

God's Amazing Grace

By David Phillips

Introduction

1. Perhaps one of the greatest ingredients in our salvation that accompanies love is God's grace.
 - a. It was love that motivated God to send His Son to the earth.
 - b. Seeing that there was absolutely nothing we could do for our own salvation, it was by grace, that is by the gift of God, that we were given a means of salvation.
2. But in the scriptures God's grace reaches farther than just our salvation.
 - a. In every passage we read where God shows good will toward man His grace can be seen.
 - b. We are reaping the benefits of God's grace with every breath we take, every meal we eat, and every word we read from the inspired scriptures.
3. Having said that, grace is also one of the most misunderstood and most often twisted doctrines in the scriptures.
4. So that we can learn to appreciate the truth about God's amazing grace and sort through the mounds of error that is being taught, we will consider several passages that teach us about the true nature of God's word.

Discussion

I. What Is Grace?

- A. Eph. 2:1-9: God shows us the process by which we receive grace unto salvation.
 1. Paul shows us that there was a need: *dead in trespasses and sins*.
 2. We were under bondage of that sin, fulfilling the desires of the flesh rather than of God.
 3. But God, because of His love, made us alive: here is the gift of God in our salvation.
 4. Therefore it is written in vs. 8, "*For by grace you have been saved.*"
 5. So here we have man's need, God's grace, and salvation. But as we look down to vs. 10 we learn of man's responsibility having received God's grace.
 6. "*For we are His workmanship, **created** in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand **that we should walk in them.***"
 7. There we have it, the process of cleansing from sin, namely God's grace, man's obedience, and salvation.
 8. Yes we are saved by Grace through faith, but not without purpose. God's grace is given to man for a very specific purpose and if we are to benefit from all that He offers we must learn to fulfill that purpose in our lives by walking in the good works which He has prepared for us.
- B. Noah found grace in the sight of God as we read in Gen. 6:8.
 1. Here was a man in a similar situation that we are in today; destruction was coming and he had no way of saving himself.
 - a. But by His grace God spoke to Noah, divinely warned him of the pending judgment and instructed him to build the ark.
 - b. As we read through Genesis we find that Noah "*did according to all that God commanded him, thus Noah did.*"
 - c. So it is that Noah's grace in the eyes of the Lord was not without duty.
 - d. It says of him in Heb. 11:7, "*By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear.*"
 2. Therefore we are able to say of Noah the same thing that Paul wrote of us in Eph. 2:8, that he was saved by grace (God showed grace by warning him and instructing him), through faith (by faith Noah heeded the warning of God and acted accordingly).

3. So we find once again that the grace of God is not without purpose. His unmerited favor toward mankind does not remove responsibility from mankind, but rather implies it: As God showed His grace toward us in saving our lives, so we should serve Him with our lives.
4. This is a principle that is taught throughout the scriptures.
 - a. 2 Cor. 5:14-15: "...if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again."
 - b. 2 Tim. 2:11-12: God's grace is given for the purpose of teaching us to deny ungodliness. There is obligation that comes with it.
- C. Grace is the gift of God to man which must be used by man in the proper manner for salvation.
 1. If we say as the denominations do, that God's grace takes away any need to work, then we receive the grace of God in vain.
 2. Paul pleaded that we avoid such an outcome in 2 Cor 6:1 saying, "*We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain.*" His point being that if we do not work as we ought to, if we do not use God's grace to learn and to good works, then we have received it in vain.
 3. We are expected to study diligently the inspire word which was given by God's grace.
 4. We are commanded to pray without ceasing, which we are able to do by God's grace.
 5. After discussing our daily responsibility as the priesthood and holy temple of God, Peter says in 1 Pet. 5:12, "...*this is the truth grace of God in which you stand.*"

II. The True Grace of God.

- A. We learn about this grace in God's word, which is the "***word of God's grace***" (Acts 20:4, 32). Through it God's grace is defined and we are taught how to receive it and how to use it.
- B. When we heed that word, by God's grace we are **taught** the way of righteousness (Tit. 2:11-12). Whenever we are taught of God we are expected us use it profitably in His kingdom.
- C. This grace can only be found in Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 2:1).
- D. Grace is God's gift to us which includes salvation, but also includes humility, strength to oppose Satan, our contentment and steadfastness, which are all components of the true grace of God wherein you stand (1 Pet. 5:5-12).

III. Opposition to the Scriptural Definition of Grace.

- A. Many will resist these truths about grace.
 1. "But we are saved by grace not by works."
 2. "Jesus said in John 3:16 that all we have to do is believe and we will be saved."
 3. What about Rom. 3:28, "*Therefore we conclude that man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.*"
- B. The fact is that grace is a gift, but it is a gift that must be received by those who desire it.
 1. If this were not true then all men would be saved instantaneously and there would be not need for the scriptures.
 - a. But God shows us that as His grace teaches us (Tit. 2:12) so we are able to grow in faith which comes by God's word (Rom. 10:17).
 - b. But in order for our faith to be of any use we must do the works that God commands of us.
 - c. James 2:26, "*For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*"
 2. This must be placed in harmony with what we studied in Eph. 2:1-10, that God's grace is given to us that we must walk in His good works.
 3. Concerning John 3:16, Jesus did says that "whosoever believes on Him should be saved," but He goes on to say in verse 21, "*But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.*"

4. Yes, we are saved by faith, but Jesus says we are saved by faith because that faith moves us to do the deeds or the works that are in God.

C. Gifts require action.

1. In Eccl. 3:12-13 it says, *“I know that nothing is better for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives, and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor -- it is the gift of God.”*
2. We will notice that God has given man a gift: to *“eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor.”*
 - a. God has blessed man with the ability to work.
 - b. God has blessed man with the creation and all things that grow on the earth which we are able to enjoy.
 - c. Therefore when we work with the creation which God has given us we can understand that whatever we enjoy from those labors is also a gift from God.
3. Most people understand that if a man does not work, then there will be nothing for him to enjoy. They understand that in order to enjoy the fruit of our labor, we must first be willing to labor.
4. Therefore, even though our livelihood is a free gift from God since we cannot earn God’s blessings, we must still do something in order to receive that gift.

Conclusion

1. God’s grace has been given in the gospel. We have seen how it includes far more than just salvation, but every gift and blessing that we receive through the gospel.
2. For Christians God’s grace places great responsibility upon us to learn and obey His righteousness.
3. If you are not a Christian you can benefit from God’s grace today by obeying the gospel and having your sins washed away.

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