"Amazing Grace"

Ephesians 2:1-10
3-1-2023

INTRODUCTION: Definition of Grace

A. The Need for Amazing Grace (v. 1-4)

1. God's grace is undeserved (v. 1-3)

   a. Man's state shows him to be undeserving (v. 1)
   (What man is)

   b. Man's lifestyle shows him to be undeserving (v. 2)
   (What man does)

   c. Man's desires show him to be undeserving (v. 3)
   (What man wants)

2. God's grace is an expression of His love (v. 4)

B. The Source of Amazing Grace (v. 5-7)
God's grace is only found "in Christ"
["with Christ" (v. 5); "in Christ" (v. 6); "through Christ (v. 7)]

C. The Channel of Amazing Grace (v. 8-9)
God's grace is received through faith not works

E. The Goal of Amazing Grace (v. 7, 10)

1. The goal of God (v. 7) - that we would be "trophies of His grace"

2. The goal for the believer (v. 10) - that we should do good works because of the salvation we already possess

   a. We are God's product ("workmanship")

   b. Our works are God's plan ("before ordained")

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1. The goal of God (v. 7) - that we would be "_____"

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INTRODUCTION: The Salvation testimony of John Newton (a former slave trader).

The key note in verses 1-10 is the word "grace" (v.5,7,8)

Eph.1- Emphasizes what we have "in Christ"
(God's riches in Christ)

Eph.2- Emphasizes how we got "in Christ"
(God's grace in Christ)

"The Lord is Gracious" (I Peter 2:3)

Definition of Grace

What do Noah, Moses, Samuel and the Virgin Mary have in common?

--Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Gen. 6:8).

--God said of Moses: "Thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name" (Gen. 6:8)

--I Samuel 2:26 - "And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men.

--Gabriel said to Mary - "Hail, thou that art highly favored (showered with grace), the Lord is with thee . . . Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour (grace) with God" (Lk. 1:28, 30).

The Hebrew word "hanan" depicts God's heartfelt (compassionate) willingness to grant favor on someone who has a need.

The word is believed to be derived from a root word meaning "to bend or to incline" (Theo. Wordbook of the O.T. p. 302). It describes the action of a superior to an inferior as he stoops or condescends to extend a favor.

The Greek word "charis" - the undeserved kindness and favor of God, that is usually shown to man by means of a spiritual gift ("charisma") (Rom. 6:23; 12:6).

A. The Need for Amazing Grace (v. 1-4)

1. God's grace is undeserved (v. 1-3)

a. Man's state shows him to be undeserving (v. 1)

(What man is)

"You hath he quickened" - The verb is implied from verse 5.

"Dead" = impotent, powerless, unresponsive; separated from God & righteousness

"Trespasses" = to overstep a boundary. To walk into forbidden territory.

"Sins" = to miss the mark; to come short of God's standards (Rom. 3:23).

b. Man's lifestyle shows him to be undeserving (v. 2)

(What man does)

"Wherein" = in which; trespasses & sins were the location we once walked in. We frequented that realm often. Iniquity characterized our life.

The three enemies of our soul are mentioned in verses 2 and 3 -

--the world (v. 2a)
--the devil (v. 2b)
--the flesh (v. 3)

"Ye walked" - you conducted your life. Your manner of living or lifestyle was characterized by sin. Our former lifestyle was pictured by a preoccupation with self and an abhorrence for a relationship with God.

"The course of this world" = the time period of this present evil arrangement. We were simply "keeping up with the times."

"The world" = this world's values and teachings which are opposed to God's values and teaching and energized by Satan.

"The prince of the power of the air" - the ruler of the authority of the upper regions; the chief demonic authority over the unseen realm (cp. Eph. 6:12)

The facts about Satan:

1. He is a prince (demonic leader) - "Beelzebub the prince of the devils" (Note: The Antichrist is also called a "prince" ("the prince that shall come" Daniel 9:26)

2. He has authority ("power" - he rules the fallen demonic realm) - his authority was usurped from Adam.

   Lk. 4:6 - "And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

3. He inhabits the upper atmosphere - "spiritual wickedness in high places" (heavenly) - Eph. 6:12

4. He is a "spirit" being
   [invisible (unseen) but powerful]

5. He is at work in unbelievers

   "Worketh" - to energize; he manipulates the thoughts; distorts the emotions; and influences the wills of the lost

   "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (I Jn.5:19)

   Satan did his best to keep us blind and unconverted (II Cor. 4:4; cp. Elymas the Sorcerer - Acts 13:6-10)

   "Children of disobedience" = sons of disbelief (which results in disobedience) "disobedience" = to be unpersuaded

c. Man's desires show him to be undeserving (v. 3)
(What man wants)

"Among whom" - we were once part of their number

"We all" - Paul includes himself. No one is exempt

"The lusts of our flesh" - our flesh's appetites controlled our conduct

The natural man has no ultimate power to deny his flesh. Whatever it desires it is fed.

"By nature" - our nature dictated our attitudes and our attitudes provoked our actions.

