

The Grace of God

- *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. Eph. 2:8-9*
- There are two ways this passage is understood.
- Some take it to an extreme where God doesn't expect anything, charging those who preach God demands works of not believing in God's grace.
- Some see grace removing all responsibility.
- They ignore all Jesus' commands about work.
- He that hears and does is a wise man building on the rock. He that hears and does not ... sand.

The Grace of God

- Others see God's grace in a very different light.
- It was given so we could work harder.
- *For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. Rom. 6:14*
- If we were under law, there would be no hope.
- One sin, forever dead. Rom. 6:23
- Grace is the perpetual 2nd chance.
- Each time we sin and repent/confess, forgiven, we can continue to work toward perfection.
- Sin can never have full dominion because after forgiveness, sin is removed and we are free.

The Instructions of Grace

- *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, Titus 2:11-13*
- God's grace is an instructor and a teacher.
- True grace that is fully understood forces us to recognize that grace leads to hard work and toil.
- Deny ungodliness and worldly lusts
- Live soberly, righteously and godly in present age

The Instructions of Grace

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- It is evident from this verse that God's grace has a far different purpose than to make it easier.
- God's grace is an instructor and a teacher.
- Because we are forgiven each time we confess, we have no excuses but to try harder each day.
- *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness 1Jn. 1:9*

God's Grace Leads to Hard Labor

- *For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 1Cor. 15:9-11*
- Paul saw God's grace as the second chance to one who had persecuted the church.
- God's grace made him an apostle.
- He was happy and excited with this second chance

Grace not Received in Vain

- *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 1Cor. 15:9-11*
- God's grace was not in vain!
- It led him to labor more abundantly.
- Yet it was not Paul alone, but God's grace
- Paul saw grace as the reason he could work.
- Without God's grace Paul would never be in a position to work at all.
- God's grace made him an apostle and bought him an opportunity ... **he did not receive in vain!!!**

The Corinthians were in Danger

- *We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. 2 Cor 6:1-2*
- How can one receive the grace of God in vain?
- By not using it as an opportunity to work hard.
- Not *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts,*
- Some very harsh words to these:
- *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Jas 4:4-5*
- Yet even in this, the grace of God gives 2nd chance

Don't Receive the Grace of God in Vain

- *We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. 2 Cor 6:1-2*
- How can one receive the grace of God in vain?
- By not using it as an opportunity to work hard.
- *we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,*
- An opportunity to work as hard /as long as we can
- ***Be sober, be vigilant***; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, 1 Peter 5:8
- ***exercise yourself toward godliness***. ... godliness is profitable for all things, 1 Tim 4:7-8
- let no one deceive you. ***He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous***. 8 He who sins is of the devil, 1Jn 3:7-8

Paul's Labor because of Grace

*Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal **for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.** Phil 3:12-14*

Each day was a new opportunity to do more and become more. Even with God's grace he worked hard.

Paul passed it on to us

- Therefore **let us, as many as are mature, have this mind;** and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. 16
Nevertheless, **to the degree that we have already attained,** let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. 17 Brethren, **join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.** Phil. 3: 15-17

Paul was Not Alone

- **Peter** 2Pet 1:3-11 Add to you faith..
- **Joshua** Josh 1:8 Think, talk, observe
- **Jesus** Jn. 13:3-18 Blessed if you do.
- **Great Cloud** **Heb 11**
- **Moses** Heb 11:24-29
- **Timothy**
- *Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. 1 Tim 4:15*

The Upward Call

- 1 Pet 2:2
- *as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation;*
- Eph 4:22-24
- *put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,*
- *be renewed in the spirit of your mind,*
- *put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

The Upward Call

- 1 Cor 3:1-3
- *could not speak to you as to spiritual*
- *but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.*
- *fed you with milk, not meat; for you were not yet able (to bear it): no, not even now are you able;*
- *you are yet carnal:*
- Gal 5:19-23
- *Lusts of the Flesh/Fruit of the Spirit*

The Upward Call

- Heb 5:12-14
- *by reason of time ought to be teachers you have need someone teach you rudiments.*
- *have need of milk, not of solid food.*
- *who partake of milk without experience of the word is a babe.*
- *But solid food is for full grown men,*
- *Those by reason of use have senses exercised to discern good and evil.*

The Upward Call

- Gal 2:20
- *I have been crucified with Christ;*
- *no longer I that live,*
- *but Christ living in me:*
- *life I now live in the flesh I live in faith,*
- *in the Son of God, who loved me,*
- *and gave himself up for me.*
- Goal we stretch for but can never truly reach