

## II.X SALVATION IS A SOVEREIGN GIFT: Ephesians 2:8-9 - Shepherd School

### I. OPENING PRAYER: All.

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## II. SERMON:

### SALVATION IS A SOVEREIGN GIFT: Ephesians 2:8-9

**INTRODUCTION/DOCTRINE.** God saves sinners by grace alone, through faith alone, as a gift alone, so that they would boast in Him alone.

**CON(TEXT).** **Ephesians 2:8-9** "8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

**DOCTRINE.** God saves sinners by grace alone, through faith alone, as a gift alone, so that they would boast in Him alone.

### I. GOD SAVES SINNERS BY *GRACE ALONE* (Ephesians 2:8a).

**Ephesians 2:8a** "For *by grace* you have been saved"

- **Q. Saved from what? A.** Look at Ephesians 1-3!

*In Christ you were saved from your natural condition, natural conversation, and natural condemnation.*

#### I) IN CHRIST, YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED FROM YOUR NATURAL CONDITION (v. 1)

(i) In Christ, you have been saved from the *deadness* of sin! (v. 1a)

**Ephesians 2:1a** "And you were dead."

- **You men were once like the dry bones in the prophet Ezekiel's vision!**
  - **Ezekiel 37:1-2** "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the

middle of the valley; it was full of bones. And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry."

**RQ.** Imagine you were to come upon a horrific accident and someone lie before you dead. What do they need?

- You and I did not need a moral reformation; we needed a mortal resurrection!

**(ii) In Christ, you have been saved from the *domination* of sin! (v. 1b).**

**Ephesians 2:1b** "in the trespasses and sins"

- Men, if you are in Christ, you were *once* dominated by sin! If you are outside of Christ, you are still dominated.
- **It is not as much that you had sins and transgressions but that sins and transgressions had you! You were the bonds slave and you bowed before them willingly.**
  - Outside of Christ you were not a sinner because you sinned *in* your nature; you sinned because you were a sinner *by* nature!

**II. IN CHRIST, YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED FROM YOUR NATURAL CONVERSATION (vv. 2-3a).**

**Ephesians 2:2a** "in which you once walked,"

- **As spiritual zombies, we walked dead to righteousness but very much alive to sin!**
  - Our conversation in life was guided not by the Holy Trinity of Father, Son, and Spirit, but the unholy trinity of the world, the flesh, and the devil!

Look at what Paul says were our guides in our deadness, and what we have been saved from in Christ!

**(i) In Christ, you have been saved from the dominion of sin! (v. 2b)**

**Ephesians 2:2b** "following the course of this world,"

- **Imagine a rushing river with everyone floating one way, going wherever the flow takes them. That is the course of this world, and the stream flows away from God!**

**(ii) In Christ, you have been saved from *the Devil*, who is the prince of sin! (v. 2c)**

**Ephesians 2:2c** "following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—"

- **Look at verse 19 in chapter 1!** "Christ is the head" of His saints. And here in chapter 2 verse 2, Satan is head of sinners.
- **Sin is satanic!** He being the first to sin and even the first tempter is

also the one who energizes man's rebellion against God by his demonic influence.

- **Satan loves to tempt to sin and then accuse us before God! He tempts us to tie the noose around our own necks and then kicks the footstool out from under us!**
  - But you in Christ have been saved from the Devil's influence and power!

(iii) In Christ, you have been saved from the *delight* of sin! (v. 3a)  
**Ephesians 2:3a** "among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind,"  
**Where once you only delighted in the bitterness of sin and its poisonous promises, now you delight in the sweetness of Christ, His Law, and His glory!**

### III. IN CHRIST, YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED FROM YOUR NATURAL CONDEMNATION (v. 3b)

(i) In Christ, you have been saved from the damnation owed to sin! (v. 3b)  
**Ephesians 2:3b** "and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind."

#### **MATTHEW POOLE:**

"Objection. How are believers said to be saved, when they are not yet glorified?

Answer. 1. Because Christ their Head is glorified.

