

## **I Believe Salvation is By Grace Through Faith**

**Read – Ephesians 2:1–10**

**Text – Ephesians 2:8–10** *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*

**Theme – Salvation is only by grace through faith. There is nothing we do to earn or obtain it.**

### **Introduction:**

We continue this morning in our series entitled "What I Believe." Our statement of faith, upon which we are basing these lessons is:

**"I believe in the inspiration of the Bible, and in the deity of Jesus Christ, God's Son, in Whom we have salvation from sin by grace through faith. I believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer and gives guidance and power as we surrender to the Lordship of Christ. I believe that God has given to the church the responsibility to evangelize the world through the preaching of the gospel and personal soul winning. I will seek to live today so as to be ready to meet Him at His coming."**

**Having now spent time on the inspiration of the Bible and the Deity of Jesus Christ God's Son (as well as His humanity), we come now to the following statement:**

**"I believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, God's Son, in Whom we have salvation from sin by grace through faith."**

**Let's discuss this fundamental aspect of what we believe. It is vital for a believer to be able to state the mechanics of salvation.**

**How else can we know we are saved? How else can we articulate to an unbeliever why they need to be saved? How else can we have any assurance whatsoever of our eternal destination? We need to be able to save with assurance, "I know I'm saved, and this is why."**

**And so, let's examine our text.**

**I. "Are ye saved" – There is a need for salvation, and there is the provision of salvation.**

**QUESTION** – What do we need to be saved from?

**ANSWER** – The Bible (and God, the Author of the Bible) divides everybody into 2 very simple groups:

**1. The Saved**

**2. The Lost**

*1 John 5:12 " He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."*

**In the phrase "... are ye saved..." we learn that:**

**A. God has provided a means of salvation.**

**B. That salvation is a present possession to the believer.**

**"Saved" is in the Greek aorist tense, which is roughly equivalent to our past tense. In other words, there is a component of our salvation which is "point in time." There was a "point in time" when you became SAVED.**

**QUESTION – When was that? What event marks the beginning of a person's SAVED STATE?**

**ANSWER – The moment they place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ, and in Him alone.**

**C. Once obtained, that salvation is a continuing possession of the believer.**

**The Greek aorist tense is interesting, in that, although it has a "point in time" component, it also refers to a continuing action. It is something that began, but continues.**

**QUOTE** (Jamieson, Fausset, Brown Commentary) "Translate as in Eph 2:5, 'Ye are in a saved state.'"

**QUESTION – What does this mean to you? What does it have to say about your salvation?**

**ANSWER – That once obtained, it cannot be lost. That once in a saved state, you cannot be in an unsaved state.**

**In the phrase "are ye saved" we not only learn of the fact that we can be saved, but we learn that once we are saved, we cannot lose that salvation! Other proofs of this:**

*John 5:24 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word,*

*and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."*

*John 10:27–28 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."*

## **II. "By grace" – It is wholly a gift of God.**

**Definition – Usually we hear "grace" defined as the unmerited favor of God.**

**QUESTION – What do Catholics believe they need to do in order to be saved?**

**QUESTION – What do Jehovah's Witnesses believe they need to do in order to be saved?**

**QUESTION – What do Nazarenes believe they need to do in order to be saved?**

**QUESTION – What do Disciples of Christ believe they need to do in order to be saved?**

**QUESTION – What do the followers of Islam believe they need to do in order to be saved?**

**A. The religions of the world are divided into 2 groups.**

**1. Those who believe we are saved by works.**

**2. Those who believe we are saved by God's grace.**

**B. The Bible is clear – there is nothing you can do to save yourself – no good work is good enough.**

***Titus 3:5 "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost"***

*Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

**QUESTION – If you were somehow able to live a perfectly sinless life from this moment forward, would that be enough to satisfy your sin debt? Would it be enough to save you?**

**ANSWER – No, because perfection is only "your reasonable service." It would only amount to your doing what you were supposed to do. It would in no way atone for past sin.**

**And the Bible makes it clear that you are a sinner, and therefore unable to please God.**

**1. We are sinners by nature.**

***Romans 5:12 "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"***

**2. We are sinners by behavior.**

***1 John 1:8 "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."***

**3. Therefore, we miss the mark of God's righteousness, and are lost!**

***Romans 3:23 "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."***

**ILLUS – "A man was traveling on his donkey when he came upon a small fuzzy object lying in the road. He dismounted to look more closely and found a sparrow lying on its back with its scrawny legs thrust upward. At first he thought the bird was dead, but closer investigation proved it to be very much alive. The man asked the sparrow if he was all right. The sparrow replied, 'Yes.' The man said, 'What are you doing lying on your back with your legs pointed towards the sky?' The sparrow responded that he had heard a rumor that the sky was falling, and so he was holding his legs up in support. The man replied, 'You surely don't think that you're going to hold it up with those two scrawny legs, do you?' The sparrow, with a very solemn look, retorted, 'One does the best he can.'" **We are much like that sparrow. No matter how hard we try – even****

**if it is our best effort – it is not good enough.** The best effort we can put forth is inadequate to provide what we really need. When the sky is falling, our reaction might be to lift our hands to stop it, but it will do us no good.

