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The Gift Of Salvation
Eph. 2:8-9

Paul the apostle has given the Ephesians a very vivid picture of their past life of darkness, their position under the First Adam. Eph. 2:1-3

1. Dead in trespasses and sins.
2. Walking after the course of the world influenced by Satan.
3. Sons of disobedience, mastered by a sinful nature, children of wrath by nature, under God's judgment.

Paul equally provided another vivid picture of their present position in Christ, in the Last Adam. Eph. 2:4-7

1. But God made them Alive together with Christ.
2. Raised up together and seated with Christ in the heavenlies.
3. On display before the angels throughout all eternity as recipients of His grace and kindness.

So Paul now gives the reason God will display His church in the ages to come, He alone saves sinners, characterized by three things. Eph. 2:8-9

- I. The proclamation regarding salvation. vs. 8a
- II. The explanation regarding salvation. vs. 8b-c
- III. The exclusion regarding salvation. vs. 9

I. The proclamation regarding salvation.

- A. The apostle Paul declared the manner by which God saves every sinner, grace. vs. 8a
* "For by grace you have been saved."
 1. The word for "gar" introduces the reason God will display the exceeding riches of His grace in the future ages to come.
 - a. Due to the fact God is the initiator when we were dead in trespasses and sins. vs. 4-5a
 - b. Due to the fact God is the trans actor, making us alive together with Christ, sitting us in the heavenlies with Christ. vs. 5b-6
 - c. Due to the fact God is the displayer in the ages to come. vs. 7
 2. Grace as we have noted is the unmerited and undeserved favor of God, the origin and source provided for salvation.
 - a. The article appears before grace, literally the Greek reads "by the grace", a very specific one.
 - b. Paul has declared this grace, "by grace you have been saved", as a parenthetical commentary. vs. 5c
 - c. Paul again mentioned this grace that God will reveal the exceeding riches of His "the grace" in His kindness towards us in Christ. vs. 7

- d. Paul now is amplifying the nature of “the grace” in salvation.
 - 1) In other words God did not save us because He felt indebted to us.
 - 2) God did not save us because we deserved it.
- B.** The apostle Paul declared the means by which God saves every sinner. vs. 8a
* “through faith.”
- 1. Faith is not just believing in God or in the existence of some cosmic force that is in control of the universe.
 - a. The word faith “pistis”, means conviction of the truth of something, belief of trust in the gospel revealed.
 - 1) Faith is produced by the Holy Spirit in a person, not their own, when they hear the word of God regarding their need of salvation.
 - 2) Faith is the subjective medium or instrument for the process of salvation.
 - 3) Faith is a necessary condition that must be met, without exception.
 - 4) For saving faith to be Biblical, it must be based on the revelation of God’s word and responded to in belief.
 - 2. Faith in God’s Word means a total dependency and trust on the work of Christ, the object and person of our faith!

- a. That Jesus is God who became man through the Incarnation. Jn. 1:1, 14
 - b. That Jesus is the Savior of the world, Jn. 4:42
 - c. That Jesus is the Lamb of God, became sin for me and died in my place to justify me before God. Jn. 1:29; 2Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:1-2
 - d. That there is forgiveness of sins in no other way to God, no other name under heaven and earth whereby man must be save, nor any other mediator between God and man, except Jesus. Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1Tim. 2:5
 - e. That He alone can impart eternal life. Jn. 20:31
* “buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.” Col. 2:12
- C.** The apostle Paul declared this grace through faith placed both Jew and Gentile on equal positions before God.
- 1. Paul gave the past lost life of the Gentiles and Jews. Eph. 2:1-3
 - a. The Gentiles were dead in trespasses and sins. vs. 1
 - b. The Gentiles were walking according to the course of this world, the prince of the

