



7

Saved by Grace

Key Theme

- God works in believers to accomplish His purpose.

Key Passages

- Romans 3:23, 5:8; Ephesians 2:4–5, 2:8–10; Philippians 1:6, 2:13

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe how sinners are saved.
- Describe what faith in Jesus will produce in a person's life.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will practice the memory verse by working on the Memory Verse Review Sheet and reciting the verse to a friend.



Activity 1: Saved by Grace Class Notes

Students will fill out the Saved by Grace Class Notes as you study the lesson.



Studying God's Word

The Bible says that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. But the good news is that God loved us enough to send Jesus as a sacrifice for sin. So, by the grace of God through faith, anyone can have eternal life with God. God works in the lives of all believers to accomplish His good works.



Activity 2: Pick a Point Review Game

Divide students into teams. Teams will take turns answering questions. They will earn points for correct answers by picking numbers from the cup.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print the Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student



SAVED BY GRACE CLASS NOTES

- Print one Saved by Grace Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- Saved by Grace Class Notes for each student
- Saved by Grace Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Print one Scripture Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets
- Memory Verse Poster



PICK A POINT REVIEW GAME

- Print and cut apart the Pick a Point Game Point Cards from the Resource DVD ROM. Put them into a cup, bag, or basket.
- Print one Pick a Point Questions Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- Pick a Point Questions Sheet
- Pick a Point Game Points
- Cup, bag, or basket to hold the cards



Memory Verse

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above with this background.

A sinner becomes a Christian when he has trusted and believed the gospel of Jesus Christ. That gospel message includes Jesus's life, His death suffered for forgiveness of sins, and His Resurrection guaranteeing that believers will live even though they die.

The sinner who has been redeemed by this gospel message lives his life as a Christian through faith. We know from Hebrews that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). The Bible tells us that as Christians, we walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7) and that the just shall live by faith (Galatians 3:11).

This faith in Jesus Christ is the means by which God grants His children grace. And the Bible makes it clear that none of this is possible by human effort. It is a free and glorious gift given by God through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8). The grace our holy and merciful God gives to believers is His free and unmerited favor which leads to eternal life. The gifts of grace, faith, and salvation cannot be earned by any human works, and therefore, redeemed sinners cannot boast in anything they have done—these are gifts from God (Ephesians 2:9). Sinners are not saved by works of righteousness (Titus 3:5). They are not justified by works of the Law but by faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 2:16).

And yet believers are to live lives of obedience. We are to be holy because God is holy (1 Peter 1:16). Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15). He said, "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you" (John 15:14). These statements seem to indicate that salvation in Jesus is dependent on our obedience. These might seem to be two different and contradicting ideas. To understand this, we must look into the full counsel of God's Word.

The truth is, before salvation no one can obey God or honor Him. The hearts of all men are deceitful (Jeremiah 17:9), and all are slaves of sin (Romans 6:16–17). But, by grace through faith, sinners are brought to repentance and the realization of the gospel—what Jesus accomplished for sin on the Cross. The believer is then sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who guarantees his eternal inheritance (Ephesians 1:13–14).

We see that in all true believers, it is God Himself who works both to will and to do for His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13). Believers can be confident that He [God] who began a good work in them will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6). Christians

are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared beforehand for us to do (Ephesians 2:10).

Obedience is wrought in the hearts of believers by God Himself! When God grants His grace through faith, the sinner repents of sins and turns to the only one who can save for all eternity. The realization of salvation, forgiveness of sins, and eternal life humbles the believer and produces a heart that overflows with love and gratitude for God who would send His only Son to die while we were still sinners (Romans 5:8). This love for Christ simply cannot be separated from the desire to live a life pleasing to Him.

A true, forgiven believer, who has confidence in the hope of heaven, would have no other response but to pursue a life of holiness and obedience while knowing, at the same time, that his life is in the hands of the omnipotent, sovereign God directing him to live just such a life.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

One of the beautiful truths of Scripture is the truth that we are justified by faith alone, not by works. In Romans 3:28 Paul states, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law." And in Romans 4:4–5 we read, "Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness." The Apostle Paul made it clear that God's verdict of "not guilty," and the imputation of His own righteousness to those in Christ, is by faith alone, with nothing else commending us to God. It is God's free grace that forgives us, acquits us, and counts us as righteous because of the work of Christ.

