

Extravagant grace

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Ephesians / God: Grace / Ephesians 2:8–10

Extravagant grace

Introduction

We live in a society that works for our salary, that works for our academic achievements.

This world is based upon the principle of human effort, hard work may bring its rewards.

But we somehow think that we need to do some human effort to be saved.

Islam believes if you do enough good works and if they out way your bad works then you will enter paradise.

Every religion out there other than biblical Christianity is based on human effort for salvation.

Christianity alone is dependent upon Divine effort, the work of God in and through Jesus Christ for salvation.

There is only one work that will save you, and that is not your work, but the work that Jesus Christ did by dying on the cross for the forgiveness of your sins and

rising again from the dead.

relying upon this is the only means for salvation.

It is by God's grace, you are saved

and by God's grace you live.

Proposition

2 truths explaining Gods extravagant grace towards you so that you walk like Jesus.

1. God's grace is demonstrated in your salvation.
2. God's grace is demonstrated in your walk

Ephesians 2:8–10 ESV

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

1. God's grace is demonstrated in your salvation.

Ephesians 2:8–9 ESV

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it

is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Having explained the action of Gods power in salvation by: vs 4-6

1. making you (the believer) spiritually alive,
2. raising you to walk in dependence upon Christ infinite power
3. And seating you in heavenly status in Christ authority

Paul explains the reason for it is to show the riches of His surpassing Grace towards us vs 7

Paul then explains that God's salvation is truly by grace, totally a work of God and is apart from any human effort.

Ephesians 2:4–7 ESV

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved

God's salvation is based upon His Grace.

The grammar emphasises that it was is a completed action with continuing results.

Before you were saved you were as dead to God as any corpse you find in the mortuary.

The only thing you were under was Gods flaming wrath like the flame of a gas plate in your life only to be opened like a bursting volcano of fire and sulphur for all eternity in Hell.

But on the firm foundation of God's grace, He rescued you from His eternal wrath and secured you in the flame-resistant hands of an infinite powerful God.

Grace means to bestow favour on, to show His kindness towards you.

Culver calls it God's unmerited favour

Grudem: Gods goodness shown to those who do not deserve it.

God's Grace (unmerited favour) requires only one appropriate response to receive it: faith.

God's grace in action is the grounds of salvation, **faith is the means** by which it becomes effective in a person's life.

Grace is Gods tool, and faith is the means it's used to save you.

You are not saved because Jesus died and rose again, you are saved when you trust in Jesus's who died and rose again.

“Calvin states that a person must receive by faith the salvation offered to him or her by the hand of God.” (Hoehner)

Faith means to trust in, it is a strong confidence and reliance upon someone or something.

Saving faith is the trusting in Jesus as a living person for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life.

Not just a belief in facts.

It is eternal devastating subtle difference to believe in the facts of Christ and the gospel, yet not personally committing to Christ and trusting or depending upon Christ and the gospel.

Saving faith means you should personally trust, personally commit and depend in Jesus to save you.

It means to enter into a genuine personal relationship with Jesus.

It also means in trusting in Jesus, you're not trusting in yourself.

It's all by His grace.

The story is told of a man who came eagerly but very late to a revival meeting and found the workmen tearing down the tent in which the meetings had been held. Frantic at missing the evangelist, he decided to ask one of the workers what he could do to be saved. The workman, who was a Christian, replied, "You can't do anything. It's too late." Horrified, the man said, "What do you mean? How can it be too late?" "The work has already been accomplished," he was told. "There is nothing you need to do but believe it."

God is the source of salvation, not man

Salvation is unequivocally God's work.

And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

Some debate whether the term "this" refers to faith, grace or to salvation as a whole, which would include faith)

I believe lean towards it referring to the whole process of salvation for grammatical reasons as well as the close context really emphasises Gods power at work in every aspect of salvation.

Paul is stating that salvation does originate from man, rather it originates from God's grace.

Paul calls it a gift of God (meaning that it is given without compensation)

When I think of gifts, what pops into my mind is Christmas on the farm of my aunt. We would wake up early and run up to the loft where the family would gather. There in front of your chair would be bags which contained your gifts. As a child one would always be so excited at the prospect of opening the gifts. And when you finally opened it, it would give you great delight.

But when I think about the gifts, I received from family members, none of them survived. All of were temporal in nature.

But the greatest gift for those who trust in Christ is God's gift of salvation.

Just as you open the covering of the gifts at Christmas, God opened your heart to see the glory of Christ.

God gifts you with the ability to repent, the faith to believe, the enablement to be alive spiritually, the power to live, the status of his authority the destiny of His glory.

2 Corinthians 4:6 *ESV*

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

God's gift of salvation lasts and lasts and last for all eternity.

The effects of His gift last for all eternity

In summary salvation is a gift from God, its basis is grace and its received by faith. (Hoehner)

not a result of works,

Paul distinguishes here the person from the persons efforts.