[Answer] 2. Because their salvation, begun in their effectual calling, shall be as certainly accomplished in them as it is begun in them, and perfected in their Head, Christ."

— **Poole, Matthew. English Annotations on the Holy Bible . E4 Group. Kindle Edition.**

***In Christ you were saved from your natural condition, natural conversation, and natural condemnation.***

*You are no longer dead in sin, but alive in Christ;  
no longer following after the course of this world, but following Christ;  
no longer in the path of the wrath of God, but on a collision course  
with endless joy and eternal glory.*

God saves sinners by GRACE ALONE.

## II. GOD SAVES SINNERS THROUGH FAITH ALONE (Ephesians 2:8b).

**Ephesians 2:8b** "through faith."

– **Q. 93. What is faith in Jesus Christ?**

**A.** Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel. (Heb. 10:39; John 1:12; Phil. 3-9; Gal. 2:15,16)

– **JONATHAN EDWARDS:**

"Upon the whole, the best, and clearest, and most perfect definition of justifying faith, and most according to the Scripture, that I can think of, is this, *faith is the soul's entirely embracing the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Saviour.*"

– Jonathan Edwards, "Observations Concerning Faith" (also titled "Concerning Faith"), in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 2 (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1997), 579.

– **GURNALL:**

"[Saving faith] is the act of the soul whereby it rests on Christ crucified for pardon and life."

– William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armor*

– **Q. Why does God save *through* faith and not *through* works?**

– **Romans 4:16** "[salvation] depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace."

– **Faith is the instrument; Christ is the object!**

*USE FOR WARNING*

**There are many I think who are on a path to hell because their faith is not in Christ alone, but in something else.**

- 1) Being circumcised cannot save you.
- 2) Praying a prayer cannot save you.
- 3) Simply confessing your sins out loud or in your heart cannot save you.
- 4) Saying with your voice or your heart "Jesus is Lord" cannot save you.
- 5) Being Baptized in water cannot save you.
- 6) Speaking in tongues cannot save you.
- 7) Taking the Lord's Supper cannot save you.
- 8) Fasting cannot save you.
- 9) Being a member of the right church cannot save you.
- 10) Being a Calvinist cannot save you.
- 11) Being Reformed cannot save you.
- 12) Being an Arminian cannot save you.
- 13) Reading the Puritans and Reformers cannot save you.
- 14) Being nice cannot save you.
- 15) Being truthful cannot save.
- 16) Telling others to repent and believe the gospel cannot save you.
- 17) Speaking up for your pre-born neighbors concerning abortion cannot

save you.

- **18)** Being Pro-Life cannot save you.
- **19)** Being an Abolitionist cannot save you.
- **20)** Singing worship songs cannot save you.
- **21)** Reading the Bible cannot save you.
- **22)** Giving money to the poor cannot save you.
- **23)** Giving offerings or tithes to the church cannot save you.
- **24)** Feeding the poor cannot save you.
- **25)** Preaching the gospel cannot save you.
- **26)** Teaching the Bible cannot save you.
- **27)** Leading others to Christ cannot save you.
- **28)** Baptizing others cannot save you.
- **29)** Doing ministry cannot save you.
- **30)** Telling people all these things concerning how they cannot be saved cannot save you.

#### USE FOR EXAMINATION

**Q. Are you trusting in any of these things I have mentioned?**

**WHITEFIELD:** "What! Get to heaven on your own strength? Why, you might as well try to climb to the moon on a rope of sand!"

**MARTIN LUTHER:** "The most damnable and pernicious heresy that has ever plagued the mind of man was the idea that somehow he could make himself good enough to deserve to live with an all-holy God."

*Men, place your confidence in Christ—who He is and what He has done—alone for salvation as He is offered to you in the gospel! This is the nature of saving faith.*

**God saves sinners *through* FAITH ALONE.**

### III. GOD SAVES SINNERS AS A GIFT ALONE (Ephesians 2:8c).

**Ephesians 2:8c** "And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,"

– **WATSON:**

"[Salvation] is styled a resurrection. 'Blessed is he that hath part in the first resurrection' (Rev. 20:6). That is, a rising from sin to grace. A man can no more convert himself than a dead man can raise himself... Every man is by sin bound in fetters... There must be a breaking of his fetters, and setting him free, before he can walk. So it is with every natural man; he is fettered with corruption; now the Lord by converting grace must file off his fetters, nay, give him legs to run too, or he can never obtain salvation."

