

SAVED THROUGH FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 • TV-028A

A television broadcast sermon delivered
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5TH, 1976

By
HENRY T. MAHAN

Transcribed, edited and published
APRIL 22ND, 2020

HENRY T. MAHAN TAPE LIBRARY

Zebulon Grace Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501
PH: 606-631-9053

Ephesians 2:8-9

“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.”

I’m reading from the book of **Ephesians chapter 2:8-9**; *“For by grace are you saved through faith, saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.”* That is our subject today; **“SAVED THROUGH FAITH,”**

Now, if there is any doctrine that is plainly taught, perfectly clear, and without question in the Word of God, it is that men are saved from sin, made children of God, become heirs of eternal life by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

If there is any doctrine in God’s Word, that is without question, that is perfectly clear; it is that men are saved, not by works, but by faith in Jesus Christ.

Listen to some Scriptures:

When our Lord spoke to His disciples after the resurrection He said this to them, found in **Mark 16:15-16**; *“Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned.”*

In the book of **John 3:14** the Lord says this; *“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so, must the Son of man be lifted up that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but*

SAVED THROUGH FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 • HENRY T. MAHAN

have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

And then, in **John 5:24** the Scripture says; *"Verily, verily, I say unto you: He that heareth my Word and believeth on Him that sent me hath eternal life shall not come into condemnation but hath eternal life."*

Paul writing in the book of **Romans 10:9-10** says; *"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead thou shalt be saved."*

So, if there's anything clearly taught in God's Word it is that we're saved from sin, we have eternal life and we're made heirs of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, faith is the saving grace. Faith is the saving grace on which all other graces depend. To believe in Christ is the foundation of everything. Our Lord said to Peter; Peter boasted that he would never deny the Lord, that if necessary; he would die with Him, that though all others might forsake Him, but Peter said, "I will not forsake you."

And the Master said; *"Peter, I've pray for you that your faith fail not."* Many things are going to fail. *"You will deny me, you will be offended, you will forsake me, but I've prayed for you that your faith fail not."*

That's the foundation grace. That's the grace upon which all other grace depends. *"Without faith it's impossible to please God."* That's what the Scripture says in **Hebrews 11:6**; *"Without faith it's impossible, (not difficult), impossible, (not hard), but impossible to please God."*

"For he that cometh to God, (whether for salvation, or for mercy, or in prayer) must believe that He is and that He's the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Whatever I do, whatever I know, whatever I have, whatever I say, without faith is of no effect. *"Without faith it's impossible to please God."*

And also, without faith there can be no call for mercy. In **Romans 10:13** the Scripture says; *"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. But how shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?"*

If I don't believe in Christ I'm not calling upon Christ. If I don't trust Christ I'll certainly not call on Christ. So without faith, it's not only impossible to please God, but without faith there can be no call for mercy.

In **John 6:28**, some people came to the Master and they said; *"Master, what shall we do that we might work the works of God?"* And our Lord replied; *"This is the work of God; that you believe on Him whom God has sent."* That is the work of God, to believe on Christ. So, I can't even work the works of God without faith.

SAVED THROUGH FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Do you see how that faith is the foundation grace and without faith there is no other grace? There are no other fruits. It's the very foundation. That's the reason the Lord said; *"Peter; I have prayed for you that your faith fail not (for without faith it's impossible to please God)."*

Without faith there will be no call for mercy. Without faith I cannot work the works of God and then listen to this in **James 1:5**; *"Without faith prayer is a mockery."* Prayer is not a ritual; prayer is communion with God. Prayer is the breath of the redeemed child of God.

And without faith prayer becomes a ritual. It becomes a ceremony. It is mockery. That's what James says, now listen; *"If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, (in other words, pray for him). Let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like the wind, like the sea, tossed by the wind. Let not that man think that he'll receive anything of God."* Without faith prayer is of no avail.

And then my friend; without faith the blood of Christ avails you nothing, nothing at all. In **John 3:36**; *"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."* That is faith to believe Christ, to receive Christ and to trust Christ.

And if we trust Christ and believe on Him and rest in Him we have eternal life. But now listen; *"He that believeth not, shall not see life but the wrath of God abideth on him."*

Now, if there's anything clearly taught in the Scripture it is that salvation, redemption, eternal life, forgiveness, is by faith. It is not by church membership, not by works, not by experience, by faith. Faith is the foundation grace. It's the grace upon which everything else depends.

"For without faith it's impossible to please God." Without faith there can be no call for mercy. Without faith we cannot work the works of God. Without faith prayer is a mockery. Without faith the blood of Christ avails us nothing.

