

Theme: What must I know to be part of God's people? To be part of God's people I must know how great my sin is, how God has delivered me from my sin and misery through Christ, and how I can show my gratitude to God for delivering me and grow in my Christian life.

## I. Intro - Step By Step Instructions

- A. Writing computer code - proper steps critical
- B. If you got steps out of order everything fell apart
- C. Writing a catechism is similar - the right order is critical
- D. How do I become part of God's people?  
To be part of God's people I must know **how great my sin is**, **how God has delivered me from my sin and misery through Christ**, and how I can show my **gratitude to God for delivering me and grow in my Christian life**.
- E. The structure: guilt, grace, gratitude and growth

## II. Guilt: Our Sin Before God

- A. The first thing I must understand: I am guilty before God  
To be part of God's people I must know **how great my sin is**, how God has delivered me from my sin and misery through Christ, and how I can show my gratitude to God for delivering me and grow in my Christian life.
  - 1. We first know how great our sin is - our guilt
  - 2. This is not about the subjective feeling of guilt, but rather the objective fact that we are sinners who are guilty before God.
  - 3. Notice how the Ephesians passage begins with this

As for you, you were dead in your **transgressions** and **sins**,<sup>2</sup> in which you used to live when you followed **the ways of this world** and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are **disobedient**.<sup>3</sup> All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the **cravings of our sinful nature** and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. Ephesians 2:1–3

- a. Five different ways to express our sinful nature and sins
- b. Paul begins this section with a focus on our dilemma - we are prisoners of sin, the world, and Satan
- c. The depth of our dilemma - dead in sin; by nature objects of wrath
- d. This is not the only place Paul paints such a bleak picture of our state outside of Christ

As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one;<sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.<sup>12</sup> All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." Romans 3:10–12

- 1. No one is righteous, not even one
- 2. No one understands or seeks God
- 3. All have turned away and are worthless
- 4. No one does good, not even one

## B. We must begin with the diagnosis & bad news first

- 1. This is a bleak diagnosis of our condition
- 2. We can not receive the Good News of the Gospel until we have understood and accepted the bad news of our guilt before God.

3. But we must begin here - we can not move on to the good news and receive the treatment until we accept this.

### III. Grace: God Has Delivered Us Through Christ

- A. The second thing I must understand: how God delivers me through Christ

To be part of God's people I must know how great my sin is, **how God has delivered me from my sin and misery through Christ**, and how I can show my gratitude to God for delivering me and grow in my Christian life.

1. How can I be delivered from this devastating guilt?
2. I can't deliver myself
  - a. I am dead - dead people don't save themselves
  - b. My very nature is guilty and pollutes everything I do
3. God must deliver me - and He has through Christ!

- B. Our deliverance by God's amazing grace in Christ

But because of his great **love** for us, God, who is rich in **mercy**,<sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by **grace** you have been saved.<sup>6</sup> And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,<sup>7</sup> in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his **grace**, expressed in his **kindness** to us in Christ Jesus.<sup>8</sup> For it is by **grace** you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the **gift** of God —<sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:4–9

1. Note grace words: love, mercy, grace (3x) kindness, gift - this is not earned but given as a gift

2. This is God's Work through Christ - made us alive, raised us and seated us, his kindness, not from us but the gift of God.

3. We are saved by grace through faith

- a. Grace is the ground, faith is the instrument by which we receive the grace of God and righteousness of Christ
  - b. Faith is NOT a work; it merely receives the work of Christ
  - c. Salvation is by grace alone, is received by faith alone, and is all based on the work of Christ alone!
  - d. Same message in Romans 3:22-24; Titus 3:4-7
4. Result: no one can boast because it is all God's work from beginning to end
  5. Once again, it is all about glory to God, not us!

### IV. Gratitude and Growth: The Fruit of Salvation

- A. I respond to God's gift with gratitude, growing in my Christian life

To be part of God's people I must know how great my sin is, how God has delivered me from my sin and misery through Christ, and **how I can show my gratitude to God for delivering me and grow in my Christian life**.

1. How do I respond to this astounding gift given to me in Christ?
2. Salvation is God's free gift and is received by faith apart from works, but it produces a deep gratitude that desires to grow in our faith and give glory to God.

B. God saved us and prepared good works for us to do  
For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10

1. Paul has already shown we are saved by grace and not by our efforts
2. He now shows what gratitude for this astounding gift of salvation looks like - we do good works, obeying God
3. This is what growth in the Christian life looks like - as we walk with God we are learning more about Him and walking in ways that are pleasing to Him and for our good.
4. God has already revealed these good works in His Word and has prepared in advance for us to walk in them.
5. This is the fruit of the grace of God in our lives  
For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. <sup>12</sup> It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, <sup>13</sup> while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. Titus 2:11–14
  - a. Grace brings salvation - not works
  - b. Those who have received God's grace and are saved are changed - they say no to ungodliness
  - c. Christ has redeemed and purified a people, and His people are eager to walk in good works.

d. This is gratitude and growth in our Christian life!

## V. Applying the Word

- A. Do I understand the structure of guilt, grace, gratitude & growth?
1. This is the structure of the rest of the catechism
  2. More importantly, it is the structure of the Gospel!
  3. The Law of God shows us that we are objectively guilty before God
  4. We are sinners by nature and by choice, dead in our sin, helpless to save ourselves!
  5. Do I accept this verdict, or deny it?
  6. The Gospel shows the way of salvation - and it is all by grace, for there is no other way we could be saved!
  7. We bring sin, Christ brings righteousness.
  8. Do I accept the Gospel - or try to work my own salvation?
  9. If we see our guilt and God's grace, the rest of our lives will be shaped by gratitude producing growth in my Christian life and the fruit of good works
  10. Do I daily experience and express gratitude for God's grace, which will produce growth and good works?
- B. Baptism - guilt, grace, and gratitude
1. These two young women confess their guilt

2. They confess and embrace God's grace offered in Christ
3. Gratitude is producing obedience to Christ's command to be water baptized
4. This is the first step in a life-long journey of growing closer to Christ, learning to glorify and enjoy Him forever

### Guilt, Grace, and Gratitude: A Biblically Shaped Life

Ephesians 2:1-10

July 28, 2019

Water Baptism

2 Corinthians 13:14

Teaching keywords: Catechism; law and gospel; salvation and deliverance; gratitude; Christian life

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. 2  
Corinthians 13:14

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. <sup>3</sup> All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. <sup>4</sup> But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, <sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you have been saved. <sup>6</sup> And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — <sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.  
Ephesians 2:1–10