— Thomas Watson, *A Body of Divinity* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), 220.

**QUESTION.** What does it mean that God saves sinners by grace alone, through faith alone, as a gift alone?

**ANSWER.** Tulip.

**T:** By nature all men stand in absolute need of being saved by gift, since we are all Totally Depraved by nature since the fall.

“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1).

*NOTE, man is not as bad as he could be, but he is totally unable morally to reform himself and go to Christ for salvation.*

**U.** God the Father decided, before the foundation of the world, to give this gift to some sinners by Unconditionally Electing them to eternal life.

“He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him” (Ephesians 1:4).

“If [election] is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace” (Romans 11:6).

*NOTE, election is based on the conditionality of what God saw that you would do with the gospel; election is based on the sheer sovereign will and purpose of God.*

**L.** In the fullness of time, Christ Jesus became man and lived without sin for His peoples' righteousness, and then died on the cross in place of His people to Particularly Redeem them, purchasing their forgiveness, and thereby their eternal life. The Atonement is Limited not in its power but only in its scope.

“I lay down my life for the sheep” (John 10:15).

*NOTE, Jesus Christ did not shed a single drop of His blood in vain.*

**I:** Those whom the Father Unconditionally Elected and the Son Particularly Redeemed are, in time, Irresistibly Drawn by the Holy Spirit to Christ for salvation, being given the gifts of regeneration, conversion, repentance, and faith.

“All that the Father gives me will come to me” (John 6:37).

“The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8).

*NOTE, regeneration precedes faith.*

**P:** Those whom the Father elected, the Son purchased, and the Spirit regenerated are then preserved by the Godhead all the days of their life, so that they persevere in faith and obedience all the way to glory.

“I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

“For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he

also glorified" (Romans 8:29-30).

NOTE, God will never lose a Christian.

**TRAPP:** "The patrons of man's free will are enemies to God's free grace." — **Trapp, John. John Trapp's Complete Bible Commentary (pp. 15783-15784). Kindle Edition.**

#### USE FOR REBUKE

*Let the one who says he contributed anything to his salvation except the sin that made it necessary be rebuked sharply! Grace is a gift. Faith is a gift. "This is not your own doing, it is the gift of God." We are all debtors, this is true.*

**God saves sinners as a GIFT ALONE.**

**TRANSITION.** Why does God save sinners in this way?

#### **IV. GOD SAVES SINNERS BY GRACE ALONE, THROUGH FAITH ALONE, AS A GIFT ALONE, SO THAT THEY WOULD BOAST IN HIM ALONE** (Ephesians 2:9).

**Ephesians 2:9** "not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

– **WATSON:**

"Why is faith more the condition of the new covenant than any other [gift]? To exclude all glorying in the creature. Faith is a humble grace. If repentance or works were the condition of the covenant, a man would say, It is my righteousness that has saved me; but if it be of faith, where is boasting? Faith fetches all from Christ, and gives all the glory to Christ; it is a most humble grace. Hence it is that God has singled out this [gift] to be the condition of the covenant."

— **Thomas Watson, A Body of Divinity (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), 156.**

**Judges 7:2** "The Lord said to Gideon, "The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.'"

**Jeremiah 9:23-24** "23 Thus says the Lord: 'Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, 24 but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord.'"

**1 Corinthians 1:30-31** "30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and

sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

**Romans 11:33-36**

"33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

34 "For who has known the mind of the Lord,  
or who has been his counselor?"

35 "Or who has given a gift to him  
that he might be repaid?"

36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen."

