



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

# Saved by Participation

Bible Reading: Ephesians 2:8-10

[Watch LIVESTREAM here at 10am](#)

[Join our post-sermon discussion on Zoom at 11am](#)

## Saved by Grace Alone, thro' Faith Alone, thro' Christ Alone (Eph. 2:8-9)

- A. Saved (Eph. 2:5, 8)
- B. By Grace (Eph. 2:5, 8)
- C. Through Faith (Eph. 2:8)
  - 1. Faith in Jesus' death, resurrection & Lordship (Rom. 10:9)
  - 2. Faith is Relational
  - 3. Faith is Adhesive.
  - 4. God's Gift (Eph. 2:8b)
- D. Not based on Works, excluding boasting (pride) (Eph. 2:9-10)

## Reformed Theology vs. Ephesians

- A. **Five 'Solas' & Penal Substitution central to Reformed Theology**
- B. Reformed Theology "affirm[s] the five *solas* [Scripture, Christ, grace, faith & God's glory-alone] ...the doctrine of predestination & the importance of Penal Substitution...as a crucial...understanding of the atonement."—Michael Allen
- C. **Saved" in Reformed Theology—Penal Substitution**
  - 1. "Saved?refers to deliverance from God's wrath at the final judgment (Rom. 5:9)." [ESV note on Eph. 2:5, 8)

2. “Justification’ in Paul is forensic [legal], not transformative...”—Michael Bird

D. **“Saved” in Ephesians—by Participation** (Eph. 2:1-6)

1. With trespasses & sins, under wrath (Eph. 2:1, 5)—Christ as our Redeemer/Substitute
2. “Dead in trespasses” (Eph. 2:1, 5b-6) —God made us alive, “quicken” us
  - God “made us alive” with Christ even though we were *dead*...? He also *raised us up* with him...” (Eph. 2:5-6)
    1. Recalling Ezekiel’s Vision of Dry Bones (Ezek. 37: 1-14)
    2. Echoing the theme of Jesus’ ‘Enacted Parable’ (Jn. 20:22)
    3. Key to participation in Christ—the Spirit
    4. Under “the Ruler of the Air”—Satan & his subordinates (Eph. 2:2; Col. 2:15)
    5. Delivered from the Devil
      - God “raised us up with [Christ] & seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus.” (Eph 2:6)
  - 6. Having a fallen ‘Sin’ nature —“we were *by nature* children under wrath” (Eph. 2:3; Rom. 5:12; 8:3)?
    - “Sin came into the world through one man [Adam], & death through sin, & so death spread to all people...” (Rom. 5:12)
    - “God...by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh & for sin,...*condemned sin* in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3)

## Change in constitution (being), not merely (legal) status

- “Paul spoke of *‘real participation in Christ.’*— Ed. Sanders

## Saved by Participation—Union with Christ (Eph. 1:13; 1 Cor. 1:30; Gal. 2:20)

- “*You were included in Christ?* when you heard the...the gospel of your salvation...when you believed...” (Eph. 1:13 NIV)

A. **Union with Christ—Christ in us, we ‘in Christ’** (2 Cor. 13:5; Jn. 15:4-5; 1 Cor. 6:16-17; 5:17)

- “Anyone joined to a prostitute is one body with her. But anyone *joined?to the Lord is one spirit?*with him.” (1 Cor. 6:16-17)
- “If anyone is ‘in Christ,’ he is a *new?*creation; the old has passed away, & see, the *new?*has come!” (1 Cor. 5:17)
- Just as *the air of life, which we breathe is ‘in’ us* & fills us, & yet *we* at the same time *live in this air* & breathe it, so it is also with...Christ...[for] Paul: Christ in him, he in Christ.” —Adolf Deissmann

B. **Participation—co-enlivened, co-raised, co-seated ‘with Christ’** (Eph. 2:5-6; Phil. 3:20)

1. Christ’s death & resurrection—epoch-changing, cosmic-altering events!
  - For Paul “*Jesus Christ is the key pivot of the ages*, the means whereby *the new age has broken into the present* through the death & resurrection of Jesus.” —Richard Burridge
2. Participating in Christ’s death & resurrection radically changes us!
  - “Jesus’ death for Paul is...about the transfer from one sphere to another... The believer participates in...Jesus’ death & resurrection. That participation...places that person in a new era & sphere of life.” —Scot McKnight
  - “Our *citizenship?*is in *heaven*, & we eagerly wait for a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Phil. 3:20)

## The Issue—God’s Masterpiece, walking in God-prepared Good Works (Eph. 2:10; cf. James 2:14-17)

- “We are his workmanship, created *in Christ Jesus* for good works, which God prepared ahead of time *for us to do.*” (2:10)
- “A masterpiece is ‘an outstanding piece of artistry or workmanship; a person’s best work.’ The church is the best work of *three* persons: Father, Son & Holy Spirit. It is a triune masterpiece...” —Kevin Vanhoozer

## QUESTIONS

- Read Eph. 1:3-14 note (perhaps underline or mark) each time the phrase “in Christ” or “in him” occurs.

- A. In these verses, who does what “in Christ” or “in him”? Does God do some action “in Christ,” or is it humans (us)?
- B. What does it mean for us to be “*in Christ*”? How do we get to be “*in Christ*”?
- C. Eph. 1:13 in the NIV reads: “you...were included in Christ?when you heard...the gospel of your salvation...when you believed...”?According to this how do we get to be “*in Christ*”? Do other verses help answer? Which?
- D. How has (or should) realizing you are “*in Christ*” and Christ is “*in you*” (Col. 1:29) impact your life?
- E. Eph. 2:1-4 says we were in a desperate situation, with multiple problems; what were those problems? Enumerate
- F. In Eph. 2:4-7 what has God done to resolve each of those problems (you’ve identified in Q4)?
- G. In Eph. 2:5-7 has the phrase “*with Christ*”/“*with him*.” What 3 actions has God done to us when he acted on Christ?
- H. What is the impact (effect) of each of those 3 actions upon us? How has (or should) each one affected you?
- I. Eph. 2:8-9 says we are ‘saved by grace through faith (*not by works*); yet Eph. 2:10 talks about “*good works*.” How do you reconcile these 2 statements?