However, what we read in the book of James seems to contradict Paul's clear statements. Look, for example, at James 2:21: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?" And in James 2:24, James states, "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." Just reading these verses, it appears that James not only says that a person is justified by works, but he seems to deny that justification is by faith alone. At least the words James uses in these verses appear to be very different from Paul's.

Before we address this apparent discrepancy, let's first keep in mind that we believe the Bible is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16). It is the very Word of God. It does not teach things that are false. It cannot contradict itself.

Jesus Himself said that the Scriptures cannot be broken (John 10:35). He commissioned His apostles to teach the church, and He promised to lead them into all truth (John 16:13). So, we have come to receive His Word—the Bible—as the very Word of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13), free from error and contradiction, because God is true; He cannot lie, and He is not a God of confusion.

Another thing we must realize is that we are finite creatures; we are sinful; we are culturally biased. And language itself can confuse us because different words often can carry the same meaning, and sometimes the same word can carry different meanings. Plus, we are removed from the historical setting of Scripture as well as from its cultural context and language.

Therefore, when we come to seemingly contradictory texts, we must, first, be humble enough to realize that we may not understand God's Word completely, given the deficiencies mentioned above. And second, we must do our best to interpret God's Word within the context of the whole of Scripture. Since God's Word cannot contradict itself, there must be a resolution between Paul and James, and we want to carefully consider God's Word. We want to be "a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Actually, the resolution between Paul's teaching and that of James is not difficult once we understand the context. Paul was speaking against the Judaizers, a group of Jewish Christians in the early church who held that circumcision and the observance of the Mosaic Law were necessary for salvation. Paul wanted to make it clear that there are no works that we can do to commend ourselves to God. We are not saved by rituals or any works of our own but by faith alone in Christ and His work on our behalf.

James, on the other hand, was responding to those who were abusing Paul's teaching of justification by faith alone by saying that it doesn't matter how a believer lives. Some were distorting Paul's teaching by saying, "If we are justified while we are ungodly by faith alone, and this magnifies the grace of God, then let's just keep sinning so that God's grace gets more glory!"

Paul teaches that works are unnecessary, but James teaches that works are essential. But, when understood in context, Paul and James are saying the same thing. The apparent contradiction is solved when we realize that Paul was speaking of those good works that an unsaved

person tries to do in order to win God's favor or work his way to heaven. James, on the other hand, was referring to those good works that a saved person performs, which gives evidence of a real, living, saving faith.

James does not teach that good works are necessary in order to gain salvation, and Paul never teaches that good works are unnecessary after a person is saved. On the contrary, Paul agreed with James that for the person justified by faith, good works are essential (Philippians 2:12–13; Titus 3:5–8; Ephesians 2:8–10). Likewise, James agreed with Paul that the only condition for inheriting the kingdom is faith and faith alone (see James 2:5 and also Acts 15 where at the Jerusalem Council James never expressed disagreement over Paul's teaching that salvation was by faith and not by the works of the law).

Those who see a disagreement between James and Paul forget that it was Paul who wrote, "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!" (Romans 6:15); and ". . . having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness" (v. 18). Thus, Paul condemns the same error James was exposing. Paul never advocated any concept of dormant faith, but rather an active, working faith.

We can thank God that we are saved by grace through faith and not by our own works or righteous deeds. But it is also true that real, saving faith will manifest itself in works. As is sometimes said, "We are saved by faith alone, but true faith is never alone."



