

Verse by Verse Ephesians 2:8-13

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[0 : 0 0] with some of that thought. It wasn't intentional on my part, but Ephesians chapter 2 and verse number 8. The Bible says, 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. Now these are verses you ought to memorize. You ought to know these verses.

If you say you can't memorize and you struggle with it, that's baloney. You could memorize these two verses. I don't care who you are. And as a matter of fact, it's a lot easier to memorize in this King James Bible than it is in the other versions.

This has a snap and a cadence to by grace are you saved through faith. That just comes right off the tongue. That's the way God wrote his book for your mind. Now there's some things in here that everybody needs to know and needs to be assured of and needs to hold on to and needs to erase what they've been taught or what tradition tells them or family and upbringing.

What you need to know is what God said about your soul and about salvation. And what he said was it's by grace and it's through faith.

[1 : 1 2] And it's not of yourself. It's a gift of God. A gift. What a blessed word there in that verse that you can take and not only help you to understand what God is doing in salvation to us today, but also to relate it to others.

A free gift. I mean, Christmas time is a great time to use this as an illustration to witness to somebody that's lost. It's what a free gift is and how you don't earn it.

You just receive it. It's by grace. Now this is an important word. And one of the attributes of our holy God is grace. He is a gracious God.

If he was not a gracious God, we would have to be working to the death to please him. That would be all we know to do is just do, do, do, do, do, because we have to earn his favor.

And the word of God says, no, no, no, no. Not the apostle Paul, I should say. He clearly defines to us today that God's a God of grace and he gives out salvation.

[2 : 1 5] And he gives it out as a gift, a free gift that we don't have to earn. And there's a word that's kind of an antonym to grace.

And it is in verse number nine. Not of works. So either you work to earn something or you don't deserve it and you get it by grace. That's what grace is.

It's a gift, giving of something that is undeserved. You've probably heard the phrase, G-R-A-C-E, that is God's riches at Christ's expense. And that points to Calvary.

And that's a necessary element here. Now there's some theological debate over this verse of what the word that actually is referring to.

That, not of yourselves. It is the gift of God. What are those pronouns pointing back to? Is it to the grace? Is it to the faith? Or is it to, I think, overall, the salvation?

[3 : 12] And I've spent some time running some verses. And you could make a Bible case to say that it's faith that God gives you that's not of yourselves. But the opposite of it being of works.

It's a gift. And it's not of works. It's something God gives. And I think it's the entirety of the summary of the thought. The salvation by grace might be the best way to say it.

Now, I'm not going to run references either way to try to build a case for that. It's not that important. What is important is that we understand clearly salvation today is by God's grace.

And he expects a man to exercise faith in the person of Jesus Christ. Now, come back to Romans chapter 4. Because it says in that text that it's not of works.

And so anybody, any religion, any preacher, any system that suggests that they can guide you to God or to eternal life, any one of them, if they add anything into their system that can constitute, it can be a work or a deed that you have to do in order to, then they're just washing this whole thing away.

[4 : 39] And it's no longer a gift of God. It's something that you have to earn. Now, look at chapter 4. And let's read a couple of verses here to Abraham is, I'm sorry, Paul is using Abraham and David as illustrations here.

Verse number 1. What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof the glory.

But not before God. Like, we know that doesn't work. But if, if he were justified by what he did, his deeds, then he could glory in that.

He could say, look what I did. Look what I earned. Be like me. Verse 3. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, faith, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

So he's using Abraham and Genesis as a, as a, this is what Paul does a lot. He takes that Old Testament text and then he uses it to teach. He just kind of takes slivers of it a lot of times just to back up what he's teaching.

[5 : 42] And in verse 4. Now to him that worketh is the reward, in this case eternal life or righteousness. To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him. There's those three words you need to have deep in you. You're believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. That justifieth the ungodly.

His faith is counted for righteousness. Not his works. His faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also described the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.

Saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Notice in verse 6 it says at the end that God imputeth righteousness without works.

And that's important. Alright, look at chapter, look at chapter 11. Romans 11. Romans 11. For by grace are ye saved through faith.

[6 : 48] It's not of yourselves. It's not something you earn. You don't get rewarded. God is not indebted to you because you chose to live good and do good works. Chapter 11, verse number 6.

And if by grace, then it is no more of works. You see how they're opposite? They're opposing one another. It can't be both. If it's by grace, and Paul said salvation is by grace through faith.

