

By Grace

Ephesians 2:8-10

(Ephesians 2:8-10 KJV) "For by grace are ye saved³ through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift*¹ of God: {9} Not of works, lest any man should boast². {10} For we are his workmanship⁵, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained⁴ that we should walk in them."

¹ doron {pronounced do'-ron}, a gift, such as a sacrificial *gift offered on some altar*

² Aorist Middle Subjunctive kauchaomai {pronounced kow-khah'-om-ah-ee}, to glory in or be proud of

³ Perfect Passive Participle, sozo {pronounced sode'-zo}, saved in the past with continuing results

⁴ Aorist Active Indicative, proetoimazo {pronounced pro-et-oy-mad'-zo}, to order or prepare beforehand

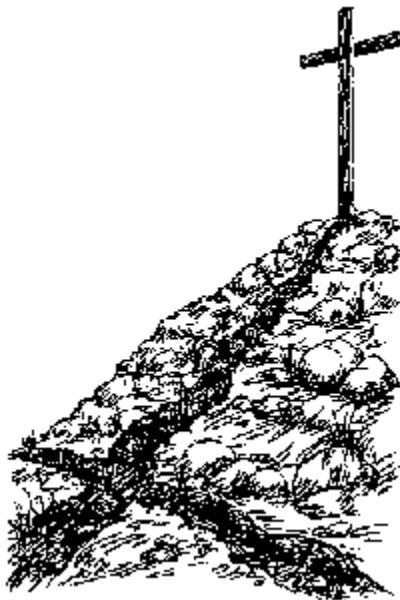
⁵ poiema {pronounced poy'-ay-mah}, a thing made

References to the original Greek text are marked throughout this document by ^{superscript numbers}.

As I looked over the various sermons I have preached over the last few years, it amazed me that I never touched on this blessed verse. Long
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ago I memorized this precious text, and its wonderful poetry has long protected me against the heretics who would make salvation a work of human hands. This verse shouts out the message, “Salvation is of God”, “Salvation is of Christ”, “Salvation is of His pierced hands and His pierced feet”. Yet the verse goes beyond salvation, and in its context drives me to work for my Savior, my Messiah, my Jesus. I pray that this text will bless you in the same way.

1. The Christian Is A Product of Grace

The Christian is *a product of Grace*. We do not have to wait for salvation, for the text promises us that our salvation is a PRESENT SALVATION:

For by grace are ye saved³

This is a wonderful promise! If you'll notice, the text does not say “you will be saved”, nor “in some distant day salvation will come”. No Beloved, it states, you are saved, and more than this (if we dig down into the Greek text for this golden nugget), you are saved with the result that you keep on being saved. This is the *Perfect Tense* of the word *saved* (sozo).

Salvation is not some promised land that the

believer will one day enter into. No, salvation is a state that is *presently secured*. We are *saved* and enter into God's covenant promises the very moment we believe. There are some sad souls who proclaim to be Christian, yet only *hope* that they will *one day be saved*. To these sad souls I quote God's Scripture which says:

(2 Corinthians 6:2 KJV) "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation)"

We are not promised salvation tomorrow, we are promised salvation *in the here and now* – today! What a wonderful promise our Lord makes!

Life has so many ups and downs. To know that salvation is a thing that we secure - not by our works, but by the *benevolence of God* – what a comforting promise. This is a feather bed I can lay down in and rest my aching soul. My heart rejoices like the man at the pool Bethesda for whom salvation was out of reach until that day when Jesus walked by. Oh, the Savior saw me, like that man, and said “**Will you be made whole?**” (John 5:6). Salvation was present at that

very moment, and I began to walk in God's light when the Son said “**Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.**” (John 5:8).

The Christian is not only a product of a PRESENT salvation, but the Christian is a product of a FREELY OFFERED salvation. This is what sets Christianity apart from all the other *false* religions, gods, and goddesses in the world today. The text says:

For by grace are ye saved³

Sherry used to have an old pot that she filled with vegetable oil. It was brown and burnt on the outside, and its handles were long gone. I tried to replace the handles on this pot with little success. No handle would fit that pot, and eventually we threw it away. A pot without a handle – especially one that holds cooking oil – is dangerous to have around.

Salvation has a handle on it, and that handle is *Grace*. You cannot make a handle by which you can grasp that pot of salvation. Your worldly efforts will not secure your salvation, for God has said that the only handle that will fir His Gift *is Grace*.

