

The Grace Of God That Brings Salvation

They stood on the other side of the street from us, singing loudly, *"Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so."* But these were not sinners, saved by grace. These were unrepentant, carnal reprobates, using a familiar old Sunday School song to justify their rebellion before Almighty God.

This was at the homosexual "pride" parade in Columbus, Ohio in June... one of the largest such parades in the nation, with a half million people in attendance. That's 1/4 the population of that city. Also in the parade were dozens of professing "Christian" churches, marching WITH the sodomites and celebrating their sin along with them. They carried signs on their floats and as they marched, APOLOGIZING for God... apologizing for the true Christians who came out to preach the WHOLE counsel of God and to rebuke their prideful rebellion. Some of the signs read, *"God thinks you're FABULOUS," "LGBT Families for Jesus,"* and of course, *"Thou shall not judge."*

And those on the sidelines sang and chanted louder: *"Jesus loves me, this I know."* Sadly, they seem to "know" so much that simply isn't true. In conversations with some of these LGBT allies and professing Christians, we learned that they believe God loves everyone, no matter what. That Jesus does not condemn sodomy or same-sex "marriage," or even "transgenderism," but rather, they believe God MADE them that way, and that God Himself gives them the GRACE to live any way they want.

There's that word, so often abused by so many whose foolish hearts are darkened. "Grace." There is a growing movement among Christianity, especially among the "Social Justice" crowd, that God gives grace to EVERYONE, universally, and that

that grace to live any way you like is just how Jesus is, and what Christianity is REALLY all about. As if the God of the Old Testament was an "angry old man," but then Jesus came and God got "born again," into Mr. Rogers.

Friends, this is a very dangerous course. It is the deception of our enemy, Satan, STILL whispering in our ears, "**Did God REALLY say?...**" Our enemy, the evil one, knows Scripture quite well, and twists it very effectively in his efforts to deceive the whole world. If possible, even the elect of God. Indeed, there are MANY regular church-goers who believe in this concept of unlimited, unending, universal grace to all. But this is a gross, irresponsible mishandling of the gift of grace and this is the reason that so many who BELIEVE they are truly saved "Christians" will one day hear those horrible words, *"Depart from Me, you workers of iniquity; I never knew you!"*

If we go back to Noah Webster's dictionary from 1828, we read the definition of "Grace." It says, *"The free, unmerited love and favor of God, the spring and source of all the benefits men receive from Him."* And: *"Favorable influence of God; divine influence or the influence of the Spirit, in renewing the heart and restraining from sin."* And: *"The application of Christ's righteousness to the sinner."* And: *"A state of reconciliation to God."*

Interestingly, if you go to a modern dictionary, such as the online "Dictionary.com," you will find virtually all references to God removed from the definition of Grace. Today, "grace" is defined as, *"elegance or beauty of form, manner, motion or action."* *"A pleasing or attractive quality or endowment."* *"Favor or goodwill."* *"Mercy, clemency, pardon,"* and *"a manifestation of favor, especially by a superior."*

How we have abused the grace of God today! Let's go back to the Bible and see what God's Word says about Grace.

One of my favorite verses about grace is found in Titus 2. *"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age; looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."*

I love this passage of Scripture. It explains grace so well. First of all, *"the GRACE of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men."* That would be Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, Who dwells inside each believer in Christ. Jesus has appeared to ALL men, this is true. As Romans tells us, *"for what can be known about God has been made plain to them, because God MADE it plain to them. For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities, His eternal power and divine nature, have been CLEARLY SEEN, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse."*

Truly this is GRACE in itself. God allowing us mere, puny people to know Him. But GOD IS SO GOOD. In His GRACE, Jesus left His heavenly dwelling place and came to earth and appeared to us, as ONE of us, bringing with Him, through His sacrifice on the cross, SALVATION for those who believe, repent and trust in Him as their LORD – not just their Savior. Let me be clear here: God's love is AVAILABLE to all of us. But not all of us accept it; and until we make Him our Lord, the Bible tells us, we remain His enemies. And when we pridefully despise Him – especially blaspheming His grace by continuing in our sin, even though we KNOW instinctively that we are continuing in sin, we become workers of iniquity.

And what does the GRACE of God that brings salvation DO? He teaches us that: *"denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age."* SOBERLY, RIGHTEOUSLY AND GODLY. Sadly, so many today

have been taught by our “seeker friendly,” “God loves everyone,” “Universal Salvation,” “Your Best Life Now,” cotton candy-preaching churches that God loves us – and SAVES US – just the way we are, and there is no need for us to change. They believe we are never to be judged, as long as we try our hardest to be “good” people.

Biblical illiteracy – or deliberate deception from their pastors and preachers. Probably both. When was the last time you heard a sermon teaching that we are to live soberly, righteously and Godly – in this present age? That means TODAY, folks. We are not supposed to plan to “get right with God” later, when it’s more convenient, perhaps on our death beds. We are to live soberly, righteously and Godly NOW. And Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who is the Grace of God that brings salvation, teaches us how, if we will hearken to His voice through the Holy Spirit that indwells all true believers.

