

# Grace Leads Us To Gratitude

## Introduction

**Eph. 2:1-10** “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,  
2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.  
3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.  
4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,  
5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, 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 in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.  
8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;  
9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast.  
10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Vs. 4 is said to contain the most hopeful words in all of scripture. “BUT GOD.” Why is that so hopeful? Consider again vs. 1-3.

## I. Our Grief Without God

### A. Groaning

As we looked at verses 1-3 it is certainly a bleak picture. But that was not all of it. Not even in this chapter.

**Eph. 2:12** “remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.”

Consider Paul when he was in the grip of sin.

**Rom. 7:22-24** “For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man,  
23 but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.  
24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?”

Paul was not alone, all mankind outside of Christ

**Rom. 8:22** “For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.”

Outside of God’s direction and protection we are in a very bad state.

**Ecl. 9:3** “This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that there is one fate for all men. Furthermore, the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil, and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives. Afterwards they go to the dead.”

### B. Gropping (If We’re Looking At All)

Job spoke of the condition of men.

**Job. 12:24,25** “He deprives of intelligence the chiefs of the earth’s people, And makes them wander in a pathless waste.  
25 They grope in darkness with no light, And He makes them stagger like a drunken man.”

Isaiah did as well.

**Isa. 59:1,2,9-13** “Behold, the LORD’S hand is not so short That it cannot save; Neither is His ear so dull That it cannot hear.  
2 But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.  
9 Therefore, justice is far from us, And righteousness does not overtake us; We hope for light, but behold, darkness; For brightness, but we walk in gloom.

**10** We grope along the wall like blind men, We grope like those who have no eyes; We stumble at midday as in the twilight, Among those who are vigorous we are like dead men.

**11** All of us growl like bears, And moan sadly like doves; We hope for justice, but there is none, For salvation, but it is far from us.

**12** For our transgressions are multiplied before Thee, And our sins testify against us; For our transgressions are with us, And we know our iniquities:

**13** Transgressing and denying the LORD, And turning away from our God, Speaking oppression and revolt, Conceiving in and uttering from the heart lying words.

We cannot find the way out of this on our own.

**Acts 17:27,28** “that they should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

**28** for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His offspring.’

God made it that we would look for Him. But without His help, we will not find the way. We'll only know that something is very much missing.

### C. The Grave

As we read earlier from Solomon, after such a life is only certain death.

**Ecc. 9:3** “This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that there is one fate for all men. Furthermore, the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil, and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives. Afterwards they go to the dead.”

We don't know when it death will come, but probably sooner than we are ready.

**Jas. 4:13-17** “Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit."

**14** Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

But it is certain for absolutely everyone.

**1 Kings 2:2** “I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man.”

### D. Gnashing Of Teeth

What awaits after death is even worse.

**2 Thess. 1:5-9** “This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering.

**6** For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you,

**7** and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire,

**8** dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

**9** And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power”

That is an exceedingly bad end. But it is what is deserved.

**Rom. 6:23** “For the wages of sin is death...”

BUT GOD!

## II. Grace

### A. God's Great Gift

God's greatest single gift to us (and this is choosing from a very long list) is Jesus Himself.

**Mark 10:45** “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

**1 Jn. 2:1-2** “My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

**2** and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.”

**Jn. 6:33** “For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.”

## B. Our Great Gain

From a life without hope and hell-bound, we have experience the most marvelous turn-around.

**Jn. 10:10,11** “The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.

**11** I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.”

There is nothing that we now lack in our life before God and in our preparation for the next life.

**Eph. 1:3** “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,”

**Eph. 1:18-20** “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

**19** and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might

**20** which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places”

## III. Gratitude

What should our response to this be?

**1 Pet. 1:13** “Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Fix our hope – appreciate it, live for it, and be very grateful for it.

### A. Gratitude

Those who see the need are the ones who come to take advantage of what is offered.

**Matt. 2:15-17** “And it came about that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax-gatherers and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him.

**16** And when the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax-gatherers, they began saying to His disciples, “Why is He eating and drinking with tax-gatherers and sinners?”

**17** And hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Gratitude is seen repeatedly in how people responded to Jesus.

**Luke 7:36-47** “Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him. And He entered the Pharisee’s house, and reclined at the table.

**37** And behold, there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee’s house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume,

**38** and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet, and anointing them with the perfume.

**39** Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner.”

**40** And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” And he replied, “Say it, Teacher.”

**41** A certain moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.

**42** When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. Which of them therefore will love him more?”

**43** Simon answered and said, “I suppose the one whom he forgave more.” And He said to him, “You have judged correctly.”

**44** And turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair.

**45** You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet.

**46** You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume.

**47** For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little.”

## B. Leads Us To:

## 1.) Glorify God

In our hearts and minds and prayers.

Like David at the coronation of Solomon:

**1 Chron. 29:10-17** “So David blessed the LORD in the sight of all the assembly; and David said, “Blessed art Thou, O LORD God of Israel our father, forever and ever.

**11** Thine, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Thine is the dominion, O LORD, and Thou dost exalt Thyself as head over all.

**12** Both riches and honor come from Thee, and Thou dost rule over all, and in Thy hand is power and might; and it lies in Thy hand to make great, and to strengthen everyone.

**13** Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name.

**14** But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from Thee, and from Thy hand we have given Thee.

**15** For we are sojourners before Thee, and tenants, as all our fathers were; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope.

**16** O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided to build Thee a house for Thy holy name, it is from Thy hand, and all is Thine.

**17** Since I know, O my God, that Thou triest the heart and delightest in uprightness, I, in the integrity of my heart, have willingly offered all these things; so now with joy I have seen Thy people, who are present here, make their offerings willingly to Thee”

or Paul for the generosity of Christians to help their brethren.

**2 Cor. 9:13-15** “Because of the proof given by this ministry they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all,

**14** while they also, by prayer on your behalf, yearn for you because of the surpassing grace of God in you.

**15** Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!”

We are also to glorify God in all our behavior.

**1 Cor. 6:20** “For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”

## 2.) Get Going

Grace should motivate us to great activity on behalf of the one who has so helped us.

**1 Cor. 15:10** “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.”

**Phil. 3:18-14** “More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ,

**9** and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,

**10** that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

**11** in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

**12** Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

**13** Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,

**14** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

## 3.) Gracious

The great generosity shown us is to be passed on to others.

**1 Pet. 3:8-13** “To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit;

**9** not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

**10** For, “LET HIM WHO MEANS TO LOVE LIFE AND SEE GOOD DAYS REFRAIN HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING GUILF.

**11** AND LET HIM TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD; LET HIM SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT.

**12** FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE UPON THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL.”

**13** And who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good?”

#### 4.) Look For Glory

Grace teaches us to look for our final redemption and glorification – at the glorious revelation of God.

**Tit. 2:11-14** “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,

**12** instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

**13** looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus;