

Application

Do you agree with Paul that you are spiritually dead and have a broken relationship with God? Why or why not?

Do you agree with Paul that you deserve punishment from God? Why or why not?

Do you think it is easy for you to trust in Jesus' death and accept God's forgiveness? Explain your answer.

What would have to change in order to accept Jesus' death for you?

1. The Bad News

2. The Good News

3. What is the place of "good works" then?

4. Why did God save us by grace?

Ephesians study 2

The gift that silences boasting!



Ephesians 2:1-10

¹ In the past you were spiritually dead because of your sins and the things you did against God. ² Yes, in the past you lived the way the world lives, following the ruler of the evil powers that are above the earth. That same spirit is now working in those who refuse to obey God. ³ In the past all of us lived like them, trying to please our sinful selves and doing all the things our bodies and minds wanted. We should have suffered God's anger because we were sinful by nature. We were the same as all other people.

⁴ But God's mercy is great, and he loved us very much. ⁵ Though we were spiritually dead because of the things we did against God, he gave us new life with Christ. You have been saved by God's grace. ⁶ And he raised us up with Christ and gave us a seat with him in the heavens. He did this for those in Christ Jesus ⁷ so that for all future time he could show the very great riches of his grace by being kind to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ *I mean that you have been saved by grace through believing. You did not save yourselves; it was a gift from God. ⁹ It was not the result of your own efforts, so you cannot brag about it. ¹⁰ God has made us what we are. In Christ Jesus, God made us to do good works, which God planned in advance for us to live our lives doing.*

New words

spiritually dead – bad relationship with God

ruler of the evil powers – Satan

God's mercy – God is not giving people what they deserve (punishment)

God's grace – God giving people what they do not deserve (forgiveness)

brag – boast, talk about your own achievements

Discussion

Each of the items below are free but they are different. Look at the list below and discuss how they are different.

1. Buy two DVDs get one free!
2. Win a free trip to Europe, apply for your bank loan now!
3. You are in prison and under the death penalty for breaking the law but you have been given a free pardon.
4. Your parents give you a free trip to Europe for your 21st Birthday.

Which of the above are truly free gifts?

Read the passage.

1. According to the passage in verses 1–3, how does Paul describe people before they became followers of Jesus?

2. Look at the list below and tick all the sentences which are true for you:

- a. I love and obey God with all my heart, mind, soul and strength.
- b. I don't believe in God, I believe in myself.
- c. I prefer to listen to myself rather than God.
- d. I do the things I want to do.

3. Compare your answers in question 2 with your answers in question 1. Do you think Paul is describing you? Why or why not?

4. According to the passage, what do people who live like this deserve? Do you think this is fair?

5a. According to verses 4–6, instead of giving people what they deserved, what did God do instead?

5b. Why did God do this?

6. According to verse 8, how do sinful people get saved?

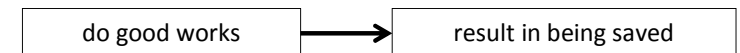
7. Why can't we boast about ourselves for being saved?

8. Look back at the discussion question: can a criminal who was facing the death penalty boast about being pardoned? What is the right thing for the criminal to do? Do you think that a free pardon allows the criminal to keep on committing crimes?

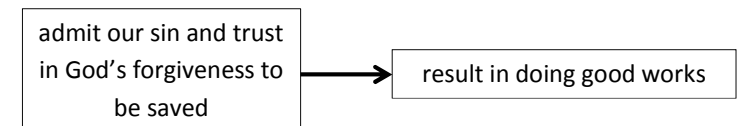
9. According to verse 10, what has God planned for us to do?

Summary

View 1: The world's view of being saved:



View 2: The Bible's view of being saved:



Every other religion or philosophy in the world agrees with View 1. Only the Bible teaches View 2. This makes Jesus a unique way of being saved.