

The Wednesday Word, Jan. 22, 2014: Misunderstood Matters about Grace - Part 3

When it comes to salvation, another misunderstood thing about grace is assuming that our faith creates the grace of God. However, the truth is that grace, righteous grace, already lived in the heart of God before anyone ever exercised faith. In our un-saved state, we were excluded from the life of God and lived in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind (Ephesians 2:1-4). But God graciously made us alive unto Himself (Ephesians 2:5). Faith came because of grace. In fact, faith is nowhere, in the scriptures, said to create grace; it's quite the opposite. Our faith does not make God gracious. God's righteous grace already existed before faith was given. For by grace you are saved (Ephesians 2:5).

Because of grace we are given faith. Faith will cause us to grasp that the sacrifice of Christ at Calvary is a righteous, finished sacrifice (John 19:30). As believers, faith continues to lead us to hug the truth that, in Christ crucified, righteousness and grace have already embraced and we are now covered, not merely by grace, but with the robe of righteousness.

When faith reads, "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, (Isaiah 61:10) it says a vigorous amen! Faith sees that the reason God loved us and took delight in us was not discovered in some goodness or worth within us but found, rather, in the gracious good-pleasure of God Himself (Matthew 12:32). Faith sees that Christ's destiny is our destiny. Faith sees that He was made alive and that we were made alive together with him. Faith believes that He was raised up and that we were raised up together with him. Faith reckons that He was made to sit at the right hand of the Father in heavenly places, and we have been made to sit together with him. Why? There is one answer and only one. It's grace, pure grace, sovereign grace (Ephesians 2:5-7).

So let's say it again, faith does not bring grace into existence. If we have received grace, then it not because we gave anything to deserve it ... and that includes faith! Let's face it, if we believe that our faith brought grace into existence then we must conclude that we are co-providers of salvation. Perish the thought!

God saves us by his grace, and not because of our faith! Although we were dead in our sins (Ephesians 2:1), "God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, quickened (made us alive) together with Christ — by grace you have been saved" (Ephesians 2:4-5).

Nonetheless, someone objects saying, "But, we need faith." I reply, "Of course we do; we are not suggesting that faith is not vital, but nowhere does God look and see if we have faith before He justifies us. We are saved "through" faith and not because of it (Ephesians 2:7). Faith is the instrument, the channel through which we receive salvation. Grace, on the other hand, is the very ground of our salvation.

We are dependent on Him, and not on our faith. He is completely reliable, He never fails. Our faith, on the other hand, often fails but the object of our faith, the Lord Jesus never does!

Faith receives salvation, but it is a very poor foundation on which to attempt to build our salvation. We build on Christ alone + nothing!

This God is the God we adore,

Our faithful, unchangeable Friend,
Whose love is as great as His power,
And knows neither measure nor end!
'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come.

And that's the Gospel Truth!