

Grace

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Ephesians 2:8-9

Grace, the unmerited favor of God, seems to be a hard subject for men to talk about. Mankind has a proud streak, an attitude of superiority, and so does not want to think that there may be something in the universe that he doesn't deserve. We see some T.V. commercials that are perfect expressions of the pride and arrogance of man. The speaker in the commercial is talking about something he is trying to sell you, something that makes your life easier, and he closes the sales pitch with "because you deserve it."

I've heard it preached that back in the days of Noah, God saw how evil men were and he found only one righteous man and his family that He cared about saving. But Rom. 3:10-12 says, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. But Genesis 6:6 says, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (i.e. it was grace that distinguished Noah from the rest) and again it says in Genesis 7:1, "And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Now, notice carefully that God did not say, "for thou art righteous before me;" but rather "for thee have I SEEN righteous...." This is the hallmark of grace...that God can see someone (who is not good, who has gone out of the way, who has become unprofitable) as righteous. The amazing fact and mystery of imputed righteousness is explained well in Romans 5:18-21, where we see that because Jesus Christ is righteous, God sees everyone who is in Him as righteous also! This is GRACE!

Looking now at the great grace of God toward men, we see in our text these things:

I. The First Aspect of His Great Grace: v4. (That He loved us)

- Romans 5:8 - But God **commendeth His love toward us**, in that, **while we were yet sinners**, Christ died for us.
- 1 Timothy 1:15 - This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus **came into the world to save sinners**, of whom I am chief.
 - > The amazing fact of a completely holy God loving sin-blackened sinners! Loving them so absolutely that He gave His only begotten Son that "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life!"
 - > This coupled with the truth of His divine birth, perfect submission and obedience to God, burial and resurrection is the Good News, the Gospel of God which is able to save men's souls. The scripture calls this "the gospel of THE GRACE OF GOD." (Acts 20:24)
 - > The favor of this love established peace with the saved sinner (Romans 5:1-2)
 - > The amazing favor of God's love
 - > That love which motivated God to provide a payment for our sin debt
 - 1John 4:10 - Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his

Son to be the **propitiation** (Greek = hilasmos = atonement, expiator) for our sins.
GRACE!

- In 1Peter 3:18 we find this great fact of Christ as our propitiation written as “Christ...suffering...the just for the unjust...”
- The unmerited favor of God’s love makes the enemy a son!
 - > 1John 3:1 - Behold, **what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us**, that we should be **called the sons of God**: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. GRACE!
 - > Ephesians 1:2 - Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - > Ephesians 1:5 - Having predestinated us unto the **adoption of children** by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

II. Second Aspect of His Great Grace: v.5 and first phrase of v.6 (That He quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together)

- To clearly understand the greatness of grace here remember that we were dead in trespasses and sin (Ephesians 2:1). This was our dead state.
- 1John 4:9 - In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.
- John 1:17 - For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.
- John 1:16 - And of his fullness have all we received, and **grace for grace** (the unmerited favor bestowed by Christ in bundling us with Him in His death AND resurrection wrought the reality of the intent of God in His love for us).
- John 14:19 - Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me: because I live, **ye shall live also**.

III. Third Aspect of His Great Grace: (v.6 (Exalted us with Christ))

- The unmerited favor of God **MAKES THE ENEMY A CO-HEIR WITH THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON!**
 - > Romans 8:17 - And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and **joint heirs** with Jesus Christ.
 - > Extending unmerited favor to the enemies, God shows honor and grants splendor to them.
 - Romans 8:30 - Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also **glorified**.
 - Revelation 3:21 - To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

IV. Fourth Aspect of His Great Grace: v.7 (That we have been chosen to show forth His great grace through the ages)

- The privilege and opportunity provided by this aspect of God’s unmerited favor begins in this age. As a personal privilege, it is meaningful for you and me in this age (we NOW have opportunity to show and tell of the kindness of God toward us).
- The privilege and opportunity will continue through this current age for other believers

- It will continue through eternal ages for all of God's elect
- The centerpiece of this eternal display will be the **kindness of God toward His people**.
- How to show forth the great grace of His kindness toward us?
 - > Tenderness toward the saints of God (Ephesians 4:32: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.")
 - > Kindness and thoughtfulness toward all men (2 Timothy 2:24-26; Luke 6:27-35)
 - > Sympathy with the lost (Ephesians 2:3)
 - > Forbearance of saints and sinners (Colossians 3:13; Luke 6:27-35)
 - > Mercy toward the wayward (Luke 6:36)
 - > Offering Christ to everybody as the answer for all differences in the universe (1Peter 3:15)
 - > Mentoring new believers (1Corninthians 11:1)