When Lazarus died, men could have wrapped the body in swaddling clothes, and poured ointment and precious fragrances on it to make it smell better. We can cover the stench of death. But only Jesus Christ can stand at the mouth of the tomb of our lives and yell, “**Lazarus, come forth!**” (John 11:43). We can dress a corpse, embalm a corpse, but we cannot give life to a corpse. God must bring life. **By grace are ye saved³.**

Have we drawn all the honey out of this text? No, for just as the hive produces more than enough honey for its members, God's Word drips with the sweet food of His promise. Our text says:

it is the gift¹ of God

This word **gift¹**, the Greek *doron*, must be examined. In ancient times man was required by the Mosaic Law to bring an offering of sacrifice¹ to God's altar. This very sacrifice was called a *doron¹*, a sacrificial gift made to God. For many years man brought sacrifices, *doron*, to God (Matthew 8:4; 23:18; Hebrews 5:1), lambs and bullocks and turtledoves, all being offered as payments for our sins. God never intended man to save himself by *doron*, by his own sacrificial gifts. No, God was showing us the futility of our

bringing Gifts to Him to secure salvation. The Holy Text says:

(Hebrews 10:1-4 NASB) "For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. {2} Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? {3} But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. {4} For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."

No, when man made a sacrifice, a *doron*¹ to God, this gift we brought to God had no effect whatsoever. Our forefathers did it because God said to do it, but the blood of animals never made satisfactory payment for sin.

Our *gifts to God* could not pay the penalty of sin.

God Himself had to bring a satisfactory *doron*, a gift that would make atonement for us. God had to provide a *doron*, a gift, a Sacrifice in my place and in your place. That sacrifice was Jesus Christ. He is the **Lamb of God, come to take away the**

sins of the world (John 1:29).

What a mystery and a wonder! For years our forefathers brought the *doron*¹, the sacrificial gift to God. But it was only when *God brought the doron*¹ to us, only when Jesus Christ was sacrificed was our salvation secured.

Cain brought the wrong sacrifice to God, and that sacrifice was rejected (**Genesis 4:5**). Our salvation, however, is not LIMITED BY OUR EFFORTS. Each Christian is saved with an equal proportion of salvation, because that *doron*¹, that Grace Gift is

that not of yourselves

C.H. Spurgeon said, **"If you go about to say, "I must feel that I am saved. I must feel so much sorrow and so much joy or else I will not admit that I am saved," you will find that this method will not answer. As well might you hope to see with your ear, or taste with your eye, or hear with your nose, as to believe by feeling: it is the wrong organ. After you have believed, you can enjoy salvation by feeling its heavenly influences; but to dream of getting a grasp of it by your own feelings is as foolish as to attempt**

to bear away the sunlight in the palm of your hand, or the breath of heaven between the lashes of your eyes. There is an essential absurdity in the whole affair.”

Salvation is a gift of God

Not of works, lest any man should boast².

Man has no right to glory or pat himself on the back because of a saved state. I fairly gag at those who puff out their chest and brag on their holy estate. Jesus Christ our Savior gets all the credit for our salvation. We brought nothing to the table but a *need to be saved*. If you want to brag, brag on Jesus. If you want to exalt someone, exalt Jesus.

(1 Corinthians 1:31 KJV) "... He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Thank God there are no *second class* Christians. If you are saved, you are just as much a Christian as the next person. If you are saved, you are just as important in God's Church as the next person.

Yet, what of works? Do we not work because we are saved? The Sacred Text says ...

2. The Christian Works Because Of Their Salvation

For we are his workmanship⁵, created in Christ Jesus unto good works

If you are a Christian, you are a thing *made by the Blood of Christ*. You are a *spiritual being*, and, the Bible tells us, you are a *child of God*. We have *every spiritual blessing* in Christ:

(Ephesians 1:3 KJV) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:"

A Christian is someone who was created to do good works. A Christian is a person *enabled* to do great things for God. A Christian has *great potential* to do great things for Jesus. The Grace that saves the Christian is the Grace that enables the Christian. The Apostle said:

(1 Corinthians 15:10 KJV) "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

Paul did not labor to retain his salvation - for he knew that salvation is a free Gift, bought by the Blood of Christ - but Paul labored *lest that Grace which saved him appear to be a vain or empty thing*. Paul struggled to put his best foot forward lest he shame the One who died for Him. Oh, how horrible, that someone could look at a Christian and make fun of Jesus! Oh, how horrible that an unbeliever could point to a Christian and say that that person was a waste of God's Grace - a vanity. Paul said that he labored - but not himself, but the Grace of God within him. The Grace of God has a goal on its horizon, and that goal is to glorify Jesus Christ on this earth. :

(2 Corinthians 6:1 KJV) "We then, *as workers together with him*, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."

The person saved by Grace works by Grace. The person given the free Gift of salvation does not spit on the Beloved Cross, but out of a heart of love works for the Master. Oh God, I do not want your precious Gift, a Gift purchased with your precious Blood, bestowed on me in vain. To fail by my own works to honor God is bad enough, but to dishonor Christ by my Christian walk is unthinkable!

3. The Christian Is Created To Work

which God hath before ordained⁴ that we should walk in them

There are those who teach that salvation is *partly of man and partly of God*, because they feel that the person who believes in the Eternal Security (once saved, always saved) of the Saint will not work for God. This is *very short sighted*.

God has *ordained, ordered beforehand* that we who are saved by Grace would do good works. Those who would make God out to be some sort of cosmic Santa Claus, and who would make salvation into a *make a vow then forget it* religion, little understand Biblical Christianity.