*USE FOR EXAMINATION*

**Q.** What do you boast in within your heart?

**GOD SAVES SINNERS BY GRACE ALONE, THROUGH FAITH ALONE, AS A GIFT ALONE, SO THAT THEY WOULD BOAST IN HIM ALONE.**

**TWO CONCLUDING EXHORTATIONS.**

**I) Boast only in God for your salvation.**

- The Father picked you, the Son purchased you, the Spirit regenerated you, and the whole Godhead is preserving you!

**II) Teach your wives and your children these glorious truths concerning how God saves sinners.**

- Teach them to boast not in themselves but in God alone!

**"Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."**

# Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith.

Because "charis"  
prep. Feminine present, active, indicative perfect passive prep. "pistis"  
Feminine

And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

not of yourselves  
conj. demonstrative pronoun adverb neuter prep. definite neuter present

9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

of/from "ergon"  
adverb prep. Toil effort labour conj. adverb aorist middle, subjunctive glory in Brag

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### III. SONG:

*Break* (start back at 7:10pm)

**IV. 1689 Confession:** Ch 14. Par 1-3 (finish by 7:35pm)

**V. DISCUSSION** (finish by 8pm)

*A Body of Divinity*

*The Ten Commandments*

**Closing Prayer**

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# SYLLABUS

## ▣ SHEPHERD SCHOOL - SEASON TWO (2026) - THE WORD, THE GOSPEL, & THE LAW ▣

WEEK	Scripture	Book I <i>(read before)</i>	Book II <i>(read before)</i>	1689 Confession	Certificate Essays	Certificate Exposition
1. 2/12	2 Timothy 2:1-7	<b>INTRO</b>	<b>INTRO</b>	<b>INTRO</b>	<b>INTRO</b>	<b>INTRO</b>
2. 2/19	1 Thessalonians 2:13	<b>The Properties of the Written Word, Part 1: Authority and Clarity</b> <i>Reformed Systematic Theology (vol. 1)</i> by Joel Beeke (pg. 334-351)	<b>The Ten Commandments</b> <i>Obedience &amp; Love</i> by Thomas Watson	<b>1689 Confession</b> Ch. 1 Par. 1-3		
3. 2/26	Isaiah 8:19-20	<b>The Properties of the Written Word, Part 2: Necessity, Unity, Efficacy</b> <i>Reformed Systematic Theology (vol. 1)</i> by Joel Beeke (pg. 352-370)	<b>The Ten Commandments</b> <i>The Preface to the Commandments (pg. 12-29)</i> by Thomas Watson	<b>1689 Confession</b> Ch. 1 Par. 4-5		
4. 3/5	Psalms 19:7-11	<b>The Properties of the Written Word, Part 3: Inerrant Veracity</b> <i>Reformed Systematic Theology (vol. 1)</i> by Joel Beeke (pg. 371-382)	<b>The Ten Commandments</b> <i>The Preface to the Commandments (pg. 29-43)</i> by Thomas Watson	<b>1689 Confession</b> Ch. 1 Par. 6-8		First Draft Exposition Due *Certificate path will meet an extra night this week
5. 3/12	2 Timothy 3:15-17	<b>The Properties of the Written Word, Part 5: Sufficiency</b> <i>Reformed Systematic Theology (vol. 1)</i> by Joel Beeke (pg. 395-408)	<b>The Ten Commandments</b> <i>The Right Understanding of the Law</i> by Thomas Watson	<b>1689 Confession</b> Ch. 1 Par. 9-10		
6. 3/19	Matthew 19:17 + Romans 2:14-15	<b>Introduction + The Essence of God's Law</b> <i>God's Law Made Easy</i> by Kenneth Gentry (pg. 1-24)	<b>The Ten Commandments</b> <i>The First Commandment</i> by Thomas Watson	<b>1689 Confession</b> Ch. 19 Par. 1-2		
7. 3/26	Matthew 5:17-20	<b>Christ and God's Law + The New Testament and God's Law</b> <i>God's Law Made Easy</i> by Kenneth Gentry (pg. 25-46)	<b>The Ten Commandments</b> <i>The Second Commandment</i> by Thomas Watson	<b>1689 Confession</b> Ch. 19 Par. 3-5	Short Essay on the Sufficiency of the Scriptures *1,000-1,200 words	

