

Time Audit Chronicles: Saved by Grace Through Faith (Ephesians 2:1-10)

Prologue: A New Life in Christ

The Presswood family sat in their living room, reading **Ephesians 2:1-10**, where the apostle Paul explains the profound truth that salvation is a **gift of grace** through faith, not something earned by works. Ariel was particularly intrigued by the idea that God's grace, not human effort, is what makes salvation possible. Alice, holding Mr. Fluffernutter, imagined herself walking through a field of gifts, each one marked with the word "grace."

"Daddy," Ariel asked, "Why does Paul say that we're saved by **grace** and not by anything we do? Doesn't God want us to do good things?"

Ryan smiled, appreciating the depth of her question. "That's a great question, Ariel. God absolutely wants us to do good things, but Paul is explaining that our **salvation**—our ability to have a relationship with God and eternal life—doesn't come from the good things we do. It's something only **God** can give us because we could never earn it on our own. Salvation is a **gift**, not a reward."

Ariel tilted her head, trying to understand. "So, we don't do good things to get saved—we do good things because we're already saved?"

"Yes, exactly," Ryan said. "When we truly understand what God has done for us through Jesus, it changes our hearts. And from that gratitude, we naturally want to live lives that honor Him."

"Let's use the **Time Audit Machine** to explore what Paul meant when he wrote this to the church in **Ephesus**," Ryan said. "We'll see what life was like before Jesus, what happens when we're saved by grace, and how that changes everything."

The Journey Begins: From Death to Life (Ephesians 2:1-3)

The **Time Audit Machine** powered up, and the family found themselves walking through a dim and lifeless landscape. The air was heavy, and the surroundings were barren and bleak. Ariel shivered.

"Where are we?"

"This represents the state of humanity before we come to know Jesus," Ryan explained. "Paul begins this passage by describing how we were once **dead in trespasses and sins**. This is a picture of spiritual death—separated from God because of our sin."

Ariel looked around, her face solemn. "So, before Jesus, people are like this—lost and without hope?"

"Yes," Ryan said. "Paul writes, '**Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience**' (Ephesians 2:2). Before we are saved, we're living under the influence of **sin** and the world's values, far away from God."

Alice, clutching Mr. Fluffernutter tightly, whispered, “That sounds really scary.”

“It is,” Ryan said gently. “But the good news is coming. God doesn’t leave us in this state. Let’s keep walking.”

God’s Mercy and Love (*Ephesians 2:4-5*)

The scene shifted, and suddenly the landscape was bathed in light. Flowers bloomed where there had been barrenness, and a warm breeze replaced the oppressive air. Ariel gasped. “What’s happening?”

“This is what Paul describes next,” Ryan said with a smile. “He writes, ‘**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).”

“Wow,” Ariel said, looking around in awe. “So, God loved us even when we were still dead in our sins?”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “That’s the beauty of **grace**. God didn’t wait for us to fix ourselves or become good enough. Out of His **mercy** and **love**, He made us alive with Christ—He saved us even though we didn’t deserve it.”

Ariel’s eyes filled with wonder. “So, it’s all because of His **love** for us—not because of anything we could do?”

“That’s right,” Ryan said. “God’s love and grace are the foundation of our salvation. It’s not about earning His favor—it’s about receiving the gift He freely gives us through Jesus.”

The Gift of Grace Through Faith (*Ephesians 2:6-9*)

The family continued walking through the transformed landscape, which now seemed alive with vibrant colors and music. Ryan stopped and pointed to a shining banner that read: “**For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.**” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

“This is the heart of the passage,” Ryan said. “Paul explains that we are saved by **grace**—God’s unmerited favor—through **faith** in Jesus. It’s not something we earn through good works; it’s a **gift** from God.”

Ariel stared at the banner. “So, even if we tried our hardest, we could never earn salvation?”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “Salvation is not about what we do—it’s about what **Jesus has already done** for us. If it were something we could earn, then we could boast about it. But salvation is entirely God’s work, so all the glory goes to Him.”

Alice spoke up, clutching Mr. Fluffernutter. “So, it’s like when you get a present—you don’t earn it, you just take it!”

“That’s a perfect way to think about it,” Ryan said. “Salvation is a **gift**—all we have to do is receive it by **faith**.”

Created for Good Works (*Ephesians 2:10*)

As they walked further, they came to a workshop where people were building, planting, and creating. Ryan explained, “Paul finishes this section by saying, ‘**For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them**’ (Ephesians 2:10).”

Ariel watched as the workers joyfully created, their actions flowing naturally from their hearts. “So, we don’t do good works to get saved—we do good works because we’re already saved?”

“That’s exactly right,” Ryan said. “Paul is telling us that once we’re saved, we become **God’s masterpiece**, created for a purpose. The **good works** we do are a natural response to the grace we’ve received. They’re not a way to earn salvation—they’re a way to reflect God’s love and grace to the world.”

“So, the good works are like the fruit of what God has done in us,” Ariel said thoughtfully. “They show that we’re alive in Christ.”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “When we’re saved by grace, our lives become a testimony to God’s goodness. We’re not saved **by** good works, but we’re saved **for** good works—works that God has already prepared for us to do.”

Takeaway: Saved by Grace Through Faith

Back in the garage, the **Time Audit Machine** powered down, and the family sat quietly, reflecting on what they had learned. Ariel turned to her father, her face glowing with understanding.

“Daddy,” she said, “I think I understand now. Salvation isn’t about trying to be good enough—it’s about trusting in what Jesus has already done for us. And when we really understand His grace, it changes us so we want to live for Him.”

Ryan smiled, proud of her insight. “That’s exactly it, Ariel. **Grace** is God’s gift to us, and our response to that gift is to live lives that reflect His love and bring glory to Him. We don’t earn salvation through our good works, but we show our gratitude through the way we live.”

Ariel nodded. “I want to live like that—knowing that I’m saved by grace, and letting that shape everything I do.”

“Me too!” Alice chimed in, hugging Mr. Fluffernutter.

Ryan hugged both girls, his heart full. “That’s the amazing thing about grace—it’s for everyone who believes. And when we live in the light of that grace, it changes everything.”

Key Teaching: Salvation Is a Gift of Grace

In **Ephesians 2:1-10**, Paul reminds us that we are saved by **grace through faith**, not by our works. Before we come to Christ, we are spiritually **dead** in our sins, but God, in His great **mercy and love**, makes us alive with Christ. Salvation is not something we can earn—it is a **gift** from God. However, this gift transforms us, and we are created in Christ to do **good works** that glorify Him. This passage challenges us to live in gratitude for God's grace, trusting in Him for salvation and allowing His love to shape the way we live and serve others.