



Take5 for the Week of August 11-15, 2014

Saved by Grace

By Pastor Christina Robertson

MONDAY

Dead to Sin

Ephesians 2:1-2, Romans 6:23, Genesis 3

Even the slightest sign of life can produce hope. Death, on the other hand, is final. Death is accompanied by mourning and sorrow. There is nothing short of a miracle that can change that.

As early as the Garden of Eden, Satan has been at work deceiving the world that the consequence of sin is nothing more than knowledge and self-awareness. He claims that no one will surely die as a result of living a self-guided life apart from God. It is the same deception tactic he uses today.

In Ephesians, though, Paul reminds us that our sinful life is indeed a death sentence. There is no hope to be found in sin. Sin is not defined here as a single act but as a lifestyle. It is this lifestyle that separates us from our Heavenly Father.

Thankfully we know that a God of miracles loves us. His love and grace is the only thing that can pull us out of such hopelessness. It was by this great love that He sent His Son to offer us the miraculous gift of eternal life.

FOR TODAY: Reflect on the miracle of new life that God offers us through Jesus.

TUESDAY

No Better Than Anyone Else

Ephesians 2:3, Romans 3:23, Matthew 7:1-5

We live in a world of sliding scales and compartments. When we fill out an evaluation card, we are able to isolate our dissatisfaction to a particular item or moment. Sin is not like that. Sin is not an isolated event. It penetrates all areas of our lives and no one is immune.

Romans 3:23 states that "We all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." There is no sliding scale on sin. There is no middle ground. We cannot say that we are "not as bad as *that* person" because we all sin and, as such, deserve the consequence of that sin. It is a result of our sinful nature, Paul reminds us, that we all deserve the wrath of God. Rather than trying to grade our sins against others' sins, we need to come to Jesus and acknowledge our own sin and seek His forgiveness.

FOR TODAY: Take a moment and seek out sin in your life that you need to confess to God.

WEDNESDAY

How Great is His Love for Us

Ephesians 2:4-7, John 3:16, Romans 5:8

There is no greater feeling than knowing that you are truly loved. Unfortunately, we live in a world that constantly blinds us with reasons on why we are unlovable. Paul, though, reminds us that the God of the Universe, the God that created us, is a God that has "great love for us" and is rich in mercy. In fact, He "raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus" all for the purpose of showing us how much He truly loves us.

You are loved. Not a future version of you. Not a past version of you. God loves you, right now. Jesus did not wait for you to become perfect before He thought you were worthy enough to die for. Scripture says, "While we were still sinners, He died for us." Jesus has already declared His love for you, no matter where you are. Your only requested response is to accept it.

FOR TODAY: Thank God for His abundant love for you and live today as one that is truly loved.

THURSDAY

Absolutely Nothing but the Blood of Jesus

Ephesians 2:8-9

Wherever we look, there is competition to be the fastest, the greatest, and the best. It can be about the latest electronics, the fastest car, the newest record holder, or even the biggest home. It seems that everyone everywhere is looking for bragging rights.

When it comes to salvation, there is nothing you can do to earn more or less of it. There are no badges or upgrades. There is no number of verses that can be memorized or prayers to be recited that give you a higher level of salvation than someone else. Jesus took the penalty of the cross so that no one would have bragging rights. It is only by His grace that we are saved from our sins. That's it. There is absolutely nothing else you can do to earn that.

FOR TODAY: Reflect on five blessings in your life and give God the absolute glory and praise.

FRIDAY

God's Workmanship

Ephesians 2:10, 1 Corinthians 2:9, Philippians 1:6, Psalm 139:14-16

A work of art can be critiqued and judged by bystanders, but nothing changes the artist's original purpose of that piece. Even before the first stroke of paint was placed on the canvas, the artist had intention for that piece. No matter how long the process takes, a true artist does not rest until his creation is complete.

This is how God sees you. He handcrafted you for His purpose. There is nothing anyone else can say or do to change your original purpose in this world, a unique purpose designed by the creator of the universe. That purpose is to live and love like Jesus, just as He has already planned for you to do.

FOR TODAY: Ask God to reveal how you can live and love like Jesus today.