- power of the air working now in the children of disobedience. vs. 2
- c. The Jews also conducted themselves in the lust of their flesh, giving in to the desires of body and mind, being children of wrath by nature, just like the Gentiles. vs. 3
2. Paul gave the present saved life of the Gentiles and Jews.
 - a. But God rich in mercy saved them both. vs. 4
 - b. But God made them both alive together with Christ by grace. vs. 5
 - c. But God raised them both alive and to sit together with Christ in the heavenlies. vs. 6
 - d. But God will display both revealing the riches of “the grace”. in the ages to come. vs. 7
 - e. God made both Jew and Gentiles one and broke down the middle wall of division. Eph. 2:14
 3. This specific grace “the grace” assured both Gentiles and Jews they were saved.
 - a. The perfect tense in the passive, the completed past action, with present results and the present time giving durative force to the finished results: justification, sanctification and glorification. Eph. 1:4-5

- b. They were to know the power of God by the resurrection of Jesus, is the same power had raised them from their spiritual dead state. Eph. 1:19-23
- c. Our salvation is described in a three-fold process.
 - 1) We have been saved, Eph. 2:8
 - 2) We are being saved. 1Cor. 1:18
 - 3) We shall be saved. Heb. 9:28

Illustration #2095 Three Wonders In Heaven

John Newton said, “When I get to heaven I shall see three wonders there. The first wonder will be, to see many people there whom I did not expect to see - the second wonder will be, to miss many people whom I did expect to see; and the third and greatest wonder of all, will be to find myself there.” Physicist 17 century

Application

You might be listening and think that you are not that bad, so you don’t need grace to be saved, but the Bible says, “the wages of sin is death.” Rom. 6:23a

- a. Let me ask you, have you ever lied or stole something?
- b. Have you ever committed fornication or lusted in your heart?
- c. Have you ever deceived or used a person to get your way?
- d. Yes, we have committed some of these and most likely many more, so the wages of sin is death. What will you do on the judgment day?

e. The Scriptures say there is none righteous, to merit salvation from God.

* “As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.” Rom. 3:10-12

2. You might argue, “how can God require that salvation be only by faith in Jesus Christ.”

- a. You might ask, “you mean to tell me that all religions are wrong? Yes!
- b. You mean to tell me that there are no other mediators like Mary, canonized saints, virgins, Peter, etc? Yes!
- c. You mean to tell me that if I do not believe everything the Bible says about Jesus, I am against Him? Yes!
- d. You mean to tell me that no matter what sins I have committed, Jesus will forgive me for them all and make me a new creature? Yes!
 - 1) Jesus said, “**I am** the **way**, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” Jn. 14:6
 - 2) Paul said, “Faith comes by hearing and hearing and hearing by the word of God.” Rom. 10:17
 - 3) Paul said it pleased God to save man by the foolishness of preaching. 1Cor. 1:21

The proclamation regarding salvation is by the grace of God!

II. The explanation regarding salvation. vs. 8b-c

A. The apostle Paul elaborated to clarify what he means about salvation. vs. 8b

* “and that not of yourselves.”

1. The Greek scholars tell us the following.

a. The word that “touto” is in the neuter singular pronoun. Lenski, A. T. Robertson, Wuest.

b. Therefore it does not refer to the word “grace” or “faith”, both words are feminine.

c. The neuter singular pronoun refers to the divine act of saving the sinner.

2. The salvation is not, nor can it be credited to man, “not of yourselves”.

a. The word of “ek” means out from the person being saved.

b. The act of salvation is not of human origin.

1) Sinners prior to hearing the gospel are dead in trespasses and sins. vs. 1

2) Sinners are following the world, Satan, disobedient children of wrath. vs. 2

3) But once the gospel is preached God initiates illuminating and bringing about faith, enabling man to respond, which has nothing to do with works,

- but responsibility and accountability to God.
- c. The act and product of salvation is whole and only in and by God.
 - 1) By grace.
 - 2) Through faith.
 3. The clarity of salvation being of God does not mean that man is passive towards salvation, nor is a contradiction of salvation being of God alone.
 - a. We have touched on predestination and free will already.
 - 1) Both are Biblical.
 - 2) Both are not contrary to each other.
 - b. We have seen that predestination and free will are complements.
 - 1) God is sovereign regarding His predestination.
 - 2) Man is responsible regarding his choice to be saved.
 - 3) We do not believe the doctrine of predestination according to Calvinism, that God predestined a few to be saved and predestined the remainder of humanity to damnation that is unbiblical.
 - 4) We do not believe the doctrine of irresistible grace of Calvinism, we believe grace can be resisted and rejected by individual to be saved.

