

Title: Undeserved
Text: Eph 2: 4-7
Date: Oct 8, 2023
Place: SGBC, NJ

Ephesians 2: 4: But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5: Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6: And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: 7: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Subject: Undeserved

Proposition: Undeserved describes our salvation.

God's election is undeserved. Redemption is undeserved. Predestination unto the adoption of children is undeserved. Regeneration and sanctification is undeserved. Chastening and preservation is undeserved. Resurrection and glorification is undeserved. Salvation is undeserved! Salvation is all of God's grace!

When do we begin to see "*the exceeding riches of God's grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus?*" In proportion to how much we see how undeserving we are due to the exceeding sinfulness of our own sin and in proportion to how we see that Christ has put away all our sins and robed us in his righteousness, is how God shows us *the exceeding riches of God's grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

Romans 5: 20: Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: 21: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

When we see our sin and when we see how grace did much more abound through Christ's righteousness then as our text says, we begin seeing "*God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins.*" We see it was not we who gave ourselves life "*but God hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*" We begin to see the exceeding riches of God toward us in that God "*hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*" This is why God saves his child. God saves us, "*That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*"

At no point is God's exceeding riches due to any merit in us. Christ sat down with publicans and sinners to eat. The Pharisees murmured, "Why does your Master eat with publicans and sinners?"

Matthew 9: 12: But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. 13: But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

SEEING WE ARE UNDESERVING MAKES US LOATH OUR OWN SELF AND OUR SINS

This is the effect God promised to work in each child who God quickens to behold God's riches toward us in Christ Jesus. The effect of God's free and sovereign grace to us in Christ, the effect of God's mercy and forgiveness for Christ's sake, makes us hate our own self and our own sins.

Ezekiel 36: 25: Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26: A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27: And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*. 28: And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. 29: I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. 30: And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. 31: Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that *were* not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. 32: Not for your sakes do I *this*, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel.

By God's grace revealing Christ our Righteousness to us, we remember our own evil ways that were not good. Then we hate ourselves in our own sight for our iniquities and for our abominations. Then we are ashamed and confounded for our own ways.

It when we see how wretched we are that we see that God saves by grace. God declares salvation is by his grace, "*Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel.*" From the day he calls us, God begins showing us salvation is all of his grace. It is not due to any merit in us, not due to our repentance, not even due to our misery and sorrow—"not for your sakes do I this, saith the LORD God, be it known unto you" Salvation is undeserved! Salvation is all of God's grace! It is all due to Christ's Righteousness to glorify Christ to give Christ all preeminence.

This is how God shuts our mouth from glorying in self and makes us give God all the glory. In Ezekiel 16, the Lord declared there was no difference in Judah, the ten tribes or the Gentiles who God saves. God said Judah and Israel despised his covenant and broke it and hated God even as the Gentiles hated God. Yet, it did not change God's grace toward his elect.

Ezekiel 16: 59: 60: Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. 61: Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. 62: And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD: 63: That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD.

Each child God saves—Jew and Gentile—are made to remember our own personal ways and be ashamed. This is how God makes us receive our brethren. He takes away our external differences when he makes us see we are all only sinners. Whether Jew or Gentile, circumcision or uncircumcision, rich or poor, bond or free, God makes us see we are one in Christ and so makes us receive one another, "*when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant.*" We receive one another because we see there is no difference in us. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." It was not by our works keeping covenant that God saves us. It is by God's everlasting covenant of grace ordered and sure in all things in and by Christ alone.

Then God makes us shut our mouths from boasting and makes us glory only in the Lord—"*That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD.*" God makes us see he is pacified—propitiated toward us—by Christ's blood and righteousness alone. That is what shuts our mouth from boasting. That is what makes us glory only in the Lord.

SEEING WE ARE UNDESERVING MAKES US THANKFUL FOR THE EXCEEDING RICHES OF GOD'S MERCIES

As believers God makes his child know more and more the exceeding riches of God's mercies to us who are such wretched sinners. The more undeserving we see ourselves the more we rejoice in God's mercy and forgiveness for Christ's sake.

Psalm 103: 10: He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11: For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

Does a sanctified child of God, who has been given a fear of God, yet need God's mercies due to our sins? Ask one. This is the difference between self-made religion and true religion. God's child sees he is a sinner in need of God's mercies every day. We fear and reverence God by his grace. We believe on Christ by God's grace. We love one another by his grace. We seek to obey Christ in all things by his grace. But our sins are ever before us. We see our need of God's mercies every day.

