

The Wednesday Word, July 25, 2018: Grace, Grace, Grace - Part 1

Ephesians 2: 8-10.

“For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Ephesians has been called the Alps of the New Testament because some of the things taught in it are amazingly glorious. Here are but two of them:

1. We are saved by grace plus nothing, and
2. We are saved by grace minus nothing.”

The Greek word for grace is “Charis.” It means, ‘unmerited and undeserved favour.’ It is, ‘God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense.’

Martyn Lloyd Jones said, “There is no more wonderful word than ‘grace.’ It means unmerited favour or kindness shown to one who is utterly undeserving. It is a free gift to those who deserve the exact opposite, and it is given to us while we are ‘without hope and without God in the world” (Ephesians 2:12).

We are saved by grace!

We are delivered from the wrath to come by grace (1 Thessalonians 1:10).

We are given eternal life by grace (Romans 5:21).

Religion knows nothing of grace. Religion seeks to find favour with God by doing something (Romans 10:3). In religion, good works are a premium. But under grace, the sinner is freely declared not guilty. Have you grasped that for yourself?

But there’s more. The believer is not only forgiven he is also acquitted. And how is this done? It is done simply on the merits of another person, the Lord Jesus Christ (Leviticus 16; 1 Peter 3:18). Now that’s grace!

In Ephesians 2:6-9, Notice what grace isn’t!

‘It is not of ourselves.’

There was and is nothing we could do to deserve salvation. We may say, “What about faith? Isn’t that something I do?” No! Faith is a gift of God. It is not of works lest anyone should boast.

Have we then no work to do in this great matter of our justification? In a nutshell, NONE!

What work can we work to obtain personal salvation? NONE! What work of ours can buy forgiveness or make us worthy of Divine favour? NONE!

Has the Lord commanded that we crawl around the earth on our hands and knees? NO!

Has He decreed that we should whip ourselves and deprive ourselves of everything good? NO!

So, what work has God commanded us to do to obtain salvation?
Once more ...NONE!

Romans 4:5 "To him that works not, but believes in Him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" There is only one work which can save us, and that work is not ours, but the work of the God/Man. And that work is finished (John 19:30). It can never be repeated. Salvation is all Grace, Grace, Grace!

SAVED!

‘Saved’ is another great Bible word from our verse. It means deliverance. It means life in contrast to the death. It must be remembered that God is obliged to save no one. All of us have sinned and rebelled. All of us deserve death, not salvation. God was not and is not bound to come and rescue a defiant humanity....that's why we love GRACE!

In Ephesians 2:1 the Word says, “You has he (God), quickened (made alive), who were dead in trespasses and sin.”

He is speaking of spiritual death here and in the past tense. We were dead! But, things are different now. We have been made alive. We are saved. We are no longer under wrath.....we are saved. And how did we get saved? ... Grace! Grace! Grace!

John Stott puts it this way: “You were saved through faith, and even this faith by which you are saved is God’s gift.” This is an essential truth. We must never think of salvation as a kind of a transaction between God and us in which He contributes grace, and we contribute faith. For we were dead and had to be brought alive before we could believe.”

To be continued.

And that’s the Gospel Truth!