

# “The Good News of the Gospel”

(Ephesians 2:4-10)

## Introduction

➤ In the Bible, the word “Gospel” (*euangelion*) literally means good news or good message, and an “evangelist” (*euangelistēs*) describes one who proclaims the good news (i.e., the Gospel). However, as we saw in our study of Ephesians 2:1-3, for there to be good news there must also be bad news. Just as the need for a cure implies that one is sick, so too does the need for salvation mean that one is condemned. For where there is no condemnation – no judgment, no wrath, no sin – there is no need for a Savior. The true good news of the Gospel makes no sense without the bad news of our sinful condition.

The truth is, we cannot truly understand the “good news” of the Gospel until we first understand the “bad news” of our sin. A person cannot appreciate being found if they do not realize that they were lost; they do not want to be rescued if they do not think they are in danger; they do not desire forgiveness if they do not think they have sinned. Likewise, a person does not desire the (gracious) salvation from God if they do not realize that they are under the (just) wrath of God. They will not understand the Good News (salvation) if they do not first understand the bad news (condemnation). In fact, the more we understand the depths of our depravity apart from Christ, the greater the heights of our praise to God for Christ.

➤ In light of this, when the apostle Paul proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he first declared the bad news (which is really bad):

**Eph 2:1-3** ~ “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup>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 – <sup>3</sup>among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.”

➤ These verses reveal three dreadful aspects of the bad news of the Gospel:

1. Spiritual condition – dead in sin
2. Spiritual corruptions – the world, the devil, the flesh
3. Spiritual condemnation – the wrath of God

➤ Once we have truly understood that bad news – our utter sinfulness (unworthiness) and our absolute dependence on God for salvation – then we can fully appreciate the good news of the Gospel.

**Eph 2:4-10** ~ “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – <sup>6</sup>and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup>so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup>not a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup>For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

➤ From this passage we can highlight three distinct aspects of the “good news” of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## A. God **MADE** us alive with Christ (vs.4-5)

➤ With a wonderfully abrupt change of course, we find the phrase “*But God*” (vs.4). This is a welcome transition because, as we have seen, the previous verses spiraled downward leaving us helplessly dead in sin and justly under God’s wrath. While verses one to three spiral down into greater and greater despair, the first two words of verse four give us hope.

✓Illust: “With these two words we come to the introduction to the Christian message, the peculiar, specific message which the Christian faith has to offer us. These two words, in and of themselves, in a sense contain the whole of the gospel. The gospel tells of what God has done, God’s intervention; it is something that comes entirely from outside us and displays to us that wondrous and amazing and astonishing work of God which the apostle goes on to describe and define in the following verses” (D.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones; *An Exposition of Ephesians*; 2:4).

✓Illust: “[Paul] says, ‘*But God.*’ He does not say, ‘But man, though his own efforts, pulled himself up by his bootstraps.’; He does not say, ‘But man, coming to his senses, inclined his heart and his will to the things of God and came to faith.’ No, it is ‘*But God, being rich in mercy*’, alluding to the wealth of diving grace” (R.C. Sproul; *Ephesians: An Expositional Commentary*; 2:1-10).

➤ Every person is a sinner by nature and by choice. Left to ourselves, apart from God’s gracious intervention, we are helplessly and hopelessly spiritually dead. “*But God ... made us alive together with Christ*” (vs.4-5). This describes the spiritual resurrection (regeneration) of those who believe, which comes only through the person and work of Jesus Christ. At the moment of genuine conversion, the believer is (for the first time) reconciled to God the Father, able to follow the Son of God, filled with and led by the Spirit of God, and able to understand and obey the Word of God (see Rom.8:7-8).

**John 3:3** ~ “Jesus answered [Nicodemus], ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.’”

**2 Cor 5:17** ~ “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

**Ezek 36:26-27** ~ “And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup>And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.”

**Gal 2:20** ~ “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

**Col 2:13-14** ~ “And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, <sup>14</sup>by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.”

### 1. The need for spiritual life

➤ As we saw in verse one, every person is spiritually “*dead in the trespasses and sins*” (vs.1) – without spiritual life or vitality (not terminally ill, kind-of dead, or mostly dead). Every person is a spiritual stillborn, having no innate goodness or righteousness. Those who are spiritually “*dead*” (*nekros*) have no way to earn God’s favor, no means in which to do good works, no merit of spiritual goodness. Furthermore, they have no way to raise themselves, or be raised by anyone (anything) other than God. In verse five, Paul repeats this sobering truth: “*we were dead in our trespasses*” (vs.5).

