



Ephesians – Pt. 3

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Intro:

A story is told of a town where all the residents are ducks. Every Sunday the ducks waddle out of their houses and waddle down Main Street to their church. They waddle into the sanctuary and squat in their proper pews. The duck choir waddles in and takes its place, and then the duck minister comes forward and opens the duck Bible. He reads to them: "Ducks! God has given you wings! With wings you can fly! With wings you can mount up and soar like eagles. No walls can confine you! No fences can hold you! You have wings. God has given you wings, and you can fly like birds!"

All the ducks shouted, "Amen!"

And then they all waddled home. In other word...there was no obedience, lives were not changed, they did no good work of which God had a plan for them (Source: Tony Campolo, *Let Me Tell You a Story*, Word, 2000)

Text: Ephesians 2:1-10 (focal – 8-10)

When I was a boy a friend came up to me while I was sitting on the steps of my church building (he was Catholic and I was Baptist) and said, "When I get older I'm going to be a Baptist."

Somewhat surprised I asked him why? He said, "Well, all you have to do is believe in Jesus, you don't even have to get baptized, and you get to go to heaven,...and then you can live like hell. I like that, 'ya', I'm going to be a Baptisd." Stunned, I had no answer. I tell you to this day that bugged me. I didn't have an answer, do you? His church taught that you have to believe in jesus, plus be baptized plus receive the Eucharist, plus perform good works to be saved.

A Summary of Ephesians 2:1-10

Ephesians focuses on the Body-us, of which Christ is the Head. And all the directions come from the Head to the body never from the body to the head. We need to remember that when it comes to obeying our LORD's commands and when talking to Him.

In chapter 2:1-10 we find the Apostle s Paul describing the very process of salvation-how and why we are saved. In this text we can get a full understanding of what 'grace' is.

In verses 1-3 Paul reminds the church of their former spiritual state prior to coming to faith in Christ. We were dead- like corpses.

In verses 4-7 Paul explains why and how we were saved from this state of spiritual deadness. We are saved because God is rich in mercy and has a great love for us. God's reason for saving us was entirely His own, don't get the idea that you thought of it.

In Ephesians 2:8-10 God's work presupposes a purpose, and the purpose for His acting is so that we might do good works. As Jesus said in Matt 5:16:

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Notice the details: _ Let's take a closer look.

v.1 – They were dead in sin – spiritually dead, just as a corpse cannot revive itself to life neither can the spiritually dead revive his own spirit into new life. Inn one sense: Spiritual deadness is a condition of the Walking dead.

v.2 – This state of spiritual deadness was according to the course of the world-according to the world's way of doing things not our LORD's.3

v2.- Those who live this way (sons of disobedience) are ruled by Satan. Hebrews 2:14-15 tells us that all who are not in Christ are spiritually dead and slave of the devil.

V3.- We were once among them, following after our flesh and living according to our own desires and mind.

v.3- Children of wrath- No one is "born" a Christian. Every human being is a sinner, dead in their trespasses from birth. All humanity shares the same starting point as children of (God's) wrath. (Cp. Ro. 1:18)

v.4 – Mercy- not getting what you deserve. We did not earn His mercy nor did we earn our salvation.

v.4 – Love- sacrificially meeting the need(s) of others without expecting anything in return in a selfish manner.

v.5- dead in trespasses- Paul explains God saved us because dead spiritual corpses are incapable of resurrecting themselves.

v.6- Paul also explains our salvation is not a matter of head knowledge or agreeing with the Gospel, it is because of His grace- He raised us and placed us in heavenly places. Therefore, we are no longer slaves to this world and the prince of the world.

v.7- Paul explains why God saved us. He appointed us to salvation so that He might display the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness to us.

Grace- getting what you don't deserve, grace is the means by which we receive faith.

Kindness- goodness of heart

Ephesians 2:8-10 explains-

Again, God's work presupposes a purpose, and the purpose for His acting is so that we might do good works. As Jesus said in Matt 5:16:

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, glorify your Father who is in heaven."

My questing is what are these good works? If I am a true follower of Christ what are these good works, and for what purpose and cause?

Good works are those actions that benefit others whereby God is honored/glorified and His mission is accomplished through the Gospel.

You know you're doing good works when these two things are being revealed in your life. Looking at it another way there are two rules to follow when seeking to do good works as evidence of your salvation:

1. It must benefit others and fulfill His Mission- your good creates opportunity to proclaim the Gospel- Eph. 4:1-7

Ways we can benefit people:

- Is seen in our fruit- Whenever the gospel takes root in our lives, it always produces Spirit-wrought fruit (Gal. 5:16-26).
- Walk in a worthy of our calling – Our character is Christ-like.

- 1. Use your talents and gifts to benefit others – 1 Peter 4:10
- 2. Live a holy or set apart lifestyle- Ro. 12:2; Matthew 5:16; 1 Peter 1:16 - transformed by the renewing of your mind: carry out actions of right living; Be holy
- 3. Help the needy and the weak- Acts 20:35
- 4. Render a good service that reveals truth- 2 Ti 3:16-17; James 1:22-27
- 5. Bring happiness, gladness- be a gift giver Matt. 2:11

2. It must honor/glorify God- Isaiah 43:7

Doing good allows people to taste and see how good our LORD is – and the focus on our LORD not us.

James 2:18 says, “someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. Paul says, ‘we are created in Christ Jesus for good works.’

Some time ago I studied and wrote a book on Epistle of 1 John and in that letter I identified marks or tests of a person who is in fellowship with our LORD, marks of a one who does good works. And as a teacher I would like to give you this in closing: I'll keep it easy- it will be mostly a YES or NO test.

1. 1:1-4- Do you enjoy fellowship with God, the church and His Word?
2. 1:8- Are you convicted of your sins? If you say you have no sin you are a liar, if sin does not bother you, you have a problem.
3. 2:3- Can you say my passion is to be obedient to keep our LORD's commands?
4. 2:15-17- Can you say I love doing God's will? – take the time test here: how many hours a week do you spend actually serving our LORD where people see you as a real Christian?
5. 3:2-3- Is your hope in the second coming of our LORD?

6. 3:3-5- Are you living a godly lifestyle as a result?
7. 3:14- Are you sacrificing yourself for your brothers and sisters in Christ like He loves us.
8. 3:22- Does God answer your prayers?
9. 3:24 and 4:13- Is the Holy Spirit working in your, convicting you of sin, righteousness and judgment? Does He guide you into truth- that is do you have a love for God's Word? Are your decisions based on His Word or do you seek the counsel of the world? Do you use your gifts for God's glory or your own end?
10. 4:1- Can you discern God's truth versus error? For example, over 70% of people who say they are Christians say Jesus was created.
11. Philippians 1:28- Have you ever taken the 'guff' for your faith in our LORD Jesus Christ and for conduct worthy of the Gospel?

I draw you to this question? What good works are revealed in yhour life that shows you have been saved by grace?