If it's by grace, then it is no more of works. Doesn't that also imply that it teaches us that God had a system set up in the past where there was an element of works? It is no more of works.

Now it's by grace. Otherwise, grace is no more grace. And if it be of works, then it's no more grace. Otherwise, work is no more work. And they are what they are. They are opposites.

They are different. All right. Come. Let's just go back to Ephesians. I don't want to go too far there. It's pretty simple. It's really not that hard when you believe your Bible and just let the Word of God.

[7 : 55] Let God tell you what he thinks about it instead of some priest, instead of some internet junkie that has the ability to type and post.

Just go to the Word of God. And the Lord God said salvation is a gift. And it's a gift that you receive by faith. You exercise faith in what he said and in his son Jesus Christ.

And he'll give you something. And that shows you that it is grace. It is not at all something you've earned. Not of works lest any man should boast. Now, that's a great verse that people need to see.

Religious people that are good people, that are moral people, that are better than you. They need to see that God said it's not of works. And they need to see that he's not going to allow somebody to boast or to declare that I have earned my way.

They need to know that. And if they can get that into their head, then that will just erase a whole lot of confusion when it comes to the Jehovah's Witnesses. Who have got their push going again.

[9 : 04] And it goes to the Mormons. And to their teachings. And to really you go anywhere around the world. Because they're all really just systems of works and deeds. Check this list and then is your best chance.

Now moving past this, we know salvation. We know salvation by grace through faith. We know who we believe on. And what we believe on. And it's not of works.

Now let's get into verse 10. For we are his workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus. There's that phrase again. Unto good works.

Which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. I said yet last week that this book is so loaded. It's not just chapters. It's like verses that contain just so much wealth.

We are his workmanship. Meaning God formed us. We're vessels that he put together. Remember in Jeremiah 18.

[10 : 02] The potter and the clay. We're the clay. We are his workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus. Unto good works. So let's look at it from God's perspective.

To get into Christ Jesus. You can't. You have works. That doesn't work. No pun intended. That's not an element that God is looking for.

To see if you'll qualify. When you take Jesus Christ as a sinner. You take him by faith. You believe on the gospel. And what he's done for you. And you receive salvation. Now something starts.

Now you're created. The verse says. In Christ Jesus. Unto good works. Now in this earlier chapter. We were looking at some thoughts of God's.

The good pleasure of his will. And of some of the futuristic ideas. For the church. But understand that. God created you in Christ Jesus. And he said in that verse.

[10 : 58] That he hath before. Ordained. Some things for the church. And it's not all just. Futuristic in the heavenly places. But here's one right here. That can apply to you this morning.

He has ordained. That those who are in Christ Jesus. Walk in. Good works. We are his workmanship. He created.

In other words. This is what you were born to do. If you've taken Jesus Christ as your savior. You name the name of Christ. He created you. You're a new creature in Christ Jesus.

He created you for his purpose. And in this case. It's for good works. He expects. He desires. He deserves. To see some fruit. Out of your life.

Because of what he created you for. Now the dirty rotten. Selfish mentality. Of Laodiceans. Stale lukewarm Christians.

[11 : 54] Is to take eternal life. Thank you God. For the free gift. And now I'm good. And now I don't have to worry about that anymore. And I can just go on. And I have eternal security.

Right? That's good to know. And now I can just do my thing. And I have forgiveness of sins. If I mess up. Right? That's really good to know too. And now I can just go on my way.

And allow the world to go to hell. And allow myself to be a pathetic testimony. And not give God pleasure. Speaking of that. You know Revelation 4.11.

Right? You know that thought of. For his pleasure. They are and were created. And we teach and believe. That God created all things. For his pleasure. But does he get pleasure.

Out of all of his creation. That's the purpose. Yes. But does he get any. No. And the Bible says in Hebrews. Without faith. It's impossible to what. And he's not going to get any pleasure.

[12 : 53] If there's not that element of faith. And it takes a birth. Into the family of God. And it takes a new creation in Christ Jesus.

Before you're going to please him. Why? Well look at chapter 2 verse 1. This is what you are. If you're not saved. You're dead. In trespasses and sins.

And as we studied last week. Through those two verses below that. That's what God sees. That's what you are. And then we covered it. Even in verse 11 and 12. God's not getting pleasure out of that.

