

Not Because Of What You Do, But Because Of Who You Are.

This teaching is called....Not Because Of What You Do, But Because Of Who You Are.

It's a strange title, a strange way to start.

Not because of **what** you do, but because of **who** you are.

Someone's first thought might be, "**What** do we do?"

Their second thought might be, "**Who** are we?"

These two thoughts are so very closely related yet are light years apart.

We could almost finish this episode by reading just two scripture passages.

The first is Ephesians 2:8-9

"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" (NIV).

"...**this** is not from yourselves, **it** is the gift of God".

What is **this** and....what is **it**?

They are both referring to the same thing - whatever **this** is and **it** is.

Some think **this** is referring to faith. But faith is not of ourselves. Faith **is** the gift of God.

That's true.

But what if **it** is referring to grace? Grace is not of ourselves either. Grace **is** the gift of God.

"It is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves".

Because faith and grace are not from ourselves, faith and grace are gifts.

It was the **faith** of Jesus Christ and it is the **grace** of Jesus Christ,

So again, faith and grace are gifts **OF** God.

If faith, and if grace, are **the** gift referred to in this verse, then the words following **SHOULD** say,

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and **THESE** are not from yourselves”. But it doesn’t.

It says “and **THIS** is not from yourselves”.

The difference here is “this is” is singular and “these are” is plural.

So whatever the “gift of” is, it has a singular focus.

And therefore it’s not faith **and** grace because faith and grace are plural.

Let’s understand, faith and grace **are** God gifts. But faith and grace are **not** of us.

This takes care of the **Do What?** question. There is no “**Do**” for you for you to do, there is no “**DO**” for me to do, and there is no “**DO**” for us to do in order for us to get saved.

There is no “**DO**” for us to get faith, to get grace, to get God’s blessings, to get healing, to get anything from God.

There’s nothing for us to “**DO**” for us to get. It’s not because of what we do.

The next verse is 2 Corinthians 5:17

“Therefore, if **anyone** is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (NIV)

This verse takes care of the **Who** we are because in Christ **WE** are the new creation. That’s **WHO** we are.

I said at the beginning we could almost finish this teaching by reading just two scripture passages.

That's because **now** we know it's not **what** we do; it's **who** we are.

But before you hit that Stop button, let's consider one question first:

How can these two thoughts, that come from these two scriptures, be so related, and yet be light years apart?

Some of you might be thinking, "Oh, I **should** have hit that stop button. We'd be done already".

So then what does "not because of **WHAT** you do" mean?

And what does "but because of **WHO** you are" mean?

When the Lord gave this to me, my first thought was, "Well that's easy".

But then I realized it might **not** be so easy for me to understand. And it might **not** be so easy for some of you to understand.

Let's look at Eph. 2:8-9 again. "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".

Let me ask you: What do **you** think is the "gift of God"?

Is it grace or is it faith?

Some might have answered that question before quite quickly. But now you're realizing, well, it may not be either.

There are study bibles and commentaries that will tell you which one it really is.

But other ones will disagree with them.

So some of them must be correct and some of them must not be correct.

Jamieson, Faussett, & Brown, a commentary I read quite often, on Ephesians 2:8 says the gift of God is “the act of believing, or ‘faith’.”

“The act of believing or faith”. They don’t think it’s grace.

But the Cambridge Bible For Schools and Colleges **does** think it’s grace.

Why did JFB choose faith over grace?

And why does Cambridge chose grace over faith?

Let’s read Eph. 2:8-9 again.

“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”.

Let me read that to you again but this time from the Expanded Translation by Dr. Kenneth Wuest. If you’re not familiar with the Expanded Translation, let me say this: it’s not a paraphrase and it’s not an amplified version, but it is a very accurate translation.

This Moody Bible Institute professor of Greek uses as many English words as necessary to bring out the full meaning of each Greek word or phrase.

This really does help us to understand what a particular scripture is saying.

So in the Expanded Translation,

“For by the grace have you been saved...through faith, with the result that your salvation...is not from you as a source; of God it is the gift”.

Let me read that again:

“For by the grace have you been saved...through faith, with the result that your salvation...is not from you as a source; of God it is the gift”.

What does the Expanded Translation say the gift of God is?

Salvation. The gift of God is salvation.

By the way, when I read this verse in the Expanded Translation I left out two short phrases. I did that on purpose because we will be covering these in depth in the next podcast.

Okay, back to salvation.

I **have** read other commentaries that agree **salvation** is the gift of God.

When we study the major emphasis in the Greek we find salvation **is** the main subject of this verse.

In many English language translations they sometimes miss the intended focus or meaning of the original Greek.

That's why it's good to check what another version says.

We can also see what a Greek word means by looking it up in the Strong's Concordance or in Vine's Expository Dictionary. Both are a great help.

Okay, salvation **is** the gift of God.

And grace and faith are also gifts of God. But these are not what's intended as the focus in Eph. 2:8-9

The question could be asked: Are there any other scriptures showing salvation is the gift?

Because salvation **is** the focus in Eph. 2:8-9 and also in 2 Cor. 5:17.

Let's look at Acts 2:36-41 (NIV):

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the **GIFT** of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.’ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’ Those who accepted his

message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.”