"Children of wrath" - we were once people destined for the wrath of God, like everyone else

2. God's grace is an expression of His <u>love</u> (v. 4)

"Justice" - God gives us what we deserve

"Mercy" - God does not give us what we deserve

"Grace" - God gives us what we don't deserve

Hymn - "Amazing Grace"

Examples of the amazing grace of God:

--Manasseh - II Chron. 33:1-20
--Nebuchadnezzar - Dan. 4:1ff
--Saul (Paul) - Acts 9:1ff
--The Corinthians - I Cor. 6:9-11

Note the contrast - "And <u>you</u>" (v. 1)
"But <u>God</u>" (v. 4)

B. The Source of Amazing Grace (v. 5-7)

God's grace is only found "in Christ"
["with Christ" (v. 5); "in Christ" (v. 6); "through Christ (v. 7)]

We were resuscitated (v. 5)
We were resurrected (v. 6a)
We were repositioned (v. 6b)

In all of Paul's epistles, he begins and ends by referring to the grace of God (specifically, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ).

NOTE: Grace comes from God the Father (II Cor. 1:12) and God the Son (Gal. 1:6).

In I Thess. 1:12 (and several other passages), God and Christ are both described as sources of God's grace - a powerful indication of Christ's deity.

SEE John 1:14-17.

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (Jn. 1:17).

God's grace only comes through Christ!

Romans 5:15 refers to "the grace of God, and the gift by grace" as being "by one man, Jesus Christ."

Apart from Christ, God has no grace to offer!

--Eternal life is a gift that only comes to man "through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).

--Spiritual blessings are only found "in Christ" (Eph. 1:3ff)

This being so, only believers are recipients of the grace of God. However, God offerings His grace to all!

C. The Channel of Amazing Grace (v. 8-9)

God's grace is received through faith not works.

Grace is a gift (something that God gives) - "He giveth more grace" (Ja. 4:6).

Grace and works cannot be united to produce salvation any more than oil and water can be mixed.
"**by grace . . . through faith"** - Note: It is not "by faith through grace", which would put the emphasis on man's faith.

The prepositions prove that:

--Grace is the cause of salvation
--Faith is the channel of salvation

"Grace" = **G**od's
Riches
At
Christ's
Expense

"Saved" = Delivered, rescued. In context, salvation means to liberate from spiritual death (v. 1) and provide spiritual life. To be acquitted from God's wrath v. 3), to be provided with God's favor. To absolve from sin's penalty, and provide eternal forgiveness.

Salvation is negative and positive: to save from sin and its consequences; to eternal life and its blessings.

We have been untied from slavery; we have been set free from blindness and lostness; loosed from the pangs of death and hell; we have been snatched from danger.

ILLUS: the testimony of the Indian and the worm

"Faith" is the only requirement for salvation. Note: Repentance is the flip-side of Faith. Needed: A Repentant Faith. A Faith which is willing to turn from every other source of trust and turn to Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

"Jn. 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."

Jn. 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."

Jn. 6:28, 29 - "Then said they unto him, What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent."

"And that not of yourselves" - What does the neuter word "that" refer to? That which is not from ourselves. Is it the grace (fem. gender) or faith (fem.) or is it all? The grace and faith, all of which spell salvation?

The "that" refers to salvation by grace through faith.

"It is the gift of God" - Rom. 6:23 - gift
I Jn. 5:11 - given us eternal life
Jn. 10:28 - "I give unto them eternal life.

Salvation must come to use as a gift because you cannot offer God any price to obtain it! What price tag could you put on eternal life?
Illustration: Offering a Mercedes Dealer 5.00 for a new car. Or even worse, offering the dealer a snot rag for the car. Or even worse, offering him a menstrual cloth for the car. (Isaiah 64:6 – Our righteousness is as filthy rags (literally menstrual cloths)

A gift is not earned, a paycheck is.

When Jesus said, "It is finished" (Jn. 19:30), he was indicating that His work was complete; that is, the end had been reached (Bill Jackson).

ILLUS: Hymn - "Jesus Paid It All" If Jesus paid it all, there is no more to pay.

Is. 53:5, 6 - Substitute - EX: Basketball and a man "subbing" for the other. When a substitute takes one's place, the former team player must get off the field. When Christ took our place, we got off the field. We no longer try to work for our salvation.

An infinite price was paid; we have an infinite salvation. If it was finite., it would run out. EX: When we had been in Heaven for 1,000 years, an angel would come up to you, tap on your shoulder, and say, "Your time is up. You now have to spend eternity in hell."

Romans 10:3 - "Do"
Romans 10:4 - "Done"
"If you living the truth of Rom. 10:4, you're a missionary; if 10:3, you're a mission field."

"Evangelism is 'done' people going to 'do' people and telling them that the work was 'done.'"

You cannot be "doing" and "done" at the same time. If you are "doing," you are not "done," and if you are "done," you don't need to do. (Bill Jackson)

Religion says "Do"; The Bible says it is "Done"

ILLUS: Man who missed the tent revival meeting and was told "It's too late" (MacArthur, Ephesians, p. 61).