Out of a sinner. Out of somebody following the course of this world. The spirit of the devil working in them. According to verse 2. He's not getting pleasure out of that.

Until that sinner calls out on Jesus Christ. And he quickens them. And puts them in the body of Christ. By his spirit. And creates something new in them.

[13 : 50] His workmanship. He begins to work. And he works on you. To fashion you into something. That can now please him. And therefore you. Only born again Christians.

Truly have the ability. To be a pleasure to their creator. In this age. Sure God can get pleasure out of certain things. But he says in the Bible.

Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked? The answer is no. It doesn't please him. To damn souls. And to destroy. And to judge. It's not. He's a God of mercy.

And a God of grace. And those positive attributes we love. He does too. He's balanced. He will judge. He will execute his wrath.

He'll do it all day long. Because he's righteous. But it's not the thing that pleases him. What pleases him. Is to see a sinner trust Christ. And then him begin to work on them.

[14 : 44] And they allow him to. And then walk in good works. Come to Philippians chapter 2. Just a page or two to the right. Philippians chapter 2.

We are his workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus. Unto good works. I want you to see. That the good works of a Christian.

Are the result of salvation. They are not what brings you to salvation. In Philippians chapter 2. To please God. And to offer these kind of good works to him.

You've got to have God inside of you. Look at verses 12 and 13. Philippians 2 verse 12. Wherefore my beloved. As you have always obeyed. Not as in my presence only.

But now much more in my absence. Work out your own salvation. With fear and trembling. Work it outward. For it is God. Which worketh in you.

[15 : 45] Both look at this. To will and to do. Of his good pleasure. You've got to get God in you. When he's in you. Then let him work. And let him change you.

Let him conform you. And renew you. And as he does. He starts to get pleasure. Out of seeing you obey him. And you know what's tough. There's a lot of things I guess.

But one thing that's tough. Is that. Sometimes. He can take pleasure. Out of seeing us. Obey him. When we're suffering. It's a hard thing to swallow.

Really in this life. Because we think that it's got to be all good. But. God will allow suffering. That's a biblical theme. And it is a strong one. In this.

Certainly in these days. And it's strong in the New Testament. Of suffering. And God getting pleasure out of that. Because we obey him. And bad things come.

[16 : 38] To those who don't fit in. With this world system. And as we. As try to serve God. It ends up making us. Butt up against that. The world's not going to. Take kindly to that. And so there's times.

Where he says. If any man suffer as a Christian. Let him glorify God. On this behalf. God can take pleasure. In that suffering. Now. God works in us.

As we submit to him. And allow him. To work in us. Come to Titus. Titus chapter 2. And. Here's a little. String of verses. In Titus here.

That he. A theme he puts out. Several times here. About five times. Of how important. Good works are. In your life. And if you're born again.

Christian. And you're trying to do right. And you're allowing yourself to. You're putting down the old man. And allowing God to use you. The good works start showing up.

[17 : 34] As they ought to. Come to Titus chapter 2. And let's start in verse number 7. In all things. Showing thyself. A pattern. Of good works. I wonder if that's a verse. You can say. You know what. I'm fulfilling that one. I'm fulfilling that one.

In doctrine. Showing uncorruptness. Gravity. Sincerity. Sound speech. That cannot be condemned. On and on. Talks about obedience. In verse 9. Gives a few other thoughts here.

A pattern of good works. That's a testimony. That's something that's displayed. And seen. Come to verse 14. Speaking of Jesus Christ.

Who gave himself for us. The church. His body. That he might redeem us. From all iniquity. And purify unto himself. A peculiar people. Zealous of good works.

[18 : 34] So you're. It's a pattern. That sounds like a discipline. That sounds like something you. Fall into. A Christian life. That has some. Some consistency to it.

But there's this inner zeal. And God wants to see that. Come to verse number one. The next chapter. Three verse one. Put them in mind.

To be subject to principalities. And powers. To obey magistrates. To be ready. To be ready. To every. Good work. Or just the ones that.

You're comfortable with. Or just the ones that you say. Well that's for me. But the. No. To be ready. To every. Good work. There's a pattern.

There's zeal. There's a readiness. Somebody wants to be this person. That God's created them to be. Look a little bit further. Verse number eight. This is a faithful saying.

[19 : 34] And these things I will. That thou affirm constantly. That they which have believed in God. Might be careful. To maintain. Good works. These things are good. And profitable unto men.