**C. It is ALL OF GRACE. God saves you because He chooses to give you that free gift. It is all His unmerited (unearned, undeserved) favor toward you.**

*Romans 11:6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.*

*Ephesians 2:5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*

*1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am:*

***Romans 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:***

**There is NOTHING you can do to earn salvation – it is ALL OF GRACE!**

**ILLUS** – When "Betty Crocker" first introduced her cake mix, women simply didn't believe a dry mix, in a small box, at a reasonable price would make a cake. The company modified its claims and told women they must add an egg. They believe it – sales skyrocketed.

**ILLUS** – When Parker Pen Company introduced the first ball-point pen, they asked just 29 cents (editor's note: I believe this was the price, at least it was a very small amount). Sales were horrible. On the advice of a consultant they made the price over a dollar – sales soared.

**NOTE – How many times will we discuss the Good News of Jesus Christ and see people cling to their unbelief because it sounds too easy?**

**There is NOTHING you can do to earn salvation. As a matter of fact, if you are trying to DO something to**

## **earn it, then you are on the wrong road!**

**ILLUS** – I was born in 1725, and I died 1807. The only godly influence in my life, as far back as I can remember, was my mother, whom I had for only seven years. When she left my life through death, I was virtually an orphan. My father remarried, sent me to a strict military school, where the severity of discipline almost broke my back. I couldn't stand it any longer, and I left in rebellion at the age of ten. One year later, deciding that I would never enter formal education again, I became a seaman apprentice, hoping somehow to step into my father's trade and learn at least the ability to skillfully navigate a ship. By and by, through a process of time, I slowly gave myself over to the devil. And I determined that I would sin to my fill without restraint, now that the righteous lamp of my life had gone out. I did that until my days in the military service, where again discipline worked hard against me, but I further rebelled. My spirit would not break, and I became increasingly more and more a rebel. Because of a number of things that I disagreed with in the military, I finally deserted, only to be captured like a common criminal and beaten publicly several times. After enduring the punishment, I again fled. I entertained thoughts of suicide on my way to Africa, deciding that would be the place I could get farthest from anyone that knew me. And again I made a pact with the devil to live for him. Somehow, through a process of events, I got in touch with a Portuguese slave trader, and I lived in his home. His wife, who was brimming with hostility, took a lot out on me. She beat me, and I ate like a dog on the floor of the home. If I refused to do that, she would whip me with a lash. I fled penniless, owning only the clothes on my back, to the shoreline of Africa where I built a fire, hoping to attract a ship that was passing by. The skipper thought that I had gold or slaves or ivory to sell and was surprised because I was a skilled navigator. And it was there that I virtually lived for a long period of time. It was a slave ship. I went through all sorts of narrow escapes with death only a hairbreadth away on a number of occasions. One time I opened some crates of rum and got everybody on the crew drunk. The skipper, incensed with my actions, beat me, threw me down below, and I lived on stale bread and sour vegetables for an unendurable amount of time. He brought me above to beat me again, and I fell overboard. Because I couldn't swim, he harpooned me to get me back on the ship. And I lived with the scar in my side, big enough for me to put my fist into, until the day of my death. On board, I was inflamed with fever. I was enraged with the humiliation. A storm broke out, and I wound up again in the hold of the ship, down among the pumps. To keep the ship afloat, I worked along as a servant of the slaves. There,

bruised and confused, bleeding, diseased, I was the epitome of the degenerate man. I remembered the words of my mother. I cried out to God, the only way I knew, calling upon His grace and His mercy to deliver me, and upon His son to save me. The only glimmer of light I would find was in a crack in the ship in the floor above me, and I looked up to it and screamed for help. God heard me. Thirty-one years passed, I married a childhood sweetheart. I entered the ministry. In every place that I served, rooms had to be added to the building to handle the crowds that came to hear the gospel that was presented and the story of God's grace in my life. My tombstone above my head reads, "Born 1725, died 1807. A clerk, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was by the rich mercy of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he once long labored to destroy." I decided before my death to put my life's story in verse. And that verse has become a hymn. My name? John Newton. The hymn? "Amazing Grace."

