

GRACE

Accepting God's Gift to You



Constantine R. Campbell



introduction

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When Amber's family arrived at Pawpaw's house, she climbed out of the family van and patiently waited for her turn to hug him. Her little brothers had already swarmed their grandfather, hoping to be the first to get a ride on his Harley Davidson.

At last the din subsided, and Pawpaw turned to Amber and asked, "How do you like my new car?" She glanced at the late model sedan in

the driveway. It was beautiful—nicer than anything her dad had ever purchased, and meticulously cared for. But somehow, she couldn't imagine her rugged grandfather driving that instead of his motorcycle.

Then he asked, "Do you wanna drive it?" Of course she agreed. And she loved it. This vehicle was nothing like the rickety old family van she sometimes got to drive.

After a drive through the countryside they returned to Pawpaw's house. Amber got out and handed the keys to her grandfather. He handed them back. She looked at him. He slowly smiled. Amber's eyes widened and her jaw dropped in astonishment. "Are you for serious?!" were her exact words.

Pawpaw was indeed "for serious." He had freely given his cherished granddaughter a car for no reason other than this: He loved his granddaughter very much.

The best gifts are like that, given simply because someone loves us. We don't deserve it, there's no occasion for it except the giver's love. That's what grace is. It's God's gift simply because he loves.

Our Daily Bread Ministries

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PRELUDE

My wife, Bronwyn, grew up going to church. She went to Christian summer camps and was a “good Christian.” Just before she began studying at university, she attended a conference that changed her life. As she sat in a small group discussing heaven, she said, “But don’t Christians just have a better chance than the next person of getting into heaven?”

The group went silent. She knew she’d said something “wrong.” After the session, a friend took Bron for a walk and they discussed the concept of grace. Until that moment, she had never understood grace. But that’s when the penny dropped for her. She realized that all this time she had been relying on being a good Christian to be right with God, but in fact God had already done everything she needed. Jesus died for her sins so that she could be right with God.

Right then and there Bron accepted God’s grace for the first time. The burden of trying to be good enough for God was finally lifted from her shoulders.

Grace. It’s a precious word to Christians. If we truly understand its meaning, we will see that grace* is

at the very heart of the good news of what Jesus has done to offer salvation. It refers to the undeserved favor of God, extended to us free of charge, even though we have no natural right to it and can never earn it on our own merits.

Perhaps no passage in the Bible expresses the concept of the grace of God as succinctly as Ephesians 2:8–9:

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

We have been saved by grace. Forgiveness of our sins,* salvation,* and reconciliation* with God come to us as a gift. Salvation is not earned through good works or good behavior. It is *granted* to us through faith.

Little wonder these verses are special to followers of Jesus. Millions of us have memorized them, keeping their precious, life-giving, profoundly encouraging words close to our hearts.

Let's explore how these famous and beloved verses fit into the message of Ephesians, and in particular how they fit in 2:1–10. In their immediate context, they take on even greater significance and meaning. There they provide the inevitable and joyous conclusion to the argument that begins in 2:1. Join me on a journey to understand the wonder of the message of Ephesians 2:1–10.



one

The Walking Dead

Do you believe in zombies? Zombies are so hip right now. They pop up in movies and TV shows, even commercials. My ten-year-old daughter recently asked me if zombies are real, and I said, “No, zombies are not real, sweetie.” But I was wrong. *Zombies do exist*—the Bible says so! When we put Ephesians 2:1 together with verse 2, we see zombies.

Ephesians 2 begins bleakly: “As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins” (v. 1). Paul’s starting point is *death*. You were dead in your sins. He doesn’t mean that you were somehow *physically*

dead without knowing it—he means that you were *spiritually* dead “in” or “through” (“because of”) your transgressions* and sins. A *transgression* is a type of sin that involves breaking a rule. *Sin* refers to our rebellion against God, whether through “transgressions” or not. Humanity instinctively rejects God. It’s a natural inclination. This rebellion is expressed through words, deeds, and attitudes.

It’s important to appreciate the significance of being dead, physically or spiritually. If you’re physically dead, you can’t *do* anything. You’re dead! When you are lying in your coffin, six feet underground, your last chapter has been written; your story is over. It is too late to fix the things you’ve done wrong. You can’t apologize to that person you offended. You can’t mend your broken relationship with that family member. It’s too late to tell your children you love them. It’s too late to undo all your regrets.

