

GOD'S MOTIVE IN GRACE

Ephesians 2:10

Introduction: It is mind boggling to think about God and the creation for the creation was a powerful and spectacular thing. YET, God has done something even greater than creating the world and the universe. Man's salvation taxed God's power and resources to the extreme limit of His might. Why does God love us so? Why does God pour out His grace upon us?

I. GOD WANTS US TO DO GOOD WORKS (2:10)

1. *"...are His workmanship..."*

- Whatever happens at salvation is wholly God's work.
- God alone can save and God alone can keep.
- All that will have been done when all is said about the salvation of man, will be God's doings.

2. *"...created in Christ Jesus..."*

- Salvation is rebirth, a new creature creation.
- A second time God's creative hand has touched man, thus "re-generation," a new birth.
- As a branch is to a vine (tree) and as an eye is part of the human body, so the believer is in Jesus Christ.

3. *"...unto good works..."*

- Not by good works does one become in Jesus Christ.
- Works acceptable to God are only those who are in Christ Jesus. (*Titus 2:14; 3:8*)
- Growing out of (and after) God's work of salvation is the believer's faithful work for God.

4. *"...which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them..."*

- The good works are particular and definite.
- The good works are revealed and attained ONLY as the life is totally yielded to God's will.

II. THE PLACE AND VALUE OF GOOD HUMAN WORKS

1. Works as required under the Law.

- Human works have always been considered as being "meritorious."
- Human works brought divine blessings under the Old Testament law.
- This is directly opposite God's New Covenant which is GRACE.
- "Under Grace" is because of divine blessings that human works are now done.

2. Works as the proper test of saving faith. (*James 2:14-26*)

- True salvation is manifested outwardly by good works.
- However a Christian may, from time to time, be living out of God's will and his public life be less than acceptable before God.

3. Works as indicative of the attitude of the heart toward the grace of God.
 - Conscious, deliberate good works motivated by having a right relationship to God are considered as works of obedience.
 - Works motivated by any other reason apart from gratitude and obedience are unacceptable.

(Romans 2:1-16)

4. God saves people that they may be led by the Holy Spirit into good works.

III. SAVED BECAUSE OF THE BENEFITS WHICH ACCRUE TO THEM *(John 3:16)*

1. "That mankind should not perish."
2. "That mankind should have everlasting life."
 - Salvation is individual by nature.
 - Benefits of salvation are individually dispensed.

IV. SAVED FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF DIVINE GRACE *(Ephesians 2:7)*

1. By God's saving work ***"men are made alive who were once dead in trespasses and sins and are raised and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, who were without Christ, having no hope and without God in the world..."***
2. The supreme motive in man's salvation is nothing less than to demonstrate before all creation (powers in heaven, etc.) principalities, celestial beings and terrestrial beings, the exceeding riches of His Grace.
3. All intelligences will know the depth of sin and the hopeless estate of the lost. They will in turn see men redeemed and saved by the works of God through Jesus Christ.
4. The supreme purpose of God is to save mankind by GRACE alone.
 - Everything done in heaven and the whole universe by God contributes totally to this one end, man's salvation.
 - For this one purpose has God been moving:
 - Blind eyes cannot see, nor men unaided by the Holy Spirit.
 - Paul saw ***"...through a glass darkly..."***
 - When all is said and done and Christ has given believers a new world, the redeemed will see clearly what God has been doing all these centuries: None other than the salvation of men by GRACE ALONE.
5. The mystery of the Church Age, hidden secretly in the Old Testament ages is now revealed and God's body of the redeemed, the Church, the Bride, the body of Christ is being unfolded day by day of our very own generation.
 - There will come a day when the age of mystery, the Church age, will end and Christ will call all the redeemed out of this world.
 - God's purpose of salvation of men by grace goes beyond the boundaries of this age and is the reason for the creation, its preservation and its consummation. ***(Colossians 1:16-17)***

6. Jesus came to reconcile all things. (*Colossians 1:21-22*)
 - Jesus was already man's answer before man ever appeared.
 - Jesus was in God's image, exalted above every name and heir to all things.

7. The whole universe of all ages, centers around the death of Jesus Christ and what it accomplished. That man has been redeemed, purified, transformed, and translated into the eternal riches of God.
 - What a spectacle for the angels and powers of the air -

GOD WORKING OUT MAN'S SALVATION

8. Grace could have no part until sin entered.
 - Creation revealed God's power and wisdom.
 - What could reveal God's love for the undeserving? The story of the human race!
(*Ephesians 3:8-11*)
 - The riches of God could only be brought to light by the fact of sin and its cure through Jesus Christ and the Cross.
 - God purposes to unveil His love by the saving of humanity by GRACE.

9. It is a redeemed sinner that shall rule the angels, and this was in the mind of God from before the creation of man. (*1 Peter 1:20; Acts 2:23; 1 Peter 1:2; Romans 8:29-30*)

CONCLUSION:

1. It is the supreme motive of God in creation, preservation, consumation of the universe, in the permission of evil to enter the world, and in the mighty undertaking of salvation, now offered to sinful men through the cross of Jesus Christ, that God's riches of grace may be revealed to all intelligences.
2. It is the supreme motive of God to reveal His grace, then salvation by grace alone, or God's purpose will fail. (*Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 11:6*)
3. No other basis can grace be manifested than by salvation which is wholly unrelated to human merit or works.
4. Isn't God great and good? We were in His mind before creation and His grace has always been for us.