Allow me to approach this question from two directions. First, consider the *familial responsibilities* of salvation by Grace. *If you are a Christian, then you are a member of God's Family – And if a member of God's Family our Father does expect you to work*. I can legitimately and Biblically show you that God the Father disciplines believers who will not do the works that you are called to do. Now I do not want you leaving this place today thinking that every trial

and tribulation that has befallen you in this life is a result of God's disciplining hand – certainly, the Bible does not teach this. There are times when God allows trials to come on us *to refine and shape us as Christians*:

1 Peter 1:6-7 (KJV) "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: {7} That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ... "

Trials do happen so that we as Christians can be refined and strengthened. But I would be remiss, dearly Beloved, if I did not point out that trials come *because our Heavenly Father disciplines us when we go astray*. Jesus says:

(Revelation 3:19 KJV) "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

and again:

(1 Corinthians 11:31-32 KJV) "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be

judged. {32} But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

and yet again:

Hebrews 12:6-9 (KJV) "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. {7} If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? {8} But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. {9} Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"

Does God chastise or punish believers who fall away from Him, refusing to do the works that He has called us all to do? Absolutely! Yes, without a Scriptural doubt. One can barely look at King David and see the smugness of his affair with Bathsheba wiped off his face when God through the prophet Nathan punished him (**2 Samuel 12:7-14**). God punished Adam, our forefather, for disobedience. Certainly He will discipline His Blood bought adopted children. But I will not

dwell on this overlong, for in our day we do not like to talk of God's justice, but only of God's love.

I do not know if fear of God will sway the hearts of this generation, so *hardened* have many of us become to God's ways. Yet if you will not turn and do the good works because the Father punishes disobedience, consider this direction. Beloved, you are, if you are a Christian, *designed by God* to follow His Will, and to do His work. Again the sacred Text saith:

which God hath before ordained⁴ that we should walk in them

God has *ordained* or *determined beforehand* that the Christian has a purpose in his design. When the potter takes the lump of clay and casts it on the wheel, the potter knows beforehand *what* he is making. Even so, God our Father *knows your potential*, and is working in you so that you will become what He wants you to be. God took you at the point of salvation and, raw lump of clay that you are, cast you on His wheel. He is forming you to be a thing that will glorify Him. The Scripture says:

Romans 9:23 (KJV) "... that he might make

known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared⁴ unto glory.."

We who are saved are vessels *of mercy*, children of the Most High, called to do His work and His will. As children of God by faith in Christ we must be *careful to maintain good works* -

(Titus 3:8 KJV) "This is a faithful saying, 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."

... for this is what we are created to do. It is *unprofitable and useless* for a Christian, whom God has designed to do His will, to step away from the Ancient of Days and worship the golden calf. Like Israel of old we are called not only to dwell in the shadow of God's mountain, but we are called to step out for Jesus and cross the Jordan because God has promised us the victory.

The happy Christian is the obedient, working Christian.

If you profess to be a Christian, yet do not *stretch*
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your wings – if you profess to know Christ and do not read the Holy Word and pray frequently – if you profess Him and yet have found no place of service in His Church – then you are not where you need to be spiritually. Christians are *created to do good works*. Christians are designed to work together in this complex organization called the Church. Every member has a design. Every member has potential. What is your potential? Until you surrender to the Potter and allow Him to cast you into a useful vessel, you will never be satisfied with your life.

Conclusion

(Ephesians 2:8-10 KJV) "For by grace are ye saved³ through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift*¹ of God: {9} Not of works, lest any man should boast². {10} For we are his workmanship⁵, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained⁴ that we should walk in them."

This wonderful text has both a *promise* as well as a *directive* for every person sitting under the sound of my voice today. The *promise* is that we who have believed on Jesus Christ for salvation – if you believe the Gospel message that He died and rose again for you – the *we are saved*. What a precious promise this is! As the blessed song says,

**I once was lost, But now am found;
Was blind, but now I see!**

The Christian is a member of the Family of God. We are adopted children of God, adopted because of the Blood that Christ shed for us on the Cross. What a wonderful promise! Yet we also have a *command*. As a *member of the Family of God*, we are compelled to work for God. No believer is happy until he or she finds their place of service, then works to the glory of Christ. No believer is happy who does not fully seek God's face. No believer is satisfied unless they are submitted to the fashioning hands of the Potter.

May God give each of us a heart to do that which He has called us to do.

In the name of Jesus Christ,

Pastor David

you have about our Church if you contact him at 731-845-6104, or through his website at bibleteacher.org; or e-mail him by writing

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Rock Hill is an independent Church affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, and is a regular contributor to missions through the Cooperative Program.



Rock Hill Baptist Church is located between Parsons and Lexington, Tennessee, on Highway 412. Look for our sign! We have services on Wednesdays (Adult, Youth, and children's Bible studies) at 7:00 PM, Sundays at 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Rock Hill is a family oriented Bible believing Church - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever! Our Pastor, Brother David Buffaloe, will answer any questions