

181226-4 Doctrine Series, Saved by Grace through Faith – Craig Thurman

The doctrine of salvation by the grace of God is found under Article 6 in our confession of faith, p.2)

Article #6, The Election of Grace* (p.2)

All the elect, being loved of God with an everlasting love, are redeemed, quickened and saved, not of themselves, nor their own works lest any man should boast, but only and wholly by God of His own free grace and mercy through Jesus Christ, who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and all in all, that he that rejoices might rejoice in the Lord. The Holy Spirit quickens the elect sinner, who is dead in trespasses and sins, giving him repentance and faith; the quickened sinner hears the gospel of Christ, repents of his sin and exercises faith in Christ as his savior, turns from his sin and follows Christ.

Jer.31:3; Eph.1:3, 7, 2:8, 9; 1Th.5:9, Ac.13:48; 2Co.5:21; Jer.9:23, 24; 1Co.1:30, 31; Jer.23:6; Jn.6:63; Eph.2:1, 5, 8, 9, 13; Col.2:13; 1Th.1:9, 10; 2Ti.2:24, 25.

**This is an added article not in the 1644 COF.*

Articles 24, 25, and 26 contain in them the truth of free grace as well.

Article #24, The Elect's Salvation (p.8)

Jesus Christ by His death did purchase salvation for the elect that God gave unto Him before the foundation of the world. The free gift of eternal life is given to them and none else.

Formerly Article 21 of the 1644/6 London Confession of Faith

Article #25, Faith (pp.8, 9 [in part])

Faith is the gift of God, wrought in the hearts of the elect by the Spirit of God.

Formerly Article 22 of the 1644/6 London Confession of Faith

Article # 26. The Preservation of the Saints (p.9 [in part])

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The Father begets and nourishes in them faith, repentance, love, joy, hope, and all the graces of the Spirit unto immortality. ...

...

The same power that converts to faith in Christ, carries the soul through all duties, temptations, conflicts, and sufferings. Whatsoever a believer is, he is by grace, and is carried on in all obedience and temptations by that same grace.

Formerly Articles 23, 26 of the 1644/6 London Confession of Faith

The Bible states that those which are saved are saved because of God's grace.

Eph 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.

The Ephesian text states in clearest terms that being saved is by grace through faith. First, I want to define terms.

By saying *being saved* I mean to receive eternal life.

Mt.19.16 ¶ And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

...

25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

By saying *grace*, I mean that God freely applies everlasting life to whomever He pleases.

Ho 14:4 I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.

freely, Hebrew, a fem. noun, נְדָבָה, n^e-da-bah; KJV, *willingly, freely, plentifully, voluntarily*.

Ro 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ... (Grace is the grounds for granting a sinner justification before God.)

freely, δωρεάν, adv. of δίδωμι, to give, bestow, grant.

Ac 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

hath granted, ἔδωκεν, 3ps. aor. ind. act. of δίδωμι, to give, grant, bestow.

By saying *through faith* I mean the time when we begin to understand that God has done a work in our lives.

Heb 11:3 Through faith we understand ...

2Ti 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

*1Pe 1:5 Who (You that have been *born again*) are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

When considering faith remember that *faith* is a fruit of the Spirit. No man has such faith originally. (Gal.5.22) Faith, faith in Christ is not of human origin. Faith is given (Phl.1.29), just as the *hearing* ear is given (Pv.20.12; Gal.3.2, 5; Re.2.7) to the sinner at the impartation of everlasting life.

There are three remarks which give definition to the statement, *For by grace are ye saved through faith.*

1. And that not of yourselves

2. It is the gift of God.
3. Not of works; lest any man should boast. (I've combine these two.)

First, *being saved by grace through faith ... is not of ourselves*. Human instrumentality is excluded. Not only can no man save himself, but there is nothing for him to contribute so that he might be saved.

1. Because he is without strength:

Ro 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

To be without strength, ἀσθενής, a noun, is tss. *sick, weak, impotent, feeble*. Context, we were impotent to justify ourselves before God. (Ro.5.1, *Therefore being justified by faith ...*). It is not what we do, but what God did that saves us.

Like the man being laid beside the pool of Bethesda day after day after day, for 38 years. Among all of the others that came there, impotent, powerless to do anything to effect any change in their condition. But one day Jesus Christ came in among them all and came only to this man. He alone received the power of God to take up his bed and walk. Why? Because God alone decided that day to save him from his sick bed. The man was weak, without strength, powerless. (cf. Jn.5.1-9)

2. Because he is dead:

Eph 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins ...