**Eph 2:1-2** ~ “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup>in which you once walked ...”

**Rom 3:10-12, 23** ~ “as it is written: ‘None is righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup>no one understands; no one seeks for God. <sup>12</sup>All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.’ ... <sup>23</sup>for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

**Rom 6:23** ~ “For the wages of sin is death ...” (see Jn.3:18, 36)

➤ Notice again the hint of “good news” even in the midst of the “bad news.” In writing to the Ephesian Christians, Paul noted that they “*were*” spiritually dead (see “*were dead*”, vs.1; “*once lived*”, vs.3; “*were by nature*”, vs.3). The unbeliever is absolutely unable to raise themselves to spiritual life.

**John 6:44** ~ “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws [*helkō*] him. And I will raise him up on the last day.”

**John 6:65** ~ “And he said, ‘This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted [*didōmi*] him by the Father.’”

**John 10:28-30** ~ “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch [*harpazō*] them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup>My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch [*harpazō*] them out of the Father’s hand. <sup>30</sup>I and the Father are one.”

## 2. The means of spiritual life

➤ Notice the numerous and glorious descriptive words used to describe the means by which God made us alive in Christ. Each of these are specific attributes (not the only ones) which God used to give us spiritual life.

First, we know spiritual life comes by God’s mercy: *“being rich in mercy”* (vs.4). The New Testament word for *“mercy”* (*eleos*) is defined as undeserved kindness and compassion. It is benevolently withholding just punishment or consequences. God shows us mercy by not giving us what we deserve. That is, as sinners we deserve God’s just and eternal condemnation. Guided by His mercy, he saves all who receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior – saving them from His own wrath. Notice the all-important adjective here describing God’s mercy: *“rich”* (vs.4; *plousios*). God is neither impoverished (destitute, bankrupt) nor miserly (stingy, cheap) when it comes to being merciful to those whom He saves.

**Eph 2:3-4** ~ “... [we] were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. <sup>4</sup>But God, being rich in mercy ...”

**1 Peter 1:3** ~ “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy [*eleos*], he has caused us to be born again ...”

**Titus 3:5** ~ “he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy [*eleos*] ...”

Second, we know that spiritual life comes by God’s love: *“because of the great love with which He loved us”* (vs.4). As with His mercy, and as an expression of His mercy, God’s *“love”* (*agapē*) is unmerited and undeserved. This means that God’s love toward us is not a response to our innate goodness or good works. God does not love us because we are so lovable, or because we first loved Him. God shows us love by loving us in spite of ourselves. Again, we need to notice the way in which God’s love is here described: *“great love”* (vs.4; “great” [*polys*]; many [quantity], long [time], greatness [magnitude]). God’s love is not a permissive love, or a pampering love, but a perfecting (sanctifying) love.

✓ Illust: “God loves you just the way you are, but He loves you too much to let you stay that way.”

**Rom 5:6-8** ~ “For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly ... God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

**Titus 3:4-5** ~ “But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup>he saved us ...”

**1 John 4:9-10, 19** ~ “In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup>In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ... <sup>19</sup>We love because he first loved us.”

Third, we know spiritual life comes by God’s grace: *“by grace you have been saved”* (vs.5). God shows us grace in giving us what we do not deserve. That is, it is by God’s grace that we receive the

forgiveness of sin (Eph.1:7) which results in us being able to inherit eternal life (i.e., salvation, heaven). While there is no adjective in this verse further describing God's grace, we find it in the immediate context of this passage: "*the immeasurable riches of his grace*" (2:7; *hyperballō ploutos*; "surpassing wealth" [NET]; "exceeding riches" [KJV]), in addition to "*his glorious grace*" (1:6) and "*the riches of his grace*" (1:7). This is to say that God's grace is infinite.

**Eph 1:7-8** ~ "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches [*ploutos*] of his grace,<sup>8</sup> which he lavished upon us"

**Rom 5:20** ~ "Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more"

**Ex 34:6-7** ~ "The LORD passed before [Moses] and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,<sup>7</sup> keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin ...'"