The difference is God's child sees God has not dealt with us according to what we deserve—"*He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.*" Every day, God's child glorifies God, praising him that God has not poured out wrath on us according to what our sins merit. He has not rewarded us the fierce fury of divine justice which our iniquities earn. The greater we see our sins, the more we see God's mercy is greater—"*For as high as the heavens above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.*"

Sadly, there is a depraved Pharisee yet in our sin-nature. It is what makes us begin to mark sins in others. But when we begin to mark iniquities in our brethren, how does God turn us from that? God makes us see our own sin and his rich forgiveness.

Psalm 103: 3: If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? 4: But *there is* forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

The more we see God deal with us in mercy for the sake of Christ our Righteousness, the more the Spirit grows us in fear of judging one for whom Christ died. The more we see God's free forgiveness due only to the exceedingly rich value of Christ's blood, the more we behold Christ's power to make us personally stand. He grows us in fear of judging another man's servant. My brother is Christ's servant. Christ his own Master shall make him stand.

He keeps showing you great mercy and forgiveness for Christ's sake and that is what makes us delight in mercy and forgiveness. "*There is* forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." The child of God only forgives others because he fears God. Without the fear of God we cannot forgive and show mercy. But we are given this fear of God, and are grown in reverence for God, by God showing us mercy every day for Christ's sake.

Lamentations 3: 22: *It is of* the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. 23: *They are new every morning: great is* thy faithfulness.

The problem we run into in forgiving another is because we know the one needing forgiveness has sinned. How is God just to show you, his believing child, mercy when you have sinned? How it is just to show mercy and forgive you of your sin? The same way he was just to show you mercy the first hour. It is because,

Psalm 103: 12: As far as the east is from the west, *so far* hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Do you think God made north, south, east and west and gave us wisdom to use a compass only so we would know which way to travel? The preeminent reason was that he might declare to us “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.” All things were made by Christ and FOR CHRIST. Next time you ask directions or look at a compass, remember, “as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”

God is just to forgive the sins of his people because Christ paid the debt we owed to justice. “*As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*” God clothed us in Christ’s righteousness through faith because Christ put our sins away and made us righteous by his obedience. God is just to forgive us our sins because Jesus Christ the Righteous is our Advocate and Propitiation with the Father.

Child of God, when you fall, it is just for God to show you mercy and forgiveness. It is to show you again that your Righteousness is not in you. It is to show you that the Righteousness God has provided for you has not changed due to your sin. It is because the righteousness of every redeemed child of God is Christ at God’s right hand. Remember that about yourself and about your fellow believers.

Child of God, when you see your sins, when you see you deserve for God to cast you out forever, what restores peace to your inward man? What increases your faith and love? God draws you to the wounded feet of your Redeemer and renews you to behold, Christ hath removed your transgressions from you as far as the east is from the west. Oh the blessedness! Oh the happiness God renews in our hearts!

Romans 4: 6: David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7: *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.* 8 *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

Psalm 103: 13 *Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.* 14 *For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.*

SEEING WE ARE UNDESERVING MAKES US THANKFUL WE CAN DRAW NEAR TO GOD

Beholding our sin and the exceeding riches of God’s grace in his kindness toward us for Christ’s sake makes us thankful we can draw near to God and pour out our heart to him.

Daniel 9: 18: O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. 19: O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

Do you see that? We do not pray and “*we do not present our supplications for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies.*” It is only by God’s great mercies that God gives us confidence to pray and supplicate God.

Poor, needy sinners were afraid of the Pharisees. They knew the Pharisees would judge them and condemn them and put them out of the synagogue. But they were not afraid to come to Christ. Why? Scripture says, “*Due to thy lovingkindness, the children of men put their trust under the shadow of his wings.*” “*We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.*”

Remember in our Lord’s parable how the Pharisee prayed due to all his righteousness? That is not why God’s child prays to God. We supplicate God because we see God’s mercies to sinners like us.

Psalm 36: 7: How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

“*We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.*”

Undeserved! That one word describes every aspect of the salvation of each sinner God saves! God has and is saving us, “*That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*” The child of God does not sin that grace might abound. We are the only ones who truly hate sin because we see it is against God who loves us. But we do sin. Yet, the more we see our sins and the more we experience God justly showing us kindness and mercy due to Christ being our Righteousness, due to Christ having put away our transgressions, then the more we see the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Psalm 36:5: Thy mercy, O LORD, *is* in the heavens; *and* thy faithfulness *reacheth* unto the clouds. 6: Thy righteousness *is* like the great mountains; thy judgments *are* a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast. 7: How excellent *is* thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

Psalm 57:10: For thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

May God be pleased to work these things in us now by showing us the exceeding riches of his grace in Christ Jesus. **Amen!**