Salvation does not originate from:

1. a human being
2. nor from any work, effort or practice of a human being.

Not from you or anything you do.

Human works(efforts) are contrasted to the grace of God.

Romans 11:6 ESV

But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

so that no one may boast.

If salvation was based upon your own effort, you would have something to boast about.

Boasting is makes man the object of trust rather than God.

Boasting means to express a high degree of confidence in someone or something.

When that object or person is yourself or your efforts it means your placing your confidence, your trust in humanity rather than God.

GK term comes from sticking out your neck in a proud manner.

Boasting is allowed only if it's in God or in the cross.

1 Corinthians 1:31 ESV

so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Galatians 6:14 ESV

But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Application

1. If you're not a believer, stop trying through your efforts to get right with God.
2. Rather acknowledge your own sin and your own inability and turn towards Jesus and trust in His death and resurrection for salvation.
3. For you the believer
4. you need reminding that what Jesus did is enough.

AS believers you and I must guard our hearts from subtly beginning to think that we have some part to play in saving ourselves or some part to play in maintaining our salvation.

God's grace protects you from legalism but God's grace does not give you licence to sin.

God's grace protects you from a performance-based relationship to God to one based on the sinless death and resurrection of Jesus

Remind yourself that your relationship with God is not based on how good or bad your behaviour is but based upon what Jesus did in the gospel.

His grace frees you to honestly face your sin, knowing its forgiven and therefore to pursue a life of holiness.

God's grace means not that you have the freedom to sin, but the freedom to depend upon His grace, His power, to pursue obeying His commands in Scripture.

Titus 2:11–12 ESV

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to

renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,

God's grace trains you in an ongoing basis to live a godly life in this world.

Paul goes on to give a 2nd reason explaining why salvation is by God's grace, and that it is a divine gift.

2. God's grace is demonstrated in your walk

Ephesians 2:10 ESV

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

For we are his workmanship,

The term workmanship Gk= means that which is made, work or creation. Something that has been brought into existence.

"His" emphasises that God is the one who did it.

You(believers) are the physical handiwork of God.

You are in an ongoing basis Gods handiwork.

You could translate this as the Holman's translated it.

Ephesians 2:10 HCSB

For we are His creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them.

You are not only created into a human being, but you are also His spiritual recreated being.

You (if you're a believer) are God's creation(handiwork), both as human and as

believer.

The principle is simply this:

Just as human beings had no part to play in their physical creation, humans contributed nothing to being spiritually created in Christ Jesus.

created in Christ Jesus for good works,

The term Created here in the Greek means to be created from nothing.

The grammar indicated that the believer is the recipient of the action.

The reason that the believer (God's creation) is different from human works is because they were created in Christ.

The purpose for being spiritually recreated in Christ is for the goal or the aim of good works.

A cell phone was created to make phone calls, wats-app messages etc.

IT was not created to be used as a hammer to hit nails into the wall.

In the same way the believer in Christ is God's creation, created to obey God.

The spiritually dead unbeliever walks in sin, his or her life is worldly.

But the believer (God's creation in Christ), is to walk contrary to the world, in good works.

God not only restores the effects of the fall, but also created a new kind of humanity.

No longer:

1. spiritually dead,
2. under the ruler ship of the world or Satan,
3. destined to experience God wrath.

Instead you are:

1. spiritually alive,
2. raise up in power,
3. seated in heavenly authority
4. a new creation created for a life of obedience.

remember: Good works are not the means for salvation but the fruit of it.

Note the timing of the good works.

which God prepared beforehand,

Prepared beforehand= one Greek term=means to make ready or prepare in advance.

God prepared certain good works for you, before the foundation of this world.

Ephesians 1:4 ESV

even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

He not only chose you, but that choice is aimed at you being holy and blameless.

That life is displayed by good works that you do.

God not only chose you as His own creation before the foundations of the universe, He also prepared beforehand good works for you.

You may ask what good works did God prepare.

Some years ago, I made the choice to build my daughter a bed.

This was not any bed, it was a double bed, with a table underneath and shelves underneath.

I remember spending quite some time sitting with a piece of paper and pen thinking and drawing out a picture of what the bed would look like.

Then I planned what wood and tools I needed.

I have visualised in my mind the end product and then I went to work to bring it about.

Well today my daughter sleeps on that wooden bed and has packed a lot of her school things in it.

God, I believe in the same way planned out certain good works you and I should do.

This plan happened before you were even conceived in your mother's womb.

It happened before mankind existed and even before time space and matter existed.

You had no part to play in this plan because you did not even exist to think.

But before you existed, God was thinking about you, not only that he was thinking about choosing you.

He was thinking about the good works that you would do.

He prepared in His own mind specific works that you would walk in when you finally were born and eventually came to salvation more than 6000 years later.

I believe the world was created by God +- 6000 years ago, that's why I use that number.

You may ask what were those good works that God thought about in His thinking?

