

III

Faith Alone

ROMANS 3:27–31

Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰ since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹ Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

READ | ROMANS 3:27–31

THINK ABOUT

We have been learning that central to “the heart of the Gospel” is the great truth of justification by faith alone, through grace alone, in Christ alone. Romans 3:21–31 contains some of the greatest words in the New Testament. We rejoice that we are justified not by what we do but rather through trusting in what Christ has done for us. We “are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (3:24).

It is essential that we get the Gospel right. There is only one Gospel! See Galatians 1:8 to learn how passionate Paul is in defending the heart of the Gospel.

An excellent guide as to whether you truly understand the heart of the Gospel is whether or not you are boasting in yourself or focused on self. A good test of a worship service is to ask, “Who is receiving the praise?” God alone is worthy of all praise. In the Gospel, Paul makes it clear that our boasting is excluded. If we contributed in any way to our salvation, we could boast, but it is all pure grace. See Ephesians 2:8–9.

Also, there is not one Gospel for Jews and another Gospel for Gentiles. How could there be? All of us have sinned, and all of us stand in need of the same remedy: justification by faith alone apart from works.

APPLY

It is easy in Christian circles to “boast” of our spirituality. Most of us don’t do this in an obvious way, but we may subtly give the impression of how spiritual we are. As sinful humans, we like the attention to be on ourselves; whereas in the Gospel, God receives all of the glory as it is all of His grace. For an example of how Jesus saw boasting, read Luke 18:9–14. When you give all the praise to God and don’t exalt yourself over other people, you are beginning to understand the heart of the Gospel.

THE BIG IDEA

The Apostle Paul presents yet another point relative to the Gospel and the law. Here it is clearly stated that justification by faith is not against the law, rather it complements and establishes it.

KEY POINTS

Biblical salvation leaves no room for boasting in human accomplishments (vv. 27–28).

Biblical salvation offers justification to everyone equally (vv. 29–30).

Biblical salvation confirms the law (v. 31).

LIFE APPLICATION

Since salvation is a free gift, it leaves no room for boasting.

Christ's work on the cross makes it possible for all people to be saved.

All humanity stands equal before the Lord.

DISCUSSION

How does the fact that salvation is free impact you?

How did God satisfy His holy nature and the law while saving mankind?

Do you think God would remain 100% holy and just had He not offered us salvation?

“FAITH ALONE”

Romans 3:27-31

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.

HYMN

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” — PSALM 23

My Faith Looks Up to Thee

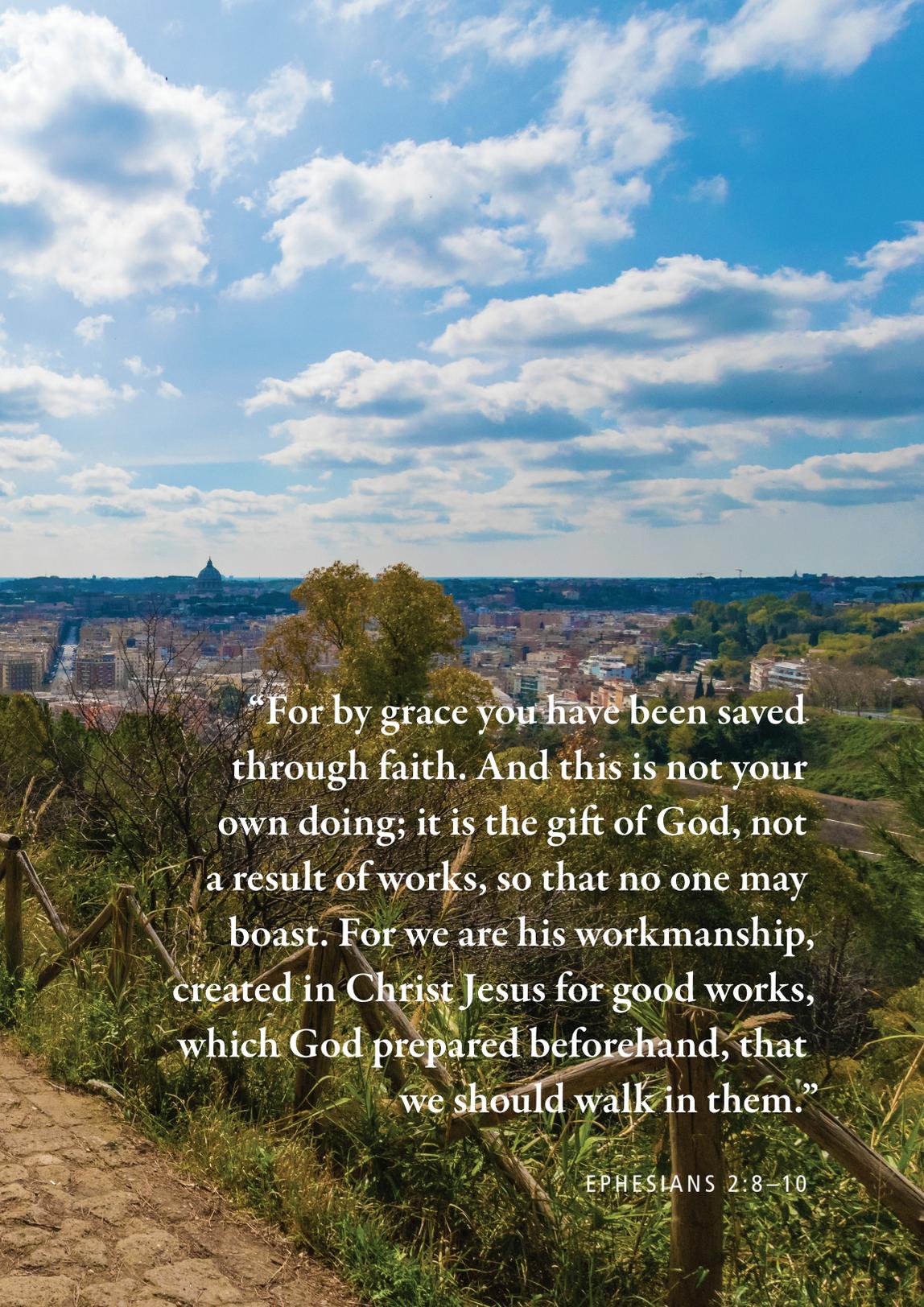
1. My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
2. May Thy rich grace im - part Strength to my faint - ing heart,
3. While life's dark maze I tread, And griefs to a - - round me spread,
4. When ends life's trans - ient dream, When death's cold sul - - len stream

Sa - - vior di - - vine! Now hear me while I pray, take all my
my zeal in - - spire! As Thou hast died for me, O may my
be Thou my Guide; Bid dark - ness turn to day, wipe sor - row's
ov - er me roll, Blest Sa - vior, then in love, fear and dis -

guilt a - way, O let me from this day be whol - ly Thine!
love to Thee, Pure warm, and change-less be, a liv - - ing fire!
tears a - way, Nor let me ev - er stray from Thee a - - - side,
trust re-move; O bear me safe a - bove, a ran - - - somed soul!

Text: Ray Palmer, 1830 Tune: Lowell Mason, 1832





“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

EPHESIANS 2:8–10