

God has saved us in order to show forth the riches of His grace

There is obviously a sense in which God's grace is comforting and encouraging. At times when we're in despair, we need to be strengthened by the knowledge that God is loving and merciful. It would be hard to face life's difficulties if we didn't have this comfort.

But the knowledge of God's grace is not only comforting — it is also motivating and energizing. When we come to see something of the horribleness of our own sins and then grasp the magnitude of God's grace in the forgiveness of those sins, we are moved to spend the rest of our lives in grateful service to our gracious God. Gratitude for grace is the most powerfully motivating force in the world. Far from being a mere passive feeling, gratitude for grace is an active energy.

Just as God created us to be vessels through whom He could show forth His goodness, He had a similar motive in saving us from our sins. Paul wrote that God has saved us in Christ “so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (**Eph. 2:7**). *God has saved us in order to show forth the riches of His grace.* In our redemption, just as in our creation, we are to be vessels or instruments through whom God is able to manifest His divine goodness.

But whether God's goodness is shown forth in us depends to a large extent on whether we respond to His grace as we should. If we do not respond gratefully, diligently giving ourselves in service to the One who has forgiven us, then God's grace will have been in vain, at least as far as we are concerned. So Paul encouraged the Christians in Corinth: “Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain” (**2 Cor. 6:1**). Surely, there could be nothing sadder than the prospect of wasting the love and goodness our Creator has showed us, and therefore failing to fulfill the purpose for our existence.

Throughout this week, let's renew our appreciation for the goodness of God's grace. Let's look for practical ways to demonstrate our gratitude for His mercy. The more we realize how much we've been forgiven, the deeper will be our desire to show our appreciation. Godly sorrow is painful, but it is cleansing. So let's be refreshed by a recognition of the mercy by which God has saved us.

Monday: Ephesians 2:1-3

Key Idea: Before we were in Christ, we were dead in trespasses and sins.

Questions for Family Growth: What is “sin,” and what does it mean to be spiritually “dead”? Before we began to serve Christ, whom did we serve, according to **v.2**? According to **v.3**, whose desires did we follow?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 20:25.**

Tuesday: Ephesians 2:4-7

Key Idea: Love and mercy moved God to save us from our sins.

Questions for Family Growth: What is “mercy”? According to **v.4**, why did God show mercy to us? With whom have we been made alive? What does **v.7** say about God’s purpose in saving us from our sins?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 20:26**.

Wednesday: Ephesians 2:8

Key Idea: Our salvation is the gift of God.

Questions for Family Growth: What does the statement mean “by grace you have been saved”? What does the phrase “through faith” mean? In our day-to-day living, why is it important to see our salvation as a gift from God?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 20:27**.

Thursday: Ephesians 2:9

Key Idea: As the gift of God, our salvation is not of our own works, lest we should boast.

Questions for Family Growth: How is salvation by “faith” different from salvation by “works”? Consider **Phil. 3:8,9**. What is the only ground of boasting or glorying that we have in Christ? See **Gal. 6:14**. Does faith mean we don’t have to obey God? What does **Jas. 2:26** say?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 20:28**.

Friday: Ephesians 2:10

Key Idea: Having been saved, we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.

Questions for Family Growth: If our salvation did not result in good works, what would that say about our gratitude to God? What did Paul say about his own work in **1 Cor. 15:9,10**? What did he say in **Tit. 2:11-14**?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 20:29**.

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