



Date: _____

Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions
Great Chapters of the Bible Series, Lesson 42

Lesson Title: Grace Chapter—Ephesians 2

Take Home Point: We are saved by grace – a gift from God.

Warm-Up:

I have a friend who is a good man.

And he has all the attributes one would associate with being a spiritually positive person. He's a good father and husband, trustworthy, giving, kind, morally upright, church-goer, honest hard-working employee for his company, etc. I enjoy his friendship. But he still clings to the notion that he must improve himself to be worthy of God's favor. He has the idea (which is not uncommon) that if he lives what he believes to be a good life, it will be easier to come to God for help or forgiveness. He hears about God's grace and knows that God is gracious, but it is difficult for him to believe that God is offering him an absolutely free gift of salvation by what Jesus did for us. Although he would never say so, it is as if he believes that God is gracious but not too gracious.

Read: Ephesians 2:1-10

Observation (What happened?):

According to Ephesians 2:1, where did we start out without Christ?

According to Ephesians 2:6, where do we end up as children of God?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What does it mean to be saved by grace?

What does it mean to be God's workmanship?

Insight:

What is it about the gift of God's grace that makes it so hard to accept? I suppose there are several factors at work, but I think one of them is an inadequate understanding of how unfixable we are by human effort. For example, imagine the feelings of Adam and Eve after their first sin! Guilt, shame, blame, sorrow, fear, failure, anxiety, separation, regret, cover-up, defensiveness – none of these had ever been known to Adam or Eve prior to their disobedience. In an instant, their hearts and minds must have been flooded with the crushing reality that everything was different in a dreadful way, and there was nothing they could do to change or fix it. Imagine the turmoil and confusion about these new, unpleasant thoughts and feelings. And because we sin, too, we may face the same thoughts, feelings, and turmoil, but our lives are so warped by sin that it's hard to see it for what it is – certain death. How thankful we can be that we don't have to try to work for any part, however small, of our salvation. How wonderful that we can receive this gift from our gracious God, and that he planned it for us all along!

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How do you know you are no longer dead in your sin? Thank God for rescuing you by his grace through Jesus Christ.

Pray for the children in your small group to accept the limitless grace of God for them.

Kingdom Quest year 2