So, look to your faith, this is the foundation of peace. What did Paul write in Romans; *"Therefore being justified by faith; we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

This is the source of comfort. He hath said; *"I will never leave you or forsake you."* I believe it, therefore, I can say the Lord is my helper because He said, *"I'll never leave you."* I believe His Word. Paul said, *"I believe God."* It's the source of assurance; *"Sirs, be of good cheer for I believe God,"* he said.

The ship was sinking. It looked like that they were all going to perish. And Paul stood there with assurance, courage, confidence, comfort and he said; *"I'm not worried because God said to me this night not one soul will be lost. And sirs; I believe God."*

Thirdly: By way of introducing this message, faith in Christ can be and should be known.

You examine your heart, examine your motives, and examine your relationship with God. *"Examine yourselves."*

SAVED THROUGH FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 • HENRY T. MAHAN

You say, “Well, how can I know if I have faith?” Well you can. The Lord commanded that we know it. He said **in 2 Corinthians 13:5**; *“Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith.”* You examine your heart, examine your motives, and examine your relationship with God. *“Examine yourselves.”*

Now you can't examine me. You can't sit around and say: “Well I don't believe he's saved and I don't believe she's saved and I don't believe.” You don't know. There's no way you can tell about others but you can examine yourself. And that's what God commands you to do, *“Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith.”*

And I'm going to show you how in just a few moments. Peter also said in **2 Peter 1:10**; *“Wherefore the rather brethren give diligence (this is important); to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things you shall never fail.”*

The people of God in the Scriptures knew their faith. Why Job said, *“I know that my Redeemer liveth; I know that He lives, (I'm confident. Write it on my tombstone, write it in a book) my Redeemer liveth and I know it.”*

That is the way David sought the Lord, he said, *“The Lord is my shepherd.”* He didn't say, “I hope He is, I trust He is, perhaps He is. I know He's my Shepherd. He's my refuge, He's my refuge, and I know that.”

And Paul sought that way; he said: *“I know whom I have believed, (confident) and that He's able to keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day.”* John said that; he said, *“We know that we've passed from death unto life.”*

So, you can know your faith. In fact, this assurance of faith, this assurance, this confidence that I'm in Christ, that Christ is in me, that I'm His child, that He's my Lord; this confidence is what leads a person to forsake all and follow Christ. The disciples said that; they said: *“Lord; we have forsaken all to follow thee.”*

And then our Lord said, *“If any man come after me; let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. If any man love father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, more than me, yea his own life also, he's not worthy of me.”*

What is it that causes a man to sell all that he has and purchase that pearl of great price? It's because he knows the value of it, because he believes in it, because he's confident that it's worth exactly what he knows its worth.

And that's what makes a man forsake everything for Christ. That's what makes a man put Christ first; it's that assurance, it's that faith, and it's that confidence in Christ. So our faith can be known.

SAVED THROUGH FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now I'm going to point out four things about faith. And I think this is very important and I want you to listen carefully. If you'd like to; why don't you jot these four things down. Maybe you'd like to go back later and think about it, study it, and look up these Scriptures. But here are four things about faith.

I've shown you the importance of faith. I've shown you that the Word of God teaches that there is no way of salvation except by faith. I've shown you from the Word of God how that, *"Without faith it's impossible to please God."*

And I've shown you from the Word of God that your faith in Christ can be known. Now, let's see something about faith, four things:

First of all, saving faith and I'm going to call it saving faith because all kinds of faith are not saving faith; there's different kinds of faith, but I'm talking about saving faith, redeeming faith, that faith that brings me into a living, vital, union, with Christ and that eternal faith.

First of all: Saving faith is born or arises out of need!

That's where it all comes from. In **Matthew 9:10-13** the Scripture says; "Our Lord was eating with Publicans and sinners. And some of the religious leaders, the Pharisees, were offended."

And they said to His disciples, they said; "Why does your Master eat with Publicans and sinners? Why does He have fellowship with these types of people, these sinners, these Publicans, harlots, and these kinds of folks; why does He associate with them?"

And our Lord knew their thoughts and this is what He said; now you look at it, **Matthew 9:10-13**; He said to them: *"I say unto you; the well have no need of a physician but they that are sick. Now you go learn what that means. I am not come to call the righteous, (the self-righteous, the super-righteous) to repentance; I am come to call sinners to repentance. The well do not need a physician."*

Why do men not call on Christ? They don't need Him. Why do men and women not flee to Christ? They don't need Him. There has not been a need felt, there has not been a need established. There's not been a need realized, the need of their hearts, the need of their souls, and the need of their future.

They don't feel it, they don't experience it, they don't understand it, and they don't cry. A man might have cancer and not go to the doctor because he doesn't know it. But, when a man discovers that he has it he's going to the doctor because he needs a physician; he's a sick man.