- No one can be saved apart from God's "*rich mercy*" (vs.4), "*great love*" (vs.4), and the "immeasurable riches" of His "*grace*" (vs.5). All of these are beyond merit and measure. However, in addition, no one can out-sin God's "*rich mercy*" (vs.4), "*great love*" (vs.4), and the "immeasurable riches" of His "*grace*" (vs.5). God's arm is never too short to save. God's power is never fragile or impotent. God's knowledge is never imperfect or misguided. His mercy is never small or lacking; His love is never impure or corruptible; His grace is never insufficient or fickle.

## **B. God RAISED us with Christ (vs.6-7)**

- A second glorious aspect of the "good news" of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that God raised us with Christ: "*and raised us up with Him*" (vs.6). Those who have been "*made alive ... with Christ*" (vs.5) will also be "*raised ... up with [Christ]*" (vs.6). Whereas the previous truth is our regeneration (resurrection), this truth highlights our ascension. Here is the parallel: Jesus "*died for our sins*" (1Cor.15:3), was "*raised for our justification*" (Rom.4:25), and ascended "*into heaven*" (Lk24:51) where He is seated "*at the right hand of God*" (Rom.8:34). As Christians, we were dead in sin, raised to spiritual life, and will ascend into the glory of God in heaven.

Scripture refers to Christians as those who have been spiritually crucified with Christ (Rom.6:6; Gal.2:20), spiritually buried with Christ (Rom.6:4; Col.2:12), spiritually resurrected with Christ (Rom.6:4-5; Col.2:12), and spiritually ascended ("raised") with Christ. Christ died physically, we were dead spiritually; Christ was buried physically, we were buried spiritually; Christ was raised physically, we are raised spiritually; Christ ascended physically, we are ascended spiritually.

- Notice that this "ascension" is declared as a truth that has already occurred: "*and raised us up with him*" (vs.6). This is true of the following verbs: "*made us alive together with [Christ]*" (vs.5; *syzōopoieō*; aor., act., ind.), "*raised us up with him*" (vs.6; *synegeirō*; aor., act., ind.), "*seated us with him*" (vs.6; *synkathizō*; aor., act., ind.). Since these have not all happened (yet), they are clearly spiritual (not physical/literal) realities. This is referring to the believer's positional/spiritual resurrection and ascension, not their future bodily resurrection and ascension.

### 1. The result of our ascension

- This spiritual ascension results in our being "*seated ... with [Christ/God] in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus*" (vs.6) – again, this is in the past tense (aor., act., ind.) indicating a current or certain reality. The true Christian is not only "*in*" Christ, but also "*with*" Christ. That is, they not only belong to Christ they are abiding with Christ (Gal.2:20; Jn.14:20; 15:1-5; 17:23) – from the first moment of genuine conversion and throughout all eternity.

**Matt 28:20** ~ "... And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (see Heb.13:5)

➤ Furthermore, the Christian's union with Christ brings them (spiritually speaking) to the very throne room of God: "*seated ... with [Christ/God] in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus*" (vs.6). As children of God – "*heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ*" (Rom.8:16-17; Tit.3:7) – Christians are in this world but not of this world (see Jn.15:19; 17:6, 9, 14, 15, 16, 18; Phil.3:20). As Christ ascended to the realm of heaven physically, Christians (at the moment of true conversion) ascend spiritually to the realm of heaven.

They are no longer of this world, but are "[*citizens*] in heaven" (Phil.3:20); they are no longer slaves of sin, but "*slaves of righteousness*" (Rom.6:18); they no longer live under Satan's reign, but "*live according to the Spirit*" (Rom.8:5); they no longer walk in darkness, but "*walk as children of light*" (Eph.5:8); they no longer love this world, or the things of this world (1Jn.2:15), but are those who "*overcome the world*" (1Jn.5:4); they are no longer loved by the world, but the world hates them (Jn.15:19; 17:14); and they are no longer "*conformed to this world*", but are "*transformed*" by the renewing of their minds (Rom.12:2). True conversion is a radical transformation (not just adding Jesus to your sinful life).

**Eph 1:3** ~ "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places"

**Eph 1:19-21** ~ "... according to the working of his great might <sup>20</sup>that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup>far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come."

**Rom 8:5** ~ "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit." (see Phil.3:18-20)

**Col 3:1-5** ~ "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup>For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. <sup>5</sup>Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

➤ As Christians, our hearts (our passions, affections and desires) should be fully seeking Christ, and our minds (our thoughts, beliefs and decisions) should be supremely fixated on Christ. We are to be engrossed with and captivated by the spiritual/eternal things of God, and not the trivial/temporal things of this world. The world vies for our attention and our affections. All day long we are bombarded with worldly messages and seductions that seek to influence our minds and captivate our hearts. We must fight to be focused on and striving after Christ, living our lives according to God's Word and not according to the world. We are to be passionate about Jesus Christ, and preoccupied with Jesus Christ. ✓**Illust**: "We are not only alive, you see, but we are elevated into the highest position of the new life – made to live with Christ, and in Christ – made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (C.H.

