

Sermon on Benefits of Spiritual Makeover

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Text:

Ephesians 2:8 - 13 ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. ¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)-- ¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

Introduction

We continue with the epistle from Paul to the churches in Ephesus and Asia Minor. We look at Ephesians chapter 2. The major theme of this passage is the grace of God, the transforming effect it has on the Christian, and the benefits it bestows on the Christian.

In advertising, before-and-after pictures is a standard method to show how good a product is. Ephesians 2 is a discourse on the before-and-after picture of the believer and the ensuing benefits in the after picture.

Extreme Makeover TV Show

A popular show on TV is called the Extreme Makeover where they take a person and transform their appearance.

Before Picture: ugly, fat, and unhealthy person

Makeover process: Producer arbitrarily chooses subject person, they perform surgery, put them on diet, take them through exercise, and sometimes counsel them on a confident self-image.

After picture: Beautiful, slim, and healthy looking person

Davidic Makeover – Mephibosheth

After David finally assumed the reigns of Israel, asked if there was anyone left in Jonathan's family and if so he wanted to show kindness to the person. Jonathan's former servant Ziba told him of Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son who was crippled when he fell while his nanny was fleeing with him after the fall of Saul and Jonathan. David had Mephibosheth brought to him and he restored him to princehood.

Before Picture

- He was a “dead dog” (2 Samuel 9:8)
- He deserved death for how Saul treated David (2 Samuel 19:28)
- He was separated from the palace and living in Makir's house in a remote place called Lo Debar (2 Samuel 9:4-5) as a result of his grandfather's actions.

Thus Mephibosheth had no privileges, no provision or protection of the palace.

Redemption/Deliverance Process

- David's love for Jonathan produced grace.
- David's grace brought salvation to Mephibosheth
 - David as the conquering successor King had the right to exterminate all his predecessor's descendents.
 - Mephibosheth did not intrinsically qualify
 - He did nothing to qualify for David's kindness

After Picture

- Mephibosheth was elevated to princehood
- He became a permanent member of the king's dining table
- He became a royal resident of the palace
- He received the estate of King Saul

So, now he had all the privileges, provision and protection of the palace.

Spiritual Makeover – the Grace of God

Before Picture (Eph. 2:1-3, 11-12)

- You were dead in your transgressions and sins, and you gratified the desires of the sinful nature.
- You were disobedient; your disobedience driven by Satan and his agents
- You had no hope in life, were separated from Christ, and were excluded from citizenship of Heaven

As a result of this you were subject to the whims and punishment of the devil. Your condition was a miserable and ugly picture.

Redemption/Deliverance Process (Ephesians 2:4-10)

- God’s love produced grace, which brought about your salvation
 - Your salvation is not by you. A person who is sinking in quicksand cannot save himself. Your situation is worse in that Ephesians 2:1 says that you were a dead person and so it is absolutely impossible to save yourself or even respond to a call to wake up. God had to breathe the breath of life to recreate you.
 - Salvation is not by your works. Your righteous works are filthy before the Lord as stated in Isaiah 64:6 “All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.”
 - Salvation is rather a gift of God received through faith. No one earns a gift. You earn wages – like the wages of sin – when you work for someone. A gift comes out of the giver’s own volition and free will. So, we earned the wages of sin, which is the wrath of God, but God out of his love gave us the gift of salvation.
- God then recreated you in Christ Jesus with a new nature, which cannot but do good works. That is why James speaks about this in his treatise on faith:

James 2:17-18 ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.
¹⁸ But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

St. Augustine (354-430) once said, "It is not that we keep His commandments first, and that then He loves; but that He loves us, and then we keep His commandments. This is that grace, which is revealed to the humble, but hidden from the proud."

After Picture (Ephesians 2:13, 19-22)

- You are brought to life in Christ from death

- You become a building component in the holy temple of God.
 - Satan can't touch you because you are integral to the temple of God

- You are no longer aliens separated from God but have now become full citizens of heaven with its benefits:
 - You receive protection from God so that no weapon formed against you prospers. "The Lord will rescue [you] from every evil attack." (2 Timothy 4:18a) God "will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you." (Exodus 23:22b)
 - You are given the best weapons to become more than a conqueror.
 - You live an abundant life because God supplies all your needs according to his riches in glory.
 - You get the privilege of getting whatever you want as Jesus said in John 14:13-14 ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.