And the same thing is true of sinners; they are sinners. They're away from God, they're lost, they are in darkness, and they are perishing but they don't know it. They're crying; *"We're rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing."*

SAVED THROUGH FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And the Lord said; *“You don’t know it but you’re naked, poor, miserable, and blind.”* But when a man discovers his sin, when he discovers his need, when he discovers his guilt; he’ll cry for help.

Just like the Canaanite woman with a sick daughter. She came to Christ and she said, “Lord, help me, have mercy upon me. My daughter is grievously ill.” You see this cry for mercy was born of need. It arose out of a need. This woman needed Him and she asked Him to help.

The same thing is true of blind Bartimaeus as he sat there by the wayside begging. He was blind all of his life, the son of Timaeus, you remember. And he said, “What’s all the commotion?” And someone said, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.” And immediately he began to cry, *“Jesus, thou Son of David; have mercy on me.”*

Do you hear the need? Do you hear the urgency? Do you hear the cry out of the soul of a man who had a need? *“Jesus, thou Son of David; have mercy upon me.”* That’s where faith is born. He believed that Christ could do something for him because he needed something done.

And when you need something done that you can’t do, the preacher can’t do, the church can’t do, and the law can’t do, you’ll turn to Him who can.

The same thing is true of the Publican in the temple. He realized his sin. Now the Pharisee was over there bragging on himself; “Lord I thank you I’m not like other men and I’m just so glad I’m not like everybody else: I’m not an adulterer, I’m not unjust, and I’m not an extortioner. I fast, I tithe, and I give alms.”

But the Publican over here wouldn’t even lift his eyes to heaven, ashamed, guilty, and he cried; “Lord; be merciful to me the sinner.” Do you hear that cry? It arose out of need. That’s faith born of need.

The same things true of the thief on the cross who cried, *“Lord; remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.”*

There can be no cry for mercy until the need for mercy is felt, when my sins are before me, when death and judgment become real to me, when the wrath of God in condemnation floods in upon me, when Christ Jesus becomes my only source of help; that’s when I will believe.

Peter stepped out to walk on the water. The Lord said, *“Come to me.”* And Peter stepped out to walk on the water and he suddenly realized where he was. He heard the wind, he saw the clouds. He looked down and the sea was rough and he began to sink. That is when he cried; *“Lord, save me or I perish.”*

Need; faith is born of need. And when you become a needy creature, a needy sinner, when the Holy Spirit of God is pleased to let you see in the Word of God your guilt, in your heart, your sins, in your past, present, and future, your record, and the holiness of God, you’ll look to the one

SAVED THROUGH FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 • HENRY T. MAHAN

who can help you and you'll cry. And that's when He said, "*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*"

First of all saving faith is born of need!

Secondly: Saving faith rests on the naked Word of God, that's right, on the Word of God!

The foundation of faith is the Word of God, not experience, not feeling, not tradition, the Word of God. "Noah, there is going to be a flood; build an ark." And Noah built an ark believing God. "*Noah believed God and moved with fear.*" Noah believed God and moved with fear when God's Word came to him and told him what was going to take place. That's faith. It was based on the Word of God alone.

He had never seen a drop of water fall from heaven. It had not rained up till that time. The ground was watered by a midst and arose like in the Garden of Eden. And God said, "*There's going to be a flood.*" Noah believed Him, Noah believed God.

God said to Moses and the children of Israel; "*Bring in your cattle out of the fields there's going to be grievous hail put them in your barn.*" Those who took God at His Word, those who believed God's Word, acted in faith and their cattle were saved.

Also God said; "*Moses, tell the children of Israel I'm passing through Egypt tonight and midnight. The first born will die, the first born of every home, even the cattle on the hill, if you want to save your first born put some blood on the door and on the side posts, on the lintel and on the side posts and when I see the blood I'll pass over you,* (no experience, no vision, no dream, no feeling, the Word of God and they acted on the Word of God).

And the Word of God comes to you and me and says; "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.*" Faith requires no sign, only His Word. Saving faith does not require a sign. It believes the Word of God. They said when Christ was here; they said, "*Show us a sign.*" He said, "*No sign is going to be given but that of Jonah and the whale; (that's the Word of God, that's the only sign).*"

You know, the rich man in hell cried and said; "Father Abraham, if there's no hope for me, send Lazarus back to the earth that he might warn my brothers." And Abraham said, "*They have the Scriptures, they have Moses and the prophets.*"

"Oh he said, but no father Abraham, if one rose from the dead they would believe." And do you know what Abraham replied? "*If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe though one rose from the dead.*"

It's not miracles that bring men to Christ; it's the Word of God. It's not signs and visions and wonders that bring men to saving faith; it's the Word of God. Men believe the Word of God; "*Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.*"

SAVED THROUGH FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now I may see a vision tonight but a week later I may look back on that vision and say, “Did I really see that?” I may have an experience today and six months later look back on it and the experience is gone now. And I look back on it; did that really happen?