BEFORE THE THRONE

Lord Jesus, I love how clear you are in your Word about salvation and works. Man has twisted this subject for 2,000 years. But you clearly say that salvation is by grace through faith. There is nothing I can do to earn such a priceless gift. But salvation isn't the end. It's just the beginning! You continue to work in the hearts of all believers to accomplish your good works through them. Our own good works can never be good enough to earn your approval. Help me clarify this important truth to my students. Allow them by your grace through faith to come to understand the gospel of Jesus Christ.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet. If time allows, have the students recite the verse together, to each other, or to you.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Saved by Grace Class Notes

MATERIALS

- Saved by Grace Class Notes for each student
- Saved by Grace Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Do not work ahead. We will complete them together during class.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we complete the class notes today, we will talk about God's grace that brings salvation and the good works He has prepared for us to do.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

Refer to the Lessons 1–4 Lesson Theme Posters and Paul's Missionary Journeys Map. God used the Apostle Paul in a great way as he traveled, taught, and wrote to many churches and church leaders.

- ? What did Paul preach about as he traveled over all four of his journeys?
The truth about Jesus.

► Refer to Paul's Missionary Journeys Map to Follow Paul's travels as you teach the lesson.

- ? As Paul made his way to many cities and told the people about Jesus, there were two ways most of the people reacted to the message and truth of Jesus. What were those two ways? *Allow discussion.*

Some people believed and were saved by the truth about Jesus. But many people were angry with Paul. They often wanted to kill him, or run him out of town! They did not believe the truth about Jesus!

- ? What would you call all those people who believed Paul's message about Jesus and trusted in Him for forgiveness and eternal life? *Allow discussion.*

They are called Christians, or believers. And today, anyone who repents of his sins, believes in Jesus and what the Bible says about Him, and turns to Jesus for forgiveness is a Christian! That person will have eternal life with Jesus and God, and will be forgiven of his sin.

But it is not easy to turn to Jesus and turn away from our sins! Let's look at God's holy Word to find out why it is so hard.

Pass out the Scripture Sheets. This week our verses are on these Scripture Sheets. We will be reading off of these sheets.

So, why is it so hard to obey Jesus and follow Him? Let's find out. Will someone read #1 on the Scripture Sheet? Read the reference, too. *Choose someone to read Romans 3:23.*

Romans 3:23

EXAMINE THE WORD

Good. Let's answer a few questions about that verse.

Observe the Text

- ? What does this verse tell us about you, me, and ALL people? *Romans 3:23. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

That's right. We are all sinners. We are born that way! And God hates sin! No sinner can get into heaven—ever! One little sin is enough to prevent it, because in God's eyes there are NO little sins. He is so perfect, pure, holy, and just that He must punish ALL sin.

Romans 5:8

- ? That seems hopeless and sad, doesn't it? But wait! Look at #2 on your Scripture Sheet. Will someone read that for us? *Assign a reader for Romans 5:8.*
- ? What has God shown to sinners? What has He demonstrated to us? *Romans 5:8. His love.*
- ? How has God shown His love to sinners? Who did He send to earth? *Jesus.*
- ? And what did Jesus do for sinners? *He died on the Cross.*

Discover the Truth

That's right, and it is amazing! All of us are born sinners! And we have no hope of getting to heaven. But God showed how much He loves sinners! He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the Cross and take the punishment for sin. All sinners who believe in Him by faith will be saved and forgiven. Their punishment will be taken by Jesus Christ, and they will spend eternity with Him!

? This is good news! Take a look at your class notes. Will someone read #1 for us? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Sinners. Have students complete #1.*

? And what about #2? Who will read that? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Jesus. Have students complete #2.*



READ THE WORD

Jesus came to save sinners! But how does that happen? We are all sinners when we are born. Let's take a look at our next verses, #3 on your Scripture Sheet. Will someone read that? *Ephesians 2:4–5. Assign a reader.*

Ephesians 2:4–5

EXAMINE THE WORD

Those verses tell us a lot. Let's answer some questions about them.

Observe the Text

? First, who are these verses about? *Ephesians 2:4. God.*

? What is God rich in according to Ephesians 2:4? *Ephesians 2:4. Mercy.*

God is rich in mercy. And because of His great love for us He did something—even while we were DEAD in trespasses.

