

December 20, 2020

God's Amazing Grace

By Michael Hickox

Olney Church of Christ

220 North Van Street
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Services

Sunday

Bible Study	9:30 am
A.M. Worship	10:20 am
P.M. Worship	2:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Class	7:00 pm
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Elders: Mike Gerber, Travis Hall

Deacons: John Frost, Dave Goff, Roger Sholders

Visitors are welcome

We offer Bible classes for all ages

We also offer in-home Bible studies

We have Bible lessons on the radio
(92.9 FM) Sundays from 8:00-8:30 a.m.

Writing "*to the saints who are at Ephesus*" (Eph. 1:1), the Holy Spirit through Paul said, "*by grace you have been saved...*" (Eph. 2:8).

The word translated grace in **Ephesians 2:8** (*charis*) can have varied meanings in Scripture. For instance, *charis* at times refers to thanks on the part of one receiving a gift (**2 Cor. 9:15**).

When speaking of *God's* grace, the emphasis is on finding *favor* with God. A definition often used that fits the meaning in **Ephesians 2:8** is "unmerited favor." This emphasizes God doing something for us that is *undeserved*. It involves Him doing for us what we *need*, but cannot do for *ourselves*.

The unmerited nature of salvation is the key to **Ephesians 2:8-9**. Notice the full teaching in these two verses: ***for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, that no one would boast.***

While God requires good works to *receive* salvation (cf. **Phil. 2:12**), salvation is still a *gift*. It is not earned, and provides no basis for boasting in *self* (cf. **Gal. 6:14**).

The word "**saved**" in **Ephesians 2:8** hints at why God's grace is *needed*. While God's grace makes all spiritual blessings possible, the foremost reason

God's Amazing Grace

(Continued)

we need God's grace is to be *saved from sin and its consequences* (cf. **Rom. 5:9**).

Without God's grace, each of us would be hopelessly doomed for eternal torment in hell (**Rom. 3:23; 6:23a**). By *grace*, God planned a means by which we might have eternal life instead of being left to perish (**John 3:16**). God loves us to such an extent that He gave what was needed to offer us salvation.

The One God lovingly gave to offer us salvation from sin is His Son (**Matt. 1:21**).

While God *planned* the means by which we can be saved by grace and the Holy Spirit *revealed* this plan, Jesus is the *embodiment* of God's grace (cf. **2 Tim. 1:9-10**). Jesus' work on earth is what God planned before the world began to offer us salvation by grace. "**By the grace of God,**" Jesus "**taste[d] of death for everyone**" (**Heb. 2:9**).

The fact that Jesus "**taste[d] of death for everyone**" shows that the salvation made possible by God's grace is available to *anyone* who is *willing* to receive this gift.

This point is made in **Titus 2:11**, which says, "**the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.**"

In spite of the choice each of us has made to rebel against God's will, He still wants each of us to be saved (**1 Tim. 2:4**). As He looks on *anyone* who is in sin, He

sees one who needs cleansing and healing (cf. **2 Pet. 3:9**).

While God *offers* salvation by His grace to all, salvation is *accessed by choice*. Salvation is not forced upon anyone (i.e. "irresistible grace"). Rather, salvation by grace is accessed by faith (**Rom. 5:2**).

"Faith" in this context is a summary term that includes *obedience* to the Gospel (cf. **Rom. 1:5; 16:26**). Those who enjoy the full blessings God offers by His grace have *chosen* to become repentant believers, have been "**baptized into Christ**" (**Gal. 3:27**), and *continually* submit to the Lord's will, lest they *fall* from grace (cf. **Gal. 5:4**).

Those who have done, and are *continuing* to do, what God requires to receive salvation have full access to the spiritual blessings God offers by His grace.

As the Holy Spirit through Paul emphasized to the saints at Ephesus, this choice is not cause for self-centered boasting. Rather, all the credit goes to *God*. His grace is cause for humility and gratitude. Moreover, His grace should motivate us to surrender fully to Him.

Though none of us deserve it, we can each be saved upon submitting to God, thanks to His amazing grace.

God's Plan for Saving Man

God's Grace	Ephesians 2:8
Christ's Blood	Romans 5:9
The Holy Spirit's Gospel	Romans 1:16
Sinner's Faith	Acts 16:31
Sinner's Repentance	Luke 13:3
Sinner's Confession	Romans 10:10
Sinner's Baptism	1 Peter 3:21
Christian's Work	James 2:24
Christian's Hope	Romans 8:24
Christian's Endurance	Revelation 2:10

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Words to Consider

“Wherefore exhort one another, and build each other up, even as also ye do. But we beseech you, brethren, to know them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them exceeding highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all.”

– 1 Thessalonians 5:11-14

Prayer List

Holly G
Sandy S
Mabel H
Cheryl S
Norma C
Raymond & Maxine
Ken & Chris F
Jeanette's Mother, Fontella
Jerry S (Prostate Cancer)
Carlyle (Hip)
Heather's Friend, Courtney
Barbara G (Cancer)
June H
Mike D (COVID recovery)
Lyla B (Leukemia recovery)
Roger & Family
Mary S (Pancreatic Cancer)

Daily Bible Reading

December 20 – Isaiah 45-46; 1 Thess. 3
December 21 – Isaiah 47-49; 1 Thess. 4
December 22 – Isaiah 50-52; 1 Thess. 5
December 23 – Isaiah 53-55; 2 Thess. 1
December 24 – Isaiah 56-58; 2 Thess. 2
December 25 – Isaiah 59-61; 2 Thess. 3
December 26 – Isaiah 62-64; 1 Timothy 1

“Direct me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in them.” – Psalm 119:35

Prayer Leaders

Sunday, December 20, 2020

Bible Study: Roger

Worship: Mike

Evening:

Wednesday, December 23, 2020

Assignments

Sunday, December 27, 2020

Reading: Dave

Announcements: Travis

Table: Steve

Serve: Mason

Dan H

Wednesday, December 30, 2020

Invitation:

Clean Building

Paula

Prepare Communion

Paula

Upcoming Reminders

**Sunday afternoon services and Wednesday*

evening Bible classes are temporarily

suspended, due to effects of COVID

Anniversaries

Birthdays

December 21 – Linda

December 21 – Christie

December 22 – Jailyn

December 22 – Lauren