

“Salvation by Grace” in Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1979, pp. 670-672.

#### SALVATION BY GRACE

one of the untrue doctrines found in modern Christendom is the concept that man can gain salvation (meaning in the kingdom of God) by grace alone and without obedience. This soul-destroying doctrine has the obvious effect of lessening the determination of an individual to conform to all of the laws and ordinances of the gospel, such conformity being essential if the sought for reward is in reality to be gained.

Immortality is a free gift and comes without works or righteousness of any sort; all men will come forth in the resurrection because of the atoning sacrifice of Christ. (1 Cor. 15:22.) In and of itself the resurrection is a form of salvation meaning that men are thereby saved from death, hell, the devil, and endless torment. (2 Ne. 9:17-27.) “O the wisdom of God, his mercy and grace! For behold, if the flesh should rise no more our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the Eternal God, and became the devil, to rise no more.” (2 Ne. 9:8.) In this sense, the mere fact of resurrection is called *salvation by grace alone*. Works are not involved, neither the works of the Mosaic law nor the works of righteousness that go with the fulness of the gospel.

Salvation in the celestial kingdom of God, however, is not salvation by grace alone. Rather, it is *salvation by grace coupled with*

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*obedience* to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. (Third Article of Faith.) Those who gain it are “raised in immortality unto eternal life.” (D. & C. 29:43; 2 Ne. 9:22-24.) Immortality comes by grace alone, but those who gain it may find themselves damned in eternity. (Alma 11:37-45.) Eternal life, the kind of life enjoyed by eternal beings in the celestial kingdom, comes by grace plus obedience. And the very *opportunity* to follow the course of good works which will lead to that salvation sought by the saints comes also by the grace of God. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, pp. 306-311.)

Thus Nephi wrote: “Be reconciled to God; for we know that *it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.*” (2 Ne. 25:23.) Again: “Reconcile yourselves to the will of God, and not to the will of the devil and the flesh; and remember, *after ye are reconciled unto God, that it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved.*” (2 Ne. 10:24.) And thus Moroni recorded: “Come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and *if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God. And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect*

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See ATONEMENT OF CHRIST, ETERNAL LIFE, EXALTATION, GRACE OF GOD, IMMORTALITY, RESURRECTION, SALVATION. *Since all good things come by the grace of God (that is, by his love, mercy, and condescension), it follows that salvation itself—in all its forms and degrees—is bestowed because of this infinite goodness. However,*

in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot." (Moro. 10:32-33.)

Paul had occasion to teach the Ephesian Saints that salvation in the kingdom of God did not result from the ordinances and performances (meaning, the works) of the Mosaic dispensation, but that it came because of the grace of God coupled with faith and gospel obedience (meaning, the works inherent in gospel obedience). The passage, though not preserved for us with the same clarity as is common through most of the body of holy writ, is nevertheless plain and clear to those having an understanding of the doctrine of salvation by grace.

"God, who is rich in mercy," Paul explained, "for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved [meaning in the celestial kingdom]); And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus [meaning in the celestial kingdom]: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith [meaning salvation in the celestial kingdom]; and that not

of yourselves: it is the gift of God [meaning that salvation in the kingdom of God is predicated on the atonement of Christ and that man of himself could not bring it to pass]: Not of works, lest any man should boast [meaning that salvation cannot come by the works of man, and specifically not by the works or performances of the Mosaic dispensation]. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them [meaning that obedience is essential to celestial salvation]." Paul then goes on to compare the performances (works) of the Mosaic day, that is, "the law of commandments contained in ordinances," with the gospel requirement that obedience is essential to salvation, explaining that only "by the blood of Christ" can man be reconciled unto God. (Eph. 2.)