The spiritually dead have no relationship with God. To be *spiritually dead* means you are completely cut off from God. Being dead, you are unable to reach out to him. You cannot fix the things you’ve done that offended God. You can’t apologize to him for rebelling against him, for pretending he doesn’t exist, and for living as though you are, in fact, God.



The first verse of Ephesians 2 raises a serious problem. Dead people can’t make things right. ▀ Any solution

to our deadness must come from somewhere other than ourselves.

↪ *Scripture encourages us to reach out to God (SEE ACTS 17:27 AND JAMES 4:8). While we can search for and find God, he is the only one who can do anything to bring our spiritually dead hearts to life and right relationship with him.*

After telling us that we were dead in our sins, Paul goes on:

in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air,* the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient (v. 2).

Paul literally wrote that they were dead in their sins “in which [they] used to *walk*.” *Walking* was a common Jewish way of speaking about the conduct of our lives. For example, to “walk in peace” means to conduct ourselves in a peaceful way. So Paul says that, though dead, they used to live in sinful ways. The walking dead. Zombies. Zombies in the Bible!

Verse 2 also says that these zombies (the walking dead) were not just out for a stroll, going wherever they wanted as though they had the freedom to do whatever they wanted. No, they were *followers*. And they followed two leaders: “the ways of this world,” and “the ruler of the kingdom of the air.”

Following the ways of this world means to live by the world’s values and ideals. Just like mindless

zombies, the walking dead are mindless followers of the world around them. They are not rebels against the status quo. They don't question the values forced on them, and they don't look for a better way.

The walking dead also follow the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. Paul doesn't name this "spirit," but the most obvious candidate is the devil himself. The world often treats Satan as a joke, but he is not a fun-loving, naughty little guy with red horns and a tail. It's easy to dismiss him as a silly idea when we caricature him in this way. The greatest trick[♣] the devil can play is to convince us that he does not exist.

♣ **C. S. Lewis dramatizes this** in *The Screwtape Letters* when a senior demon advises his protégé on how to deceive a human: *"The fact that 'devils' are predominantly comic figures in the modern imagination will help you. If any faint suspicion of your existence begins to arise in his mind, suggest to him a picture of something in red tights, and persuade him that since he cannot believe in that (it is an old textbook method of confusing them) he therefore cannot believe in you."*

An evil spiritual being known as Satan, or the devil, is real (JOB 1; MATTHEW 4:1–11), and he is dangerous. He guides and directs the zombies. The walking dead are under his control. He is their puppet master as they mindlessly follow his directions and the ways of the world.

But just in case you get the impression that Paul is speaking in a judgmental way about the zombie-like walking dead, in the next verse he gets a little more specific with exactly who these zombies are. He includes himself as once one of them: “*All of us* also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of *our* flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, *we* were by nature deserving of wrath” (2:3 *emphasis added*). All people—you, me, and even Paul the apostle—were at one time one of these walking dead.

Another thing to notice in verse 3 is that the walking dead are characterized as “gratifying the cravings of our flesh* and following its desires and thoughts.” In other words, we used to live according to our appetites. Whatever our bodies wanted—whatever we craved and desired—that is what we would try to get. Self-gratification was our highest pursuit.

Putting these things together, we see that living according to self-gratification is in fact *following* the world and the devil. We might think that we’re not



We might think that we’re not hurting anyone by chasing after our desires and cravings, but we are just one more cog in the wheel of the world that turns its back on God.

hurting anyone by chasing after our desires and cravings, but we are just one more cog in the wheel of the world that turns its back on God. And we don't notice that living this way is just what our leaders—the world and the devil—want us to do.

The world tries to tell us that “freedom” is being able to do whatever we want: chasing after our desires, gratifying our cravings, simply doing whatever makes us feel good. But this is a lie. The world's freedom is no freedom at all. It is, rather, the slavish following of the world and the evil one.

Finally, Paul adds in verse 3 that we, like the rest of the world, “were by nature deserving of wrath.” Left in our natural state, we deserve nothing less than the consequences of rebellion against our Creator. Mindless, self-gratifying, Satan-following, world-pleasing, spiritual zombies deserve to face the wrath of God.

