace for Life

But what do we DO Now? How am I supposed to live differently as a CHILD OF God?

Let me give but one example: We must **stop** asking ‘what would Jesus do?’

First, off we have no idea what He would do. The Gospels are full of stories that shock us, and show how confused the disciples were.

Second, touting the slogan ‘what would Jesus do,’ misunderstands the Gospel. For it tries to ‘bring Christ down,’ by thinking that his work is not completed.

Instead, we need to encourage each other with: “what has Christ done!”

What He Has already accomplished and applied as a GIFT to our lives through faith. The Christian-Life is *benefiting* from and rejoicing in, What Christ has already done.

Meditating on what Christ HAS DONE moves the Christian into true Gratitude. Realizing the foundation is laid, means we don’t try to relay it. Realizing the Truth, means we don’t live a lie.

Since Christ died for my Sins	I have no debt to pay
Since Christ free me from slavery to sin	I am not in bondage: I can say no
Since Christ has loved me & given Light	I don’t have to be bitter, but can love others

The Life of gratitude- Love God and Love Neighbor.

This is what Paul explains in V.9-10. There is no Boasting, because You didn’t Do the Work. There is no boasting because you don’t bear the scars of the Cross.

The Life of Gratitude is not to try to redo the life of Christ, but to Rejoice in Gratitude at the life Christ Lived.

You see: Christianity is not the kind of religion where: ‘*batteries are not included*’

You know what I am talking about parents. You get that new toy and every 5 minutes you have to put new batteries in to keep it running. You get a free gift, but you have to pay the annual fee to use it. Joining the club is easy ... but you have to work have to stay in.

Beloved of the Lord, that is not Christianity. Phil. 1:6 says, ‘he who began a good work in you, it is Him who will carry it to completion.’ God is the beginner and Perfector of our Salvation.

We are saved by grace and we continue in this life, and every breathe by Grace. It is God who worked to save us. It is God who worked to Redeem us. It is God who Worked to Raise us in Christ. It is God who Worked to *re-craft us*. We are not our own, we belong to God.

If God Has done all the Work, then were is doubting and fearing about Tomorrow? It is removed because of the Magnitude of the Gift—Eternal Life in Christ.

God has done all the work for our Salvation, but this does not leave us without **purpose**.

Since God has done all the work for our Salvation ... this means we have Purpose now. There is meaning to our lives ... Christian, you are freed from a purposeless existence.

Paul explains your purpose here. You have a purpose beyond yourself. You are not

Floating 飘浮, empty and purposeless ... Now to walk in a life of Gratitude

our Purpose:

Rightly know God, heartily love him, and live in harmony with him forever.

They are the logical outcome of who we now are. Before we were children of Wrath, and so we bore the fruits of unrighteousness and sin. That is the kind of tree we were, and thus we bore fruit according to our kind.

But Now- by the Extravagant Mercy and Power of God, we have been refashioned from ‘plants of wrath’ into Christians, bearing fruits of righteousness. Christ’s Words in Matt. 7:16 “You will recognize them by their fruits...”

As we Rejoice and Live in Christ, the Fruits of the Spirit will blossom

But you might ask: HOW: How will I bear such fruit and do these works? Well think of the Plants: when the right conditions are in place, the right nutrients—grapes come from vines, strawberries come from bushes, and apples come from trees.

So it is with us in this Life. We must learn that we are Totally Dependent up God because we were once Children of Wrath. BUT GOD plants us in the Rich Soil of Christ’s Grace, nourishes us weekly in the Light of His ‘Son,’ feeds us at the Table—we will produce fruit according to our Kind.

The Soil of the Grace and Gospel produces Christians with hearts set aflame in Gratitude.

These fruits are the things that the Spirit himself is growing in us.

So Paul takes us from Hell to Heaven; from Death to Life.

This is what we come each week in this House to be built up in, and what we should encourage each other in our own homes. We turn now to one of the chief nutrients for the Christian Life: The Gift of His Supper to Us.