



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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By Grace Ye Are Saved!

Focus Verse: Ephesians 2:8 -For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

Lesson Text: Luke 19:1-10; Ephesians 2:4-8

Truth About God: God is gracious to all.

Truth For My Life: I will respond to grace through repentance.

God has made His grace available for all who have *“had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind”* (Ephesians 2:3). According to Romans 3:23, we are all included: *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”* Thankfully, that is not the final word on the matter. Paul continued his thought: *“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”* (Romans 3:24). This free and undeserved grace saves all of us from living a life governed by sin and the authority of the evil one.

God recognizes our predicament as human beings and, in His great love, offers us rescue and redemption. *“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”* (Ephesians 2:4-5). When we are outmatched and incapable of conquering sin, the kingdom of darkness, and death on our own. Not even our religious activities can save us. We do not earn our salvation by our good deeds: how many hours we have banked in prayer or meals we have missed by fasting. A fully completed Bible reading chart or perfect attendance on the church roll does not bring about salvation. **While these spiritual disciplines are some signs of a transforming disciple, only God’s grace saves us.**

Perhaps the familiar saying like **“you can’t get something for nothing”** has distorted our understanding of the biblical concept of grace. The influence of our contemporary way of thinking may cause us to think of our relationship with God as transactional—**“I must do spiritual activity X to get God to love me.”** This type of mentality can turn God’s grace into something to be earned, yet this is entirely opposite of what grace means. **Grace is undeserved and unearned; grace is a gift we receive.**

Acknowledging that our salvation does not depend on us requires humility. The apostle Peter instructed: “Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5). A strong and necessary link exists between grace and humility. Humility acknowledges, **“I am not perfect.”** Humility understands our need for growth and improvement. Humility allows us to accept grace because humility allows us to truly repent.

Jesus demonstrated God’s great grace when He encountered Zacchaeus while passing through Jericho. Zacchaeus was not popular due to the job he chose. He was a Jew working for the Romans as a chief tax collector, which likely meant he was viewed as a traitor. Not only that, but it seems he had charged his fellow Jewish citizens extra on their taxes to profit from the surplus. He was getting rich off them. Zacchaeus certainly fit the description of an individual walking *“according to the course of this world, . . . fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind”* (Ephesians 2:2-3). Zacchaeus had risen to the top of the ranks of swindling tax collectors, and he abused his authority by getting rich off the hard-earned money of others.

Interestingly, Zacchaeus climbed a tree in order to see Jesus. That act alone showed his willingness to lay aside decorum and propriety he was used to. His statement in Luke 19:8 was evidence of deep sorrow and a desire for change in his life. After he repented, Jesus identified Zacchaeus as a son of Abraham. Like Zacchaeus, we must take an honest look at our attitudes and actions and then humbly admit we are not perfect and we have chosen wrongly.

From a purely physical and tangible perspective, he was indeed a sinner. But thankfully, God’s view of us is not from an earthly perspective; He sees our truest identity—God created us in His image, for His purpose, by His design. **God’s actions toward us are not motivated by our labels but by His love.**

We too live free because of God’s grace. We cannot save ourselves or remove the stubborn stain of one single sin. We need His grace. Thankfully, He is as willing to give His grace to us as He gave His grace to Zacchaeus. Let us humble ourselves, admit we need Him, repent of our sin, be born again, and live out our lives in full view of His glorious, cleansing, healing grace. Zacchaeus’s story and our stories testify that God is gracious to all.