

THE GRACE OF GOD AT THE CROSS
Hebrews 2:6-13

Intro: Salvation is the grand theme of Scripture. And when I say that I am saying that Christ is the grand theme of Scripture because He is salvation, He is the Saviour. And when I say that salvation and Christ together constitute the grand theme of Scripture, I am including all that is included in salvation: justification, sanctification, and glorification. Salvation spans all of time, from eternity to eternity. It was conceived by the Godhead in eternity past, and all of the glory of it will be viewed eternally when time has come to an end! Therefore, the person who would understand the Scriptures must focus his attention on Christ and on the glorious work of Christ in salvation. That is the heart of Scripture, and that is the basis of our fellowship together. We enjoy fellowship with each other as those who have been redeemed to God by Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Now one word that is used repeatedly throughout Scripture in connection with salvation is the word grace. The grace of God has to do with the love of God, the mercy of God, the goodness of God, the compassion of God, the lovingkindness of God, and all such expressions. It describes salvation as something which is wholly undeserved by man. It means that if God had given us what we do deserve it would have been just the opposite of salvation; it would have meant eternal banishment from the presence of God. But God has seen fit to extend grace to sinners, and the whole account is given to us in the Bible. Tonight as we prepare to remember the Lord Jesus Christ in His death, I want to consider with you these few verses in Hebrews 2 with reference to salvation by the grace of God.

According to this text, how was the grace of God manifested at the Cross of Christ?

I. IN THE FACT THAT THERE WAS A CROSS.

Note v. 10: "by whom are all things.

In its context this statement has to do with all things having to do with salvation. God not only designed it, He made Himself the Guarantor of it. Man did not deserve it, but God provided salvation anyway!

There did not have to be a Cross, but because of the grace of God, there was!

II. IN THE PERSON WHO DIED ON THE CROSS.

One of the chief questions in designing salvation was, Who would be the Redeemer? Who could be the Redeemer?

It could not be any ordinary man because all are under the judgment of God. He had to be a man to be a substitute for men; he had to be more than a man to be able to satisfy God.

And so the incarnation of the Son of God was ordained. Look at the way it is expressed here:

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death,
crowned with glory and honour . . .

All of this has to do with His humanity. The writer of Hebrews is not saying here that "glory and honour" were the results of His work, although they were, but the "glory and honour" of Deity were to be seen in His humanity. Is this not what we have been learning from the Gospel of John?

There never has been, and there never will be, a Person like the Lord Jesus Christ.

But the grace of God was seen at the Cross in a third way:

III. IN THOSE WHO WERE THE OBJECTS OF HIS SAVING WORK.

We have this at the end of v. 9:

. . . that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

He tasted the bitterness of death as the awful penalty for sin--not His own, but the sins of those for whom he died.

I could speak here about the total depravity of man, because the hearts of all for whom He died were and are exactly the same-- Guilty, vile, and helpless, we;
Spotless Lamb of God was He.

The only way anyone could be saved was by grace because there is not a speck of merit in any of us.

But let me show you from this passage that the grace of God is a distinguishing grace.

But, you say, this sounds like universal redemption--that Christ died to save all men. I can hear someone saying, "I thought you at Trinity Bible Church believed in a particular redemption, in a definite atonement, in what has been called, limited atonement! What will you do with this verse?

All right, let us read verse 10.

Let me ask you a question: Did Christ really accomplish anything at the Cross, or did He just try to? Did He guarantee the salvation of any sinners, or was there just

a provision in the hope that some would be inclined to receive Christ, and thus validate the work of Christ by their faith?

What was Christ doing at the Cross?

He was "bringing many sons unto glory"--not trying to, but bringing them, guaranteeing that they would come! He died as "the captain of their salvation."

Note the word "many"--"many sons." He did not die to save all men. He died for the "many sons" whom the Father had appointed for salvation. It was for all of them that He died--all kinds of men and women and children from every tongue and tribe and nation. God's elect are to be found throughout the world in every generation.

God's grace is a distinguishing grace. If He determined that there would be salvation, and He did, then He also had the right to determine who would be saved, and He did this also. It was a definite atonement that Christ came to accomplish. He has chosen His son.

Note v. 13b where the Lord says, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." You see, the children did not even come on their own; they were given by the Father to the Son.

One further word on this point. Note that our Lord is called "the captain of their salvation." "The captain." This is the Greek word which means,
the Sovereign,
the Efficient Cause,
the Leader,
the Chief.

In Heb. 12:2 it is translated "author." Cf. also Acts 3:15; 5:31.

The Lord is sovereign, not man. The Father determined who would be saved, Christ died to guarantee their salvation, and the Holy Spirit is at work throughout the world in every generation bringing the chosen ones one by one.

But notice also that the grace of God is seen at the Cross . . .

IV. IN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CHRIST'S WORK.

I have already touched on this, but let me call your attention to two statements:

A. V.10: "in bringing many sons unto glory."

This does not just mean heaven, but it means glorification! It means final conformity to the likeness of Christ. Christ's death guaranteed that!

- B. Also v. 10: "to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

In what sense did an already perfect Saviour need to be perfected?

It had to do with accomplishing a finished work. It was through His death on the Cross that He did everything necessary for the salvation of those for whom He died.

What a Saviour! There is nothing left for man to do.

One more evidence of God's grace at the Cross:

- V. IN THE ULTIMATE, could I say, PRIMARY, OBJECTIVE OF CHRIST'S WORK ON THE CROSS.

The Son had a greater purpose than even the salvation of sinners. Do you know what it was?

It is seen in the expression, "for whom are all things" (v. 10).

Christ died to save those who were chosen by the Father, but He died pre-eminently for the glory of the Father.

Concl: This is the Saviour we remember tonight--not One Who died hoping that some would be saved, but One Who died knowing that all for whom He died would with absolute certainty be drawn to Himself and saved eternally.

Let our time at the table be a time of worship for the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit as we remember Him in particular Who suffered and died that we might be brought to God as His sons, destined to share His likeness.