

LESSON 8

THE GRACE OF GOD
AND
THE CHURCH

by

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THE CHURCH

rights and
privileges

YOU

all
blessings

THE GRACE OF GOD

Introduction

- A. The Church of the Living God is an assembly "called out" of the world and united about the Lord Jesus, Revelation 1:4-20.
- B. While the Church of the New Testament is organized, it is primarily an organism. It is characterized by a profound unity and indwelt by God Himself. All believers in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are members of the Church which is the Body of Jesus Christ.

I. The Biblical Explanation for This Lesson.

God has not only designated the Holy Scripture and the exercise of prayer to be the channels of divine grace -- He has also provided the organism of the Church. In our salvation we were made members of the Church which is the Body of Jesus Christ. All the rights and privileges of that relationship belongs to every believer. It is the will of God that the Christian receive the fullness of the Grace of God through his involvement in his local church.

II. The Biblical Explanation of This Principle.

Acts 4:33 -- Grace is a characteristic of the life and ministry of the Church.

Acts 11:23 -- Grace is a description of God's activity in building the Church.

Romans 12:6 -- Grace is the origin of all the gifts given to the Church.

I Cor. 3:5-10 -- Grace is recounted as the source of the Church at Corinth.

II Cor. 8:1-19 -- Grace is illustrated in the monetary offering received by the Church at Corinth.

Ephesians 4:7 -- Grace provides a gift for all believers. (I Peter 4:1)

II Timothy 1:9-11 -- Grace involves all believers in a divine calling.

Revelation 1:4 -- Grace and peace is the benediction pronounced on the Church.

III. The Biblical Illustrations of the Church. (This is only a sample.)

- A. The Church is likened to a Flock and the believer is related to Jesus Christ as a sheep to the Shepherd, John 10:1-29; I Peter 5:2.
- B. The Church is likened to a Vineyard and the believer is related to Jesus Christ as the branch is to the Vine, John 15:1-11.
- C. The Church is likened to a Body and the believer is related to Jesus Christ as the member to the Head, I Cor. 12:12-27.
- D. The Church is likened to Marriage and the believer is related to Jesus Christ as the bride to the Bridegroom, Ephesians 5:22-33.
- E. The Church is likened to a Temple and the believer is related to Jesus Christ as a stone to the Building, I Peter 2:5-10.

IV. The Biblical Leadership in the Church.

- A. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, Ephesians 1:22,23.
- B. The Holy Spirit is the Administrator of the Church, Acts 1:1,2.
- C. Pastors are the undershepherds to the Church.
 - 1. The pastor is to oversee the Flock -- we must be willing to obey and be led, Acts 20:28.
 - 2. The pastor is to feed the Flock -- we must be willing to respond, Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2,3.
 - 3. The pastor is to watch over the Flock -- we must follow their example and obey them, Hebrews 13:7,17.

- V. The Biblical Sample of the Church of the Living God, Ephesians 4:1-16.
- A. There is a Calling to be Recognized and Fulfilled, Eph. 4:1.
 - B. There are Qualifications to be Met, Eph. 4:2,3.
 - C. There is an Orthodoxy to be Maintained, Eph. 4:4-6.
 - D. There are Gifts to be Accepted and Used, Eph. 4:7-10.
 - E. There are Divinely Ordained Relationships between the Recipients of these Gifts and Callings, Eph. 4:11,12.
 - F. There are Personal and Corporate Goals Which are To Be and Will Be Achieved, Eph. 4:13-16.

VI. The Biblical Ordinances of the Church of the Living God.

- A. Baptism is an illustration of the Grace of God in Salvation, Romans 6:1-5.
- B. The Lord's Supper is an illustration of the Grace of God in the fellowship of Sanctification, I Corinthians 11:20-34.

Conclusion

- A. Pray for your pastor and your church.
- B. Support your pastor and your church.
- C. Cooperate with your pastor and your church.
- D. We may not ". . . despise the Church of God . . ." I Cor. 11:22.