? Now what does that mean? Dead in trespasses? What are trespasses? *Allow discussion.*

Trespasses are sins! And because God hates sin so much, when we are sinners, God considers us DEAD!

? But we don't have to stay dead to God! How can we be made alive again? Look in Ephesians 2:5. *We can be made alive in Christ.*

That's right! God sent Jesus Christ to make a way for sinners to come alive with Christ! To be saved! To be forgiven of their sins forever!

? This forgiveness comes through a special gift from God. The Bible mentions it at the end of Ephesians 2:5. How does that verse say sinners get saved? *By grace we have been saved.*

Sinners are saved by grace. Let's read something else from the Bible that tells us the same thing!

- ? Look at #4 on your Scripture Sheet. Will someone read that? *Ephesians 2:8–9. Assign a reader.*
- ? There it is again. How are sinners saved? It is at the very beginning of Ephesians 2:8. *By grace we have been saved.*
- You know, many people think that if they are good enough, if they do good things for people and try to obey all of God’s commands, they will get to heaven. But this verse says we are saved by grace—not anything good that we do.
- ? Where does this grace come from? It comes through something. What is that? That is in Ephesians 2:8. *Through faith.*
- ? Grace comes through faith. Faith in what? What does God want people to have faith in? *Allow discussion.*
- God wants us to have faith in the gospel message of Jesus—that Jesus is God, who was born as a man, who lived on earth, who died for the forgiveness of sins, and who rose again from the grave, conquering death. God wants us to have faith in Jesus whose life is described in the Bible.
- ? This grace through faith is a gift to sinners! Who is the gift from? *Ephesians 2:8. From God!*
- Wow! Grace through faith that saves sinners is a gift from God.
- ? Will someone read Ephesians 2:9 again? *Choose a reader. Ephesians 2:9.*
- ? What does this verse tell us about good works and being saved by God for all eternity? *Sinners are not saved by works.*

Discover the Truth

This is such an important thing to remember. We were all dead in our sins and have no hope of ever getting to heaven. But God sent Jesus, His perfect Son, to die on the Cross so that whoever believes in Him can have eternal life. This salvation comes as a gift from God! No sinner can get to heaven by the things he or she does. Nothing we could do would ever be good enough. We do not get to heaven by works! But God gives sinners grace and faith to trust Jesus for forgiveness. Salvation is a gift from God!

- ? Let’s review this for a minute. Go back to your class notes. Will someone read #3 for us? How will you finish that? *Assign a reader. Dead. Have students complete #3.*
- ? And what about #4? How are we saved? *Assign a reader. Grace. Have students complete #4.*
- ? And #5. Who will read that for us? How will you answer it? *Assign a reader. Gift. Have students complete #5.*



READ THE WORD

Sinners are saved by grace through faith! It is a free gift from God. And every sinner who receives this gift through faith, and believes in Jesus as the Bible has told us, has eternal life. But that's not all! Something happens to the sinner who is saved by God's grace.

- ? Go back to your Scripture Sheets. Will someone read #5 on there? It is Ephesians 2:10. *Assign a reader.*

Ephesians 2:10

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? What are Christians, according to Ephesians 2:10? Look at the beginning of the verse. *His workmanship.*
- ? Who is this referring to? Whose workmanship are Christians? *Allow discussion.*
Christians are God's workmanship. They are created in Jesus Christ.
- ? What are Christians created for? We are still in Ephesians 2:10. *To do good works.*
- ? But sinners are not saved by works, right? Where do the good works that Christians do come from? Who has prepared the good works to be done? *God.*

Sinners can never be saved by what they do! But when they are saved by God's grace they will do good works. And these good works they do are works that God has prepared for them to do.

- ? The Bible has more to say about this. Will someone read #6 on the Scripture Sheet? It is Philippians 1:6. *Choose a reader.*
- ? This verse is talking about believers—sinners saved by grace. Who saves sinners and offers forgiveness to them? *God.*

Philippians 1:6

Yes. God begins the good work in sinners. And this verse tells us that we can be sure that what God has started He will finish!

Do you see? When a sinner is saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ something happens in his heart. God goes to work. And what God starts, He will finish. Let's read one more verse.