Ephesians 2 indeed begins with a bleak picture! Thank God he didn't leave us there.

👉 *“Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned— To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come” (ROMANS 5:12–14).*



two

Alive with Christ

Though we were self-gratifying, spiritual zombies, God loved us. Yes, *loved* us. Paul says in verses 4–5, “But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.”

Because of his mercy and out of his great love for us, God did what all the heroes of the zombie movies try to do. He provided the cure, the antivirus for the zombie plague. God “made us alive with Christ.” We were dead

in our sins, unable to change our situation, but God took action to bring us to life. And as Paul says, this means that we are saved “by grace.” We can’t claim any credit for making ourselves alive. Dead people can’t do that. Our changed situation can only be due to God’s gift, which is what “grace” means. But we’ll come back to that, as Paul does later in the passage.

He continues in 2:6, “And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.”

When Paul says that we are made alive, raised, and seated *with Christ*, he means that we share in these key events of Christ’s experience. Theologians call it *participation with Christ*.* Our trust in Christ connects us to him, so that his death becomes our death, his resurrection* becomes our resurrection, his ascension* becomes our ascension. 🐾

🐾 “Since, then, you have been **raised with Christ**, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory” (COLOSSIANS 3:1–4).

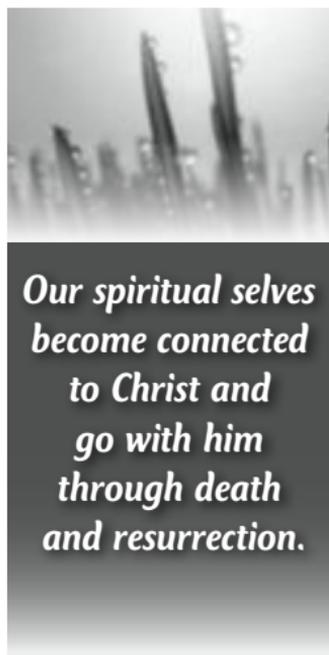
Participation with Christ can be difficult to grasp, but it’s a concept that Paul uses throughout his many letters in the New Testament. Our connection to Christ is *spiritual*. Paul doesn’t mean that we physically died with Christ or were

physically raised with Christ; Paul means that our spiritual selves become connected to Christ and go with him through death and resurrection. This is why Paul can say that our old person has been put to death and a new one now exists in its place. This is not exaggeration or a metaphor; it is spiritually true.

👉 *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The **old has gone, the new is here!**" (2 CORINTHIANS 5:17).*

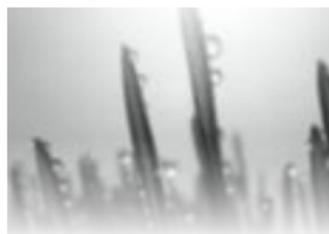
Think of our participation with Christ as *hitching our wagon to his wagon*. Wherever his wagon goes, we go too. He pulls us along—through death, into new life, and ultimately into heaven itself. We do not deserve to receive resurrection life, but we are granted it because our wagon is hitched to Christ. We do not deserve to live in heaven with Christ, but we can because we participate with him. We are drawn in to share in his achievements.

At the 1998 *Golden Globes*, something remarkable took place. The actor Ving Rhames won a Golden Globe for his role in a TV movie about promoter Don King. As he



received his award, a visibly emotional Rhames asked the audience, “Is Mr. Jack Lemmon here?” Jack Lemmon was a household name TV star in my grandparents’ generation and a fellow nominee for the award Rhames had just won. “Would you come up here please, sir?” Laughter swept the room as the spotlight and cameras searched for the bewildered Lemmon. *What was this all about?* No one knew. Lemmon looked as surprised as everyone else. He looked around and shrugged his shoulders. With a sheepish look on his face, Lemmon tentatively got out of his seat and made his way to the stage. By now there was a real buzz of anticipation. Once he was standing next to Ving Rhames, Rhames said, “I believe that being an artist is about giving. And I would like to give this to you, Mr. Jack Lemmon.”