This happened on the Day of Pentecost.

You may notice when you read Acts 2:36-41 it doesn't say the 3,000 were baptized in the Spirit and spoke in tongues.

But they did receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore the gift **they** received was not the same the gift the **120** just received.

The gift the disciples received was baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

The gift the people received was salvation.

But we will see there are more verses emphasizing the promise being **salvation**:

2 Timothy 1:1 “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the **promise of life** which is in Christ Jesus”.

“Promise of life” means eternal life, salvation.

Hebrews 9:14-15 “How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the **promised eternal inheritance**—now that He has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.”

The promised eternal inheritance is salvation.

2 Peter 3:9, 13 “The Lord is not slow in keeping His **promise**, as some understand slowness. Instead He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance...But

in keeping with His **promise** we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.”

Eternal life in the new heaven and the new earth is the **promised** gift of salvation.

1 John 2:25 “And this is the **promise** that He hath **promised** us, even **eternal life**.”

Eternal life is the promise, and eternal life is salvation.

So we just read a number of scriptures making it very clear the promise of God is the gift. And the gift of God **is** salvation.

The promise of God is the **gift** of God.

Let’s go back to Eph. 2:8-9 one more time.

This time we’ll read it in a summary fashion of what we just discovered:

“For it is by the grace of God you have been saved, through the faith of Jesus Christ—and this **salvation** is not from yourselves, this **salvation** is the gift of God—not by our works or by anything we did, so that none of us can boast”.

And I don’t think you’ll find this verse written quite this way in any bible.

But **now** we understand what we just learned we can easily see this is what the verse is saying.

Faith is not of ourselves - so we can’t boast.

Grace is not of ourselves - so we can’t boast.

Salvation is not of ourselves - so we can’t boast.

Faith, grace, and salvation are not because of **what** we do.

Faith, grace, and salvation are **ours** because of what **Jesus** has done.

Faith, grace, and salvation are ours because of **who** Jesus has made us to be.

If any of this was because of **our** doing, because of **what** we have done, because of **who** we have made ourselves to be, our salvation would be worthless.

If any of this **was** our doing then it would mean **we** have faith, grace, and salvation because of **what** we have done. Because of **OUR** righteousness.

But Is. 64.6 clearly teaches us:

“All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags...” (New International Version).

In the New English Translation, however, which is a very studious bible, it says, “We are all like one who is unclean, all our so-called righteous acts are like a menstrual rag in your sight...”

“Filthy rags” does not carry the same impact as “a menstrual rag” does.

But that is exactly what the Hebrew words mean.

And that is exactly **how** God sees our righteous acts. Like a menstrual rag.

To a Jewish male it couldn't get any worse than that.

Now this is exactly how God sees **our** righteous acts trying to make **ourselves** righteous.

It is by God's grace, that comes through God's faith, that results in God's salvation being offered to you and I.

And there is nothing **we** can do to obtain salvation.

So, how do we obtain salvation?

Acts. 16:31 “They replied, ‘**Believe** in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household’”.

Romans 10:9-10 “If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and **believe** in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you **believe** and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you **profess** your faith and are saved”.

Both verses clearly say you must **believe** in the Lord Jesus **with** your heart. Not with your mind. Not with your head. But with your heart.

And when you believe with your heart you are justified.

The English word, ‘justified’, comes from the Greek word *disk-ah-yo-o*.

It means: “to render righteous or such as he ought to be; to show or to exhibit one to be righteous such as he is and as he wishes himself to be considered; to declare, pronounce one to be just, righteous, or such as he ought to be”.

Notice it says, “**such** as he ought to be” and it says, “**such** as he is”.

There is a **lot** in those two statements.

But simply, we are supposed to be righteous.

We were not because the sin of Adam was counted against us.

We are supposed to be righteous.

We were not because our own sin was counted against us

What makes the change? Is it anything we’ve done?

No! It is what **Jesus** has done.

And because of what Jesus **has** done, when we **believe** in the Lord Jesus we will become just as we **ought** to be.

And what ought we to be?

Holy, without blemish, without spot, without wrinkle.

Basically perfect. But we will never become that on our own.

That is why we need Jesus.

Ephesians 5:25-27 “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. (NIV).

We are the Church. We are holy.

We are a radiant Church. We have been cleansed.

We do not have stain or wrinkle or any other blemish.

We are holy and blameless.

What else? We **are** as we **ought** to be.

It’s not because of **WHAT** we do, but because of **WHO** we are.

Let me say that again.

It’s not because of **WHAT** we do, but because of **WHO** we are.

In our next teaching we will return to Eph. 2:8-9.

There is **another** great truth, **another** great revelation, the Lord wants to share with us.

And it’s been there, right in front of our eyes, the whole time.

But in the English language we’ve tend to miss it.

But in the Greek language it jumps right out at us.

It’s very simple to see. But it may not be so easy to accept.

Why not? Because of what we have been taught over the years.

But, **if** the Lord put it there, **then** the Lord wants us to see it.

Okay, look forward to sharing the grace and truth with you we'll discover *In Past Time*.

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God bless you

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