



Saved by Grace Through Faith

We believe that we are justified by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

In his letter to the Ephesians, chapter 2, Paul explained the good news in a similar way to which he did in Romans 3.

1 In the past you were spiritually dead because of your sins and the things you did against God. 2 Yes, in the past you followed the ways of this world, following the ruler of the evil powers that are above the earth. That same spirit is now working in those who refuse to obey God. 3 All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else.

- What are the three things Paul said we all followed?
- What situation did that land humanity in?

4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, 5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)

- Do you see a parallel here with the Parable of the Prodigal Son?
- How does this truth about God's love for sinners discourage us from thinking we are good enough for God on our own?

5 He gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) 6 For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus.

How would you put this in your own words?

7 So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.

- How would you define 'grace' as Paul used the word here?
- How do you feel about it?
- How do you feel about the picture of grace in the Parable of the Prodigal Son?

8 God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.

- Can you do a paraphrase of those verses? That is, put it in your own words, keeping what Paul is saying, not adding to it.
- What does he mean when he says 'so none of us can boast about it?'

10 For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

How does God want us to live after he declares us righteous, and accepts as good?