All men died in Adam's transgression:

1Co 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

All men are born dead in sins before God. A dead man can do nothing. He cannot hear. He cannot speak. He cannot do. He is dead.

Second, to define what it means to be saved by grace through faith not of ourselves the Scripture reads, *it is a gift of God*. So, being saved by grace through faith is a *gift of God*. A gift is something that is received.

Joh 3:27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

Receiving eternal life is a gift of God.

Ro 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A gift is a bestowment of God.

1Jo 3:1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed (δέδωκεν, dedōken, 3ps. perf. ind. act. of δίδωμι, didōmi, to give; John refers the brethren, as a matter of fact, to consider the completed act of God's gift ...) upon us (To what end? ...), that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

And third, being *saved by grace through faith*, which is the gift of God is further clarified: since it is a gift it is *not of works lest any should boast*. There is nothing that man can do to be saved. If man could do something to save himself then he would have something to boast of before God and men. How can a man boast of receiving a gift if he did nothing to warrant receiving it? Any man that boasts doesn't understand what it means to be a recipient of eternal life. Paul, even after being saved for some time, continued to glory in the grace of God, and never had anything to boast of in himself for anything *before* Christ, and *after* Christ.

Ga 6:14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

David the Psalmist, through the same Spirit of God, confessed the same:

Ps.34.1 ¶ « A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed. » I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

2 My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

2Ti 1:9 Who (God) hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began ...

Man, descended from Adam is bankrupt.

Ps.39.5 Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.

He has no righteousness so that he might merit being saved:

Ro.3.10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one ...

The best of the righteousness of man before God is rejected:

Isa 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

7 And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

Ec 7:20 For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

He has no faith:

Ro 3:11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. (He.11.3, through faith we understand ...)

And he is neither good, nor can he do good:

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Mr 10:18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

Ro 3:12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

So, we are saved.

saved, σωμένοι, nom. pl. masc. part. perf. pass. of σώζω; Eph.2.8; we are recipient of the work of being saved.

The entire work of salvation, not only in the beginning of our experience, but unto the very completion of it is of God. The child of God should lay all praise to God for everything which proceeds from the time of the reception of the grace of life. What grace? The graces of love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, meekness, forgiveness, longsuffering, forbearance, administrations, mercy, faith, a desire to holiness, the desire to praise and offer thanksgiving to God, an understanding of God's word, a love for Christ and the brethren, a love for His church and for the whole family of God, etc. All things come to the children of God from a loving Heavenly Father through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Then this whole work of God to save is attributed to Him.

Eph 2:10 For we are his (v.8, God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

It should go without saying that there is not a man that warrants having eternal life.

*Jn.1.12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

The impartation of eternal life is in the hands of a sovereign God. It is a grant by God to whomever He pleases.

Mt 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Joh 17:2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

God is the principal character in the salvation of the souls of men. Who can take what is His without His giving it to them first? The covenant says *I will put* and *I will write ...*

He.8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

Those things, *putting* and *writing*, mean that I didn't possess a mind after God or have the holy affections of God until he first *gave* them to me. Only then do we begin to *know Him*.

He.8.11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

And the very basis of that change which comes upon every sinner to whom the Lord grants everlasting life is the putting away of the offense of sins by Jesus Christ's substitutionary death.

He.8.12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Being saved is what God does to us and through us. It is by grace and through faith. It is a grant from the Sovereign God. We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

workmanship, Eph.2.10, *ποίημα*, a noun; we are of His *making*, *ποιέω*.

created, *κτίσθέντες*, nom. pl. masc. part. aor. pass. of *κτίζω*, *to create* (13), *to make* (1)

We couldn't make ourselves attractive to the Lord in any way so that He might save us. There wasn't a little goodness in us that caught God's attention. There wasn't the slightest inkling of faith so that He might come along and enhance it. The best of my righteousnesses were filthy in His sight. But instantly we were changed BECAUSE GOD'S PURPOSE TO BESTOW GRACE SPRANG FROM THE PLEASURE OF HIS OWN WILL. It is from the moment of the bestowal of grace that we began to hear for the first time the good news of Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection for us. From this moment we began forsaking our former manner of life and following after Christ. Once I was lost, but now am found. (Lk.15.32) Blind, but now I see. (Jn.9.25) Sick, but am made whole. (Jn.5.6) Dead, but now I live. (Jn.11.44) It is the power of God alone that saves a sinner.

1Co.1.23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24 But unto them which are called (that is, the effectual call), both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

We confess that we are saved by the grace of God, through faith in Christ alone.