

Family TableTalk

Conversation 110

Half-a-Gospel?

read

Ephesians 2:1-10

think

Raise your hand if you ever had a conflict with someone where you confronted them only to realize that you didn't have all the details? You approach them in frustration, they share with you their side of the story, and suddenly you become embarrassed for having jumped to conclusions. You realize you have been believing and living a *half-truth*. Everyone should be raising their hands right now because this is one of our biggest problems in life.

This is why Ephesians 2:1-10 is one of the most important passages of Scripture, because in it, Paul refuses to give us "half-truths" when it comes to the most important matter of all: the Gospel. Two of the most common pitfalls when it comes to believing and living the Gospel is to either believe in "works righteousness" or "cheap grace." "Works-righteousness" states that we earn salvation through effort, and "Cheap grace" states that we don't need any more effort once we've been saved.

Ephesians 2:1-10 keeps us from falling into these pitfalls. The first 9 verses keep us from falling into the pitfall of "works righteousness" by communicating clearly that *we did not save ourselves by our own effort*. It was only through the love-fueled grace of God that we were saved from sin, death, and the power of Satan. Therefore, we cannot boast in ourselves—all glory goes to God.

However, many of us stop at the end of verse 9 and therefore are tempted to fall into the pitfall of "cheap grace." Because God has already accomplished our salvation, we now can passively wait around to one day cash in our 'ticket to heaven.' This is why verse 10 is crucial. While it is true that we are God's workmanship by His grace, it is also true that this grace then transforms and leads us to live into the "good works" God has always intended for us to live out in our lives.

This is the full-truth of the Gospel: our salvation by grace transforms us into people of grace. The Gospel makes us Gospel people. There is no room for half-truths when the full Gospel is known and lived.

apply

- Why is a "half-truth" so dangerous, especially in the spiritual life?
- In our culture today, which "pitfall" do you think is most prominent: "works righteousness" or "cheap grace?" Why?
- In your own personal life, which "pitfall" do you tend toward? What might this tell you about your understanding of the Gospel?
- If you struggle with works-righteousness, focus in on Ephesians 2:1-9 this week. If you struggle with "cheap grace," meditate on verse 10.

pray

Father, help us to live into the fullness of your Gospel—a Gospel that frees us *by* the work of Christ *for* the work of Christ. Give us the courage and strength to live into the work you have called us to do *and* the humility and discernment needed not to take the glory for ourselves. By your Spirit, help us to live for you and you alone, free in the fullness of your Gospel. Amen.

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