

# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, March 12, 2025 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

T H E B O O K O F

EPHESIANS

*How to live the Christian life*

**EPHESIANS: HOW TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE – PART 9**  
*“Salvation is Totally of God” - Ephesians 2:1-7*

*“<sup>1</sup>And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup>among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.<sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup>and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup>that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” – Ephesians 2:1-7 (NKJV)*

If you could buy a book that contained a concentration of a lifetime of thinking and experience on spiritual matters by one of the greatest Christian leaders of all time, would you do it? Would you read it and study it and try to plumb the depths of its wisdom? What about if you could read aloud all six chapters of the book in only 19 minutes? I’m speaking about Paul’s letter to the Ephesians.

- Even though Ephesians is so short, **Martyn Lloyd-Jones**’ exposition of it takes eight volumes! He has 37 messages on chapter 1 alone!
- **John Calvin**’s 48 sermons on Ephesians take up 705 pages.
- The **Puritan William Gurnall** in *The Christian in Complete Armor* takes almost 1,200 pages to expound on Ephesians 6:10-20!

So there is far more depth in this short epistle than I can begin to understand or apply to my own life, much less to expound on. So as we come to it, we must pray with the apostle Paul (Ephesians 1:17-19), ... *“<sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, <sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power.”*

- The English poet, Samuel Coleridge, said that “Ephesians is the divinest composition of man.”
- Another writer refers to it as, “Ephesians is the Grand Canyon of Scripture, because it is breathtakingly beautiful and apparently inexhaustible to the one who wants to take it in” (cited by, James Boice, *Ephesians* [Baker], p. 1).
- Martyn Lloyd-Jones calls Ephesians “Ephesians is the sublimest and the most majestic expression of the gospel.” (*God’s Ultimate Purpose* [Baker], p. 12).



## KEY BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR EPHESIANS

To gain a better understanding of the Book of Ephesians, consider the following background information:

1. **Authorship: The Apostle Paul** - Traditionally attributed to the Apostle Paul.
2. **Date of Writing: A.D. 60-63** - Likely written around A.D. 60-63 during Paul's Roman imprisonment.
3. **Place of writing: Rome** – Paul wrote the book/letter of Ephesians from a Roman prison
4. **Audience: Ephesian Christians at Ephesus and surrounding area** Addressed to the Christian community in Ephesus, a major city in Asia Minor. Ephesians is considered a

“circular letter” meant to be circulated to church in the area of Ephesus... possibly the same 7 churches

5. **Purpose: How to live the Christian life** To strengthen the faith of believers and address issues of unity and spiritual maturity.
6. **Themes: Grace, the church, and holy living** - Key themes include grace, the church as the body of Christ, and the importance of living a holy life.
7. **Structure: Ephesus is divided into two main sections** - Divided into two main sections: doctrinal teachings (chapters 1-3) and practical applications (chapters 4-6).
8. **Cultural Context: Ephesus was center of commerce and religion** - Ephesus was a center of commerce and religion, known for the Temple of Artemis.
9. **Significance: Mystery of the gospel and inclusion of Gentiles** - Emphasizes the mystery of the Gospel and the inclusion of Gentiles in God's plan.
10. **Spiritual Warfare: Ephesians' emphasis on the spiritual battle** Concludes with a call to spiritual readiness and the armor of God (chapter 6).

*“<sup>1</sup>And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup>among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.<sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup>and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup>that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” – Ephesians 2:1-7 (NKJV)*

How is a person saved? I want you to really think about it. How is a person saved? According to SO4J (Sold Out For Jesus Ministry) there are at least 10 primary ways that people today claim to be saved.

### **10 Primary Ways People Claim to be Saved:**

- (1) **Being a good person**
- (2) **Saying the “Sinners Prayer”**
- (3) **Feeling saved**
- (4) **Doing good deeds**
- (5) **Being religious**
- (6) **Havning a Christian title**
- (7) **Certain denominations / traditions**
- (8) **Blessings / Prosperity**
- (9) **Spiritual gifts**
- (10) **Mysticism or Spiritual experiences**

### **QUESTIONS TO PONDER:**

- **What is each of these things based on?**
- **What is wrong with trying to be saved by one of these?**
- **Why might some think one of these might saved them?**
- **What is wrong with basing your salvation on any one of these?**

The late Bible teacher, Harry (H.A.) Ironside, was quite a character. On one occasion, he was on a trolley car in Los Angeles when a rather peculiar looking lady got on board and sat down beside him. She was dressed in what he described as red bandanna handkerchiefs pieced together, with a shawl over her head and a lot of spangles on her forehead. As soon as she sat down, she asked Ironside if he would like to have his fortune told. Her fee was a quarter.

