

HOW DOES GOD'S GRACE SAVE US?

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Paul said, "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" (Eph. 2:8-9). Without any doubt, we are saved by the grace of God! The Greek word from which we get the word grace means "*graciousness (as gratifying), of manner or act*" (e-sword, Strong G5463). The secular definition for grace is, "unmerited divine assistance given humans for their regeneration or sanctification" (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/grace>). Both these definitions are exactly right and mean basically the same thing: grace is God's favor given to mankind in order to renew him. But how does that take place?

Paul mentioned to the Ephesians two ingredients that had to be combined in order for them to be saved: grace and faith. In fact, he said that salvation came **by** grace **through** faith. God definitely has to have the desire to save mankind, even though it is not deserved, in order for us to be saved. However, we have to possess faith in order to be able to access God's grace. Remember the words of James when he said, "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble" (Js. 2:18). His point is that the demons, the spirits of the evil dead, believe in Christ as the only begotten Son of God, yet they will be lost eternally. Note the entire context of what James said:

"Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect" (Js. 2:17-22).

In order for God's grace to be beneficial to us, we have to produce the correct faith that allows grace to affect us. A correct faith is a working faith that performs the works of God! Mankind cannot be saved by works of men; we can **only** be saved by works of God!! The origin of the work determines if the work is of God or if it is of man. When God commands one to perform a certain task, it is a work of God not man, such as baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 22:16).

God has instructed us on exactly which works He has required from every person who desires for His grace to abound in his or her life. The people asked Jesus, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God” (Jn. 6:27). He replied, “**This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent**” (Jn. 6:28). It is clear that one’s belief in Christ is a work of faith in God. However, one must be an active participant in faithfulness. James demanded, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does” (Js. 1:22-25).

When one believes in Christ (Jn. 8:24), repents of past sins (Acts 2:38), confesses that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 8:37), submits to baptism in water for the forgiveness of sins (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21), and then continues a life of faithfulness (Mt. 10:22; 2 Tim. 4:6-8; Rev. 2:10), then God’s grace saves him through faith. Each one of the acts described is a work of God and not of man, and each one has been commanded in order to gain salvation.

God’s grace saves each person that has ever been saved or will be saved, because without it there is no salvation; but according to the inspired Word of God, no person can be saved without the works of God being demonstrated in his life. James warned, “You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only” (Js. 2:24). That is how the grace of God works in the lives of His creation and brings them to salvation!