I am grateful to Paul because he sheds some insight to that in ch 4-6

Paul elaborates on these good works in ch 4-6 that flow out from your salvation.

I will list maybe 20 I could quickly find in Ephesians alone.

1. urged to walk in a manner worthy of our calling (Eph 4:1)
2. Our attitude should reflect humility, gentleness, patience and love towards one another Eph 4:2)
3. God gave us the church to equip us to serve one another and to build up one another in Christ-likeness. (Eph 4:11-16)
4. speaking the truth Eph 4:25
5. being angry, but not sinning Eph 4:26
6. not stealing but labouring Eph 4:28
7. not allowing any corrupting talk come out of your mouth Eph 4:29
8. not grieving the HS 4:30
9. being kind towards one another Eph 4:32
10. Imitating God Eph 5:1
11. walking in love Eph 5:2

12. being morally pure Eph 5:3
13. not being deceived with empty words Eph 5:6
14. walking as children of the light Eph 5:8
15. Taking no part in the unfruitful works of darkness Eph 5:11
16. looking carefully how you walk Eph 6:15
17. Understanding the will of the Father Eph 5:11
18. being filled by the spirit Eph 5:18
19. One expression of being filled by the HS is submission in family and work relationships
20. Wives submitting to their husbands in reverence to Christ Eph 5:21
21. Husbands loving their wives as Christ loved the church (sacrificial love) in submission to Christ Eph 5:25
22. Husbands encouraging their wives to greater Christ likeness, nourishing, cherishing her and pursuing oneness with her. (Eph 5:29-31)
23. Wives respecting their husbands (Eph 5:33)
24. Children obeying and honouring their parents (Eph 6:1)
25. Fathers not provoking their children but bringing them up in discipline and instruction of the Lord. (Eph 6:4)
26. Servants obeying their masters as they would Christ
27. Being strong in the Lord and taking up the armour of God in spiritual conflict. (Eph 6:10-13)

Unbeliever, walk in bad works: sin, like the world, under Satan's rule and under Gods wrath.

But God recreated you to walk in good works, the path of faith and obedience doing the activities (good works) God had prepared for you before He created this universe.

Not only is your salvation a work of God's grace that you had no part in.

The good works you do is a work of God's grace, planned without any of your involvement.

The blue print is there, you simply need to walk according to Gods blueprint in His Word.

that we should walk in them.

That we might walk= to live or behave in a specific manner, to conduct one's life in a certain way.

The grammar indicates a degree of doubt, which implies that as believer you choose either to obey God or disobey Him.

The story is often told of the rowdy, disruptive young boy in a Sunday school class who continually frustrated his teacher. One morning the teacher asked him, "Why do you act like that? Don't you know who made you?" To which the boy replied, "God did, but He ain't through with me yet." (MacArthur)

We are not perfect yet, but we are on a journey towards greater Christ likeness.

1 John 3:2 ESV

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

You choose to walk in faith and obedience or not.

This is the road of sanctification.

When you do, then you are living or behaving in a manner that lines up with the works God had planned for you before the foundation of this world.

Then your life reflects Christ likeness and glorifies God.

Application

1. It encourages me to know that God thought of me before this universe was created.
2. It encourages me to know that God has a plan for me, a specific blue print for my life.
3. It encourages me to know that that blue print is not hidden, its revealed in His word.
4. You and I can simply open our Bibles, god to passages like Eph 4-6 and the many others we find in the word and implement walking according to that blue print.
5. It encourages me to know that God has given us clarity to know how we should think, feel, speak and do as we relate with believers and unbelievers.
6. It encourages me to know that God has explained exactly how a godly marriage works
7. It encourages me that God has put in place commands for parenting and work relationships.

Everything I need for life and godliness is found in God's word.

8. God not only gave us spiritual life, He gave us His word and the HS, and He gave us the body of Christ as tools in His hand to help you and I to walk in the good works He had prepared beforehand.

9. You and I should not neglect using these tools. People now is not the time to neglect the various means of Grace God has provided.

10. don't lose heart, don't give up. If you have sinned, confess and repent of it and return to Gods word.

11. If you can, come to church, if you can't, then make sure that you listen to the services and that you connect with other believers. There really is no excuse.

12. we do have the zoom bible studies, we do have the WhatsApp fellowship calls, we do have our telephones, we do have our bibles we do have the HS.

13. For those of you who don't have Christ in your hearts, may I encourage you to come to God in humility, acknowledge your sinfulness, and choose to trust upon Christ death and resurrection for the forgiveness of your sins. don't delay.

Conclusion

2 truths explaining Gods extravagant grace towards you so that you walk like Jesus.

1. God's grace is demonstrated in your salvation. (being saved is totally a work of God based on His unmerited favour)
2. God's grace is demonstrated in your walk (in the fact that even the good works you walk in was part of Gods design even before the creation of this universe., man has no role to play in that.)