Ironside asked her if she was sure that she could do it. He explained that he was Scotch, and he hated to part with a quarter if she could not deliver the goods. She looked a bit bewildered, but then assured him that she could reveal his past, his present, and his future. Just give her the quarter and she would tell all.

Ironside said, "It's really not necessary because I have had my fortune told already. I have a little book in my pocket that tells my past, present, and future." She said, "You have it in a book?" "Yes," he said, "and it's absolutely infallible. Let me read it to you." He got out his New Testament and the fortuneteller looked startled. He opened to Ephesians 2 and said, "Here is my past." He read verses 1-3, about being dead in his trespasses and sins and living in the lusts of his flesh.

The nervous fortuneteller said, "I don't care to hear more." But Ironside held her gently by the arm and said, "But I want to tell you my present." He read (2:4-6), "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

"That's plenty," the woman said, "I do not wish to hear any more." But Ironside said, "There is more yet, and I won't charge you a quarter to hear it. Here is my future." And he read verse 7, "so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

By now, the woman was on her feet and Ironside could not hold on to her arm any tighter, lest he be charged with assault. She fled down the trolley aisle, saying, "I took the wrong man! I took the wrong man!" (Adapted from, *In the Heavenlies* [Loizeaux Brothers], pp. 97-98).

Ironside was right: these verses reveal our spiritual past, present, and future...

**PAST:** In the past, we were dead in our sins, living for selfish pleasure, completely alienated from the living God. We were mercifully saved by His grace alone when He made us alive together with Christ.

**PRESENT:** In the present, God raised us up with Christ, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places.

**FUTURE:** And in the future, we will be trophies of the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us. The overarching theme of these verses is that salvation is totally of God. Because salvation is God's doing, there is hope for even the worst of sinners.

### **Application Questions**

1. **Why is it important to affirm that salvation is not a joint effort between God and men, but that it is all of God? What is at stake?**
2. **Does your view of God begin with His abundant mercy and great love? If not, why not? Note that His discipline is because of His love (Heb. 12:6).**
3. **What are some practical implications of our present identity with Christ in the heavenly places?**
4. **Do you look forward to heaven or view it as kind of boring? Ask God to fill you with the hope of Ephesians 2:7.**

## **SOME BASIC BIBLICAL PREMISES OF SALVATION**

### **3 Premises of Salvation in Scripture:**

- (1) **Salvation is not conditional but unconditional** – That is salvation is not ever based on something that we ourselves do or have done
- (2) **Man does not maintain his own salvation but rather it is God who maintains our salvation** – Some believer that since God has saved us, we must maintain our salvation as we continue to match up with God's standards. If we fall to match up at any point we lose our salvation. But, in fact, the Bible never paints salvation as something man does or has to work to keep. God is the one who saves us and the one who keeps us saved.
- (3) **Salvation is never based on a works-righteousness perspective, but rather solely based on God's grace** - The teaching(s) of religion maintain that one must live up to a religious standard, religious works, moral behaviors. Although these may be important in a Christians relationship and walk with God, they do not save us. Works (even religiously good works) cannot save nor can they keeps us saved. Actually the teaching that one can fall from grace must always insist that salvation should be seen from a works-righteousness perspective.

### **A Deep Dive into these 3 Premises of Salvation:**

**Premise 1: Salvation is not conditional but unconditional** –Scripture teaches that salvation is “unconditional” in nature and indeed doesn't depend on anything that we do or have done.

**Scripture:**

- (1) **Ephesians 2:8-9** - *“<sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast.”*
- (2) **John 3:16** - *“<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*
- (3) **Romans 6:23** - *“<sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in <sup>[a]</sup> Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

**Claim 2: Man does not maintain his own salvation but rather God maintains our salvation** – Man could never match up or be good enough to match up to God’s standard according to Scripture.

**Scripture:**

- (1) **Isaiah 64:6** – *“<sup>6</sup> All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.”*
- (2) **Romans 3:10, 23** – *“<sup>10</sup> As it is written: ‘There is no one righteous, not even one’ ... <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*
- (3) **Matthew 7:21-23** - *<sup>21</sup> “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup> Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ <sup>23</sup> Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”*

**Claim 3: Salvation is never based on a works-righteousness perspective, but rather solely on God’s grace** – The claim that salvation would be based on works would be in direct violation of Scripture. Scripture clearly teaches that we are “not” saved by works.

