

Remember What God Has Done

The human heart craves recognition. When things succeed, we want the credit: "I did that." Yet, when it comes to salvation, Christians joyfully say, "It wasn't me. It was all God. He did it all!"

This is such a freeing truth of Christianity. Being saved, being right with God—the responsibility isn't on your shoulders. Why? Because **we are not saved through what we do for God—we are saved through what God has done for us.**

This opposes our natural instinct to earn our way. The world says, "Try harder." But Jesus, on the cross, declared, **"It is finished."** Salvation is already accomplished. God did it for you. All that remains is to believe - by grace through faith.

God saves us this way to showcase His kindness and grace. He displays it by taking lost, sinful people who don't deserve His love—people like us—and saving us purely by His **grace: unearned, undeserved favor.**

CHRISTIANS ARE NOT SAVED BECAUSE OF WHAT WE DO FOR GOD; WE ARE SAVED BECAUSE OF WHAT GOD HAS DONE FOR US.

What exactly has God done for us? Ephesians 2 reveals the amazing work of God in **five gracious transformations**:

Gracious Transformation #1 – LIFE: God gave us life when we were dead (2:1–5)

We must admit the truth about ourselves: in our natural condition, we were never good people. Spiritually speaking, we were **dead**. Not weak. Not sick. Dead. Lifeless in the eyes of God. Verses 1–3 state: "You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air... and were by nature **children of wrath**, like the rest of mankind." We were spiritually lifeless, enslaved to sin, and under God's judgment.

BUT Two words change everything: **“But God...”** (v. 4). “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, **made us alive together with Christ —by grace you have been saved.**”

That's the miracle of grace. God acted when we were helpless and hopeless. He sent His Son to die and rise again. When we believed in Jesus, He gave us **new life**;

He made us alive together with Christ. What did we do to deserve this? **Nothing.** We did the sinning—God did the saving. Grace is unearned favor. You were lifeless, but God made you alive.

Gracious Transformation #2 – STATUS: God raised us up when we were low (2:6–10)

In our natural, dead condition, we were at the lowest point possible. But because He is kind, God reached down and raised us up to the highest status imaginable. Verse 6 says: "And raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Your forever status is seated with Christ in the heavenlies, at the Father's right hand. That is your high status because you are **in Christ**. Why? Verse 7: "**So that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace** in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." God saved us to showcase His grace forever.

Ephesians 2:8-9 is one of the clearest statements of salvation: "**For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.**" Salvation is God's gift. You cannot earn

it. We receive eternal life by grace, through faith in Jesus.

Good works follow, they do not precede. Verse 10 explains: "For **we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works**, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." We are God's new creation, and even our good works are planned and empowered by Him. He gets the credit.

Gracious Transformation #3 – BELONGING: God brought us near when we were far (2:11–13)

One of life's hardest feelings is not belonging. Before Christ, we didn't belong among God's people. Verses 11–12 remind us: "You were at that time **separated from Christ**, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, **having no hope and without God in the world.**" We were spiritual outsiders.

"**But now**" (v. 13) changes everything: "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been **brought near by the blood of Christ.**" We were far, but now we belong. This belonging is a gift of grace. Jesus brought us in through His shed blood. Remembering where we came from protects us from

pride. If we forget we were once far off, we start treating others like they don't belong. We should be the most **humble and welcoming** people on earth.

That means we remember what it felt like to be far away, and then we want to invite others near. The church is meant to be a people who invite others to belong too.

Gracious Transformation #4 – PEACE: God gave us peace when we were hostile (2:14–18)

God gives us a deep and lasting peace. He gave us peace when our lives were full of hostility—both peace with God and peace with one another.

Historically, the Law of Moses created division between Jew and Gentile, building walls of pride and resentment. The law also exposes the hostility in our hearts toward God, showing our sinful nature's desire to rebel. The law makes peace impossible. But Jesus came. Dying on the cross, He broke down the barrier separating us.

The Law is finished because Jesus paid the full price for our law-breaking. The debt is paid. The ground is level at the cross: we are all sinners in need of grace. Through faith in Jesus, we receive His peace. We can

stop living by competition and pride—and start living in peace. When you look at a fellow believer, you're seeing someone who needed grace just like you.

Gracious Transformation #5 – PURPOSE: God gave us purpose when we were useless (2:19–22)

Paul pictures this purpose as God building a temple—a spiritual house—where every believer is a necessary brick. Every single brick matters to the structure's strength and beauty.

You are no longer a stranger. You are a member of God's family and God's building. You matter for what God is doing in this world.