



*For by grace you
have been saved
through faith. And
this is not your own
doing; it is the gift
of God, not a result
of works, so that
no one may boast
(Ephesians 2:8–9).*

My daughter, Tirza, is what I term a “kid magnet.” At family gatherings, the little ones gravitate to her — no matter how often they’ve seen her (we live two states away from most of my family). At one family Christmas gathering, my nephew’s three-year-old daughter sat on Tirza’s lap, loving the time with the “big girl.” She decided that she should get to play cards like the “big people” in the other room. The toddler’s mother and I sat down to watch her deal the cards — her way. We asked, “What are the rules to this game?”

Easily and simply, little Peyton pointed and said, “Her and I win,” (meaning herself and my daughter). Then she pointed at her mother and me, “You two lose.”

That Christmas memory was a gift that, years later, still makes me smile. Simple rules — no extra effort — just deal the cards, and the outcome is certain.

God granted us a gift with an equally certain outcome. The gift is awesome and simple: We’re saved by grace. No extra effort can help us win salvation. We win, because God says so. Satan loses. There’s no sleight of hand, no extra knowledge needed, and no expert gamesmanship which helps the outcome become any better. We are saved by grace through the faith God placed in us.

One blessed night, His star shone down to light the way. It led to our amazing Gift — so amazing, we, like the shepherds and the women in this issue, still have to go and share the story. He still shines on us and still is gracious to us ... and we are still smiling at the Gift.

Sheila Lutz,
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