

SOLA GRATIA

INTRODUCTION

“Sola- Gratia means grace at the start, grace to the end, grace in the middle, grace without fail, grace without mixture, grace without addition, grace that allows no boasting, grace that precludes all glorifying but in the Lord.”

Salvation is a gift of God’s grace which cannot be earned, but when received it should result in a humble certainty and sacrificial service. We like the idea of grace, but most of us don’t like “hand-outs” and prefer to earn what we receive, and so the reality of grace is a total mind shift for us.

SERMON POINTS

1. TO BELIEVE IN SALVATION AS A GIFT OF GOD’S GRACE IS TO HUMBLY ADMIT OUR CONDITION WITHOUT IT

- Read Ephesians 2:1-3

Our human condition, as sinner from birth, is impossible to change on our own. This passage goes as far as to say we were dead! Dead people have no ability to do anything, let alone try and rescue themselves. We were trapped and condemned and needed someone else to rescue us. As sinners, we were all under God’s righteous judgement and we deserved his wrath (his righteous judgment for sin). Without an act of mercy from him, we would all still be facing this judgment. This is why his gift of salvation is so incredible. We have been saved from so much:

- We are saved from sin and death (v1)
- We are saved from the pattern of this world (v2a)
- We are saved from Satan (v2b)
- We are saved from ourselves (v3a)

Sin is the great leveller. No one is above or beyond it, and everyone needs the same rescuer.

Q. Why does Paul say we were “dead” in our transgressions and sins?

Q. What does it mean that we were all once children of wrath?

Q. When you consider that you have been saved from Satan, what thoughts and feelings come to mind?

Q. Why is it incredible that we have even been saved from ourselves and the lives we once lived?

2. TO BELIEVE IN SALVATION AS A GIFT OF GOD'S GRACE IS TO HUMBLY RECEIVE OUR CONDITION BECAUSE OF IT

- Read Ephesians 2:4-9

Realising our need for salvation humbles us to the core, but realising that Jesus died to give it to us, humbles us even more. Not only does God rescue us from his judgement and from sin, death and Satan, he also gives us a new identity and status. He has raised us up and seated us with Christ in the heavenly places. His generosity is astounding and assures us that we cannot out-sin his generosity, or that we could ever add to it. Grace is given. It is to be received – open handed.

Q. For what reason, according to this passage, did God save us and how does that make you feel when you really think about it? (vs. 4)

Q. When we are saved, where are we seated?

Q. What thoughts and feelings surface when you think about being seated with Christ in the heavenlies?

Q. Why is it so crucial to understand that we are saved by grace alone, and not by anything we try and do?

Q. Why is it prideful when we try and earn God's grace, instead of receiving it, exactly where we are at?

3. TO BELIEVE IN SALVATION AS A GIFT OF GOD'S GRACE IS TO HUMBLY SURRENDER OUR LIVES TO GOD'S GRACIOUS PURPOSES

- Read Ephesians 2:10

When God saves us, he then points to us as we live our lives for him, showing the powers and principalities how incredible his gift of grace is. His life in us is a testimony to them, of his amazing work. He also saves us for good works he has already planned for us. What an exciting thought. When we are changed by grace, we want to love and serve others, and give them the same grace that we have received. We no longer live for ourselves but live for Christ, out of love and gratitude.

Q. Why do you think our saved lives are a powerful testimony to the powers and principalities?

Q. Take a moment to think... what good works can you already look back on, now realising that God had planned them before you were saved?

Q. Why is it a natural response to want to love and serve others, and extend God's grace to them, when we have been saved by grace?