

GRACE

1. Definition: Grace is all that God is free to do for man on the basis of the cross. It is God's work on behalf of man without man's help.
 - A. Grace is the title of God's plan, Philippians 1:2.
 - B. It has three phases for the believer:
 - Phase 1, salvation is the work of grace, Ephesians 2:8-9.
 - Phase 2, growth and survival in the devil's world is the work of grace, Philippians 4:19.
 - Phase 3, heaven is the final state for the believer in his resurrection body, 1 Corinthians 15:28; Revelation 22:1.
 - C. Grace is the maximum expression of God's character to man through the cross of Jesus Christ.
 - D. Because of Jesus Christ's work on the cross God is propitiated and able, through His righteousness, to offer salvation to all men. This is unlimited atonement, John 3:16-18; 1 John 2:2.
2. Grace depends solely upon the character and essence of God.
 - A. Grace is poured out upon mankind through the cross of Christ.
 - B. Grace is free to all men but not all men will accept it. Some will reject God's grace offer of salvation and join the ranks of religious activity, human good works, humanism and human systems of wisdom.
 - C. God gives man free will to choose for or against His decree, therefore, man is responsible for his decisions.
 - D. God offers grace, man accepts or rejects it, and God has not compromised His righteousness or justice. The reason is grace, for we do not earn or deserve it. We can have eternal life through Jesus Christ if we want it and God does not have to violate His righteousness to give it to us.

3. The issue of Grace:

A. Mankind has to stay out of the way and not try to add to what God has done. When we try to add works to God's plan then it is no longer grace.

B. Salvation is simple for us because God has done all of the work. If we try to improve upon the offer of salvation through adding human works, deeds, our personality, sales techniques, self-improvement techniques, rituals or traditions, then we complicate God's salvation plan. The result is no salvation.

C. Seven characteristics of God's salvation grace works:

- 1) They cannot be experienced.
- 2) They are not progressive.
- 3) They are not related to human merit or ability.
- 4) They are eternal in their character.
- 5) They are known only by Biblical revelation (doctrine).
- 6) They are wrought by God alone.
- 7) They are NOT wrought by man.

4. The seven characteristics of God's work magnified and explained.

A. They are not experienced means they are not sensed through nerves or emotions. Justification is not felt, it rests wholly on the testimony of God and we learn about it through study of the Bible. The riches of God cannot be experienced by human senses.

B. God's work is not progressive. God's salvation work for us does not become better, more full, more complete, as time progresses.

- We are never more saved than we are at the point of salvation.
- Every divine work is instantly perfect and lasts for eternity in perfection. The principle of sonship illustrates this. The fellowship between a father and son

changes but their relationship does not change, for they will always be father and son. We are called the “sons of God,” Hebrews 12:7-8.

C. God’s work is not related to human merit or ability.

- God works through His own sovereignty to please Himself and we humans have a hard time understanding that.
- We become members of His body through salvation and have to learn how to serve God.
- We must understand the riches of grace are built upon the merit of Jesus Christ and we are to rest in His ability, not in our own.

D. God’s work is eternal in character. All of God’s work is based on the work of Christ, and is not subject to variations which characterize human thinking.

- We are imputed righteous and therefore we can take no credit of human worthiness for salvation.
- It is the righteous imputed that saves us, not our ability. The gift of eternal life is that of Divine nature which has existed forever.

E. God’s works are only known by Biblical revelation. Human imagination and speculation cannot attain all that God achieved by saving the sinner through the work of Christ on the cross.

- God’s works surpass human knowledge and can only be understood through study of the Word of God.

F. God’s works are worked by God alone. Grace means that God has worked for man’s benefit. No man can save himself and tear down the barrier of sin that exists between God and mankind. No man can write his name in the heavens forever by his own power. God alone saves through Jesus Christ, Romans 3:23.

F. God’s works are not worked by mankind. No one can redeem himself for all mankind is unrighteous.

- The creature cannot conform himself to the likeness of the Creator.
- Man lives in time and he cannot design and execute eternal things.

- Salvation is more than the continued existence of a good man; it provides the most radical transformations, the acquiring of infinite possessions, and entering into positions which are in the sphere of heaven and of God. Colossians 2:10, “complete in Him.”

The forty-four things that the believer receives at salvation are a grace package that lasts forever. He never loses them, no matter what he does in time because they were given by God and man cannot undo God’s work.

5. The greatest thing God can do for us is to make us like His Son, Jesus Christ. This is called sanctification.

A. Sanctification I—Positional, at the moment of salvation we are entered into union with Christ, 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30.

B. Sanctification II—Experiential, this is accomplished through the consistent study of doctrine in the local church.

- The Pastor presents the Word of God line upon line from the original languages to the congregation.
- Believers receive the information and apply it to their lives.
- Believers develop the same norms and standards of Jesus Christ and serve Him.
- This is experiential sanctification. This sets us apart from the world’s thinking.

C. Sanctification III—Ultimate, we receive our resurrection body minus the old sin nature, Philippians 3:21.

6. How much faith does it take to enter into God’s grace plan? Just a “taste,” 1 Peter 2:3, “If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious”. Just a little bit more than no faith at all.

Matthew 17:20, all mankind is capable of is a “mustard seed” of faith for salvation.

There is no such thing as “strong faith” at salvation for man is a spiritual weakling

at salvation, he is only capable of the smallest faith, but that is enough to save him. At that point of “tasting” you receive 44 things that God gives to all men when they are saved through faith in Christ.

7. The hazard of grace is disorientation for the believer. If we live by our emotions and carnality or reversionism we will abuse grace. Hebrews 12:15; Galatians 5:4, we fall from grace means we are disoriented, although still saved.

8. God is constantly waiting to pour out blessings upon us if we will orient to His grace plan, Isaiah 30:18-19.
9. Salvation is by means of grace, not works, Ephesians 2:8-9. Romans 4:4, the more we work for salvation the more we go into debt.
10. In the believer's development God provides grace for us in:
 - A. Prayer, Hebrews 4:16.
 - B. Suffering, 2 Corinthians 12:9-10.
 - C. Growth, 2 Peter 3:18.
 - D. Stability, 1 Peter 5:12.
 - E. Method of operation, Hebrews 12:28.
 - F. Divine good, 1 Corinthians 15:10.
11. Giving is one of the functions of the believer priest, 2 Corinthians 8:9-12.
12. Areas of pride that reject grace:
 - A. Pride of those who believe you can lose eternal security; he thinks his sins are greater than God's plan.
 - B. Believer who gives in to pressure for he thinks his pressure is greater than the provision of God.
 - C. Systems of false spirituality (tongues for example,) assume human emotion is greater than the true filling of the Spirit.
 - D. Believers pride in emotional revolt thinking that his experiences are greater than the plan of God which calls for consistent intake of doctrine to
mature and know God.