

Ephesians 2:8-9 - Whose Faith Saved Us?

- I. Eph 2:8-9 is quoted often by professing Christians, but is unfortunately usually misunderstood and incorrectly interpreted.
 1. **Eph 2:8** - For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:
 2. **Eph 2:9** - Not of works, lest any man should boast.
- II. When most professing Christians read Eph 2:8, they hear something like this: "For by grace are ye saved through your faith; and only the grace is not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:".
- III. What does Eph 2:8 say? "For by grace are ye saved through faith; *and that not of yourselves...*"
 1. The grace *and* the faith *are not of ourselves*.
 2. Many will say that only the grace is not of ourselves, but the faith *is* of ourselves.
 3. This is false for the following reasons:
 - A. In the context of the verse, Paul states plainly that when we were *saved by grace*, we were DEAD in sins and God *quicken*ed us (**Eph 2:5**).
 - i. **Eph 2:5** - Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)
 - ii. Dead - 1. That has ceased to live; deprived of life; in that state in which the vital functions and powers have come to an end, and are incapable of being restored. 4. Destitute of spiritual life or energy. 1382 Wyclif Eph. ii. 1 Whanne Še weren deede in Šoure giltis and synnes.
 - iii. Quicken - 1. a. To give or restore life to; to make alive; to vivify or revive; to animate (as the soul the body).
 - iv. Dead people can't decide to make themselves alive, physically or spiritually.
 - v. When Christ saved us, we were *without strength* (spiritually dead) (**Rom 5:6**).
 - vi. The gospel is foolishness to them that perish (*To incur spiritual death, be lost*), and therefore can't be believed by them (**1Co 1:18**).
 - vii. **1Co 1:18** - For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.
 - viii. Therefore the faith through which we were saved could not be our own.
 - B. At the time that God saved us by grace, we were natural men: we *walked according to the course of this world* (**Eph 2:2**), and were by *nature the children of wrath* (**Eph 2:3**).
 - i. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* - (**1Co 2:14**).
 - ii. Therefore the faith through which we were saved could not be our own.
 - C. At the time that we were saved by God's grace, we were *in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind* (**Eph 2:3**).
 - i. *But they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, not the things of the spirit* (**Rom 8:5**).
 - ii. *To be carnally minded is death* (**Rom 8:6**).
 - iii. Carnal *adj.* - 1. Of or pertaining to the flesh or body; bodily, corporeal. 5. Not spiritual, in a privative sense; unregenerate, unsanctified, worldly. 1611 Bible Rom. viii. 7 The carnall minde is enmitie against God.
 - iv. *The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* (**Rom 8:7**)
 - v. *They that are in the flesh cannot please God* (**Rom 8:8**).

- vi. Believing in Jesus Christ pleases God (**1Jo 3:22-23**), and they that are in the flesh cannot please God; therefore, they that are in the flesh cannot believe in Jesus Christ.
 - vii. Therefore the faith through which we were saved could not be our own.
4. If the faith is not of ourselves, then whose faith was it through which we were saved?
- A. It is the faith *of* Jesus Christ (His faith) that saved us.
 - B. We were justified by the faith *of* Jesus Christ.
 - i. **Gal 2:16** - Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.
 - ii. The righteousness of God is by the faith *of* Jesus Christ (**Rom 3:22; Phi 3:9**).
 - C. It was Christ's faith to go to the cross, trusting that God would accept His sacrifice and raise Him from the dead (**Luk 23:46**) that saved us.
 - D. Commend *v.* - 1. To give in trust or charge, deliver to one's care or keeping; to commit, entrust: b. a person. Now *esp.* used of committal to the divine keeping: To commit with a prayer or act of faith, 'to deliver up with confidence'
- IV. What does the next verse say? "*Not of works*, lest any man should boast." (**Eph 2:9**)
1. Eph 2:9 further confirms that it was not *our* faith through which God saved us by His grace, because salvation is *not of works*.
 - A. Works are something a person *does*.
 - B. Work *n.* - 1. Something that is or was done; what a person does or did; an act, deed, proceeding, business
 - C. Faith is something that is *done* and is therefore a work (**Mat 23:23**).
 - D. Our faith is a work (**1Th 1:3**).
 - E. Believing in Jesus Christ is a work (**Joh 6:28-29**).
 - F. If believing in Jesus is not a work, why do we tell people to DO IT?
 2. Furthermore, we know that it is not *our* faith by which we are saved eternally because it is "*Not of works*, lest anyone should boast." (**Eph 2:9**)
 - A. If it was our faith through which we were saved eternally, we could have something to boast about.
 - B. We could take some of the credit for our eternal salvation, because, after all, God couldn't have done it without us.