You see; these things come and go but the Word of God remains the same. And God says; *“Heaven and earth may pass away but not one jot or one tittle shall pass from my Word till it all be fulfilled.”*

“We have a more sure word of prophecy. You do well to take heed to it,” and that’s this book, God’s Word. Faith requires no evidence, only His Word.

The disciples had fished all night and caught nothing. And our Lord appeared to them on the shore and He said, *“Children, have you no meat?”* And they said, “We don’t have any.” He said, “Well push off from the land a little bit” and they pushed off.

He said, *“Now throw your nets on the right side there.”* And Peter looked at Him and said, “Lord; we’ve fished all night and we’ve caught nothing, nevertheless, at your word we’ll let down the net.”

That’s what I’m trying to teach, *“At your word, we let down the net”* because God said it. And when He did the net was almost broken with the catch that they brought in, such a great draught of fish.

And then faith requires no explanation. Saving faith requires no sign. Saving faith requires no evidence. Saving faith requires no explanation, just the Word of God. God said; *“Abraham, leave your father’s house and you go to a land I’ll show you.”*

And Abraham left not having the faintest idea where he was going. He didn’t ask God, “Why?” That’s what we do, “Why Lord?” You know; God said, *“Abraham take thy son.”* God gave him that son. God promised him that son would be his heir and that all the nations would be blessed through that son.

And then He turned around and told him to take him up on Mount Moriah and sacrifice his life. And Abraham didn’t say, “Why?” Abraham just started for the mountain.

Faith requires no explanation, only His Word. Charles Spurgeon once said; “When I came to Christ I had no assurance of any personal or saving interest in the death of Christ. But I knew it was written in His Word; *‘He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.’*”

And I came and I trusted on the basis of that promise, on God’s Word, sink or swim I’d go to Him. I dare not go one step farther than the Word of God. But I believe His Word.

Thirdly: Saving faith is not just head work, its heart work!

SAVED THROUGH FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now listen to this, **Romans 10:9-10**; *“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord and believe in thine heart God raised Him from the dead thou shalt be saved.”* Now this is important; stay with me for a moment. I know it’s true that believing in Christ, in believing in Christ, there must be a head work. There’s got to be an understanding. There’s got to be some mental work. There’s got to be an understanding of who He is; He’s God almighty, “Very God of very God.”

What He did; He came to this earth and worked out for us in the flesh a perfect righteousness. He went to the cross of Calvary and died for our sins. *“And He died that God might be just and justify the ungodly. He was buried and rose again and ascended to the right hand of God.”*

There’s got to be a mental understanding of who He is and what He did and why He did it. *“The Son of God has come and given us an understanding.”* That is what **1 John 5:20** said, *“That we may know Him that is true and that we are in Him that is true. And this is eternal life.”*

I’ve got to understand the ruin of sin. I’ve got to understand the wisdom of redemption. I’ve got to understand the miracle of regeneration. And God teaches me that. God reveals that to me.

But Christ is to be received and believed in the heart. You see; it’s not just mental acceptance of facts because James says; *“You believe in one God you do well, the devil believes that.”* The devil knows those facts. He has mental agreement with those facts but there’s no love for it.

Do you see that? There’s no acceptance of it. There’s no rejoicing in it. Faith is not just mental agreement but a heart love for that person Jesus Christ. *“If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ; let him be accursed when Jesus come.”*

So saving faith is not just a mental acceptance of truth, it’s not just a mental agreement with facts; it’s a heart reception of Christ and a heart love for Christ and a heart rejoicing in Christ.

I not only believe in one God; I’m glad He’s God. I don’t only believe Christ died on the cross but I receive Him and trust Him and love Him.

Now last of all: Saving faith is a committal to Christ!

In **2 Timothy 1:12**; this is the definition of faith that all the old writers used to use. Paul said in **2 Timothy 1:12**; *“I know whom I have believed.”* That’s knowledge. Faith has to have knowledge. It begins there.

I know He’s my prophet, priest, and king. I know He’s very God of very God. I know He’s the God-man. I know what He did. *“I know whom I have believed.”*

Secondly, *“I am persuaded that He is able to keep,”* He’s able to save me, He’s able to keep me, and He’s able to present me faultless before His presence with exceeding glory. He’s able to raise my natural body from the ground and make it a body like unto His own. He’s able, He’s willing and able.

SAVED THROUGH FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 • HENRY T. MAHAN

But the last line is this, a committal; *“I know He’s able to keep that which I’ve committed to Him.”* I’ve conscientiously, intelligently, committed my soul to Christ, like a farmer commits the seed to the ground and waits for the harvest.

It’s out of my hands; it’s in His hands. I surrender all to Christ Jesus my Lord, here and now, publically and personally!