

# By Grace Through Faith

Ephesians 2:1-10

## **MEMORY VERSE**

Ephesians 2:8, 9

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

## **WHAT YOU WILL NEED:**

Four bowls, two tablespoons and two bags of pinto beans.

A hammer/nail (with nail partially driven into the wood), screwdriver/screw, scissors/paper, and a spoon/dry beans/two bowls.

As many strips of 1/2” ribbon (10-12” strips) as the number of children in your class and one bead for each bracelet.

## **ATTENTION GRABBER!**

### **Boast of the Most!**

Have four bowls (2 bowls across the room, 2 bowls close), 2 tablespoons and 2 bags of pinto beans.

Fill the two of the close bowls evenly with pinto beans. Form two teams for a relay. Teams must fill their "far" bowl as much as possible with just a spoon, no help from hands! The team with the most beans wins...yea! But, in a moment of frenzy the teacher gives all, yes, all the beans to the losing team!! Oh no, did they work for the beans? No! They were a gift, just like our salvation, or else we would boast about it!

## **LESSON TIME!**

Have you ever stopped to wonder how good God is towards us? When you consider all His blessings, which He richly showers down upon those whom He has saved, we could only begin to scratch the surface. God is so good to us and He pours out so much grace in our lives.

In our lesson today, we get a beautiful explanation of why salvation is our greatest need. Not only do we see our need, but we see how God has met that need for us. As the Apostle Paul writes to the Christians in Ephesus, they are reminded of the spiritually dead condition of their past, and of the new life that is now theirs because of what Jesus did for them. We will learn that we should never take this for granted. **Jesus died that we might live.**

### **EPHESIANS 2:1-3**

**And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,**

**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,**

**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.**

Non-Christians do not understand God, for they cannot grasp the concept that God's Holy Spirit lives inside of Christians (1 Corinthians 2:14). Yet before we knew God, we were spiritually dead and unable to understand the spiritual things of God. Someone who is spiritually dead has no communication with God and lives a life that is totally separated from Him. Sin has killed us spiritually, and because of it, unbelievers are dead to God (Colossians 2:13).

The fact that all people, without exception, commit sin proves that they are in the sinful nature. In our Bible passage, we see that there are three forces that encourage mankind in his disobedience. The world, the devil, and the flesh all influence mankind to turn from God with an attitude of pride and rebellion.

Does this mean there are any good people who are not Christians? There are many people who do good to others and compare themselves to criminals. From a human perspective, we would say they are very good indeed. But on God's absolute scale, no one is good enough or absolutely perfect. Even the nicest and best person will not be

perfectly holy. There will be some mistake or sin that they will make. Sinful man can not stand before a holy and righteous God without blame. Only through uniting our lives to Christ's perfect life can we become good in God's sight. **Jesus died that we might live.**

### **EPHESIANS 2:4-7**

**But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,**

**even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),**

**and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,**

**that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**

Now comes the good news! We have looked at the hopeless condition of sinful man, but God has revealed His great love and mercy, so we no longer have to live under the power of sin. The little, tiny phrase "but God" changes everything for us. We see that it is God who provides for us the answer to our problem of sin and separation from God.

We learn that Jesus Christ destroyed the penalty of sin and its power over our lives on the cross. **Jesus died that we might live.**

Before we are Christians it is hard to understand God's mercy and love because we are separated from Him. It is hard to imagine the horrifying existence of Hell for eternity. God never intended anyone to spend eternity in Hell. So He made a way that no one would ever have to go to that terrible place. Out of His mercy and love He provided salvation through His Son, Jesus. The Bible says that WHOEVER will believe in Jesus will be saved.

Through God's mercy we receive His undeserved grace. Mercy means that we don't get what we deserve (death), but grace means that He gives us what we don't deserve (eternal life).

Then, because of Christ's resurrection, we know that our bodies will also be raised from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:2-23) and that we have been given the power to live the Christian life now (Ephesians 1:19). **Jesus died that we might live.**

## **Memory Verse Bracelets**

Use 1/2" ribbon (10-12") long and one bead for each bracelet (or use heavy paper, leather, plastic, etc.).

Write Ephesians 2:8-9 on a bracelet. Decorate with markers, then thread both ends through the bead, each going into the bead in the opposite direction, and then tie off the ends.

### **EPHESIANS 2:8,9**

**For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.**

The wonderful expression of God's love to those who are spiritually dead is everlasting life. We cannot begin to understand all of the riches of His grace that He gives to us.

Our salvation is a gift of God, not a reward for doing good things. The only way we can receive this gift of grace is through believing in Jesus. We never do good things to make God like us or accept us, but we do good things because we love Him and are thankful that He has saved us.

Grace simply means:

God's  
Riches  
At  
Christ  
Expense

Because of God's grace we receive salvation completely apart from anything good that we do. So often we think we must do something to earn salvation, but it is already been provided through Jesus.

God brought us life through the death and resurrection of His Son. God did it all for us as a great expression of His love. Though sin worked against us, God worked for us.

## **EPHESIANS 2:10**

**For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**

The beautiful picture of salvation is the workmanship of God's love and grace upon His children. Believers are God's workmanship, because they have been created in Christ Jesus to do good works for His glory. This is a work that only God could do. Think about a potter with a big lump of clay. God is the potter and we are the clay. The clay is pretty ugly at first in a big gray lump. But as the potter begins to work with it, spin it on his wheel, shape it with his hands and mold it, it will become a beautiful work of art. The word "workmanship" is literally "work of art." When we are saved our lives become God's work of art and He makes something beautiful out of our lives.

God has prepared a path of good works for believers, which He will perform in and through them as they walk by faith. As we realize God's love towards us, out of gratitude of His love, we will seek to help and serve others with kindness, love and goodness, and not merely please ourselves.

God's intention is that our salvation will result in a work of service, to bring glory and honor to Him. We are not saved merely for our own benefit, but for His and His glory as we are equipped to build up His church (Eph. 4:12).

Salvation truly is our greatest need. Without God's work of grace, we would face an empty and hopeless eternity of sorrow, and pain, but the life of Christ and His resurrection power that saves us can help us live for Him with a new hope and a purpose. We can look forward to eternity and live our lives for the glory of God. **Jesus died that we might live.**

## **Wrong Tool**

Teacher brings hammer/nail (partly driven into a block of wood), screwdriver/screw, scissors/paper, spoon/dry beans/2 bowls etc.

Place in plain sight during circle time, but mix up the tools (put with the wrong tasks). Let volunteers come to try the tasks. After all of the tools are tried with the given task, have them put the tools with the correct jobs. Like the tools, we are also made for a specific task, good works. Let's produce good works in our lives like we have been made to do!

## **PRAYER**

Lead the children in a prayer of thankfulness to the Lord for the grace and mercy that He has poured out into our lives. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.