

Ephesians 2: 4-10 (ESV) – Grace is a Gift

Main point: God's graces are innumerable.



Open with a short prayer, inviting God to teach us.

Background¹: Ephesus was a major seaport city on the coast of Asia Minor (today, western Turkey). It's no longer on the coast, but the ruins of ancient Ephesus are still there, including a large amphitheater, library (once the largest in the ancient world), elaborate homes, and public gathering places. Scholars estimate that ancient Ephesus could have had 200,000 residents.

Paul wrote this letter to the new church at Ephesus, though probably the letter was meant for several churches and passed around. Just before this passage, Paul writes about how all of humankind is "dead in trespasses and sin."

Focus of the study:

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which God loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages God might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Questions:

1. *This section starts with "but God." Why are these such powerful words?*
 - a. Shows that something major has changed; we were going in one direction, and now there's been a right turn! God changes everything, turns our direction towards spiritual death towards LIFE.
2. *What has God done, and why?*
 - a. v. 5: made us *alive* together with Christ
 - b. v. 4: because of the great love with which God loved us, even when we were sinful and separated from God
3. *What's the word Paul uses for how we're saved?*
 - a. v. 5: grace
4. *I wonder what grace means to you? [discuss; list as many as possible²]*
5. *What happens when you receive God's gift of grace?*
 - a. v. 6: God raises us up with him, seats us with him: *What does this look like? When you're seated with someone, how close are you?*
 - i. Right next to that person! No separation; brought in close to live with God
 - b. v. 7: *Why does God do this?* So that "in the coming ages God might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

¹ <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/markdroberts/series/ancient-ephesus-and-the-new-testament/>

² Responses I've heard include "great love, he's always there, care, mercy, salvation, forgiveness, prayers, loyalty"

Ephesians 2: 4-10

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which God loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages God might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.