- 5) If God forced people to be saved, while forcing others to perish, then how can God be just and holy when both groups deserve hell?
 - 6) How can God judge righteously those He damns by predestination, never having given them a chance to be saved.
 - 7) This is a contradiction and violation of the attributes of God.
- B.** The apostle Paul specified what salvation is to man. vs. 8b
 * “*it is* the gift of God.”
1. God is the possessor of the gift of salvation.
 - a. He created man in His image and likeness, a spirit being. Gen. 1:26
 - b. He promised Adam the plan of salvation by a Messiah. Gen. 3:15
 2. God is the giver of the gift of salvation.
 - a. He is the initiator in salvation.
 - b. Man is the responder to salvation.
 - c. The word gift “*doran*” simply means a present and is emphatic in the Greek.
 3. Man is the potential recipient of the gift of salvation, if he meets the conditions.
 - a. Faith in the gospel heard.
 - b. Conviction of their lost condition and need of the Savior Jesus.
 - c. Repentance from their sin, asking forgiveness.

- d. If God has predestined some to be saved already and nothing can alter it, then the conditions of faith and repentance are unnecessary and a mockery.
- 4. For a gift to be valid there must be two things present.
 - a. The person giving the gift.
 - 1) God was not compelled or forced to save sinners.
 - 2) God motivated by His love made provision for salvation by His grace.
 - b. The person accepting the gift.
 - 1) The sinner is not compelled or forced by God to accept the gift of salvation.
 - 2) The sinner responds to the love of God for him in the offer of salvation.
 - c. The gift is meaningful only when given and received of one's own free will.
 - 1) The sinner is thankful to God.
 - 2) The sinner loves God.
 - 3) The sinner is a child of God.
 - a) For God so loved the world that He gave. . . Jn. 3:16
 - b) Of His own will He begot us. Ja. 1:18

Illustration

Having the right key to open a door is important to get in a house. You may believe the key you have is the right one, but if it isn't, your belief won't make it so!

* The same with salvation, only Jesus can save!

Application

1. The educators of centuries past to the present have concluded that their intellectual accomplishments and contributions to society make them more worthy and valuable than others.
 - a. Yet some of them had and have had bad marriages or divorces like other persons.
 - b. Their supposed intellectual superiority has not been able to keep them from lying, stealing or deceiving people.
 - c. Their certainty about the origin of man through evolution compels them to deny God, even to mock God.
 - * “**Where** is the **wise**? **Where** is the scribe? **Where** is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” 1Cor. 1:20
2. Not one person that is in hell now nor those that will stand before Jesus at the White Throne Judgement will say, “I could have saved myself”.
 - a. They know now in hell they deserve hell.
 - b. They will also know at the White Throne they deserve the punishment received.
 - c. They will know they should have repented and received salvation as a gift, they will also know for all eternity they chose to not receive it!
 - 1) “I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, *that* I have set before you **life** and **death**, blessing and cursing; therefore choose **life**, that both you and your descendants may live.” Deut. 30:19

- 2) “Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” Josh. 24:14-15

The explanation regarding salvation is the gift of God!

III. The exclusion regarding salvation. vs. 9

- A. The apostle Paul declared works have nothing to do with salvation. vs. 9a
* “not of works.”
1. Paul is not talking specifically about the works under the Mosaic.
 - a. The Jews were to keep the commandments, precept, statutes and judgments, but none of those could save them.
 - b. The Jews were to keep all the Feast, particular the Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacle, presenting themselves three times a years before God, but that did not save them.

