

Title: One in One
Scripture: Ephesians 2: 8-22
Date: October 11, 2009
Place: SGBC, NJ

Ephesians 2: 8: For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God:* 9: Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

By grace are ye saved.

The grace of God saves with no respect to our persons or our thoughts or actions. That is, with no respect to any good or evil. The glory of grace is: It is God who performs all the work necessary to honor his holy name while accomplishing the work of salvation for his totally helpless objects of mercy.

You Are Saved Through Faith Which is the Gift of God

Faith is the gift God gives so that sinners believe God. Faith believes that God has and shall do everything necessary to bring us into his glorious presence. Faith does not look to man but to God. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Not of works, lest any man should boast

If a sinner was permitted by God to perform one work—whether a work to give ourselves spiritual understanding, a work to bring ourselves to believe on Christ, a work to clear ourselves from the justice of God, a work by which we make ourselves holy, a work by which we free ourselves from the bondage of our own corrupt minds then you and I would brag on ourselves instead of on God.

Isaiah 43:7: *Even* every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

Isaiah 48:11: For mine own sake, *even* for mine own sake, will I do *it*: for how should *my name* be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.

Believers are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus

He ordained before that some sinners would be saved out of this world to walk by faith not by sight, to walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, to walk in wisdom redeeming the time, to walk in the Light, to walk in Truth, to walk after the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so God brings each of his chosen children to do so.

Next, the Lord calls on us to remember how he has done this for us

Ephesians 2: 11: Wherefore remember,

It is good to remember times past. You were Gentiles in the flesh—dead in trespasses and in sins, hating God, under the power of the prince of the air, carnal, fulfilling the lusts of the flesh like brute beasts.

In time past your confidence was in your flesh.

Ephesians 2: 11: Wherefore remember that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

Gentiles and Jews were separated by God's law. The Jews held the Gentiles in contempt, a reproach. The Jews called them vile-dogs because the Gentiles were uncircumcised in the flesh and the Jews were circumcised in the flesh. But note this phrase, "in the flesh". Before God saves a sinner, whether Jew or Gentile we are in the

flesh. The Jews exalted themselves over the Gentiles merely because they observed the circumcision made by hands.

Do you remember when we determined a truth from a lie by religious practice?

Before God created us anew in Christ, many of us were religious. Whether we were like the Gentiles who did not have the oracles of God or like the Jews who did, fleshly religious practice was what we were proud of. We exalted ourselves above others by looking on the outward appearance. We boasted of our form of religion.

We may have spoken of Christ Jesus, but in our vain imaginations we thought what really brought us near to God was what we had done in our flesh: For some of us it was: a decision, we walked an aisle, repeated a prayer, made our promises to God, walked the Roman Road, learned a system of doctrine and so on.

Our wall of separation was: our denomination is better than their denomination, our choice of songs is better than their choice of songs, our church government is better than their form of church government, our creed is better than their creed, our way of making proselytes is better than their way, our way of making disciples is better than their way, our pastors are better than their pastors. It was all a love for self: self-righteousness, self-justification, and self-sanctification. We called it liberty but it was bondage. We would have never admitted it at the time but it was the way of Cain. We had no peace. We hated God and we hated all who did not practice what we practiced.

The Jews who put their confidence in the obedience to God's ordinances were as much without God as the Gentiles, who were not even a part of the Jewish economy. So it was with us, we were in the same broad way of death with those we hated.

At that time, ye were without Christ.

We were aliens from the commonwealth of God's true Israel. Christ is the wealth—the Pearl of great price—all God's true Israel have Christ in common. At that time, we were without the Spirit of Christ to govern us in the heart. We were not led of the Spirit of grace. We were without Christ, the believer's rule of Life.

We were strangers from the covenants of promise

We had no spiritual understanding that God's covenant with Adam in the garden was a covenant of works—that Adam, in uprightness, could not keep himself. That Adam really died and we died in him.

We had no spiritual understanding of the covenant at Mt. Sinai—we did not know that the law was given to shut our mouths. We thought "this do and live" meant that we could obey and could obtain eternal life thereby. We had no understanding that the law of God is spiritual and we are carnal, sold under sin.

We had no spiritual understanding that God's covenant promise to Abraham was an everlasting covenant performed by the triune God in Christ Jesus.

Genesis 22: 18: In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

We had no spiritual understanding that the whole word of God:

Romans 1: 2: (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) [is] 3: Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,...

Whether we were using the things of God as the Jews were or whether we were walking in our vain imagination as the Gentiles, we were without Christ. We had no hope and we were without God in the world and we did not even know it.

BUT NOW

Ephesians 2: 13: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14: For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; 15: Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; 16: And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

We were afar off; BUT NOW we are made nigh by the blood of Christ; we had no peace with God, no peace with men, no peace in our hearts—BUT NOW Christ Jesus is our Peace; we were separated by that middle wall of partition, a wall of hatred for God and for men, a wall of self-righteous religious ceremony, BUT NOW, Christ hath broken down the middle wall of partition. He abolished in his flesh the enmity by taking away those things we used to make us to differ.

Colossians 2: 14: Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

Now, in Christ Jesus ye who were sometimes afar off are made nigh BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. We were justified by God in Christ, sanctified by Christ's one offering, reconciled to God in Christ Jesus, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Whether Jew or Gentile, of all those for whom Christ died:

Ephesians 1: 4: But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5: Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6: And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: 7: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

BUT EVEN THOUGH CHRIST HAD REDEEMED US AND GONE TO THE FATHER, WE DID NOT KNOW IT. WE WERE USING OUR WISDOM AND OUR STRENGTH

We counted his gospel, foolishness. We regarded those who preached it as weak, ignorant men. To us, true wisdom was not to speak of divine election based absolutely on God's sovereignty. We thought it wisdom to use words that made his electing grace to be based on the sinner's choice. We would not hear of Christ Jesus the Son of God alone, of atonement fully accomplished for each one he represented. It seemed wise to us to make God out to be a salesman who offers his Son and his salvation to all men without exception. We crafted our words, instead of proclaiming every man a maggot, in need of mercy. We put the emphasis on the sinner and our works. We made God out to be a begger.

We thought it "strength" to go along with the majority. We were impressed with wise oratory, outward dress, wise men of religion. But we knew men only after the flesh. We thought by our strength we could make ourselves and others holy men and women. All the while, like the Ephesians, we worshipped the god of our imagination. But then one day,...

Ephesians 2: 17: [Jesus Christ, the Son of God] came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

When did Christ come and preach to the Ephesians? He did so, when he sent his pastor, the apostle Paul, to feed them with knowledge and understanding. When did Christ come and preach peace to us? When he sent his pastor declaring Christ Jesus the all-victorious King Priest.

Ephesians 2: 1: And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

He used no wisdom of words but he used that very gospel we called foolishness. He used an earthen vessel that the power might be of God and not of us. Christ Jesus made us fools to ourselves. He made us to see that all we are is sin. In everything, we came short of the glory of God.

He made that gospel we once called wise to be foolishness to us and through his gospel Christ became the Power and Wisdom of God. He turned us from our earthly ark, from our earthly Jerusalem, from our earthly thrones, from our sinful vain imaginations when he gave us faith in Christ Jesus. He made us to realize that salvation is not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God.

He made of Jews and Gentiles, of us and some who we opposed while in our vain religionist, to be one, brethren in Christ, so making peace.

Ephesians 2: 18: For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Galatians 3: 28: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29: And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Ephesians 2: 19: Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20: And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; 21: In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Seeing where we were, seeing what he has done for us, we are constrained by his grace and love in all that we do.

Application: Ephesians 4: 1-6; 22-25, 32.