

Theme: The contrast between what we deserve apart from Christ's saving work and what we receive through His mercy and grace is demonstrated dramatically in the life of the Apostle. The only appropriate response to His saving work is thanksgiving and praise.

Background and Introduction: What happens to "salvation" when "sin" is no longer a factor?

## I. Grace for a Sinner

### A. Paul – law breaker

#### 1. The Pharisee (legalist)

##### a. Two categories of people

- Sinners
- Pharisees

##### b. Pharisees are sinners

- Pharisees
- Really only one category – Sinners
- Paul is numbered with the unholy, profane, and lawless (v. 9)

#### 2. A law breaker

##### a. Blasphemer - showing contempt for the Lord Jesus

##### b. Persecutor!

- Of Christ! (Acts 9:4)
- Of the church (Acts 9:1; 22:4)

##### c. Insolent/violent opponent

### B. God's sovereign mercy (Romans 5:8)

#### 1. Mercy – not what he deserved

#### 2. Mercy because of his ignorance and unbelief (13b)

- Ignorant, but highly educated
- Thinking he was serving God (John 16:2)
- Still a candidate for mercy (Luke 23:34; Hebrews 10:26)

#### 3. Mercy for a great sinner

### C. Christ's "super-abounding" grace (14)

#### 1. Overflowing grace

- Paul's "super" vocabulary (Romans 5:20; 2 Thessalonians 1:3)
- Receiving what we don't/can't earn or deserve
- God's unmerited favor!

#### 2. With faith and love that are in Christ Jesus

- a. Faith – a gift!
- b. Love – both of and for Christ

### D. Gifts for life

#### 1. His gratitude (12)

#### 2. The blessings received

- a. Strength
- b. Judged "faithful" (trustworthy/reliable)
- c. Appointed to Christ's service

## II. Grace for Sinners

### A. Christ saves sinners (2 Corinthians 5:21)

#### 1. Encouraging words for some

#### 2. Discouraging for others

#### 3. It is absolutely trustworthy (v.15)

#### 4. Worthy of full acceptance

- B. He saves *only* sinners
- C. Paul – Exhibit "A"
  - 1. Foremost/Chief of sinners!
    - a. He knew what sinners were
      - He was foremost among them
      - This is not hyperbole
      - Thought he was serving God
    - b. Not just because of acts in the past
      - He writes in the present tense
      - Romans 7 – the fight continues!
  - 2. Giving hope to sinners
    - a. Of his day
      - Those in the church feared him
      - Reveals his patience with sinners through Paul
    - b. And in ours!
      - An example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life!

### III. Praise to the God of Grace

- A. It is all of Christ
  - For sinners in every age
- B. Worthy of praise
  - 1. King of the ages
    - Ruling and over-ruling the plans of mankind in every age
    - The everlasting King (Psalm 145:13)
  - 2. Immortal/imperishable/incorruptible
    - What we, and everything around us, is not
  - 3. God is invisible –
    - Who has revealed Himself in Christ Jesus (Colossians 1:15)
  - 4. The only God (Isaiah 45:5)
  - 5. With honor and glory above all others
  - 6. Forever and ever
- C. Who saves sinners – like you and me