- ? Will someone read #7 on the Scripture Sheet? It is Philippians 2:13. *Choose a student to read the verse.*
- ? Wow! Who is it who works in the hearts of believers? *God!*
- ? God works in all believers. And what are believers working toward? What do they do for God? It is in Philippians 2:13. *God's good pleasure.*

Philippians 2:13

God works in the hearts of believers. And the works believers do are what God wants them to do.

- ? OK. Let's finish the class notes based on those last three verses we read. Will someone read #6 on the class notes? What is the answer? You can look at Ephesians 2:10 for the answer. *Assign a reader. Workmanship. Have students complete #6.*
- ? What about #7? What is the answer there? *Assign a reader. Works. Have students complete #7.*
- ? And #8? Who has prepared the good works believers do? *Assign a reader. God. Have students complete #8.*
- ? And the last one—#9. Why do believers do the good works? *Assign a reader. Pleasure. Have students complete #9.*

Discover the Truth

These verses explain that sinners are saved by grace through faith. No one can get to heaven based on good works. But good works are still important. Christians are God's workmanship. God works in them to do good works. And God will complete the good works in the Christian. When a sinner is saved by God's grace he will begin to do good works because God will be working in his heart. And those good works will be for God's pleasure.

If time allows, assign students to re-read the points on the class notes as a review and briefly discuss them.





Pick a Point Review Game

MATERIALS

- Pick a Point Questions Sheet
- Pick a Point Game Point Cards in cup, bag or basket

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide the students into teams of 4–5 students each. Have each team take turns answering a question. After each correct answer, let a member of the team draw a number card from the basket. You may want to allow teams to look the answers up in their Bibles where appropriate. Allow the first team to get the answer to draw a point or alternate between teams!

The number of points on the cards will vary, so the score will have nothing to do with how skilled one team might be. The effort to earn points will keep the students tuned into the game. Keep a list of the team's points to determine the "winner" for the day. If time allows, repeat the questions!

OK. Now you are going to get into teams. We are going to play "Pick a Point." Each team will take turns answering questions from the lesson. If you get the answer right,

you will draw a point card for your team. I'll keep score here on the board.

Get together with your team, and let's get started. *Play the game.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

We heard the bad news today that everyone has sinned, and that even one sin is enough to keep us from heaven and eternal life with God. But we also heard the good news that God loved us so much that He sent Jesus to die for sin. Jesus died for the forgiveness of sin and rose again to conquer sin and death, so by grace through faith we can be saved from the punishment we deserve. After a sinner is saved, God works in his heart to do good works. It's exciting to think that God is using each Christian to accomplish His will in the world.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Refer to Lesson Theme Poster. Sinners are saved by God's grace through faith and not by works. Because no matter how good we are or how many good things we do, our goodness is not good enough for God. But God provided a way—the only way—that we could be good enough. And that is through faith in Jesus Christ.

God promises to work in every sinner who has believed through God's grace in Jesus. Our faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation moves our hearts to do good works. These are good works that God has prepared for us to do, and that He works in us, and they bring God pleasure and accomplish His will on earth.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

You know a lot of people think that if they are good enough, they will get to heaven. But we just learned that the Bible does NOT teach that! All sinners who believe in Jesus and repent of their sins are saved by God's grace, through faith. Christians are called to do good works. We are to obey God and the Bible. But don't be confused about the good works you do and think that you can earn God's approval through them. No. The good works Christians do are things that God has already planned for them to do.

➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.

For those of us who are saved, we can trust that God's work is being done in our hearts at all times to help us obey Him more and more. When we receive Jesus as our Savior, He changes us and lives in us. So, as we read our Bibles, pray, and get to know Him more and more, God is able to work in our hearts to actually make us more and more like Him. We will continue to change and grow the rest of our lives!



MEMORY VERSE

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God for His great love that made a way for sinners to be saved from sin and the punishment we deserve.
- Ask God to help us have faith through His grace to believe and receive the gift of salvation through Jesus.