

Ephesians

Transformed by Grace, Empowered by Peace

Study 7

The Gospel of Grace Through Faith

Ephesians 2:4-10

Ephesians 2:4-10 (NIV)

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 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. 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.

1) Fill in the blanks. Based on the video lecture, this passage is divided into three segments, fill in the verses that match it.

| Segment | Verses that match the segment |
|--|-------------------------------|
| What God did | |
| Why God did it | |
| How did we receive it and what do we do with | |

A) What God did

Ephesians 2:4-6 (NIV)

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

2) a) Fill in the blanks. According to the video lecture slide, fill in the four traits of “total depravity”.

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Total depravity | |
| | Emotions, will, intellect |
| | Affects each in different ways |
| | |
| | |

b) Fill in the blanks. According to the video lecture slide, fill in the three views about how “dead” in transgression (v.5) we are.

| | | | |
|-------------------|---|--|---|
| |  |  |  |
| View | Pelagianism | Semi-Pelagianism | Augustinianism |
| Description | | | |
| Level of dead | | | |
| Correlating views | Arminianism | Arminianism | Calvinism |
| Sea metaphor |  |  |  |

B) Why God did it

Ephesians 2:7 (NIV)

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.

3) a) Comprehension question. According to the video lecture slide, when does “in the coming ages” refer to?

b) Comprehension question. According to the video lecture slide, who is God “showing” the richness of his grace?

c) Comprehension question. Why is God showing his grace? (Refer to Ephesians 1:4-6)

Ephesians 1:4-6 (NIV)

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

C) How did we receive it and what do we do with

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV)

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.

4) a) Discussion question. Can Christians boast? (Refer to Jeremiah 9:23-24 and 2 Corinthians 12:9)

Jeremiah 9:23-24(NIV)

This is what the Lord says:

“Let not the wise boast of their wisdom
or the strong boast of their strength
or the rich boast of their riches,

but let the one who boasts boast about this:

that they have the understanding to know me,
that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness,

justice and righteousness on earth,
for in these I delight,”
declares the Lord.

2 Corinthians 12:9(NIV)

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”
Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may
rest on me.

b) Discussion question. Which came first: grace or faith? (Refer to Acts 16:14)

Acts 16:14 (NIV)

One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple
cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message.

**c) Discussion question. “Unbelief is not the absence of faith, it is the presence of some other
kind of faith”. What does that statement mean?**

**d) Discussion question. What are the kinds of “good works” that God has set for us to do?
(Good = in terms of moral and beneficial)**

Takeaway

In Ephesians 2:4-10, apostle Paul reminds us that we are saved from death by God’s grace
through faith. He also reminds us that we are saved so that we can do His good works.

Case Study

Case 1 – The Gospel of Grace Through Faith

Kok Wai attended a Billy Graham Rally years ago and was a young man who was a part of the
Jehovah's Witness movement at the time. He learnt about the salvation of God offered freely
on the cross through Jesus Christ. He thought about it really hard. The speaker said all you
have to do is believe and he did and renounced his JW views and took Jesus as his Lord and
Saviour. He joyfully shared his testimony with his JW friends and told them how he heard the
message and it made sense he believed and because of his belief, he was now saved.

They did not buy his story and he began to look down on them because they believed in a lie. He had given them their chance to believe but they had rejected him so he was not going to bother with them any more. However, the death of his daughter due to a sudden illness really took a toll on his life and his faith. He nursed a hidden grudge against God and questioned why God would take his only child away whilst others who were less serious in their faith were happily with their families.

His JW friends were doing well and look at how God had treated him. He was constantly angry. Kok Wai was a deacon in the church and served faithfully for years. He kept up appearances and never did share his doubts. He felt increasingly distant from God and quit his service as a deacon. He no longer felt confident to share the gospel as he felt his faith was shaky. He continued to read his bible but felt dry inside. He felt God no longer loved him and the more he retreated from the fellowship the more alone he felt and the more he felt that his faith was not strong enough when his colleague asked him if he could come to his house to pray for him as he had been experiencing some marital problems, Kok Wai declined. Now whenever he got on an aeroplane he would be very nervous because he did not know if he was going to be saved if it crashed.

1) a) Discussion question. How would you counsel Kok Wai?

b) Discussion question. Is the intellectual understanding that we are saved by grace through faith enough to assure Kok Wai?

Case 1.1 – Good Works

To relieve this feeling of dread, Kok Wai started attending Third Baptist Church and immediately went to serve non-stop in the Soup Kitchen Ministry, the Sunday School, and Vacation Bible School. He often gets the job done but often in the process gets frustrated and shouts at the kids and others for being disorderly and noisy in “God’s house.”

c) Discussion question. Is what Kok Wai doing “good works”?

d) Reflection question. If Jesus or apostle Paul was on earth today, what would the good works they meant look like?