

Q: In what ways has God shown His loving kindness towards His people regarding their salvation?

Read Ephesians 2:8-9

Context:

Ephesians: Written to the church in Ephesus and possibly churches in the area. Chapters 1-3 Doctrine, 4-6 Application. Chapter 2 starts by saying, Ephesians 2:1-3, “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body[a] and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

In this midst of the bad news we have verse 4...

4-7, “But[c] God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Doctrine: God shows His immeasurable kindness towards His saints in saving them by grace, through faith, in order that all human boasting would be excluded and that God’s glory alone would be exalted.

I. GOD SHOWS HIS IMMEASURABLE KINDNESS IN SAVING HIS SAINTS BY GRACE, TO WHICH THIS IS NOT THEIR OWN DOING. (v.8a)

“For by grace you have been saved...and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God”

Grace: kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved.

Q: Have you considered the many places we see God’s saving grace throughout Scripture:

Genesis 3:15, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring[e] and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

Genesis 3:21, “And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.”

Genesis 6:8, “But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.”

Jonah: God’s grace to the Ninevites, “Jonah 2:9, Salvation belongs to the Lord.”

The Apostle Paul: Acts 9

I want us to see the depth of God’s grace in saving His people by looking at Romans 8:29-30.

Turn with me to Romans 8:29-30

I) Marvel at God’s grace in foreknowing His people

I) Romans 8:29a, “Those whom He foreknew” God has set his adopting love upon His people

II) Matthew Henry: The counsels and decrees of God do not truckle to the frail and fickle will of men; no, God's foreknowledge of the saints is the same with that everlasting love wherewith he is said to have loved them, God’s knowing his people is the same with his owning them, that is, whom he designed for his friends and favorites.

II) Marvel at God’s grace in predestinating His people unto salvation from before the creation of the World.

I) Romans 8:29b, “he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.”

II) Ephesians 1:4, “even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world”

III) Marvel at God’s grace in effectually calling his people out of darkness into His marvelous light.

I) Romans 8:30a, “he also called”

II) 1 Peter 2:9, “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

IV) Marvel at God’s grace in justifying His people who deserve His condemnation.

(I) Romans 8:30b, “he also justified”

(II) Romans 8:1, “ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

V) Marvel at God’s grace in glorifying His people assuring them a possession of eternal life.

(I) Romans 8:30c, “He also glorified”

(II) Calvin: “He then immediately adds, that those who are now pressed down by the cross shall be glorified; so that their sorrows and reproaches shall bring them no loss. Though glorification is not yet exhibited except in our Head, yet as we in a manner behold in him our inheritance of eternal life, his glory brings to us such assurance respecting our own glory, that our hope may be justly compared to a present possession.”

Look at these glorious truths. Do you marvel at them? Do you teach them to your family?

Do you take credit for them. Do you take credit even in some small way for the salvation of friends and family? God has been saving His people all throughout history in this manner. He saved David in this way, He saved Paul in this way and He will continue to save in this way and you and I have no room for boasting. The only response we are permitted to put forth is praise and thanksgiving. Praise because He is worthy. Thanksgiving because He uses us to bring about the advancement of His kingdom.

We can not only glorify God in His gift of saving grace but also in His gift of FAITH...

II. GOD SHOWS HIS IMMEASURABLE KINDNESS IN SAVING HIS SAINTS THROUGH FAITH, TO WHICH THIS IS NOT THEIR OWN DOING. (v.8b)

“Through faith...and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God”

FAITH: A strong and welcome conviction or belief. It means to rest your weight against. Banking your whole life entirely upon the object of your faith.

Q: What object can save?

A) The natural man believes that he himself being the object of his faith can save him and make him well. But the natural man does not have eyes to see nor ears to hear how damnable his efforts of self salvation are before a Holy and Triune God.

A) Isaiah 64:6, “We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.”

B) The man who has been born-again sees, hears and knows that the only object of his faith that can make him eternally well is the Lord Jesus Christ.

A) **Question 91 in the baptist catechism.**

B) **Q. What is faith in Jesus Christ?**

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace (Heb. 10:39), whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel (Jn. 1:12; Is. 26:3, 4; Ph. 3:9; Gal. 2:16).

I) See God’s kindness in giving His people a faith who’s object is far more majestic than themselves

Colossians 1:15-20, “15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by[a] him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.”

Q: Are you exhorting those in your care to take their eyes off themselves and place them on the Majestic Master?

II) See God’s kindness in giving His people a High Priest who prays that our faith will not fail

Luke 22:31-32, “31 “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you,[d] that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

Though your faith may be small in seasons of trial, difficulty, and persecution, we have, as the object of our faith a High Priest, who He himself prays that your faith would not fail...that it would not finally fail.

Draw comfort in that truth that even when your strength gives out, and the doubts of your flesh arise, The Lord Jesus Christ is praying that your faith would make you well and that you would persevere. May that put wind in your sails and cause you to fly high above the perils of this life as you fix your eyes upon your Redeemer.

III) See God’s kindness in giving His people a faith that pleases God in obedience

Hebrews 11:6, “And without faith it is impossible to please him”

Q: Do you desire to obey Christ? Do you have godly grief when you sin? Praise God. God has done this work in you. God has given you a faith to trust that what He says is right and good and He strengthens His people by His Holy Spirit to walk in this Faith and not by Sight.

IV) See God’s kindness in giving His people a faith that will one day be made sight

1 Peter 1:6-9, “6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

It Is Well: Haratio Spafford

Son died of pneumonia, lost business in Chicago fire, wife and 4 daughters took ship from US to Europe, 4 days in collision with large iron ship and 226 of the 313 died. Anna his wife alone was saved. He got on a ship and 4 days into the journey the captain brought Haratio up to the deck and said this was roughly where the ship went down. He then proceeded to pen the words to the song It Is Well.

And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
Even so, it is well with my soul.

Listen to what we will behold:

Revelation 7:9-10 “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

III. GOD SHOWS HIS IMMEASURABLE KINDNESS IN SAVING HIS SAINTS IN ORDER THAT HE ALONE WOULD BE EXALTED. (v. 9)

“Not a result of works, so that no one may boast”

Spurgeon: We should be sure to boast if we could. We are a boasting people. Man is a poor mass of flesh, and he is largely given to the corruption of pride, He will boast if he can.

God has removed any ground for human boasting. We are without cause. There is only one proper response to God’s gift of grace and faith and that is that His people should worship Him and be in awe of His mercy.

Application:

I) Use these truths to instruct your wife and your children:

I) Is your house regularly filled with praise and thanksgiving for what God has graciously done in saving you?

II) Use these truths for reproof:

I) Who are those that boast in bringing something to the table of their own salvation other than the sin that made it necessary? May God use you to help them see how great God truly is and lead them to ascribe to Him the glory that is due His name.

II) Use these truths for examination:

I) God’s gift of faith produces good fruit that brings glory and honor to God alone in these ways:

I) Faith that produces noble effects: “A Christ prizing grace” A high valuation upon Christ

II) Faith that refines: Has your love of sin diminished? Has the pursuit of holiness increased in your life?

III) Faith that is obedient: Watson: “Faith melts our will into God’s”

IV) Faith that assimilates: “Are you more like Christ?”

V) Faith that grows: Is your faith growing?