

Sermon title: The Graceness of our Salvation

Scripture text: Ephesians 2:4-10

The text before us contains some of the most popular verses in all of scripture. The subject of this text is likewise amongst the most important spiritual realities ever penned by mortal man (penned by man, but authored by God). It is a subject that we are privileged to preach, but the greater privilege is in believing, receiving, and applying. The fact that salvation is by grace is a truth that demands our utmost consideration and I trust that the Spirit of God will use this message to encourage your heart and give you a greater appreciation of this tremendous truth that salvation is truly by Grace, minus everything, and plus nothing.

Let us pray

My message today is a message about salvation and before I get into the text I want to begin by making this message as simple and as practical as I know how. I am going to be sharing some doctrine in just a few moments, because as has been mentioned numerous times already Paul begins this epistle with doctrine which is teaching, theology, explanation if you will, and he concludes with application. Doctrine than duty, principle than precept, explanation than application, this is Paul's style. However, before I get into the text let me be very personal and speak to each of us in very simple terms because the emphasis of this passage, salvation by grace, is so very very important. The truth about salvation is here and if you miss everything else I am going to say please do not miss this.

Listen: What is the plan of salvation, how does a person go to heaven? Can you show me in the word of God how one can know for sure how to be saved? How does one establish a right relationship with a Holy God? In other words how can one experience the joy of having their sins forgiven? This is what is addressed in this passage.

Are you hungry? Not physically hungry (I know we are all physically full from the food and all the festivities of Thanksgiving), but I am not talking about physical food at all. Do you have a hunger for something more in life? Is there something deep inside of you that never seems to be satisfied? If so, you need to realize the longing in your heart can only be addressed by the salvation that can only come through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and this is addressed here in this passage before us.

Are you confused? Does it seem like you cannot find a path or purpose in life? Our text holds the key to an entrance into the things that truly make life truly worth living, it is all here!

Do you wonder what happens after this life? Are you uncertain about tomorrow? Does the

thought of death horrify you? I would encourage you to listen and heed the message of our text here in Ephesians chapter 2.

How can these issues be resolved? Only in Jesus Christ and it is only through receiving Him, a person, the 2<sup>nd</sup> member of the Godhead, Jesus Christ the Lord into your heart and life, and this happens by grace through faith! You see the key to life is in this text for the text says for by grace through faith are you saved, or literally it says you have been saved. Saved from what, saved from all the things I just mentioned and more. Christ will save you from sin, He will save you from a life of emptiness and purposelessness, He will save you from a helpless life and hopeless eternity, and He will satisfy the longing in your heart that is void due to sin.

Salvation is by grace:

Romans 3:23 all have sin and come short of the glory of the God.

Romans 6:23 says the wages of sin is death (that's what we deserve, but then steps grace).

But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (that is grace).

Romans 10:9 For if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead thou shalt be saved. This is the faith! Salvation how: By grace, through faith, minus everything, plus nothing.

Nothing in my hands in my hand I bring simply to the cross I cling. I come to the garden alone, where the dew is still on the roses is and joy I feel as we tarry there none other has ever known.

This is salvation by grace alone through Christ alone. We bring absolutely nothing; we cling totally upon the merits of Christ alone! In Christ we soar with the wings of God amazing Grace.

So before we can become the rich of Ephesians 1, we must become poor and in the sight of God, and outside of Christ that is exactly what we are. We come to God as paupers, destitute, empty, possessing nothing that can gain any favor with God.