Diagnostic Question:

> If you died today and stood before God and He said to you, "Why should I let you into my heaven?" If the response is "I've lived a good life" "I didn't do anything to deserve otherwise" "I've been a good Baptist" "I was baptized as an infant," etc.--They are trusting their works.

"Not of works" -
II Tim. 1:9 - "Who hath saved us, and calls us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

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."

Purgatory is a place of doing. Mass is an occasion of doing. Come back next week and we will do some more.

There are only 2 religions in the world:

1) Every world religion and cult which teach that you must DO something to gain eternal life (examples: Hinduism; Buddhism; Islam; Judaism; Catholicism; Mormonism; Jehovah's Witness etc.)

2) Bible Christianity which teaches that the work has already been DONE through Christ. My Testimony: The balancing scale

Acts 13:39 - "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye would not be justified by the law of Moses."

Gal. 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 not flesh be justified."

Gal. 3:24 - "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

A "works" salvation denies the sufficiency and efficacy of Christ's work on Calvary.

"When a sufficient price is paid, no further price can be exacted" (Bill Jackson, Do Or Done, p. 14).
You can't add to infinity. Christ is infinite and His work is of infinite value.

"Grace" (v. 8) describes what God has done. "Works" (v. 9) describes what man can do.

Do you want what you can do or what God can do?

The point about our being "dead" (v. 1, 5) proves that someone outside of ourselves must give us life. "When a person chokes or drowns and stops breathing, there is nothing he can do. If he ever breathes again, it will be because someone else starts him breathing" (MacArthur, p. 61).

What work could a dead man do to resuscitate his life?

"Lest any man should boast" - SEE: Rom. 3:20-27; 4:1-3
To say that God provided 99% of our salvation and that we must do the remaining 1% is to give us something to boast about in Heaven.

D. The Goal of Amazing Grace (v. 7, 10)

1. The goal of God (v. 7) - that we would be "trophies of His grace"

"The ages to come" - Life does not end at death for the believer. We will be living trophies of God's grace throughout eternity.

HYMN: "Amazing Grace" - "When we've been there 10,000 years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun"

"He might show" - God has every right to show off (he should receive glory).

The reason it is wrong for us (men) to proudly show off is because by showing off we are making a statement. We are saying "Look at my unique greatness." "Look at my talent and skill." And we are falling to give credit to One who is over us, who gave us our talent and skill.

God can take pride in what He does because it is He who totally did it. It is wrong for us to take pride in anything because all that we are able to do we do with the life, energy, talent, etc., that God gave us.

"Exceeding riches" - This phrase tells me that we cannot even imagine a hint of all the blessings in store for us to experience throughout eternity.

Salvation will enable God to display an aspect of Himself which could never have been manifested if man had not been pulled out of the sewer, yea, the tomb of sin.

2. The goal for the believer (v. 10) - that we should do good works because of the salvation we already possess

a. We are God's product ("workmanship")

We were not saved <u>to</u> sin but from sin (SEE: Jer. 7:10).

"We" - Paul was saved by the same means and for the same purpose as we are.

"Workmanship" - Accomplishment. This word again points to the grace of God. The saved are products of God's spiritual manufacturing.

"Created in Christ" - Salvation is as much a miracle as creation itself.

b. Our works are God's plan ("before ordained")

"Unto good works" - The purpose or goal of our salvation (in this life) is not license to sin, but liberty to serve.

"Before ordained" - God pre-planned a will for our lives (Rom. 12:2)

"Walk" in contrast to our former walk (v. 2)

A realization of God's ownership of my life will produce in me a submissive obedience to His will.

Our fruit and good works glorify God (Jn. 15:1-8)

--Works are the evidence of salvation not the means of attaining it (Ja. 2:18, 26 - "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.")

--Works are the fruit of salvation not the root of it. (illust. The fruit tree)

--Works are the practical outworking of God's gracious in-working. Work reflect a life that is thankful and appreciative for God's grace. The truly redeemed will prove it by their works.

"By their works you shall know them"

Illustration: The Indian at the Bombay Airport.

CONCLUSION:

Ps. 34:8 - "O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

Have you tasted that "the Lord is gracious"? (I Pet. 2:3)

Concluding Thoughts

Our Response to God's Grace

after being saved by it

1. Continue in it

Remain confident in the grace of God -- Don't revert back to Law!

Acts 13:43 - "Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God"

2. Pray for it

Isaiah 33:2 - "O LORD, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble."

Malachi 1:9 - "And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts."

3. Desire it to be on others

Romans 16:20 - "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."

4. Rely on it

II Cor. 12:9 - "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

5. Be empowered by it

"Strong" = endued with strength, infused with strength.
II Timothy 2:1 - "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

I Cor. 3:10 - "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereof. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."

Empowered for service - Eph. 4:7 - "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

6. Guard your testimony because of it

Titus 2:11 - "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."

7. Proclaim it!

Acts 20:24 - "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."