**Scripture:**

- (1) **Ephesians 2:8-9** - *“<sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast.”*
- (2) **Titus 3:5-7** – *“<sup>5</sup> He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.”*

**KEY THOUGHT: Because our salvation is totally of God, there is eternal hope for all who are dead in their sins**

These verses (and the ones we will study next time) are a wonderful summary of the gospel, the good news that God saves sinners. On the one hand, the gospel is simple and easy to understand. Young children can grasp its truth as God opens their eyes to see. Yet on another

level, the gospel is deep and unfathomable. It is, as Paul puts it like this in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, *“<sup>3</sup>But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup>whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”* That is an unfathomable subject! So the gospel is like the ocean, where a child may wade on the shore, but it is so deep and vast that we can never explore all of its depths. If you do not yet know Christ as Savior, pray that God will open your eyes to your desperate condition as a sinner and to the abundant riches of His grace. If you do know Christ, ask Him to take you deeper in your understanding of these glorious truths.

### **3 Glorious Truths of the Gospel:**

- (1) In the past, the cause of our salvation was God, who brought us from death to life because of His rich mercy, His great love, and His almighty power**
- (2) In the present, the result of our salvation is that God has raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly places**
- (3) In the future, the ultimate purpose of our salvation is to show the surpassing riches of God’s grace in kindness toward us in Christ**

**IN THE PAST, THE CAUSE OF OUR SALVATION WAS GOD, WHO BROUGHT US FROM DEATH TO LIFE BECAUSE OF HIS RICH MERCY, HIS GREAT LOVE, AND HIS ALMIGHTY POWER**

### **3 Statements Concerning God on our Salvation:**

- (1) God and nothing else is the cause of our salvation -** To get the flow of these verses, we need to go back and reread Ephesians 2:1-3: *“<sup>1</sup>And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup>among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.”* Then, the next words jump out at us with a startling contrast in verse 4, *“But God....”*

Those are the greatest words of hope that we could want to hear! Death robs us of hope. When someone dies, hope of him returning to life is gone. And to be spiritually dead is to be without hope—unless you bring God into the equation.

- God warned Adam that in the day he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he would die (Gen. 2:17).
- When Adam and Eve ate of that fruit, the entire human race was plunged into spiritual death (Rom. 5:12-21).
- As we saw (Eph. 2:3), by nature we all are born under God’s wrath because of sin.

- Those who are spiritually dead have no capacity to seek God (Rom. 3:10-18), to understand spiritual truth (1 Cor. 2:14), or to believe in the gospel (2 Cor. 4:4). It is foolishness to them (1 Cor. 1:18).

In **Ephesians 2:1-3**, Paul wants us to feel the helplessness and hopelessness of our spiritual past. We were dead. **“But God!”** What man cannot do, God can do! When you bring God into the equation, there is hope for the chief of sinners!

After the rich young ruler walked away from salvation, Jesus explained to the disciples in **Matthew 19:23-24**, **“Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”** Contrary to a popular idea, Jesus was not talking about a certain low gate in the Jerusalem wall. He was talking about a literal needle!

So we read in **verses 25-26**, **“When the disciples heard this, they were very astonished and said, ‘Then who can be saved?’ And looking at them Jesus said to them, ‘With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’”**

There are many evangelicals today who view salvation as a joint project between God and men. God has done all that He can do, and the rest is up to the free will of the sinner. They don’t view him as dead, but rather as sick or wounded. Like a drowning man, there still is life in him. He can grab the rope if we throw it to him. But, if he refuses to cooperate, even God can’t save him. That is an unbiblical view of salvation!

## What is wrong with this idea?

The biblical view is summed up in the short sentence, “Jesus saves!”

- As the angel announced to Joseph concerning Jesus (Matt. 1:21), **“He will save His people from their sins.”**
- He didn’t say, **“He will do all that He can, but He is limited by the sinner’s stubborn will.”**
- He didn’t say, **“He will throw the rope to everyone, but they’ve got to grab on to be saved.”**
- God isn’t frustrated in heaven, wishing that He could do more: **“I’d like to save Saul of Tarsus, but the guy is so stubborn!”**
- No, the hope of the gospel is that God saves sinners.
- We were dead—but God! He made us alive!

(2) **God saved us out of His rich mercy and great love** - Many wrongly think that in the Old Testament God is portrayed as a stern God of judgment and wrath, whereas in the New Testament, He softened into a tolerant God of love. That is false.