And with that backdrop let's consider verse 4: but God! This is a radical contrast from what Paul has been sharing in the first three verses of chapter two. For in verses 1-3 we were those who were described as dead in trespasses and in sin. We were dead, we had the smell of a rotten filthy corpse and we were powerless to help ourselves. In addition we were those who walked according to the course of this world, and followed the dictates of the God of this world, none other than Satan himself. In addition to this our manner of life was fleshly, and we enjoyed a behavior (a pattern of life) that was contrary to will of God and as a result we were by nature the children of wrath. So in the midst of this **black** background out shines the light of the glorious grace of God. We don't see it apart from the Spirit of Gods illumination in our state of nature, but there is good news and it is here! It seems like all is hopeless and helpless but here it is hope, for Paul writes: **But God!** Two of the most crucial words in the entire English language, **but God!** Not a moment too soon, and certainly not a moment too late-**But God!**

These two words represent the hinges upon which the doorway to God's marvelous amazing grace opens. **But God!** As we open the door the darkness fades and now we see the light of Gods great grace appearing on the horizon. **But God!**

Yes man is incurably sinful, **but God!**

Yes man is deserves of hell, **but God!**

Yes man is a murderer and killed the prince of Life, the Lord Jesus Christ, **but God!**

Yes man believed the lie of Devil and man keeps on believing that lie today, **but God!**

You take the vilest most sinful, most wicked crooked, depraved man imaginable, a Hitler, a Charles Manson, Jack Darippler, a Judas, take the worst murderer, the worst rapist, the worst Antichrist and so on. You put them all together and multiply their sin by the sins of the entire human race, and you say who would love such a person? The answer: But God! Jesus on the cross bore the magnitude of this degree of sin and it was not a pretty picture. Not a pretty picture at all, so much so that God turned his back on him. Unimaginable, but that is how much God loves you! He loves you so much that He sent His son to experience the total depravity of mans sin in His body to degree that God would turn His back on His own son. What great love!

Now, But God why? But God, how does it manifest itself? Two words: mercy and love.

God is rich of mercy and possessing great love!

Mercy is God withholding judgment. We all deserved hell, but God in His mercy does not give us what we deserve, but withholds His judgment and in his grace, which is God giving us what we do not deserve God provides salvation. This is the mercy of God.

God is great in mercy, but God also has a great love for us! God is love! This is what we read in 1 John 4:8. This is God's very nature. The manifestation of God's love was seen @ Calvary!

Let us delve a little deeper into the love of God, for this is a great love, and agape love!

**THIS IS THE BEGINNING POINT OF SALVATION...**

1. From this, all else flows

2. The mercy and grace of God rest upon the very fact that God has a great love for us - cf. [1 John 4:10](#) Herein is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins. That word propitiation means mercy seat. Jesus is the mercy seat of God for the sinner, in other words instead of an animal's blood being poured upon the mercy seat our redemption was purchased by the sprinkling of the blood of the lamb of God upon the Mercy Seat of God. Let me show this mercy seat to you again: Look @ Hebrews 13:9-12 In other words God loved you so much that He was willing to allow His son to be crucified on the altar of sacrifice, the cross outside the gate. So remember this Jesus was not crucified in the city of Jerusalem but on a hill called Calvary outside the gate, outside the city walls so that the horror of crucifixion would not be observed and the stench of crucifixion would not be smelt by the people

as they went about their daily lives within the city of Jerusalem. Remember that because that is how much God loves you and that is how much He loves me!

**THIS LOVE IS NOT BECAUSE OF WHO WE ARE, BUT WHO GOD IS...**

1. God did not love us because we were lovable, but because God is a Loving God and it is his nature to love irregardless of the object, God simply loves us.

Now abideth faith, hope and love. Which is more important? This is a very difficult question because faith is doorway to salvation, and without hope it would be impossible to survive. Still I would have to say love is supreme because without love there would be no cross, no salvation and even more significant than all that is the fact that without love there would be no savior, because John 3:16 says: For God so loved the world that he sent ....

Verse 5 is where we see Gods amazing grace!

1. For notice that Paul says "WHEN we were dead... (God) made us alive"
2. While STILL "dead in trespasses" God has somehow made us alive together with Christ!
3. Dead people living, no we were once dead and now raised to live, but not just to live but to live the resurrected life in Christ!