Boy doesn't he just. Tweak it a little bit. Each time. Be careful. To maintain. Good works. You better guard. Your testimony. And you better be careful.

You better be careful. To maintain some things. And. That's. That's a. You know. There's times that come up. I'll just. For an instance. Your bible reading. You may have a pattern.

Of bible reading. Something that. Wasn't in you. Before you were saved. But God put that inside of you. To seek his word. To fellowship with him. And that's a good thing to do. And it's.

It's a great thing to do. It's one of the best things. You can do in your life. Is to spend time. In the word of God. And. You can set that up. As a pattern. You can even have a zeal to it.

[20 : 30] And be ready to do it. But if you're not careful. To maintain it. And if you don't pay attention to it. There'll be something. That crops up. And it could be once in a day. It could be twice. It could be a whole.

A whole change in scenery. For your life. And you better say to yourself. Just in this one instance. As far as bible reading goes. No. I need to maintain. I need to be careful. That I don't miss it.

I need to give myself to it. And to whatever else it is. That God's calling you to do for him. Come to the end of the chapter. Verse 14. And says. Let ours also learn.

To maintain good works. For necessary uses. That they be not unfruitful. So since you're saved.

And have received the gift. Of eternal life. Through Jesus Christ. The grace of God. Has bestowed that upon you. When you were undeserving. When you were an enemy.

[21 : 24] And without Christ. And you exercise faith in the gospel. God puts a new creature inside of you. You are no longer going to suffer. The wrath of God. For your sins.

That you've committed. And God says. Now come on. Let me form you into something. I can be pleased with. And use. For my glory. I want to see you glorify me.

Because I saved you from that. And what a wretch. That says. Forget you God. God. I'll take the gift. And do what I want to do. And by the way.

We know the end. We know the book. And we know there's going to be shame and regret. Come judgment seat of Christ. When we see. When it's revealed. By fire.

The truth. The truth. Of our Christian life. Individually. Of how much you decided. I want to let him fashion me. Change it.

[22 : 18] God I'm yours. Whatever you want to do. Just give me grace to do it. And here's my life. You know God. He's going to do that with somebody.

He will. At some point. Call you to something. He will test you on something. He'll check your heart. We'll see it in the next hour. How he did it with one of the kings.

How he left him. So that he could see. What was in his heart. To test him. He wanted to try him out. He'll do that with you. He'll. He'll check you and say. You've got all of this.

In your life. Are you willing to give it up for me? He'll put you in that spot. At some point. And he may not take it from you. But he may just be checking you. And say. Do you want to give it up for me? Would you?

If I wanted it. And some people. I know a man. Specifically. He's an old man now. But he made the wrong choice. As a young man. As a young man.

[23 : 12] He told me. Gave me like a private talk. And he said. God called me to this. And I was scared. And I told him no. And I've regretted it. Every day of my life. And now he's in his 70s.

Maybe 80 now almost. And he looks back. And he thinks. What could have been? And here I am. And I was too scared. To say yes. And I don't even know. If God would have called him to it.

Or made him do it. I don't know what it was. If God was just testing him or not. But he feels. He's living with regret. And he feels he failed God. All right. Verse 10 says. We are his workmanship.

Created in Christ Jesus. Unto good works. Which God has before ordained. That we should walk in them. Let's move on a little bit here. Verse 11. Wherefore remember. Oh that's important.

Remember. If you don't remember. What you were before you were saved. Then you're probably not going to. Think too strongly about the good works. And what you're supposed to be doing in this life.

[24 : 09] But remember. That ye being in time. Past Gentiles in the flesh. Who are called uncircumcision. By that which is called the circumcision in the flesh.

Made by hands. So he's referring to Jews there. They're called the circumcision in the flesh. Made by hands. That at that time. Ye were without Christ. Being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.

And strangers from the covenants of promise. Having no hope and without God. In the world. Now remember that first. Remember. Don't ever forget what you were.

And don't ever lose sight of that. Come to Peter. Look at. I think it's 2 Peter. It's a bad place. When a man or woman. Gets their eyes.

So engrossed. With things in this life. That they forget. What they were. Before Jesus Christ saved them. And where they were headed. 2 Peter chapter 1.

[25 : 12] And we're talking here about. Being his workmanship. And created in Christ Jesus. Unto good works. And not being unfruitful. And in verse number 8.

For if these things be in you and abound. They make you that you neither be barren. Nor unfruitful. In the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. That's what we want. Be fruitful. But he that lacketh these things.

