

Transforming Daily

“ . . . for by grace you have been saved through faith . . . ”
Ephesians 2:8

Ephesians 2:8-9 is one of the hallmark passages of Scripture for the defense of eternal security. It is also one of the strongest verses in Scripture concerning John Calvin's view of salvation, known as Calvinism. All of this notwithstanding, the most important feature of this passage is the grace of God; that is the sovereign expression of God's good pleasure. Salvation is a miracle, and whereas it can be described and experienced, it can neither be explained nor proven apart from faith. God's grace is the key to understanding salvation, forgiveness, physical sanctification, spiritual transformation, etc.

Some scholars define God's grace as "receiving what we don't deserve." This application doesn't make sense unless you understand the context against the back drop of sin. Moses wrote in Genesis 6:7-8, "So the Lord said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.' But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Paul wrote in Romans 6:23, "for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." In both passages, man's sinfulness is against God's righteousness and deserves punishment. However, there is this little contrasting conjunction "but" that changes the direction of everything. So not receiving what we deserve in this context is not receiving condemnation for our sin; that is not receiving everything that was poured out on Christ at Calvary including death, hell and the grave, not to mention being forsaken by God.

Instead, the believer receives salvation, sanctification, and ultimately, glorification in heaven with God forever. Condemnation still took place. The wages of sin was paid. Separation from God occurred. All of this was poured out on Jesus Christ. He became sin who knew know sin. He became my substitute on the cross. Jesus bore my indignities, my shame, and my death; He bore what should have been my separation from God when God forsook Christ upon the cross! His death was supposed to have been mine. His burial was supposed to have been mine. Hell was supposed to have been my destination. What happened? In one single word, *grace* happened. Another single word can also be used, propitiation.

As the song says, "He paid a debt He did not owe. I owed a debt I could not pay. I needed someone to wash my sins away. And now, I sing a brand new song, amazing grace, all day long. Christ Jesus paid the debt that I could never pay." Have you received the free gift of God purchased by the shed blood of Jesus Christ? Do you know for certain that you will go to heaven when you die, or should Christ return before you die? If so, then give God the glory for by grace you have been saved through faith.