

## All of Grace

Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 1992

### Ephesians 2:8-9

*“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.”*

The title of this message today, is: “ALL OF GRACE.” My text is a very, very, familiar passage of scripture. Two verses of this scripture are quoted quite often and are very familiar to most of you. Actually, I believe that these two verses of scripture are really understood by very few people. If you are interested in this message, I invite you to get your Bible and follow along with me as I speak today.

We’re going to be speaking from the Book of Ephesians, Paul’s letter to the Ephesians in Chapter 2: verses 8 and 9. Immediately, you will recognize this passage of scripture and many of you may be able to quote it. It goes like this: *“For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, less any man should boast.”*

What is Paul saying here? Let’s break it down and take each sentence and see what Paul is saying. First of all he is saying this, “By the grace of God you have been saved.” That is the proper translation of that opening statement, *“For by grace have you been saved.”*

What does it mean to be saved? The word (saved) means to be delivered. We’ve been saved or delivered from a covenant of works. We are not under a covenant of works for salvation. We are under a covenant of grace. We’ve been delivered or saved from the curse of the law. The scripture says, *“Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us.”* So, we are saved or delivered from the curse of the law.

Then, we are saved or delivered from the wrath of God. It is the wrath of God against sin. We are saved or delivered from judgment. *“There is therefore now, no judgment to them who are in Christ Jesus.”* There is no condemnation; we are delivered or saved from judgment.

Paul is writing here to believers. He’s writing to the church of Ephesus and he says; *“It is by the grace of God that you have been saved.”* In First Corinthians it says, *“To you who are being saved, Christ is the wisdom and the power of God.”* Paul says over in the Book of Romans, *“Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”* If you have salvation, (there are really three tenses); the believer has been saved by the grace of God,

he is being saved by the grace of God and His salvation is nearer now, than when he believed, by the grace of God. “By the grace of God you have been saved.”

Now, watch this, “For by the grace of God you have been saved.” What is grace? Grace is the goodness of God. Grace is the free mercy of God. Grace is undeserved, it is unmerited, and it is unearned. Someone said this, “Grace is God giving us what we don’t deserve.” It’s not what we’ve earned, merited or in most cases, we haven’t even sought. God Almighty’s free grace and mercy is in Christ Jesus.

I will tell you this, “The grace of God does not try to save; it saves!” The scripture says, “*For by grace, you have been saved.*” Grace doesn’t try to save somebody. I hear often times; preacher’s saying that God is trying to save you. No, the grace of God does not try to save; it saves. The grace of God doesn’t do its best to save; it saves. The grace of God does not make us saveable; it saves us. The grace of God does not need any help from us. Again, “*For by grace you have been saved.*” You have been saved from all past sins, saved from all present sins, and saved by His grace from all future sins.

This is a statement that sometimes agitates people. Nevertheless, it is true! “*For by grace you have been saved.*” You are delivered from the curse of the law, from the penalty of sin, from the wrath of God, from judgment, from condemnation and from all sin. “*The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son cleanseth us from all sin.*” It’s not just our past sins only, but all sin, past, present and future.

Watch the next words, “*For by grace you have been saved through faith.*” It’s not without faith, or apart from faith but through faith. That is, through the means of faith. Faith is not the Saviour, Christ is. Faith believes God. That’s what the scripture says about Abraham.

“*What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?*” Well, he found righteousness. How did he find it? He believed God. God saved him. God redeemed. Abraham believed, and in other words, God chose Abraham and Abraham believed God.

God didn’t choose him because he believed; he believed because God chose him. God called Abraham and faith responded. God didn’t call him because he responded; he responded because God called Him. God blessed Abraham and Abraham received God’s blessings by faith. That is what he is saying here, to the Ephesians church, “*It is by the grace of God that you have been saved through faith*” (through the means of faith).

Christ Jesus is the Saviour. Faith is not the Saviour. He’s our Saviour by His obedience, and His blood, but faith receives Christ. Faith rests in Christ, rejoices in Christ, and

builds on Christ and faith walks with Christ. *“For by grace you have been saved.”* It’s through faith and not apart from faith. It’s not by faith but through faith. Faith is the means.

You see, when I reach and take a glass of water, my taking the glass does not quench my thirst; (I’m just as thirsty). My taking the glass of water does not quench my thirst, the water does. It is the water that satisfies. The water quenches. Faith takes the water and Jesus Christ is the water of life, and faith receives it. Jesus Christ, is also the bread. He is the nourishing bread. He is the satisfying water. He is the redeeming Redeemer. He’s the redeeming Saviour and faith receives Him, rests in Him, rejoices in Him and builds on that foundation.

Let’s go on with our text. *“For by grace have you been saved, (you are delivered through faith) and that not of yourselves.”* You know, a person who is a child of God, (a person who is a believer and many of you are that are listening to me); you’re an heir of everlasting life. A person who is a true believer, a true child of God, will take none of the credit for what he is. Paul said, *“I am what I am by the grace of God”* (by the mercy of God). A true believer takes no credit for what he is, for what he has, and for what he knows or what he will be. The reason is because it is all of grace!