Spurgeon; Exposition notes from sermon: "Go in Peace"; Sept.23, 1883).

## 2. The reason for our ascension

➤ As glorious is the result of our spiritual ascension, equally glorious is the reason for our spiritual ascension: "*so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus*" (vs.7). While salvation is clearly for our benefit, it is – first and foremost – for God's glory. Our salvation showcases God's divine attributes. Specifically, as we have seen, His attributes of "*grace*" and *kindness*" or "*the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus*" (vs.7).

As always, God desires to glorify Himself – His nature, character, and attributes – in all that He does (see Is.42:8; 43:7; 48:11; Ex.9:6). In verse seven, Paul described this in that God “*might show*” (*endeiknymi*; vs.7) “*the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus*” (vs.7).

**Rom 9:17** ~ “For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, ‘For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show [*endeiknymi*] my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.’”

**1 Tim 1:16** ~ “But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display [*endeiknymi*] his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.”

**Rom 5:8** ~ “but God shows [*synistēmi*] his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

**Eph 1:4-6** ~ “... In love <sup>5</sup>he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup>to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.”

**Eph 1:11-12** ~ “In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, <sup>12</sup>so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.”

**Eph 1:13-14** ~ “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup>who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”

➤ This began “*before the foundation of the world*” (1:4), as God “*chose us in Him*” (1:4), and *predestined us for adoption ... according to the purpose of His will, <sup>6</sup>to the praise of His glorious grace*” (1:5-6; see 1:11-12). So, from before the foundation of the world God chose to save all those who would believe so that He would be glorified forever. The phrase, “*in the coming ages*” (*en ho eperchomai aiōn*), points to an unspecified future time. This clearly refers to a period of time between Christ’s first coming and second coming, and may also refer to eternity (after Christ’s second coming).

What we know for sure is that God will be glorified in the salvation of all believers.

**Eph 3:21** ~ “to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

**1 Cor 10:31** ~ “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

### C. God SAVED us in Christ (vs.8-10)

➤ A third, and more well-known aspect of the good news of the Gospel is salvation. “*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup>not a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup>For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them*” (vs.8-10).

**Eph 2:5** ~ “even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved”

➤ To be “*saved*” (*sōzō*) means to be rescued from ruin, destruction, or death (see “*perish*”, Jn.3:16). In terms of our salvation in Christ, “*saved*” refers to being saved “*from ... sins*” (Matt.1:21), saved “*from the wrath of God*” (Rom.5:9; cf. 1Thess.1:10), and saved from God’s just and eternal condemnation (Jn.3:17).

## 1. The root of our salvation

➤ Salvation is by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone: *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup>not a result of works, so that no one may boast"* (vs.8-9). This could not be more clear:

### Negative

*"not your own doing"* (vs.8)

*"not a result of works"* (vs.9)

### Positive

*"it is the gift of God"* (vs.8)

*"so that no one may boast"* (vs.9)

➤ The *"gift of God"* (*dōron theos*) is certainly His *"grace"* (*charis*; which means free gift" or "unmerited favor"), but the grammar of this sentence may also indicate that our *"faith"* (*pistis*) is also a free gift from God; as God enables us to believe (Jn.6:44; 65). For, as we have seen, is the one who raises the believer from spiritual death and grants them spiritual life (Eph.2:1, 5).

**Rom 3:20** ~ "For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin."

**Rom 3:27-28** ~ "Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. <sup>28</sup>For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law."

**2 Tim 1:9** ~ "who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began"

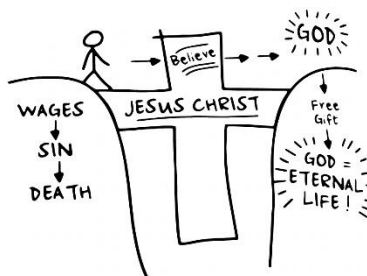
**Titus 3:4-6** ~ "But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup>he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup>whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior"

➤ Notice how often Christ is mentioned in Ephesians 2:4-10 ["Christ" (4x); "Jesus" (3x); "him" (2x)]. The Bible is emphatically and repetitively clear, that Salvation comes only through Jesus Christ (Jn.3:16, 36; 14:6; 1Jn.5:11-12; Acts 4:12). God's saving grace is received by those who put their faith in Jesus as the Christ, the one and only Son of God and the one and only Savior from God. All of the salvific blessings Christians have come to them in Christ and are forever guaranteed in Christ!

