

The Reality and Necessity of Grace

Text: Ephesians 2:8-9

I. Grace Defined

- A. The usual definition of grace, “unmerited favor,” is not broad enough in scope to fully define all that is meant by the term.
 - 1. “The grace of God was upon” Jesus. (Luke 2:40)
 - 2. Colossians 4:6. “Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt...” (cf. Ecclesiastes 10:12)
- B. W.E. Vine: “That which bestows or occasions pleasure, delight, or causes favorable regard;...on the part of the bestower, the friendly disposition from which the kindly act proceeds, graciousness, lovingkindness, goodwill generally...especially with reference to the Divine favour or grace, e.g. Acts 14:26...” (*Expository Dictionary of NT Words*, 509-510)
- C. The Biblical definition.
 - 1. Grace, in respect to salvation:
 - a. Is a summary of all God has done to effect the salvation of man.
 - b. Includes all of God’s acts which show favor to undeserving mankind.
 - 2. God’s grace is more than mere passive pity. It expresses itself in real, concrete acts of love. (Romans 5:8)
 - 3. God’s grace runs through all He has done for man’s salvation. By grace:
 - a. He sacrificed His Son. (Hebrews 5:8-9)
 - b. He revealed His plan of salvation.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 2:9-12. The Spirit searched out the deep things of the mind of God.
 - 2) Galatians 1:11-12. The Spirit revealed these things to the inspired writers.
 - 3) Ephesians 3:1-5. When one reads the Scriptures he can have a clear understanding of the mystery of Christ—the redemption of mankind in accordance with the eternal purpose of God.
 - 4) Titus 2:11-12. The Scriptures, God’s word revealed through His Son (Hebrews 1:1-2), is the medium of God’s grace.

- c. God raises sinners to a new life in Christ. (Ephesians 2:4-7; cf. Romans 6:4-5)
 - d. The Lord built the church. (Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25-27)
4. Grace excludes salvation by meritorious works. (Romans 4:4; 11:6)

II. The Necessity of Grace

- A. The reason that grace is needed is sin: all have sinned. (Romans 3:10, 23)
1. The spiritual state of man is seen in many passages.
 - a. 1 Kings 8:46. "For there is no one who does not sin."
 - b. Proverbs 20:9. "Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?'"
 - c. Ecclesiastes 7:20. "For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin."
 - d. Psalm 14:2-3. "The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no who does good, no, not one."
 2. Since man sold himself into the bondage of sin (John 8:34), and since all sinned (Romans 3:23), therefore, all are under the sentence of death. (Ezekiel 18:20; Romans 6:23)
- B. God, in His matchless love, provided the ransom price for man's sins—His Son to die in man's place. (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 1:18-19)
1. While the grace of God is demonstrated in many ways, none is greater than its manifestation in His Son. (Romans 3:23-24)
 2. Salvation is not merited.
 - a. Man has sinned and deserves hell and no works he could do would earn or merit his salvation.
 - b. Salvation is that which is given by God's grace—a favor man has not merited. Hence, salvation is the gift of God.

Conclusion

1. We ought to be grateful for the lovingkindness, favor and grace of our God.
2. Without God's grace, we would all be condemned for all of us have sinned.
3. Look to God's grace, obey the gospel for the salvation of your soul.