And as we live in this present age, here on earth, in our earthly bodies, enjoying the Grace of God and thanking Him for His WONDERFUL grace toward us, we look forward to that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ... but AGAIN, ONLY those who are truly saved by grace. Only the sheep – not the goats. Only the wheat, not the tares. Only the truly saved, not the evil men who have crept in unawares. For them, the glorious appear of our great God and Savior will not be so glorious, as He returns with a sword to bring righteous and just judgment. Again, as Romans tells us, we are without excuse.

Because as this Scripture in Titus concludes, we read, that Jesus, when He suffered and died on the cross so that we might live, *“gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”* And so those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life have been redeemed from all iniquity, all sin. Upon our confession of Christ as Lord and Savior, upon our repentance from the darkness of this world and our former

lives as sinners... once we are saved – BY HIS GRACE, we become purified, a peculiar people, zealous for good works.

It is no longer WE who live, but Christ, who lives IN us, through His Holy Spirit. We cannot walk an aisle, say a prayer and then continue on our path of our old sinful lifestyles, doing as we please, living to gratify the desires of our flesh, while quoting tidbits of Scripture out of context and thinking we are Christians. There needs to be that REPENTANCE, that TRANSFORMATION – that renewing of our hearts and minds. If it does not exist in your life, then by calling yourself a “Christian,” you are taking the Lord’s name in vain. And you are living a life of delusion.

The precious grace of God has been SO abused by so many in our modern world. It is very, very sad indeed. False teachers have told us that we need simply come and worship Him (in THEIR synagogues of satan). They’ve told us that we can just “add Jesus on” to the life we are already living. Such lies. Titus goes on, in Chapter 3 to say, *“For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving diverse lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”*

THAT, my friends, is grace. We WERE foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving all manner of lusts and pleasures, full of malice and envy; filled with hate. But GOD IS SO GOOD! He showed kindness toward us, undeserving as we were. And He showed mercy, even though we were so sinful, our hearts so dark and filthy. He showed MERCY. And after He saved us, we were washed clean, regenerated, renewed and filled with His Holy Spirit. We were BORN AGAIN. THIS, my friends, is what

makes eternal life in Christ possible.

We have done nothing to earn His mercy and grace. Because He loved us – while we were yet sinners... BUT: (and here is the POINT)... though He loves us and does not want any to perish, IF WE CONTINUE to flaunt our sin in His face, if we continue to justify our carnal lusts, even though in our hearts we KNOW better (and all of us DO)... if we take the grace of God and spit on it, and toss it in the gutter, continuing in our lawlessness, then His mercy and grace does not apply to us.

The Christian life is not an easy one. It involves denying ourselves, forsaking our fleshly, carnal desires and CHOOSING to follow Him, even when we know it will lead to persecution in this life. God's love, mercy and grace is AVAILABLE to all men. But if we do not respond, if our hearts are not washed clean by the blood of the Lamb, then we remain His enemies, and we will remain His enemies for all eternity.

Please understand: God does not send anyone to hell. We CHOOSE to go there by the way we respond to His wonderful offer of mercy and grace. In order for us to go to hell, we have to ignore EVERY single message, every single attempt God makes to save us. You have to ignore and despise every one of your Grandmother's prayers, all the prayers of your parents, every Christmas carol you've ever heard, every Easter service, every time a street evangelist tried to hand you a tract or start a discussion, every broadcast on Christian radio, everything you've ever read or heard about the REAL God of Creation in the Bible, you have to ignore all those invitations to church, all the pleadings of your loved ones to simply LISTEN. You have to literally jump through every hoop, every obstacle and warning sign God has placed in your path throughout your entire life until you come to the end of it, and the Lamb's Book of Life is opened... only then to find that your name is not recorded...

You refused to listen. You CHOSE hell. You CHOSE to listen,

instead, to the false, lying “love gospel” preachers you heaped up for yourselves to tell you what you wanted to hear: that you could remain in your sinful lifestyle and that nothing need ever change... God loved you just the way you were... no – you lived your life as an ENEMY of God, and deep down, you know that. Standing before the throne of GRACE on Judgment day, you will know it too, and you will weep bitterly, with gnashing of teeth, as you come to realize you deserve the eternal punishment and separation from this holy, wonderful, merciful Savior... because you believed the lie. You CHOSE to believe the lie, because you loved darkness rather than light.

My friends, TODAY is the day of salvation. Do not despise those who come to tell you the truth. Pay attention to the sign posts – God has been calling you. He is patient and merciful and kind, and filled with GRACE. But He is also a righteous and Holy Judge. While the Christian life is not one of ease, it IS one of peace. Turn to Him, let Him wash you clean and place within you a new heart, sanctified and set apart for His service. Do not take His mercy and grace for granted. You cannot remain in your sin and still inherit the Kingdom... no, the Kingdom is reserved only for HIS children. And He wants to adopt YOU into His family ... today.

Audio CDs and transcripts of this message are available when you call me at Wisconsin Christian News, (715) 486-8066. Or email Rob@WisconsinChristianNews.com. Ask for message number 229.

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