

Columbus Street church of Christ

Sunday Bulletin

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Grace and Heaven

“¹⁰ Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.”

(1 Peter 1:10-11)

According to [biblehub.com] the English word “grace” is found no less than 125 times in the New Testament NKJV. Referring to Jesus Luke recorded, “*And the Child grew and became strong ^[k]in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him*” (Luke 2:40). Referring to the “saved” Paul wrote, “*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace*” (Eph. 1:7). Used by Paul 20 times just in the book of Romans he writes, “²⁰ *Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, ²¹ so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*” (vss. 20-21). And the writer of Hebrews mentions grace in this way tying it to the kingdom, “the saved”, and our service in that kingdom. “*Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear*” (Hebrews 12:28). We have redemption through His blood, according to the riches of His grace which is greater, more powerful than anyone’s sin.

Any study of your Bible concerning grace will bring you to a “foregone conclusion”; The relationship between salvation and grace cannot be separated. Every soul that will one day be in Heaven will be there because of God’s saving grace, not one exception, not one! Nothing can be clearer than this point, that man is lost in sin and cannot be saved except for God’s redemptive work through Christ—grace. Paul said to the saints at Ephesus, “⁴ *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)*” (Eph. 2:4-5).

Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

Concerning grace many often use it as a “fix-all” answer to every form of sin and doubtful doctrine. We must not allow grace to be perverted, thus, I offer the following for your consideration.

First, from John concerning our Lord: *“For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ”* (John 1:17). *“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace”* (Eph. 1:7). Can one be saved without His blood? Not One! Saving grace is only found in Jesus, all else is outside of Him. Paul said, *“I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus”* (1 Cor. 1:4). Grace that saves cannot be found anywhere but in Jesus Christ.

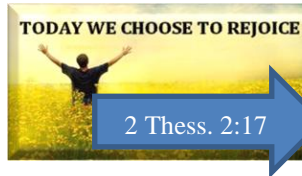
Paul wrote, *“because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth”* (Col. 1:5-6). Great news! The hope of Heaven is tied to an understanding of the word of truth, God's word. Paul and others were charged to *“testify to the gospel of the grace of God”*, and to reveal it to us. Notice that grace was, *“...able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified”* (Acts 20:24, 32). Therefore, preaching the gospel plants saving grace in the heart of those who will receive it.

Try to enter a private country club without a membership, you will be quickly turned away. Just the same, God's grace cannot be accessed apart from faith. Access according to Webster is, “permission, liberty, or ability to enter, approach, or pass to and from a place”. Therefore, access to His saving grace, membership if you will, must be by faith. Jesus, *“through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God”* (Rom. 5:2).

Now consider, *“For by grace you have been saved...through faith”* (Eph. 2:8). So, we know, *“faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”* (Rom. 10:17), thus, one must hear and be taught (John 6:45), believe Jesus is the Christ (John 8:24), repent of sin (Luke 13:3), confess Jesus before men (Matt. 10:32), be baptized for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38), then live by faith the rest of your life (Rev. 2:10). Only when God's grace, which is undeserved, is applied has power to save. Obedient faith gives us access to His grace, which in turn gives access to the kingdom, and ultimately Heaven. You cannot just “have faith”. If you don't hear the gospel you cannot be saved, if you refuse to repent you cannot be saved. If you don't believe

Jesus is the Christ, and confess that before men, you cannot be saved, nor will you be saved if you refuse to be baptized. Contrary to the scripture is ideology that you can make mental ascent right up into Heaven. *“O foolish man, that faith without works is dead... For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also”* (James 2:20, 26). Thus, salvation is by grace through faith which only comes by hearing God’s word (Rom. 10:17) and requires obedience (Rom. 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:2).

Saving grace does not give license to sin as most will teach. Our sin was



“⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and ¹⁸ establish you in every good word and work.”

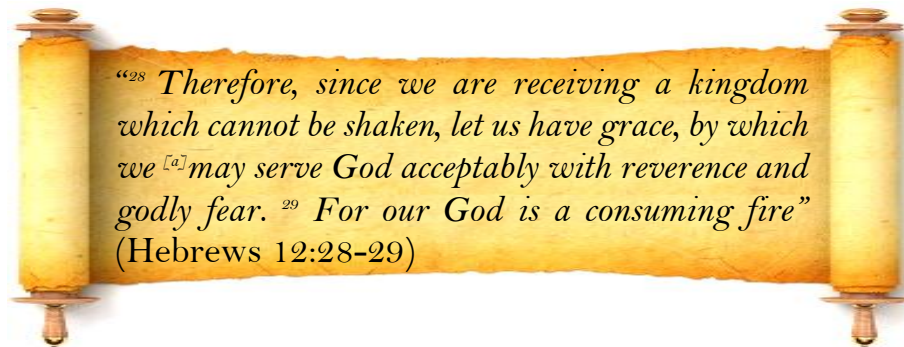
revealed by the law, and under the law sin abounds. Of this, Paul wrote, *“... Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more”* (Rom. 5:20). The phrase *“grace abounded much more”* is so misused by the religious world which in a nutshell falsely teaches you can sin, and grace is greater than your sin, therefore, you are ok even in sin? Not so, and we only need read from Romans 6 verses 1 and 2 to learn the truth. Paul’s question, *“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?”* (v.1) to which Paul gives the answer, *“Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?”* (v.2). Still many erringly interpret grace as a license for the Christian to indulge in unrighteousness, but remember this, *“But there shall by no means enter it anything ^[q] that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life”,* and *“He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him ^[e] be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still”* (Rev. 21:27, 22:11). You become a slave to sin if you choose the path of unrighteousness. Paul wrote, *“¹¹ 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”* (Tit. 2:11-12). Take the righteous path, according to the word of truth and you will remain in His grace.

From the scripture we learn our entrance into God’s saving grace, and Heaven in the after while, is based on our willingness to obey the faith which is in Christ. There is then nothing we can do to merit grace, nothing we can build, no work ever earns or deserves grace and eternal rewards (Rom. 4:4). Our salvation is based solely on obedient faith, it is impossible to deserve it, or to earn it. But let us not get confused by the words, *“not of works, lest anyone should boast”* (Eph. 2:9) as meaning that no work is involved in our salvation. There are actions commanded by God, in the exercise of faith which are called *“works”* such as in James 2 and 24, *“You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only”*. These are not in the category of efforts that earn or merit, but of obedient faith that pleases God. God owes us

nothing; we owe Him everything. God does desire, “*all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*” (1Tim. 2:4), and Jesus did say, “*If you love Me, ^[a]keep My commandments*” (John 14:15).

When it comes to your soul’s salvation do not be guided by anything except for the Word of God. Put away all teaching from any and every source that cannot be validated by the word of God, rather give all your attention to the saving word of His grace that one day Heaven will be yours.

In Christ
Love
D. Scarpino



Welcome One and All!

Our faithful Creator is worthy to be praised in this assembly. All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme! He gave His Son to die, for all mankind, that He might redeem all. Our blessed Redeemer suffered and died for our sins and is now risen and sitting at the right hand of God as only Head of the church. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, knowing that He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). “***Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!***” (Isaiah 6:3)

What Jesus Said I Must Do to Be Saved?

1. Hear the gospel ----- John 6:45
2. Believe the gospel----- John 8:24
3. Repent of sins ----- Luke 13:3
4. Confess Christ----- Matthew 10:32
5. Be baptized ----- Mark 16:16
6. Remain faithful until death----- Matthew 10:22