



Date: **2-3-2019**

Scripture: **Ephesians 2:1-10**

Last week we looked at one of Paul's great prayers that he prayed for believers to whom he was writing. This followed on describing the greatness of salvation that God enacted as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is because of the greatness of God in our salvation that Paul prays for the greatness of God's power in the Church as seen in the resurrection of Christ. As Father, Son, and Spirit, God works His great power in the Church to bring into greater relationship with Him.

In Ephesians 2:1-10 Paul turns to describe why it is that salvation is by grace through faith in Christ. Paul's explanation hinges on the phrase "But God" in vs. 4 as he highlights the grace of God in saving us against the deadness we were once in before that grace was realized in our lives. Far from teaching us that God only helps those who help themselves, Paul shows us that God helps the helpless; and it is only when we see ourselves as helpless that God's help will makes sense.

Digging into the Passage:

- There are four past tense phrases in vss. 1-3. What picture do they paint of mankind outside of the grace of God in salvation?
- Discuss how the following three phrases describe the way "you once **walked**" (vs. 2:1):
 - "Following the course of this **world**"
 - "Following the **prince** of the power of the air"
 - "We all once lived in the passions of our **flesh**, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind"
- There are many ways in which the Bible describes the state of those outside of Christ.
 - Why does Paul use such strong language as "sons of disobedience" and "children of wrath"?
 - What is the difference between those two descriptions and being adopted as God's children in Christ in vs. 5?
- What are some of the contrasting words Paul uses to describe life *outside* of and *in* Christ?
- Read Romans 3:20-23 and compare it to what Paul says in Ephesians 2:3-9.
- How is it that we are "saved through **faith**" and why is faith not a work?
- What is faith's role then in salvation?



- What is Paul referring to as the “gift” in the phrase “by grace you have been saved through faith” and why?¹
- What does the phrase “we are his workmanship” in vs. 10?

Reflecting on the Passage:

- What truths in this passage can help you to fight against pride and self-righteousness?
- Why is it important that Paul emphasizes the spiritual condition in which we all enter this world?
- Discuss the following questions about this passage in relation to evangelism:
 - How does it help you pray for and talk to those outside of Christ?
 - What challenges does Paul’s description of those outside of Christ pose for evangelism in today’s culture?
 - Based on Paul’s emphasis on sin, why is it important to stress sinfulness of mankind in our presentation of the gospel?
 - What encouragement does this passage give us in our evangelism?
- How does a passage like this draw us into deeper worship and adoration of God?

Challenge for the week: Pray through this passage this week for a few different people. Who do you know that has misunderstood the relationship between salvation and works? How would these verses help you to explain that to them?

¹ There is a debate as to whether this is referring to salvation by grace or faith itself. Given the whole context, it is probably better to see it as referring to the whole idea of salvation by grace through faith.