

SALVATION: The Gift We Could Never Earn

What we could never do, Jesus did completely. Grace isn't earned — it's received.

1. The Truth About Us

“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.”

—Romans 3:23–24 (NLT)

Grace begins where our control ends.

The mirror tells the truth, but grace tells the rest of the story.

2. The Problem We Couldn't Solve

“As the Scriptures say, ‘No one is righteous— not even one. No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one.’”

—Romans 3:10–12 (NLT)

Sin is not what you do against God; it's what you do without God.

3. The Angled Mirror

Angled Toward Others:

“You may think you can condemn such people, but you are just as bad. You have no excuse! When you say they are wicked and should be punished, you are condemning yourself, for you who judge others do these very same things.”

—Romans 2:1 (NLT)

Angled Toward Self:

“As the Scriptures say, ‘No one is righteous— not even one.’”

—Romans 3:10 (NLT)

Angled Toward Jesus:

> “Can we boast, then, that we have done anything to be accepted by God?

No, because our acquittal is not based on obeying the law. It is based on faith.”

—Romans 3:27 (NLT)

Alignment of Faith

> “Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith,

we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.”

—Romans 5:1 (NLT)

Works are me running back and forth adjusting the mirror; faith is standing still behind Jesus.

4. The Righteousness We Can't Define

“Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? By no means! Let God be true though every one were a liar...”

—Romans 3:1–4 (ESV)

We don't define what's right — we discover it in Him.

5. We Don't Get to Redefine 'Right'

“But if our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) By no means! For then how could God judge the world? But if through my lie God's truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? And why not do evil that good may come? Their condemnation is just.”

—Romans 3:5–8 (ESV)

Faith believes what we can't comprehend.

6. Law Reveals — Promise Redeems

“Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.”

—Romans 3:19–20 (ESV)

The law shows the crack; the promise restores the reflection.

7. The Gift We Could Never Earn

“For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he makes sinners right in his sight when they believe in Jesus.”

—Romans 3:25–26 (NLT)

We don't climb to heaven; heaven stepped into us.

8. The Faith That Frees Us

“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.’ Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.”

—Romans 4:1–5 (ESV)

Faith is standing still long enough to let the true reflection appear.

9. The Sign and the Seal

“He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised.”

—Romans 4:11 (ESV)

Don't polish the frame and forget the face in the glass.

10. The Peace That Follows

“Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved

privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory."

—Romans 5:1–2 (NLT)

You can't carry shame and enjoy peace at the same time
— drop one.

11. The Hope That Holds Us

"When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation."

—Romans 5:6–9 (NLT)

Hope is grace projected forward.

12. How Salvation Changes How We Live

Live from righteousness, not for it:

"For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in

triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.”

—Romans 5:17 (NLT)

Righteousness is the result of His obedience.

Respond to sin differently:

“Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it?”

—Romans 6:1–2 (NLT)

Salvation doesn't make me sinless; it makes me restless in sin.

The proof of salvation is reflection, not perfection.

Stay in alignment through faith:

Faith isn't measured in distance walked but in direction faced.

13. I Declare

“Jesus, You are my reflection.
When I look at myself, I see You.
When I look at others, I see You.
I will not tilt the mirror again.
My life is aligned.
My salvation is secure.
Grace has the final word.”