But there is more, for as we continue to read in our text we learn that "Salvation is By Grace through Faith", and this involves being quickened with Christ and made to sit together in heavenly places with Christ (verses 5 & 6)

**A. WE SAW IN EP 1:20...**

1. Where Christ was raised from the dead
2. And then was seated at the right hand of God in the heavenly places

**B. NOW WE LEARN FROM EP 2:5&6 that we also enter into that resurrection and exaltation**  
For we too are raised up and made to sit together with Christ in the heavenly places!

- a. This speaks of our present condition in the "spiritual realm" (heavenly places)
- b. Because of our union with Christ, we enjoy an exalted position together with Him

We see there is also present as well future aspect to this salvation. Presently we are in Christ physically upon this earth, but spiritually we are seated in heavenly places. In the future we will be literally in Christ reigning with Him in heavenly places, and this is seen in verse 7. Note what it says in verse 7.

As we continue, we find Paul further clarifying this wonderful salvation. It is like Paul is saying did you get this, well just in case you did not let me explain it this way:

Now Paul says in verses 8&9 that this all comes about by grace, through faith and not of works, and this is the heart and soul of this text!

**SALVATION IS TRULY BY GRACE AND GODS GRACE IS A KEY POINT IN ANY PRESENTATION OF THE GOSPEL, FOR WITHOUT GRACE NONE OF US COULD BE SAVED, WHY BECAUSE WITHOUT GRACE GOD GIVES US WHAT WE DESERVE AND THAT IS HELL!**

So what is grace: Grace is Gods riches at Christ expense! Grace is Jesus Christ! Everything we have is by grace, but nothing more glorious than this great salvation which is totally by grace!

Look at verses 8&9

What does God save the sinner from? Three "P's"  
Saved from sins:

1. Power
2. Penalty-Punishment or consequence
3. Presence

1. Past Sins
2. Present Sins
3. Potential future Sins

We are saved by grace, but we are saved through faith! God has done it all but for you to experience it requires faith! No effort, no merit, no energy, nothing on the sinner's part but to believe. Faith is crucial, for without faith it is impossible to please God. Without faith we experience only the physical, and our lives never enter into the spiritual dimension. Faith-The just shall live by faith!

## CONCLUSION

1. So it is "by grace through faith" that...
  - a. "Children of wrath" can become "children of God"!
  - b. "Sons of disobedience" can "receive the adoption as sons" of God!
  - c. We are "accepted" by God because of His tremendous grace!
2. Because "Salvation by Grace through Faith" involves:
  - a. God's great love
  - b. God's rich mercy

- c. God making us alive together with Christ
- d. God raising us up together with Christ to sit with Him in the heavenly places
- e. A saving faith that trusts in Jesus Christ alone plus nothing.
- f. And as new creatures we are privileged to do good works in the power of God for the glory of God\*

“Grace grace marvelous grace, grace that is greater than all our sin”!

Let me say that as I prepared this sermon I set out to preach on 6 verses, but in reality I could not get pass two words-But God. I wanted to only preach two words but I know I could not get away with that so I did my homework and studied the rest of the passage, but really these two words have impacted my life more than any other aspect of this text and the text is marvelous but these words shake me up: But God!

The only way the human race has survived for over 2000 years is because there is a but God and the only hope for this poor world is But God! Listen: When all else is said, the verdict is read, the books are closed, and everyone has packed and is headed for the exit-before you check out, you remember and do not forget, But God!!!! I do not care if you are at the bed side of loved one that the doctors have said it over, there is nothing else we can do...I don't care if on the job interview the interviewer says you did not make the cert. I do not care if you are in halls of academia and you cannot afford to go one more semester to get that degree remember: Nothing is final until God says it final; But God! Many gave up on me a long time ago, and some still do: But God! I can say by the grace of God I am who I am not because of me or anyone else: But God!

But God folks, But God! May God help us not to forget those two words! But God!

Let us pray!