

Ephesians 2:8-9

Why did God save us? This is an important question to ask and, biblically speaking, it has a few answers. God's motivations are often multi-faceted. For instance, His preservation of the Jews was both due to His covenantal faithfulness AND for His great name. Jesus' return is for the purpose of eternal salvation and judgment and, in this case, Ephesians shows us that God's motivation in saving us is both His love for us and His desire to be glorified.

1. An Important conjunction
 - a. Notice that verse 8 begins with this word, "for"
 - b. The little word communicates some very important truths to us
 - c. Specifically, the presence of the word "for" tells us that an explanation is coming
 - d. Verse 7 tells us that God has saved us in order to show us His grace and now, verse 8 reminds us that we are in fact saved by grace alone
 - i. God has not saved us because of anything good in us, God has saved us solely because of His grace
2. Grace is a gift
 - a. The term "grace" means undeserved favor
 - b. It is clearly defined for us in this text as Paul belabors the point that our salvation is rooted in God's goodness and nothing else
 - c. We are not saved by virtue of anything we have done... not even faith!
 - i. Some people like to affirm salvation by faith alone while attempting to back door works
 - ii. They claim that God "looked down the corridor of time to see what we would do" but the problem with this thinking is multi-faceted
 1. First, it states that God learned something
 - a. If God is omniscient (all-knowing) then, by His very nature, He cannot investigate a single thing!
 - b. If the Lord is a recipient of knowledge, He ceases to be God
 2. Second, it attempts to root our salvation, in two sources
 - a. While affirming the reality that God did what we could not (sending the Savior to die for us), this idea also affirms the fact that we contributed what God could not
 - b. This makes salvation "synergistic" (two forces working together)
 - c. Paul destroys this argument by stating that even the faith we exercise is a gift
 - d. How is this the case? Well, God raised us up, He "made us alive", He chose us in Him "before the foundation of the world" and ordained that we would be given the gift of faith

- e. Frankly, the entire argument of chapters 1 and 2 demonstrate this line of argumentation which makes v. 8-9 merely confirmational of what Paul has already taught us
3. Grace glorifies the Savior
- a. Why would God do it this way? Stated differently, why would He design a system whereby He is the sole actor? The answer is that so He alone gains the glory
 - b. Remember, God has saved us for the purpose of showing us the “immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us”...
 - i. His eternal goal is to show us how gracious He is and this means that He has devised a plan whereby His grace is ALL that achieves our salvation
 - c. This results in His praise alone
4. Grace humbles the sinner
- a. Indeed, no one can boast in this situation... why?
 - b. Because all of us are recipients of His grace
 - c. There is no room for arrogance or self-sufficiency in the Kingdom of God
 - d. Our fallen tendency is to look for ways to make ourselves look good
 - i. If salvation were the result of even a little bit of our efforts, we would have reason to boast in comparison to others who have not realized God’s saving grace
 - ii. However, if we realize that we were “dead” (chapter 1), that God “made us alive” (chapter 2) and that this was only by virtue of His undeserved kindness (chapter 2) toward us, then we have no reason to do anything but humbly cry out in adoration and dependence
 - iii. This is the way that God gains all the glory but it is also the way that we receive the greatest gifts we could ever imagine
 - 1. God indeed has two, glorious, motivations in salvation