#### **4 Old Testament Examples of God's Mercy and Love:**

1. **Moses** - When Moses asked to see God's face, He told him that he could not, because no man can see God and live (Exod. 33:20). But then God told Moses to hide himself in the rock. God would pass by so that Moses could get a glimpse of His back. Then we read in Exodus 34:6, *"Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth.'"* The Hebrew word translated "lovingkindness" often has the flavor of His mercy, His compassion for our miserable condition due to our sin. Later, when Moses is predicting to the nation her apostasy and idolatry, and how God would scatter them among the nations because of their sin, he added that they would then return to the Lord and listen to His voice. He adds the reason for this (Deut. 4:31), *"For the Lord your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your father which He swore to them."*
2. **David** - When David rehearsed God's many blessings, he wrote in Psalm 103:8, *"The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness."*
3. **Jonah** - When Jonah, the disobedient prophet, tries to explain to God why he did not go to Ninevah the first time, he says in Jonah 4:3, *"for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity."* In other words, he knew that it would be just like God to forgive the evil people of Ninevah, but Jonah wanted them to get zapped!
4. **Nehemiah** - When Nehemiah prayed, confessing the sins of Israel that had led them into captivity, he rehearsed the stubbornness of the people in the wilderness, who wanted to return to slavery in Egypt. Then he added in Nehemiah 9:17, *"But You are a God of forgiveness, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness; and You did not forsake them."*

The theme of God's compassion and mercy runs throughout the Old Testament and, as you may expect, into the New Testament also, where the Greek word for mercy appears over 70 times. Instead of berating sinners or blasting them into oblivion, God delights to show them mercy if they will repent (Micah 7:18). As if God's rich mercy were not enough, Paul throws in His great love (Eph. 2:4)! How can I describe such a thing!

One of the best attempts outside of Scripture is the hymn, *"The Love of God."* A Nazarene pastor, **F. M. Lehman**, heard what is now the third verse recited at a camp meeting. A Jewish rabbi had composed it in Arabic in 1096. Later it was found inscribed in English on the wall of an insane asylum after the inmate had died. Pastor Lehman added the other verses and chorus (from *Amazing Grace*, Kenneth Osbeck [Kregel], p. 47). The third verse reads,

*Could we with ink the ocean fill,  
And were the skies of parchment made,  
Were ev'ry stalk on earth a quill,  
And ev'ry man a scribe by trade,  
To write the love of God above,  
Would drain the oceans dry,  
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,  
Though stretched from sky to sky.*

*O love of God, how rich and pure!  
How measureless and strong!  
It shall forevermore endure—  
The saints' and angels' song.”*

God's redeeming love was at the heart of Paul's life after he met Christ. In Romans 5:8, he wrote, *“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”* He brings Romans 8 to that great crescendo, that nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:39). He explained to the Galatians in Galatians 2:20, *“the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”* Is this your view of God towards you, that He is rich in mercy and great in love? Before you met Christ, you were His enemy. But His great love, as shown at the cross, rescued you from His wrath and made you His child. **The enemy will still try to get you to view God as your enemy, or as an angry parent who doesn't want you to have any fun or joy in life. Don't believe it!** As Paul exclaimed in Romans 8:31-32, *“If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?”* Ask God to give you a greater experience of His rich mercy and great love!

- (3) **God saved us through His mighty resurrection power and His grace** - Paul continues in Ephesians 2:5, *“<sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),”* Then, although it will be his theme in verses 8-9, it's as though Paul can't wait to say it, he interjects parenthetically, *“(by grace you have been saved).”*

**Grace means that we did not deserve it.** We deserved God's wrath because of our sins, but He saved us by His unmerited favor. We were walking corpses, living for the lusts of the flesh, but He made us alive together with Christ. This goes back to Ephesians 1:19-20, *“<sup>19</sup> And what is the boundless greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might <sup>20</sup> which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.”* Paul prayed that his readers would know God's surpassing

power towards us who believe. It is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him at God's right hand, far above all rule and authority in the universe.

It took that mighty power of God to save us, because, like Jesus in the tomb, we were dead. We need to understand that salvation is not a matter of a spiritually sick sinner deciding to take the medicine. If it were, we could perhaps talk him into making that decision. It is not a matter of a drowning man grabbing the life ring. Who wouldn't grab it, if he knew his desperate condition?

Rather, the sinner is a corpse, floating face down in the water. He's dead. God must raise him from the dead. But the good news is, God can raise the dead! He can impart new life to dead sinners. If He can't, then why pray for the conversion of anyone? Is God in heaven saying, "Yes, I wish I could save him, but he just won't take the life ring"? No, God made us alive even when we were dead in our sins. That's your past, if you now believe in Christ as your Savior. God saved you from spiritual death because of His rich mercy, His great love, His almighty power, and His grace alone.

