

Ephesians (2:4-10)

EPHESIANS OUTLINE

GREETING (1:1-2)

I. THE BELIEVER'S POSITION IN CHRIST (1:3-3:21)

A. The Believer's Spiritual Blessings in Christ (1:3-14)

1. Chosen by the Father (1:3-6)
2. Redeemed by the Son (1:7-12)
3. Sealed by the Holy Spirit (1:13-14)

* Intercessory Prayer for Divine Wisdom and Enlightenment (1:15-23)

B. The Church—the Body of Christ (2:1-3:21)

1. Raised to New Life in Christ and Seated with Him in Heavenly Places (2:1-10)
2. Reconciliation between Jews and Gentiles (2:11-22)
3. The Mystery of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (3:1-13)

* Intercessory Prayer for Spiritual Strength (3:14-21)

II. THE BELIEVER'S CONDUCT IN THE WORLD (4:1-6:20)

A. Walking in Unity with other Believers (4:1-16)

B. Walking in Purity (4:17-5:14)

1. Putting off the Old Man and Putting on the New Man (4:17-32)
2. Walking in Love (5:1-7)
3. Walking in the Light (5:8-14)
4. Walking in Wisdom (5:15-20)

C. Godly Submission in Relationships (5:21-6:9)

1. Husbands and Wives (5:21-33)
2. Parents and Children (6:1-4)
3. Masters and Bondservants (6:5-9)

D. The Warfare of the Christian (6:10-20)

CONCLUSION (6:21-24)

TEXT (VERSES 4-10)

⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ 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. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians (2:4-10)

COMMENTARY

Verse 4-5. God is rich in mercy. Mercy is an outward expression of pity. God's mercy comes from his love. Although, we were dead in transgressions, God corrected the situation and "made us alive together with Christ." In other words, there is an intimate union between believers and Jesus Christ. Spiritual death means separation from God; therefore, spiritual life is the restoration of fellowship with God (Luke 15:31). Salvation, which is mentioned in verse 5, is another way of describing the state of being alive in Christ (see verses 8-9).

Verse 6. The salvation of the believer is a guarantee both of eternal life and of resurrection from the dead. The state of being "seated with Christ in the heavenly realms" will be realized totally for the believer in the future. Salvation has a past, present and future dimension. We were saved from the penalty of sin (past). We are being saved from the power of sin (present). One day we shall be saved from the presence of sin (future).

Verse 7. This verse declares that although what we have now in Christ in our present state is wonderful, it is nothing in comparison to what we will have in the coming ages. Furthermore, what God has done for us in Christ is a testimony to the whole world of his love, grace and mercy.

Verses 8-9. In these verses, Paul sums up the Gospel message. Grace is a gift of God. It does not come to us through any merit of our own. The human response to God's grace is faith. Paul goes on to state that the grace that we have received is "not by works, so that no one can boast." This is true because "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Because salvation does not come from human effort, it cannot lead to spiritual pride.

Verse 10. Finally, in verse 10, Paul sums up his entire epistle. First, "we are God's workmanship" (*poiēma*). In other words, we are his new creation. Secondly, we are "created in Christ to do good works." Therefore, although our human works were not enough to save us, good works are nevertheless important. Here, Paul agrees with the central message of James 1:22 and 2:14-26. We are not saved by good deeds, but once we are saved, we must follow a course of holy and righteous activity.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How are mercy and grace related?
2. Resurrection in the Book of Ephesians is seen as a demonstration of God's power. How does the presence of the Resurrection Power of Jesus Christ in your life encourage you personally (see Ephesians 1:18-20; 3:20)?
3. What is faith?
4. According to Ephesians 2:10, we are God's masterpiece? Do you feel like a masterpiece? Why or why not?