That is the title of this message: “All of Grace.” It is all by the grace of God and *“Not of yourselves less any man should boast.”* Paul wrote in First Corinthians 4:7, *“Who made you to differ?”* You are a believer and others aren’t. You trust God and others don’t. You believe the Bible and others don’t. *“Who made you to differ?”* You have received life.

What do you have that you didn’t receive? After you received it, why do you boast as if you didn’t receive it? In First Corinthians 15:10, it says, *“By the grace of God, I am what I am.”* Grace is not of yourselves, otherwise it wouldn’t be grace. Salvation is not of ourselves or it wouldn’t be sure. It is by grace through faith that it might be sure. Jonah 2:9 says, *“Salvation is of the Lord.”* It is not of ourselves.

Let me show you something, faith is not of ourselves, *“Faith is the gift of God.”* Listen to this verse again, *“For by grace have you been saved through faith.”* (You are saved by the grace of God through faith and that not of yourselves). Faith is the gift of God. Grace is the gift of God. Everything about salvation is the gift of God. Redemption is the gift of God. Salvation is the gift of God. Forgiveness is the gift of God. Repentance is the gift of God.

Have you repented? Listen to the Word of God; *“The goodness of God led you to repentance.”* It is God that convicted you of sin. It is God who revealed Christ to your heart. It is God who brought you to see Him and mourn over your sins in the light of Christ’s mercy. *“Faith is the gift of God.” “It is given unto us, not only to suffer for Him, but to believe on Him.”*

In First John 5:11 *“This is the record, God hath given us eternal life and this life is in His Son.”* In Romans 6:23, *“The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.”* The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. *“For by grace have you been saved through faith and that not of yourselves.”* Salvation is not of yourselves, forgiveness, repentance, or even the faith is not of yourselves. *“Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power.”* By the grace of God I am what I am, I know what I know, I have what I have and my future is in the kingdom of God by the grace of God. Therefore, *“Salvation is not of works less any man should boast.”* No part of our redemption is by works because, *“It is not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to His mercy He hath saved us.* Therefore, we conclude, Paul said, *“We are justified by faith without the deeds of the law.”*

Actually, we don’t have any works that will please God. *“In the flesh no man can please God. In the flesh dwelleth no good thing.”* Isaiah says, *“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”*

Let me tell you something. This goes for everyone listening to my voice and including the preacher who is doing the talking. We have no works that are acceptable to God in themselves. The best works that we can do have too much flesh and sin in it. Our works make it filthy rags in God’s sight. You see, in order for God to accept anything; it says in scripture, *“It shall be perfect to be accepted.”* There is nothing about us that is perfect.

How does God accept us then? The answer is, in Christ. How does God accept our prayers? It is through the Mediator, Christ Jesus. How does God accept our works? The answer is that God in Christ makes them holy. How does God accept our worship? We come to Him in Christ’s name.

There will be no human glory in heaven. God has given Him all preeminence. Paul said, *“God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”* Do you see what Paul is saying in this verse? There are very few people that have entered into the depth, and the meaning and riches of this verse. *“For by grace, (free*

grace, sovereign grace, God's grace, unchanging grace, prevenient grace, efficient grace) *have you been saved.*" It is done!

The great transaction is done. Christ has obeyed the law. He has imputed unto us a perfect righteousness. Christ has died for all our sins. You have been saved through faith, not without faith, and not apart from faith. *"Thy people shall be willing, in whom you trusted after you heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation."* You trusted Christ and you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves. Even the faith to believe is the gift of God. It's not of works, it's not of merit, it's not of human deeds, it's not by morality, it's not by keeping the law, and *"It's not of works less any man should boast."*

There's no need to brag and glory in this flesh. Christ will not share His glory. He will have all the preeminence. *"Every knee is going to bow and every tongue is going to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* It is all of grace!

One of the old hymn writers wrote this hymn:

Grace, it's a charming sound  
It's harmonious to the ear.  
Heaven with the echoes shall resound  
And all the world shall hear.

Grace wrote my name  
In God's Eternal Book.  
Grace gave me to the Lamb  
Who all my sorrows took.

Grace taught my soul to pray  
Grace made my eyes overflow.  
Grace has kept me to this day  
And grace will not let me go.

*"For by grace, (all of grace), have you been saved through faith, that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."*

Let me tell you something. The man who knows the grace of God and the gift of life, does not glory in what he has done for God or for what he's done for others. He never brags or boasts about what he's done for God, or for what he's done for others in the

name of God. Any man who glories in what he has done for God or for anyone else in the name of God knows nothing about grace.

Oh, he may use the word but he's never experienced it. He may speak of the doctrine, but he's never entered into it. Grace humbles the heart. Grace humbles the spirit. Grace exalts and magnifies the Lord Jesus. Grace ascribes all that I am, and all that I have to the goodness of God and not of myself.