## **IN THE PRESENT, THE RESULT OF OUR SALVATION IS THAT GOD HAS RAISED US UP WITH CHRIST AND SEATED US WITH HIM IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES**

God not only made us alive from the dead, but Paul continues Ephesians 2:5-6, "*5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*" Note the repetition in Ephesians 2:5-6, God "made us alive together with Christ," He "raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Paul means that we are totally identified with Jesus Christ in His death, resurrection, ascension, and present position in heaven! All of the blessings that we enjoy come to us by virtue of our identification with Jesus Christ. There is no salvation apart from Christ and all that He is to us.

When Paul speaks of being raised up with Christ, it refers not to His resurrection from the dead, but rather to His ascension. When He ascended into heaven and took His place at the right hand of the Father, we are there in Him. Although we still live on this earth, we are now citizens of heaven (Phil. 3:20). We were formerly members of Satan's domain of darkness, but now we live in a different realm, as a part of God's heavenly kingdom (Col. 1:13). So we should behave here as foreigners and pilgrims. We don't really belong here. Our true home is in heaven.

This is not an easy concept to grasp, but to the extent that we see our identification with Christ in heaven, we will live differently on earth. We won't be ensnared by the world's

vain treasures. We will seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at God's right hand. That is where our true life is hidden (Col. 3:1-4).

Also, our being seated with Christ in heaven means that we can exercise His authority over the forces of evil. As we saw in chapter 1, God's right hand is the place of authority over all rule and dominion. While there is still a battle raging, in that all of Christ's enemies are not yet subject to Him, we are to engage in that battle through prayer. When we pray against the forces of darkness, we do so in the name of Jesus and because we are in Him. We cannot stand against the enemy in our own strength, but rather because we are seated with Christ in heaven. He administers His authority through His praying church. That is our present position and privilege!

But we may worry, "What if I don't make it as a Christian? What if my faith fails?" Paul goes on to reveal our glorious future:

**IN THE FUTURE, THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF OUR SALVATION IS TO SHOW THE SURPASSING RICHES OF GOD'S GRACE IN KINDNESS TOWARD US IN CHRIST**

Paul assures us by showing that God's purpose in saving us is bound up with His glory and thus extends throughout eternity, which he calls, "*the ages to come.*" If God brought you from death to life through the death and resurrection of His Son, He isn't going to let you go!

Romans 5:9-10, "*<sup>9</sup> Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*"

We all will be trophies of His grace and kindness throughout all eternity, to the praise of His glory! The angels themselves will marvel at the surpassing riches of God's grace when they see the company of the redeemed in heaven (1 Pet. 1:12). Our salvation is first and foremost a demonstration of the glory of God. As Jonathan Edwards astutely argued, "*God created the world and put us here to further His glory*" (see John Piper, *God's Passion for His Glory* [Crossway Books]). That theme extends through eternity!

Martyn Lloyd-Jones pointed out (*God's Way of Reconciliation* [Baker], p. 111, italics his), "*Salvation vindicates the greatness and the character of God in a special way and in a manner which nothing else does.*" Satan's object in tempting Adam and Eve was to detract from the glory and majesty of God. But God allowed sin to enter this world in part because His plan of redemption revealed certain aspects of His holiness, justice, wisdom, mercy, love, and grace that would not have been known apart from the cross (see Rom. 9:22-23).

It's mind-boggling, but we will play a part in displaying the surpassing riches of God's grace throughout eternity!

## CONCLUSION

Paul wants us to know...

### **5 Things Paul Want Us to Know:**

- (1) **Because our salvation is totally of God, there is eternal hope for all who are dead in their sins**
- (2) **The dead can't raise themselves and they can't even decide to do so, but God is in the business of raising the dead!**
- (3) **If He has opened your eyes to your true condition as a sinner under His just wrath, flee to the cross. Trust in Christ alone.**
- (4) **He has a vast fortune of surpassing riches of grace for every sinner who comes to Jesus.**
- (5) **If you have received new life in Christ, God wants you to live in light of it - Seeing your past and what He did in raising you from death to life should fill you with gratitude and joy. Seeing your present, totally identified with Christ in heaven, should cause you to live as a citizen of heaven, separate from this evil world. Seeing your glorious future as a trophy of His grace should give you assurance and hope, even in the midst of trials or in the face of death itself. Praise God for His rich mercy, His great love, and the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus!**

### **3 Truths Worth Remembering About Salvation:**

- (1) **Salvation is the work of God**
- (2) **Salvation is a free and undeserved gift**
- (3) **Salvation is the gift of eternal life**

***“It is utterly and absolutely impossible that the sentence of the divine Judge should ever be revoked or reversed... Sooner shall the lightnings of omnipotence shiver the Rock of Ages than those sheltering in Him be brought again under condemnation.”***

***-Arthur Pink, “Eternal Security”***