And he handed his Golden Globe Award to Lemmon. The audience was electric. Ving Rhames had just *given away his Golden Globe!* Throughout the audience, tears flowed. The rousing cheer declared the audience’s approval of Rhames’s unprecedented act. Lemmon



Jack Lemmon did not win that Golden Globe. He had no right to stand on that stage. But he was invited to share in the achievement of another.

himself was stunned. He reluctantly received the Golden Globe and told the audience that this was one of the nicest, sweetest moments of his life.

The point is this: Jack Lemmon did not win that Golden Globe. He had no right to stand on that stage. But he was *invited to share* in the achievement of another. And it was beautiful.

In a similar way, we have been invited to share in the achievements of Christ. We have no natural right to share in them, except that we have been invited to do so. That is participation with Christ.

And this invitation leads us to marvel at God's incredible goodness: We participate with Christ "in order that in the coming ages* he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus" (2:7). Seated in the heavenly realms with Christ, we see the incomparable riches of God's grace. He showed us grace so that he can show us more grace!

That's incredible, isn't it? We were dead. We were blind followers of the world, rejecting God and his



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good purposes for us. But God raised us up from spiritual death and gave us new life with Christ. His grace is indeed magnificent.



three

Created by God

Now we come to those famous verses that so many have committed to memory: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (2:8–9).

Having worked through the argument of Ephesians 2:1–7, we can now see how these two verses fit in. They are simply the inevitable conclusion of the argument Paul has been making since verse one. It *must* be true that we are saved by grace, because we were spiritually

dead—unable to save ourselves—and God made us alive. Why did he make us alive? Because of his mercy. Because of his great love for us. Not because we impressed him. Not because we earned it. Not because we were especially attractive zombies. We are saved purely by grace. This is the gift of God. We are not saved by works, nor by anything we have done, nor by any merit of our own.

But what exactly does “grace” mean? It is best expressed at the end of verse 8: “It is the gift of God.” Grace is pure gift. But sometimes our understanding of gift-giving does not offer the best picture of grace. We often give gifts out of expectation. If it’s my birthday, you may feel obliged to give me a birthday present. Or think about Christmas. There is an inaccurate expression sometimes used at Christmastime—“the exchange of gifts.” If gifts are “exchanged” are they really gifts at all? Isn’t it just an exchange? Aren’t we simply swapping our stuff? I’m exaggerating a little, but you get the point. It’s why you feel embarrassed if someone gives you a Christmas gift but you didn’t get that person anything. That shows there is an expectation to “exchange gifts.”

Instead, consider the gift that someone gives you



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for no apparent reason. You say, “But it’s not my birthday! It’s not Christmas. I haven’t just graduated. Why are you giving me this gift?” And the answer is simply, “Because I love you.”

That’s what the grace of God is like. Salvation is not given to us out of expectation. It is not exchanged for something else. It is *pure gift*. Why does God give us salvation? Simply because he loves us. 🐾

🐾 *“As the Father has loved me, **so have I loved you**. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command” (JOHN 15:9–14).*



The gift of salvation is truly spectacular. Rather than receiving the wrath we deserve (v. 3), we are forgiven of our sins. We are adopted and brought into God’s family, adopted to be his sons and daughters. We receive eternal life in perfect peace, joy, and love together with him. For all eternity we will enjoy being together in his presence, 🐾 rejoicing and giving him thanks. It will be a life without sin, without trouble and hardship, and without suffering and pain. Moreover, our salvation brings a multitude of

blessings for this life too. We truly know God and are known by him. We instantly become part of a worldwide family. Our identity is transformed from being dependent on achievement, success, the praise of others, money, and status, to being grounded in Christ. Truly the gift of God is remarkable and precious.

↗ **The eternal destiny** of the follower of Christ is to be in his presence forever on a new earth. What we often think of as heaven—someplace in the sky—is only our temporary home until God creates a new heaven and a new earth that we enjoy in our resurrection bodies.

But you may know all that perfectly well. You may be quite familiar with the teaching of salvation by grace through faith. You know you are not saved by your works or by anything you contribute. You understand what the gift of God is. And yet sometimes we can *know* something and yet not *truly* know it. We might have knowledge of a certain truth, but that truth has yet to really sink in. It has not yet permeated our entire being, down to our core. It's in our head, but not our heart. Can you relate to that?

Some believers know that salvation is by grace. They may have even shared that message with others. But if they're honest, they'll recognize that deep down there's a part of them that is still depending on their good deeds to be right with God. They still hope to impress God with their goodness. They

really hope that they're good enough for God. What they know intellectually and how they live their lives don't match. The evidence demonstrates that what they really believe is that they must do something to impress God, to either earn or repay their salvation.

In the movie *Good Will Hunting*, Robin Williams plays Sean Maguire, a therapist whom the young prodigy Will Hunting, played by Matt Damon, is court-ordered to see for counseling. Will has had a violent past, and his last fight landed him before a magistrate. While Will should have

been imprisoned for his actions, Professor Gerald Lambeau (Stellan Skarsgård) has arranged for Will's freedom on the condition that he meets with a therapist every week.

They get off to a slow start, as Will is not interested in letting his counselor into his inner world. But slowly their relationship develops. Toward the end of the film there is a moving scene in which Sean raises the fact that Will had endured years of physical abuse as a boy. He says to Will, "What happened to you was not



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your fault.” Will says, “I know that.” But Sean presses the point, “It’s not your fault.” “I know.” Sean continues, “Look, son, it’s not your fault.” “I know!” “Will. Listen to me. It’s *not your fault.*” At that point Will breaks into tears and hugs Sean. He finally *knows* that the abuse he suffered was not his fault.

While we can know something to be true, sometimes we don’t know it truly. It can take a while to really sink in. We may know it intellectually, but we have yet to accept it. We have not yet allowed the truth to shape us at the core of our being. God loves you, brother or sister. He loves *you*. No, listen to me: He *loves* you! And because of his love, we are saved by grace.

If we are saved by grace through the gift of God and not by our own works, there is no basis for boasting (v. 9). No Christian can be proud of their salvation. In fact, every single human being stands guilty before God. No matter what we may have done—whether we are law-abiding citizens who pay their taxes and are generally nice people, or convicted criminals serving a sentence for armed robbery—we are all in the same boat before God. Guilty. Even the



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friendliest, most compassionate and honest person cannot boast before God. All are humbled by the grace of God, since it confirms the reality outlined in verses 1–3. Before we received God’s grace, we were mindless zombies under the control of the evil one. Only fools boast of their own goodness!

↗ *“If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith” (PHILIPPIANS 3:4–9).*

Rather than being about what we have done—our impressive performance, or our “nice guy” credentials—this is all about what God has done. In verse 10, Paul says “For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works,* which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Notice he says that we are *God’s handiwork* (v. 10). We are God’s *product*. We are the result of *his* work. This is a deliberate turnaround from discussing *our*

works. Salvation cannot be earned by our works. Instead, the very opposite is true! Our salvation is the work *of God*. He is the one who has raised us from the dead with Christ. He has raised up to be seated in the heavenly realms with Christ. He has saved us by grace. We are God's handiwork.



four

Created for Good Works

Paul also says we are “created in Christ Jesus to do good works” (v. 10). So far in Ephesians 2:1–10, all the discussion about our works has been negative. We are not saved by works (v. 9). Our deeds were transgressions and sins (vv. 1, 5). We lived to gratify the cravings of our flesh (v. 3). But here we see that God wants us to do good works.

Why affirm the value of good works now? The text has been so careful to say that our works do not save us. Paul has meticulously demonstrated that they have been pushed to one side. Why now suggest that works are part of the equation?

The answer has to do with the placement of verse 10 in the argument. Now that Paul has made it abundantly clear that we are *not* saved by our works, we can address the right place for works. They are not for salvation, yet good works matter. Once we have been *created in Christ Jesus*, we are able to live in a way that pleases God. It was not possible to please God while we were mindless zombies, obedient to the evil one and trapped by our own desires. But now that God has made us alive with Christ and saved us by his grace, we have become new creations. We no longer belong to the evil powers that held us. We belong to Christ.

Belonging to Christ means that we can live in a way that pleases God. Our works can be good. (Notice that our works were not called “good” until verse 10.) So believers should seek to please God in the way we live. We should strive to serve God. We should consider how we are acting in this life. We should seek out the good works that God has prepared for us to do.

