

North Christian Church -

Pastor Ed Collins

www.nccdighton.org

10/18/16 - The "Difficult" Passages - Grace and Works -

Part 9

Ask Yourselves

Who do you believe opened your eyes to the Gospel - you, or God? Hint: you were born in complete darkness.

Salvation, while there is an element of human consideration to it, is not a rational decision, strictly speaking.

Rationalizing God

When by self-deception man THINKS he has some control in salvation, that's when he thinks he can put God on trial; that he, man, can set the parameters of salvation and satisfying God.

*** What Happened to Authority? diagram ***

God Is Holy and Sovereign

Authority is designed to demand compliance. God is the Sovereign Authority in the Universe, yet man has postured himself like a typical teenager, supposing God ought to beg him for his submission. Wrong, wrong, WRONG!!! Sorry man, it doesn't work that way, especially not with the Gospel!

Mt 28:18

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."

1Tim 5:17

The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.

Authority-Orientation

A person who doesn't receive God's grace is arrogant. The Bible is grace. Your ability to read is grace. Your pastor is grace. His blogs/books are grace. Your whole life is grace. If you reject any of these things, you are proving yourself arrogant. You are rejecting authority.

Eph 1-2

You must understand God's grace and what it includes at salvation in Eph 1-2:7 before you will understand the fullness of Eph 2:8-9! God is not only just/righteous, He is Holy! Too many people focus solely on certain attributes rather than His essence, His Person.

"dead in your trespasses and sins"

"Dead" refers to spiritual death (complete separation from the Light). "For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly" (Ro 5:6). A "dead" creature cannot reconcile themselves to the Holy God of the Universe.

"by nature children of wrath"

The very nature of the unsaved is unholy, "living in the lusts of [their] flesh" (Eph 2:3) (as opposed to the saved, who have been given a "new nature" (2Pe 1:4)). This is wholly consistent with being "dead in [their] trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1).

"even when...dead...made us alive"

This means that being born spiritually dead precludes any man from saving himself, or contributing anything righteous to the equation. God's grace includes all aspects of salvation, including the call to repentance and saving faith (two sides of the same coin).

"surpassing"

from hyperballo - surpass, exceed, transcend; in context, refers to God's grace performing works in man that even believers cannot fully understand yet; same word used in 2Co 3:10 and Eph 3:19.

Eph 1-2

You must understand God's grace and what it includes at salvation in Eph 1-2:7 before you will understand the fullness of Eph 2:8-9! God is not only just/righteous, He is Holy! Too many people focus solely on certain attributes rather than His essence, His Person.

Eph 2:8-9

If a person doesn't understand what it means to be "saved" (e.g. - that they are saved from sin, not "from Hell"), how will they ever fully understand this magnificent passage? They cannot.

Eph 2:8-9

A person who rejects all of God's grace at salvation rejects salvation, itself. Such a person is akin to the rich man in Lk 18:18 who wanted eternal life but wanted to keep his self life.

Eph 2:8-9

It's impossible for God's grace to pronounce a person righteous, judicially, and "allow" them to remain in the domain of sin. Salvation is not merely a judicial issue, it is an issue of life and death.

"for good works"

When God saves a person, He "creates" them "in Christ Jesus" for the purpose of "good works" (Eph 2:10). Believers are "born again" (Jn 3:3), created as "new creatures" (2Co 5:17) that are forevermore inclined to abide in righteousness

(having eternal life, itself).