**Rom 5:1** ~ "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

➤ God's saving grace is *"immeasurable"* (vs.7). It bridges the seemingly infinite chasm that our sin has made between us and God. This chasm is so wide and so deep – so treacherous – that no one can cross. To minimize our sin is to minimize God's grace. When we elevate man to being basically good, or even well-intended, we blasphemously reduce God to merely "helping" or "rewarding" us – not saving us. To make this chasm crossable by our own goodness or good works, is to disparage substitutionary death of Christ on the cross. To put it bluntly, if our sin is really no big deal than what Jesus did on the cross is really no big deal (or massive overkill).

But our sin made it impossible for us to cross the chasm between us and God. The only way is by the bridge of the cross of Christ.



➤ To say it another way, to elevate man to being good in and of himself is to diminish the praise that is due God; it enables us to “boast” (vs.9; *kauchaomai*) in ourselves or what we have done, and not boast in God and Christ alone. The Bible exhorts us to give God all the praise and glory for our salvation because He has raised us up from the pit of spiritual death and damnation, and raised us to be seated with Christ in the heavens!

**1 Cor 1:29-31** ~ “so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup>And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup>so that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’”

**Gal 6:14** ~ “But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

## 2. The fruit of our salvation

➤ While no one is saved by good works, everyone who is saved is saved unto good works. God does not save the sinner so he can remain in sin (Rom.6:1-2). Likewise, God does not save the sinner so that he can be spiritually idle (complacent) or lazy (indolent). God saves the believer in order to use that believer according to His good purposes and please: “*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them*” (vs.10).

To be God’s “workmanship” (*poiēma*; see Rom.1:20; cf. 2Cor.5:17) indicates not only our Maker, but also the reason for why we were made: “*created [ktizō] in Christ Jesus for good works*” (vs.10). To do “good works” (*agathos ergon*) is part of the reason why we were created, and why we have been saved. These “good works” represent anything and everything we do out of sincere and humble obedience to Christ – obeying His commands, living according to His will, walking by His Spirit; glorifying His name.

**Col 1:10** ~ “so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

**1 Cor 10:31** ~ “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

**Matt 5:16** ~ “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

**John 15:8** ~ “By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”

**James 2:17, 26** ~ “So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ... <sup>26</sup>For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.”

**Phil 2:12-13** ~ “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup>for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

**Titus 2:14** ~ “who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”

➤ A Christian who does not produce the spiritual fruit of good works is disobedient at best, and a false believer at worst (Matt.7:21-27; 12:50; Lk.6:46; Jn.14:15; 15:1-8, 14; Gal.5:16-25). Those who truly have the root of salvation will produce the fruit of salvation, which is obedience to the commands and will of God. Of course, none of us do this perfectly (Jms.3:2) but this is the Christian’s greatest desire and purpose.

**Matt 7:17-20** ~ “So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup>A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup>Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup>Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.”



➤ God has ordained for His children to walk in obedience: *“which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them”* (vs.10).

**Ps 139:14** ~ “I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.”

**Phil 1:6** ~ “And 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.”

## Conclusion

➤ This new song, written by Matt Boswell and Matt Papa, published in 2024, is the anthem of every true believer:

Completely known, completely loved / My heart is seen by God above  
Should I now run? Dare hide my face? / When in His eyes there is only grace

Completely free, the shame is gone / The highest Judge took all my wrongs  
And set them on His only Son / He bore my sin, I bear His love

*Completely known, completely loved / I'm covered by my Savior's blood  
I'm robed in white and God is pleased / To see His Son, when He looks on me*

Completely His, how can it be? / That God would set His heart on me  
Loved not for works that I have done / But long before time had begun

*Completely known, completely loved / I'm covered by my Savior's blood  
I'm robed in white and God is pleased / To see His Son, when He looks on me*

Completely saved, the work is done / The curse, the grave, is overcome  
For with that dawn there rose a King! / Now heaven's smile shines over me

*Completely known, completely loved / I'm covered by my Savior's blood  
I'm robed in white and God is pleased / To see His Son, when He looks on me*

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