



Sermon Notes: July 26, 2015

Grace Alone

8 of 14 from the teaching series "The Messiah's Community"
Ephesians 2:8-10 • Pastor Paul Bradford

Ephesians 2:8-10

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. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Salvation is by grace alone apart from works.

- This belief is contrary to all world religions, which teach:
 - We are born neutral or good
 - If we don't try hard enough:
sinful works > evil person > rejected by God > damnation
 - If we do try hard enough:
good works > good person > accepted by God > salvation
- Christianity teaches:
 - Mankind was created good, Adam fell, all are born fallen and alienated from God
 - Apart from God's saving grace:
self effort > sinful works > damnation
 - Human effort doesn't please God (*Romans 3:10, Romans 3:23, Isaiah 53:6, Romans 8:8, Ephesians 2:1-3*)
 - By grace alone through the gift of faith:
we are forgiven, reconciled, saved, born again, and united with Christ as a new creation > God continually works in us by grace > good works with no boasting
 - The only true goodness is the goodness of The Light shining in and through us (*Romans 5:8, Ephesians 5:8,10*)

Faith is a gift.

- The Lost Son (*Luke 15*) is a perfect illustration of saving faith. We recognize we're a mess, stop trusting in our own righteousness, and instead trust in the goodness of God. Even our ability to turn to God and trust is a gift.

We have no grounds to be either boastful or judgmental.

- Both salvation and good works are gifts, we cannot take credit for either; if we are good, it's because God's light is shining through us; if we are evil, it's because we, in rebellion, choose to move away from the light.
- We have no grounds to be judgmental; we are not morally superior, we are morally bankrupt apart from Christ.

Our Response

In humility, look to God's grace alone for salvation and for true righteousness – the way in is the way on.

- Only by God's grace are you saved, only by God's grace do you stay saved, only by God's grace can we live righteously.
- We don't come in by faith and then stay in by works; it's grace and faith from beginning to end.