Let's look through the Word of God and trace this word "grace." Let's see the blessings that we have by the grace of God. It is all of grace! Grace is unmerited favor.

First of all, our election is by grace. In Romans Chapter 11:5 and 6, Paul writes, *"Even so, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace, and if it is by grace, then it is not works, otherwise grace is not grace."* There is a handful, a remnant, there's a flock, by the election of grace. *"And, if by grace it is not of works."*

What do you mean by election, preacher? I mean that you didn't choose God. God chose you. That is what our Lord Jesus said to His disciples. They sat about Him one day and in John 15:16, He said, *"You have not chosen Me; (you didn't choose me); I chose you."*

Did you ever read the First Chapter of Ephesians? A few weeks ago, I spoke about how we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. One of our dear listeners wrote to me and said, "My neighbor and I missed that broadcast but we heard about it and we've been looking for that in the Bible. We've been looking for the phrase, 'Chosen before the foundation of the world,' and we haven't been able to find it." Have you found it? It is in the Bible several times.

Look at Ephesians Chapter 1:3, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ, according as He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of His own will."* Did you read that? Look it up again, Ephesians 1: verses 3, 4 and 5. I'll ask you three questions:

Did you choose God or did He choose you? He said that He chose us. When did He choose us? It says, *"Before the world began."* Why did he choose us? Why me and why you? We're no better than anyone else. There is no difference. Why did He set His affection on us? Why did He send His Son to die for us? Why did He choose us and why did He write our names in the Book of Life? It was, *"According to the good*

*pleasure of His own will, even so Father, it seemed good in Thy sight.”* So, our election is of grace and by grace.

Secondly, our redemption is by grace. Preacher, what does redemption mean? What do you mean by redemption? Redemption is to purchase and pay the price or buy back that which has a price on it. You go to the pawnshop to put your watch in. They give you some money. That watch belongs to him now. It's his watch and he put the price on it. If you want it back you have to redeem it. You have to come back and pay the price on that watch. When you pay the price, you redeem it.

You can go down to a store and redeem anything that you buy. You pay the price and there is proof of it. That is how God Almighty bought us. He paid the price. There's a price on our soul. The law had us in captivity. The justice of God had us in its clutches. *“The soul that sinneth, it shall surely die.”* We've sinned. God sent Christ into this world to redeem us, buy us back and purchase us from the law.

How did He purchase us from the law? He met the demands of the law. He made the requirements of the law. He met the price of the law. *“He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin.”* He met the price of justice. Justice says the sinner must die. Christ died on the cross. That is why He died on the cross. He paid for our sins. *“In whom we have redemption, through His blood”* (Ephesians 1:7). We are bought back through His blood. *“You are bought with a price. We're redeemed, not with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as a Lamb without blemish or spot.”* The blood of the Lamb of God redeems us!

Listen, *“We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sin according to the riches of His grace.”* It is free, unchangeable and sovereign grace. It's all of grace. Election is by grace, *“There is a remnant according to the election of grace.”* We're redeemed and forgiven of sin by His grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, our calling is by grace. The apostle Paul was sitting in prison and he was writing a letter to young Timothy. Paul called Timothy his son in the faith and in the ministry. He was sitting in prison and he writes the Epistle to Timothy (Second Timothy). He says in Chapter 1:9, *“Timothy, do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord. Do not be ashamed of the gospel. Don't be ashamed of me, God's servant. You be ready to bear the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God who has saved us and called us.”* Who called us? It is the same one who saved us. *“He saved us and called us, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Jesus Christ before the world began.”* Do you hear that?

*“We love Him because He first loved us.”* We choose Him because He chose us. We come to Him because He calls us. *“We’re kept by the power of God through faith.”* Paul says, *“Timothy, God has saved us and called us, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ.”* God loves us in Christ, He forgives us in Christ, He redeems us in Christ and we are kept in Christ. *“It was given us in Christ before the world began.”*

Fourthly, we are justified by grace. Now, nearly every person will give this definition of justification, (not guilty)! In other words, Christ took our guilt and our sin and left us without sin. So, we are justified, (just as if I had never sinned). Isn’t that wonderful? Justified means not guilty, (just as if I had never sinned). That’s true, but it is by the grace of God. *“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”* There it is! *“Whom God set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood. We’re justified freely by His grace through Christ Jesus.”* That is the gospel!

Last of all, our daily walk, our worship and prayers are all dependent on His grace. It is all of grace. In Hebrews 4:14, *“Seeing then we have a great High Priest that has passed into the heavens, Jesus Christ the Son of God, let us come boldly unto the throne of grace.”*

God’s throne is three-fold. It is a throne of justice; you don’t want to have anything to do with that. It is a throne of glory; you don’t want to have anything to do with that. It is a throne of grace and that is where you want to come, *“That you may obtain mercy and find grace to help us, (every day), in our time of need.”*

When is your time of need? It is right now in these last five minutes and in the next five minutes. All my life is a time that I need His grace. Come to the throne of grace because it is all of grace!