

# S O L A S

**Ephesians** 2:8-9, *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—9 not by works, so that no one can boast.*

For hundreds of years, the Church was in darkness; it stopped reading the Bible and started electing leaders who are far from God and do not have a genuine relationship with Jesus which resulted in teachings contrary to the Bible. They believed that the way to heaven can be earned or bought in the form of indulgences (forgiveness). Martin Luther, a German priest was trapped in that system, until one day, he read his Bible and his eyes were opened to the truth! He learned that going to heaven is not earned by works or effort; it is by God's grace alone, through faith alone in Christ alone. He wrote down what he discovered and posted them on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany on October 31, 1517. What happened that day, Martin Luther gave the people a new sense of hope! We don't have to be trapped in a man-made system of earning or working our way to heaven, because God's word is so clear when it comes to salvation. Now, in order to fully understand these verses, like Martin Luther did, you must understand seven key concepts found in these verses: "saved"; "grace"; "faith"; "gift" (as opposed to "works"), "boast" (or, glory); "handiwork" and "Christ."

**SAVED: To be made alive with Christ and rescued from God's wrath and judgment.** The point is, because we are disobedient, we are under God's wrath, so Jesus gave Himself up on the cross. By going to the cross, Jesus paid the penalty that we are under because of our sin.

**GRACE: We did absolutely nothing to earn or merit salvation.** We can be sure that we are going to heaven, but not by keeping an accounting of good works. We can be sure of heaven because of God's grace! The simple definition of grace is God's unmerited favor. If you did anything to earn it or deserve it, it's not grace. GRACE is what makes true Christianity different from all other religions!

**FAITH: To receive salvation through trusting in what Jesus did for us on the cross.** Salvation in the Bible is uncomplicated! The Apostle Paul makes the message of salvation so simple: Romans 10:8-10. When we declare with our mouths that Jesus is Lord, and believe in our hearts, God forgives our sins and makes us alive! Theologians call this regeneration—to be born again; to be given new life! He secures our place in heaven and he seals us with His Holy Spirit; and empowers us to do His will for our lives!

**GIFT: The only way to enjoy it is to receive it.** Salvation is available for all, but you must receive it by faith! It's God's gift. Verse 9 says, *not by works, so that no one can boast!*

**BOAST: Our salvation points to God's glory.** Because salvation is not a result of our efforts, it shows us how good God is and that we are meant to give glory to Him. We find that in verses 6-7.

**HANDIWORK: We are saved to do His will.** By saving us, He has recreated us—we are new creation, God's handiwork! He saved us and included us in His church to use us, along with others, to declare His grace and goodness, so that they too will receive the salvation He offers!

**CHRIST: Our salvation and purpose are established on Him.** Everything that God promises finds its fulfillment and fullness in Jesus. This is how important Jesus is! He is the foundation; the cornerstone; the pinnacle! He holds all things together.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEXT STEPS:

- New York Mission Trip (November 8-16)
- Men's Conference (November 3-4)
- Team Night (November 26)

## PRAY TOGETHER FOR

- Opportunities to share God's grace and salvation with others.
- More people to come to Jesus because of your obedience

## GOAL FOR THIS STUDY:

To understand and experience the fact that our salvation is not based on merit or effort; it is because of God's grace expressed to us in the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. This salvation is a gift from God and we must personally receive it by faith.

## Connection and Action

Questions to promote conversation and connection

### Question:

Have you ever felt trapped? How did you get out of it?

What makes Christianity different from all other religions?

What was/is your belief about how a person can go to heaven?

## Bible and Belief

Questions to help believers develop a biblical point of view.

### READ EPHESIANS 2:1-10

#### Questions:

What is God's wrath and why is it an important aspect to discuss when we talk about salvation?

Who is this ruler that they followed? See 2 Corinthians 4:3-6.

What attribute within God moved him toward us? v. 4a. What other attribute of God do we desperately need? v. 4b. How much of this attribute does God have?

What has God done for us? v. 5a. See Luke 15:24; John 5:24. When did God bring us to life in Christ: when we are made ourselves perfect, or when we were yet sinners? See Romans 5:8.

What has God done for us in Christ? v. 6. Can you grasp the enormity of our position in Christ? Explain what this means in our Christian walk.

What emphases regarding salvation are given here in verses 8-9?

If God's salvation is by grace, what is the human response to it called? How does faith come? (Romans 10:17)

## Growing in Leadership

Questions to help people grow as leaders.

### Question:

The word of God says, apart from Christ "people are subject to God's wrath," does that mean that we who know Jesus have a role to play in their salvation?

As a Christians with a higher calling and indebted to God's saving grace, what do you think is your role as part of the church in today's world?

How do we reach out to individuals who are still trapped in their old way of thinking/believing?

Read Romans 10:8-17.

As a DGroup and as individuals, how can we effectively bring more people to experience God's love and be made alive in Christ?

Think of ways and opportunities, individually and corporately; and list them down, pray for and pursue these plans and follow up on each other.

### Important Note:

The message of salvation is CRUCIAL. The apostle Paul calls it "**a matter of first importance**" (1 Corinthians 15:2-5). It is the message that could change your friends' and loved ones' eternal destiny—whether they go to heaven or be forever separated from God (2 Thessalonians 1:8-10). Our role and our message are so important, the Bible urges us to bring the Gospel to people, and bring people to Jesus.