2. Paul is speaking in general to Jews and Gentiles about anything a person would consider doing to be sufficient to obtain salvation by what they did.
 - a. Some of these Gentiles came out of religions ascetic religions carrying over their pagan theology of works.
 - 1) Denying themselves certain pleasures for a set time or foods.
 - 2) Dedicating themselves to a life of poverty for life.
 - 3) Diligently do good works for those less fortunate.
 - 4) Delivering the oppressed and slave of tyrants.
 - b. Others of these Gentiles came out of very idolatrous sensual and corrupt religion.
 - 1) They could have considered their sexual abstinence as deserving salvation, which would exclude grace and faith.
 - 2) They could have considered by not partaking in debauched drunken feast as deserving salvation, yet faith and works are exclusive and opposite of each other.
 - 3) They could have considered by not partaking in the offerings of the pagan gods, as a work to earn salvation, a contradiction of the gift of salvation.

- B.** The apostle Paul declared boasting has nothing to do with salvation. vs. 9b
 * “lest anyone should boast.”
1. Paul focuses on the reason God designed salvation to be all His doing.
 - a. The word lest “hina” introduces the purpose.
 - * For this reason when the word “hina” is found it is called a “purpose clause”.
 - b. The word anyone “tis” covers any and all persons.
 - 1) In any generation.
 - 2) In any nation.
 - 3) In any culture.
 2. The purpose is stated, “should boast”.
 - a. The word boast “kauchaesetai”, means to glory.
 - 1) Simply to take credit.
 - 2) To point to something for the salvation God has given to them.
 - b. The aorist middle voice means literally, in order that no one shall ever get to boast.
 - 1) Jew or Gentile.
 - 2) Bond or Scythian.
 - 3) Male or female.
 - 4) Slave or free.
 3. The plain reason.
 - a. Since we are saved by grace.
 - b. Since we are saved through faith in the work of Christ Jesus.

- c. Since both grace and faith are the divine process for the product of salvation
- d. Since salvation is the gift of God.
 - * Not even Abraham could boast in works before God. Rom. 4:1-4

Illustration

Simon the Pharisee looked down on Jesus and the harlot that washed the feet of Jesus with her tears and wiped them with her hair, so Jesus gave him a parable about two debtors. Lk. 7:36-50

Application

1. Salvation is available to all sinners as a gift, yet not all will receive it.
 - a. The way all sinners respond to the gospel about Jesus crucified for them is forever unchanging.
 - b. There were two thieves, who heard Jesus, one rejected, the other received the free gift.
 - * “Today you will be with Me in Paradise.” Lk. 23:43
2. Salvation will always be distorted by those who mix works with grace for salvation.
 - a. It is a misrepresentation of Christianity.
 - b. It is a contradiction of the gospel.
 - c. It is an offence to the grace of God.
 - d. Paul and James do not contradict each other, Paul denies works prior to salvation to be saved, James declares works after salvation as evident that we are saved.

* “So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is **finished!**” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.” Jn. 19:30

3. Salvation as God’s gift gives glory to Jesus alone.

- a. “But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I *am* the LORD, exercising loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the LORD.” Jer. 9:24
- b. “Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? *Then* may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil.” Jer. 13:23
- c. “I am what I am by the grace of God.” 1Cor. 15:10a
- d. “For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God--and righteousness and sanctification and redemption-- that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.” 1Cor. 1:26-31

- e. “What do you have that you have not received, why are you boasting.” 1Cor. 4:7
- f. “And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.” Rev. 5:9-10

The exclusion regarding salvation is the glory that belongs only to God!

Conclusion

Paul has declared the reason God will display His church in the ages to come, that He alone saves sinners, characterized by three things:

- I. The proclamation regarding salvation is by grace of God!
- II. The explanation regarding salvation is the gift of God!
- III. The exclusion regarding salvation is the glory that belongs only to God!