### **III. "Through faith" – Our part is simply to place our faith and trust in Christ.**

**We do have a part to play, although it is not a work. We do need to place our faith in Him.**

**QUOTE** – (Robertson's NT Word Pictures) "Grace" is God's part, "faith" is ours.

*Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*

*Romans 3:22 Even the righteousness of God [which is] by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:*

*Philippians 3:9 ¶ And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:*

*John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

*John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

*Acts 10:43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*

**QUESTION – When the Bible refers to FAITH and BELIEF, is it referring to simple mental assent? For example, is belief in Jesus Christ (the kind that leads to salvation) the same as belief in George Washington or Abraham Lincoln?**

**ANSWER – No. Otherwise Satan and his demons would all be saved! (cf. *James 2:19 "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble"*)**

**Saving faith, or saving belief affects the WILL as well as the MIND. It is a matter of the HEART as well as the HEAD.**

**QUOTE (Easton's Bible Dictionary) "Faith is in general the persuasion of the mind that a certain statement is true. Its primary idea is trust. A thing is true, and therefore worthy of trust. It admits of many degrees up to full assurance of faith, in accordance with the evidence on which it rests. Faith is the result of teaching (Rom 10:14–17). Knowledge is an essential element in all faith, and is sometimes spoken of as an equivalent to faith. Yet the two are distinguished in this respect, that faith includes in it assent, which is an act of the will in addition to the act of the understanding."**

**ILLUS – There is a beautiful illustration of the faith that saves in the story of Peter walking on the sea. (READ *Matthew 14:22–31*) Simple mental assent (such as the devil has, and such as the lost could have) would have stopped short of reaching to Christ and asking for the salvation that Peter knew to be in Him.**

**IV. "Not of yourselves" – There is no room for boasting. We have achieved nothing.**

If our salvation were in any way due to our good works, we would have reason to boast.

**But notice *Romans 4:4–5* "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness"**

**ILLUS – Peter at the Pearly Gates story. (Unbiblical idea, but good for jokes)**

A man comes to the gates of heaven and is met by St. Peter. "What do I have to do to get in?" Peter says, "It takes a thousand spiritual points to get into heaven. What have you done?"

The man begins to recite his accomplishments: "I went to church every Sunday, attended every prayer meeting and fellowship dinner, read my Bible each morning and shared the gospel with everyone I met. What is more, I tithed ten percent of all I made, sang in the choir, cooked Thanksgiving turkeys for the Senior Citizen's dinner and EVEN HELPED WITH THE JUNIOR HIGH BAPTIST YOUTH..."

For two hours he went on reciting an awesome list of all he had done for God. Peter looked at with love and said, "That's very impressive! It will add up to one spiritual point." The guy was flabbergasted! "You mean to tell me that everything I've done, the sweat I've poured, money I've given and time I've spent is only worth a SINGLE POINT?? "I've got one point and it takes ONE THOUSAND to get into heaven? LORD, HAVE MERCY!!"

**Peter replied, "Oh, that will be worth the other 999. You can come on in."**

**We may think our goodness is worthy of something, but it is not. Salvation is ALL OF GRACE, and there is nothing in you worthy of boasting.**

**V. "We are His workmanship" – Good works will never earn you salvation, but they will always accompany salvation.**

**QUESTION – Now, let us think some more about good works. We have said that good works do not save you. Now I ask, is it possible for a person to be a Christian and not have good works?**

**ANSWER – No. Works will never OBTAIN your salvation, but they will also EXPLAIN or DEMONSTRATE your salvation. They are the natural accompaniment to**

salvation and are present in every true believer.

**DEFINITION (Bible Knowledge Commentary)** "The word "workmanship" (poiema), used only here and in Romans 1:20 denotes a work of art or a masterpiece. It differs from human "works" (ergon) In Ephesians 2:9. Believers are God's workmanship because they have been CREATED (a work only God can do) in Christ Jesus."

(Note that we get our word POEM from this Greek word POEIMA.)

Earlier we referenced *Titus 3:5 "Not by works of righteousness..."* to bolster our argument that works are not necessary for salvation. But turn there now – read down to verse 8 – notice that works are a natural RESULT of salvation.

**READ Galatians 5:22–25** – The fruit of the Spirit is the natural result of the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence in your life – If you are saved, you have the Holy Spirit (which we'll talk about next week), and if you have the Holy Spirit indwelling your life, you will exhibit the fruit of the Spirit! You will have these good works evident in your life!

**Conclusion:**

*Ephesians 2:8–10 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*

Salvation is only by grace through faith.  
There is nothing you can do to earn or obtain it.  
You do not deserve it.  
You dare not take pride in it, or boast about it.

**2 Corinthians 9:15 "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."**

Are there any questions?

Next week we'll examine the next statement in our outline, which is "I believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer, and gives guidance and power as we surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ." We will discuss the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit... the difference between the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and the filling of the Holy Ghost.

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*Please direct questions, comments, and submissions to [William E. Johnson](#)  
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