

DAY ONE: Transformation Read Ephesians 2:1-10

The whole idea of grace and good works is tricky. There are two distortions of God's grace we can fall into. Looking at Ephesians 2:10 out of context, it appears we have to do good works for God to accept us. But nothing is further from the truth, because "good" **follows** "grace."

My goodness doesn't save me "so no one can boast" about their good works. But after I have accepted Christ's payment on the cross for my debt of sin, his righteousness is transferred to me.

The other distortion is "empty grace." We can say we accept the gift of Christ's death, but it leads to no transformation, nor goodness in our lives. We just move on to do what we want and glorify ourselves, not God. Because God has given us such goodness, our lives should overflow with good works that reflect his character. *For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do* (Ephesians 2.10).

Today, in response to God's grace toward you, write out Ephesians 2.8-10 on a card, replacing the words "we," "you," and "us" with "I" and "me" to make it personal. Tape it on your mirror or carry it with you as a reminder of what God has done for you, and what your response should be.

DAY TWO: Substitution Read Romans 3:23-24

Our Creator God did not create us for sin. We were meant to reflect his perfect character and glory. His wrath toward us is centered in his perfect goodness which cannot ignore our wrongdoing. Yet amazingly, God offers himself (Jesus, who is God in the flesh) to satisfy his own anger.

The story of the cross is a story of substitution. The sins that were mine got transferred to Jesus, and the righteousness of Jesus got transferred to me. It's a double transfer that satisfies God's anger.

God's willingness to see us justified through the death of Jesus, doesn't mean he now overlooks sin in our life. It means the debt of our sins has been punished and paid for in Jesus—one time—for all sin (1 Peter 3:18).

In Jesus' time, when a person paid back a debt, *It is finished* was written across the document of debt, indicating it was paid in full. At the crucifixion, the last words uttered from Jesus before he died were *It is finished* (John 19:30).

Jesus himself declared our debt to be paid in full as he offered up his life on our behalf.

Today as you lift your hands to God, put your name in the phrase Jesus uttered, "*your name, it is finished.*" Offer up your thanks to Jesus as you listen to the song *Broken Vessels (Amazing Grace)* by Hillsong Worship.

DAY THREE: Awe and Wonder Read Colossians 2:6-7

When God justifies sinners, he is not declaring bad people good. He is pronouncing them legally righteous . . . because Jesus paid the penalty of their law breaking. ~ John Stott

There is no other God like our God. He created us, and died for us. No other religion or life philosophy is centered in such perfect, deep, unconditional love for imperfect people. As we look at the world he created for us, our hearts should be filled with honor and joy. As we consider the great gift Jesus gave us by going to the cross to die in our place, we should be filled with awe and wonder. We can't say "thank you" enough.

Jesus' death on the cross takes us from guilt to justification. Not earned, but a free gift we only need to accept by faith (Ephesians 2:8-10). Whether these truths are new to you or old, take some time today to tell God how thankful you are. Express your awe and wonder in a prayer of thanksgiving to him saying specifically what he has done, how he has justified you, and from what you've been saved.

DAY FOUR: Purpose Read Romans Ephesians 2:10

God created you. But He didn't stop there. He created you with a purpose in mind. He doesn't see you as a piece of art to hang on the wall, but as someone He uniquely designed to impact the world.

God made you on purpose and for a purpose.

When you truly embrace that, it changes the way you view life. And this idea can change the way you see social media. When you know that the Creator of the universe thinks you're valuable, it's hard for a negative comment on Instagram to change that.

But this idea doesn't just affect how we see ourselves. It also changes the way you view and treat the people around you. Because they are masterpieces, too! They were created with a purpose as well. The *good works* that God prepared you in advance to do—they are to help others, not just yourself.

As you invite God into your day, take time to reflect on how you will **let God change your view of you** today. Take a few minutes to memorize Ephesians 2:10 as well and look for ways to do the good works God created you to do for others, including as you use social media.