In fact, when Paul says we have been “created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do,” this is literally, “created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance *for us to walk in.*” Yes, we come back to *walking*. This occurs only in verses 2 and 10 in this passage, providing a contrast between two types of walking. The first is the “zombie walk,” as the spiritually dead walk in their sins and trespasses. The second is the walk of the spiritually alive, who walk in

good deeds pleasing to God. All human beings will walk one way or the other. We will either walk like zombies, following the world, or we will walk in the way of Christ. 📌

📌 *“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (MATTHEW 5:14–16).*

One encouraging aspect of walking this new way is that God has already planned ahead of time the good deeds he wants us to walk in. It’s hard to know how specific this is. Does it mean that God has planned every good deed for every Christian? Or does it mean that God has planned the good deeds (in general) that his people (as a group) will walk in? It’s probably both/and. Throughout the Bible, God’s plans and actions show a concern for *the one and the many*. He cares for the group *and* the individual. You can’t have a group without individuals. The one and the many go together. And so, God has planned a way (in general) for us (as a group) to walk in. As members of that group, we each will walk in the particular good deeds God has prepared for us.

This means that even our good deeds are *given* to us by God. God doesn’t just save us by grace and then leave us to our own devices. We are saved by

grace, and we live by grace. God plans the good he wants us to do, and he enables us to do it. This is truly encouraging. We do not need to beat ourselves up for not doing enough good in the world. Nor do we need to worry about whether we are doing “the right” good things. God has arranged the good deeds we will do, and we should take comfort in that. He is in the driver’s seat, and we are glad to go where he takes us.



If we truly understand God’s grace, it will change our lives. But to understand his grace, we must first comprehend the depth of our sin and our complete spiritual deadness prior to receiving God’s grace. Only then can we appreciate that being made alive with Christ is an act of pure grace. It is the sheer gift of God that he raises the dead and gives us new life. We have been made anew, no longer trapped by the world and the devil to mindlessly walk in rebellion against God. We now belong to him, having been seated in his very presence in the heavenly realms.*

Now that we have been made alive with Christ, we are able to walk in a way that pleases God. We have been created for good works. We can walk in the deeds he has prepared for us to do—not to gain our salvation, but because we are saved by grace.

If we truly understand this, nothing can remain the same. The burden of sin and guilt has been lifted. Our feelings of inadequacy are now quenched.

We may rest secure in the overwhelming love of God and in his abundant mercy. We know the true freedom of God's grace. 🌿

GLOSSARY

Grace: Grace is a “free gift.” When God saves us by grace, it means that he saves us from the punishment we deserve, and he does this “for free.”

Sin: Sin is rebellion against God. We rebel against God by wanting to live our own way apart from him. We rebel by making ourselves boss, when God is the rightful boss of our lives.

Salvation: Salvation is to be rescued from something. Salvation in the Bible means being rescued from the punishment we deserve for rebelling against God.

Reconciliation: To reconcile is to fix problems in a relationship. Instead of remaining enemies, two people repair their relationship. Instead of being enemies of God, we become members of his family.

Transgressions: A transgression is breaking a rule or a law. Transgressions are a type of sin (SEE ABOVE).

Ruler of the kingdom of the air: The ruler of the

kingdom of the air is one way of talking about the devil, or Satan. The kingdom of the air is part of the spiritual realm the devil has influence over.

Flesh: The flesh is our “sin nature.” Not just our bodies, but our bodies influenced by ungodly desires and motivations.

Participation with Christ: Participation with Christ is sharing in the key events that Jesus went through: his life, death, resurrection, and ascension. It means we “hitch our wagon to his wagon.”

Resurrection: Resurrection is coming back to life after we have died.

Ascension: Jesus ascended when he was taken up into heaven after his resurrection.

Coming age: The coming age is the period after Jesus’s return. After judgment day, and after bringing about the new heavens and new earth, the “coming ages” is when we will live with God forever.

Works: Works are actions done to earn something. Works can be anything good and helpful, but will not earn God’s approval.

Seated in his very presence in the heavenly realms: Being seated in the heavenly realms means that we are spiritually with God and Jesus. While we still live on earth, because we participate with Christ (SEE ABOVE) we are also “where” Jesus is.



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