

Cooperating with the Holy Spirit: Understanding Grace

Introduction

- A. The Holy Spirit is the gift of our Heavenly Father. He is the One Who has brought us the new birth and Who seeks to teach us, transform us, and enable us to glorify the Lord Jesus.
- B. One of the assignments our Heavenly Father gave the Holy Spirit when He sent Him into the world, was to lead all believers to “*Understand what God has freely given us*” (1 Cor 2:12).
- C. The words “freely given” point to the Biblical truths related to “The Grace of God.”

I. The Definition of the Grace of God.

- A. The most common: *Unmerited Favor* and *God’s Riches at Christ’s Expense*.
- B. Griffith Thomas: *The Love of God in Action Toward Sinful People*.
- C. A. B. Simpson: *Mercy for the sinner, help in hardest places, everything for nothing – That is Grace*.
- D. H.C.G Moule: *God working in us, to will and to do, for His good pleasure’s sake*.
- E. Summary: *Grace is the gift, of the all-sufficient provision of God, so that the believer may know God’s forgiveness, may enter into deep fellowship with God, experience His love, joy, peace and power, and thereby accomplish the will of God in life and service.*

II. The Meaning of the Grace of God.

- A. “Grace” designates all the benefits God has “*Freely Given*” to us.
- B. Some Biblical affirmations related to grace.
 - 1. *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.* Ephesians 1:3
 - 2. *From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.* John 1:16
 - 3. *His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.* 2 Peter 1:3
 - 4. *And are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.* Romans 3:24

III. The Explanation of the Grace of God.

A. The Bible constantly emphasizes the distinction between God's law and His grace.

1. God's law is His holy standard that must be met for anyone to go to Heaven. The law was perfectly kept by Jesus Christ as our Representative.

If you want to enter life, obey the commandments. Matthew 19:17

*Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law ... But now **a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known ... This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe ... and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*** Romans 3:20-24

2. Every believer has been completely forgiven and is perfectly righteous through the life and death of Jesus Christ. Acts 13:39; Rom 5:1; 8:3,4; Gal 3:13; Hebrews 3:10-12

B. The Bible describes God's grace as a source of spiritual power.

With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. Acts 4:33.

Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power ... Acts 6:8

*But he said to me, **"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.*** 2 Corinthians 12:9

Summary: When a believer believes and practices the truths of the grace of God – there is a release of spiritual power. The importance of this truth can hardly be overemphasized.

IV. Errors that Hinder the Understanding and Practice of the Grace of God.

A. The error that we can, by our good works, earn the grace of God.

*You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; **you have fallen away from grace.*** Galatians 5:4

B. The error of legalism that establishes rules as a necessary spiritual practice.

"These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men." Romans 15:8,9

C. The error that it is sufficient to simply believe the truth but not necessary to practice it.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. James 1:22

Conclusion: Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you the grace of God and how to receive.