



Lesson Five: An Introduction To Salvation

We are continuing our first G, the Gather. Gather is an introduction. In our last lesson we were introduced to Jesus, God's Son. We learned that He was fully God and fully man. It was necessary that He were both if He was going to pay the price for our sin. We looked briefly at His death, burial, and resurrection. It was through this work that Jesus paid the price for our sin and made everlasting life possible. In this lesson we will take a closer investigation of what this means for us.

Near Death

Have you ever almost died? If you did, how did it happen? _____

I almost died in a car wreck when I was a teenager. I was on a two-lane road heading down a hill, when I decided to pass a car that was going too slow for my taste. When I pulled up beside the car, he stepped on the gas and so did I. It was at that moment that I noticed a car coming towards me. I cranked the steering wheel and pulled onto a gravel driveway, spinning around and coming to a stop. I narrowly avoided a head on collision at high speed. There is something about almost dying that makes us think about the end of our lives, and what comes next.

Grace

Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:8-9 how we can be sure about where we will end up when we take our last breath in this life, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." Grace is the good things that God gives to us that we absolutely do not deserve. A couple of lessons ago, we learned that we are all sinners. Remember what Paul told the Romans in Romans 3:23? He wrote, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,". Have you ever sinned by breaking God's rules? _____ If you have, what is one sin that you know that you have committed? _____ Because we have sinned, we deserve a punishment. But God loves you and offers you a gift of grace.

Saved

We have looked at the grace in Ephesians 2:8. The verse continues, "For by grace you have been saved...". The salvation that we are speaking of is not talking about being saved from physical death. I recently talked with a man about his relationship with Jesus. And in the discussion, he kept going back to times where his physical life was spared from a car wreck and other things. That is not what we are talking about. We are referencing being saved from spiritual death. Salvation is a pardon from spiritual death. Being rescued from eternal condemnation. Paul wrote in Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death...". We noted in our lesson on sin that the death here is eternal spiritual death.

The whole reason that Jesus came in the first place was to make salvation possible. Jesus said in John 3:16-18, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have

eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.”

Notice what is written in verse 16, “that whoever believes in him should not _____...” God does not want you to face eternal death. That’s why Jesus said in John 3:17, “that the world might be _____ through him.” We deserved to pay for our own sins, but Jesus chose to pay for them Himself, that is what makes this salvation all of grace.

Faith

Ephesians 2:8 goes on to say, “For by grace you have been saved through faith....”. You have to believe. Let’s go back to Jesus words in John 3:18, “Whoever _____ in him is not condemned, but whoever does not _____ is condemned already, because he has not _____ in the name of the only Son of God.” It’s not about praying a prayer, being a part of a church, or doing good things. The way that we access this salvation is through faith. But it is important to have faith in the proper thing.

Paul made it clear what we are to have faith in when he wrote Romans 10:9-10, “because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.” What is it that you have to believe in your heart? _____

Notice the belief has to do with the work that Jesus did to pay the price for our sin and make everlasting life possible. The belief is in what He did, not in what you or I did or must do.

Gift

Ephesians 2:8-9 ends by focusing on the gift that God wants to give to us, “not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Salvation is not something that we can earn. We cannot work to obtain it, because we can never be good enough. We looked at the beginning of Romans 6:23 already, not let’s take a look at the second half of the verse, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” We earn death by our own work, but eternal life is a gift from God that is made possible through _____.

I’m a fan of the Iowa Hawkeyes. Recently, I was offered a ticket to the Iowa/Michigan game in the Big House in Ann Arbor, Michigan. My wife’s cousin lives just outside of Ann Arbor and offered us a free place to stay and entrance into the football game for my birthday. Now when I was offered the gift, I had a choice to make. I could refuse the gift, or I could accept it. I definitely chose to accept it! I had a great time at the game, even though Iowa lost. But we won’t talk about that part of it.

When it comes to God’s free gift of salvation, we have a choice to make just like I had a choice to make about the football tickets. You have to choose to either accept God’s gift, or you have to choose to reject it. What is the choice that you have made? _____

Conclusion

Have you trusted in Jesus to save you from your sin? Have you accepted His gift of salvation through Jesus? God is offering this gift to you right now! Paul told the believers in Rome Romans 10:13, "For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Won't you trust in Him today?