Is blind. And cannot see afar off. And hath forgotten. That he was purged. From his old sins. A man that gets too far removed.

From Calvary. And too far removed. That he can't look back. In the eyes of faith. And remember the cross. Remember that. That change in his life. When he understood.

That I deserve hell. And feared before God. That he would send him there. When a man can't see that anymore. He's in a bad place in life.

[26 : 10] A place where he's forgotten. What Christ has done. He's walking on a road. That's going nowhere. Probably just walking in circles. Because he's not glorifying God.

And walking in those good works. That God ordained him to walk in. Coming back to Ephesians. Wherefore remember. That that's what you were. You were just Gentiles. In verse 12 says.

You were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. So it's not talking about coming from Mars. But an alien is an outsider. And the commonwealth of Israel.

Is that. That seed of Abraham. That God covenanted with. And through Abraham. The Mosaic covenant came through that nation.

Eventually God revealing. His holiness to them. And their sin. And how they can be. Come holy with him. And have their sins atoned for. But being aliens from that commonwealth.

[27 : 10] They don't have any access to God. A Gentile is a dog. He's an outsider. He doesn't have God's ear. And God's eye. So that's a Gentile.

He's outside of what God established. The connection to him through Israel. Strangers therefore. From the covenants of promise. And what did God promise the Gentiles?

The promises he made. Are through Abraham. To inherit the earth. And a seed to that man. He came through David. And promised the kingly line.

That one day the Messiah Christ. Would come and rule the world. Through his seed. And through the Mosaic covenant. I skipped that one. There's all these promises of blessings. And gifts of God.

And his protection. And his eye over them. And all of that's gone. A Gentile has none of that. They are complete strangers. From any of those covenants.

[28 : 07] That God has made. Those are binding agreements. By the way. With God. A binding agreement. God will absolutely hold up. His end of it. You can be sure of that.

But a Gentile doesn't have any access to that. So what does he have? Nothing. No hope. Without God in the world. He's just a dog. And that's a good word.

That the Jews would use. To describe Gentiles. And their viewpoint. The Gentile doesn't know righteousness. He doesn't know holiness. He doesn't know God. He can't access them. He's not them.

He just does what we read. In verses 2 and 3. He just follows the course of this world. He just does what feels good to him. Like an animal. Just fulfills the pleasures of his mind.

And of his own lusts. And there we go through that. That's what a Gentile is. Remember that. And then verse 13. But now in Christ Jesus. I hope you're in Christ Jesus.

[29 : 05] If you're not in Christ Jesus. You're still lost. You're still without hope. But now in Christ Jesus. Ye who sometimes were far off. Are made nigh.

By the blood of Christ. So he's speaking specifically of Gentiles here. When he says ye who sometimes passed. Were far off. You're made nigh. By the blood of Christ.

We're going to have to stop there. But it's the blood of Jesus Christ. That brings you nigh. Without the blood of Christ. Without the offering of himself upon Calvary. You're not getting nigh.

You can't offer those works. That's going back to verse 9. You can't offer any sacrifices. He's not interested in it. It's the blood of Jesus Christ. That made that way open.

Now as we continue through this in a few weeks. We're going to see that this body. That Paul is still teaching on. The body of Christ. That he's making of Jews and Gentiles.

[30 : 01] Whoever will get into Christ. A new man. A new thing that didn't exist before. Called the body of Christ. We've already looked at it a little bit. And he gets into some more doctrine.

So thank God this morning. As we close. Thank God for the salvation by grace. I'm thankful this morning. That I can stand and be free from guilt.

And free from any fear of tomorrow. And I don't want to die. And I don't want to leave my wife and children behind. I don't want those things to happen. But if I die. To God be the glory.

I'll be with Christ. Which is far better. And I only know that. Because the Bible told me that. And I'm looking. I'm okay with that. And if you should die.

I know. Based upon your testimony of faith in Christ. That you're far better. And I won't weep. Like those. Who have no hope. Like the Gentiles.

[31 : 02] And I won't mourn for you. Like those who have no hope. Because I'll say. Why would I cry for him? He should be crying for me. Because I'm still here.

And he's where I want to be. And in time. Christian. In time. We'll be there. And we'll be with the Lord. Because of his grace.

Because of the Lord Jesus Christ. Alright. So let's take a break there. Amen.