

The Truth About God's Grace
Parker 472
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Today I'm going to talk about the grace of God. And the title of the message is "The Truth About God's Grace." I don't have one particular text that I'm going to use, I have several, but I'm going to start in Romans nine. This is the text for the message: Romans 9:18, even though I'll be reading some other verses with it. So, if you'd like to follow along in your Bibles, open them to Romans chapter 9. "The Truth About God's Grace"

Now, just about anyone of any denomination who claims to be a Christian will say, "we believe salvation by God's grace" and that's a good thing if you really do, if you really believe salvation by God's grace. But I want you to be aware of something. And that is sometimes Satan in his subtlety spreading his tares (if you're familiar with the parable of the wheat and the tares) Satan spreading his lies, stealthily entering into the church and sewing error. That's what the apostle Paul warned the Corinthians about in second Corinthians 11. He said I don't want your minds to be corrupted from the simplicity that's in Christ; the singleness, the single message of all of salvation by God's grace in Christ Jesus. He said, I don't want your mind to be corrupted from that. He said, there will be people coming in who claim to preach Jesus, but they're preaching another Jesus, one of a different kind. They'll be claiming to preach the gospel, but it will be another gospel, another of a different kind. They'll claim to be preaching by the Holy Spirit but it's another spirit.

In the book of Galatians chapter 1 he warned the Galatian churches there concerning false preachers who come in preaching another gospel. He said *"though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed (anathema)."* And what happens in these errors, these subtle errors, is at some stage... And here's the way I put it because this is the way that I began to really understand it. The truth about God's grace tells us that the salvation of sinners who cannot save themselves, who cannot contribute to their salvation, who cannot earn or deserve salvation, the truth about salvation for sinners who by nature don't want salvation God's way, so the truth about God's grace in salvation is this: that all of the salvation of all the people of God is conditioned solely upon the Lord Jesus Christ who, as God manifest in the flesh, fulfilled those conditions by his obedience unto death. And I say it this way: as the surety, the substitute, and the Redeemer of God's people.

Now, if you hear or believe a gospel that makes salvation conditioned on sinners (on you, on me) in any way, to any degree, at any stage, that's the subtle heresy of a false gospel. And what you have there is grace plus works and they don't mix. Paul wrote about that in Romans chapter 11. Grace and works do not mix. You can't preach salvation by grace and by works and make it work. It jus

doesn't work. Paul said in Romans 11 if it's grace it's all of grace, if it's works it's all of works. I've heard people say will that preacher mixes grace and works. No, he doesn't. He is just preaching a false gospel of works. You can't mix grace and works.

So I want to show you several truths here about God's grace. Years ago I heard, you may have heard this, acrostic - you know where take the word grace and you make each letter stand for something. Well, here's a good acrostic for you to remember. Grace is **God's riches at Christ's expense**. I like that, If you know what it means. God's riches. Well what are God's riches? It's all the salvation, all the blessings and benefits of salvation, eternal life, acceptance with him. God's riches, but who paid the price? At Christ's expense. Not at your expense.

I know the Bible talks about us counting the cost, but all we're giving up, according to the Scripture, is dead works and that's not a payment. Christ made the payment. He's the Redeemer. So let me give you these truths about God's grace.

1. The first truth about God's grace that I want you to see, we find these all throughout the Bible, but I am going to give you particular scriptures that explain. And number one is this: **God's grace is always sovereign**. Sovereign grace. A lady asked me one time, what denomination are we, and I said we're not affiliated with any of what people are familiar with, the major denominations, but we are a sovereign Grace church because we believe in the sovereign grace of God. Why do I believe in the sovereign grace of God? That's the only kind there is. And what that means is this - we find it in Romans nine, look at verse 15 and 18. Here in these verses, the apostle Paul is quoting from the Old Testament in the book of Exodus (I believe it's chapter 33) where Moses asked the Lord, show me your glory. And the Lord responded this way in Romans 9:18. "*Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*" In other words, what were talking about here is God's sovereign, electing Grace.

Look back up at verse 11 talking about Jacob and Esau. This is Romans nine verse 11 talking about how Jacob and Esau, *(For the children being not yet born, (that's talking about Jacob and Esau being not yet born) neither having done any good or evil...*

You know a lot of people say when God elects a people, he looks down through the telescope of time and foresees what they would do, whether they would believe, no he doesn't. Not according to the Bible. I know people don't like to hear this but this is what the Bible says.

"(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)" That's God. Verse 12 says, "*It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.*" You see again talking about Jacob and Esau. They were twins but Esau came forth from the womb first. He's the elder and Jacob came

next, he's the younger. And in the Jewish economy under way that the patriarchal system was set up, the firstborn was always in line to be the spiritual head and ruler of the family. But here he says, according to God's sovereignty, this is God's way, he says, *the elder shall serve the younger*. Verse 13: "*As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*"

People say, so that means that God loved Jacob more and loved Esau less. That's not what it means. This is God's hatred. This is righteous indignation. This is God's rejection of Esau based upon a just ground and then it's God's acceptance of Jacob based upon the just ground of his grace. Jacob didn't deserve to be chosen or loved or saved. He was a sinner as all sinners. If we're sinners, grace tells us that everything we have from God we didn't deserve any of it and we did not earn any of it. It's grace. God's riches at Christ's expense. And he says, "*As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*"

Romans 9:14: "*What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness (or unjustness) with God? God forbid.*" And here's the same thought that's in verse 18 repeated here for verse 15. "*For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.*" And why is that, the way it's set up by God? Verse 16: "*So then it is not of him that willeth, (it's not of your free will as people say) nor of him that runneth, (not of your works) but of God that sheweth mercy.*" So one thing we know about grace, if you're going to talk about biblical grace, it's sovereign. God, before the foundation of the world, chose a people to save. Now, that's what he did. And he didn't choose everybody. You say, well that's not fair. Well read Romans nine. There's your answer. If you raise that objection - I used to raise that objection all the time - and I read Romans nine and I thought, wow, I'm raising the same objections that these lost people are raising. God's grace is absolutely sovereign. God saves whom he will. You say, well then it doesn't matter what I do if God's going to save me he will. No, who God has chosen is part of the secret things that belong to God, only he knows that. All you know is your responsibility.

Deuteronomy 29:29 states it. The secret things belong to God, the revealed things belong to you. And what's revealed to you and me? We're sinners and if we don't have a savior, if God didn't choose us, if God didn't send a Savior to save us, we're doomed forever. I need salvation. I need it and I want it God's way. But his grace is sovereign, it's sovereign grace. God says Romans 9:18, "*Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*" Now, that's God's business. You say well, that's not fair. How can he hold me responsible? Verse 19 - that's the objection. "*Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?*" You can't argue with God. You can't debate with God. You're not even on his level to have a discussion with him. All you can do is look at what he's revealed and he's revealed that his grace is sovereign. But now let me give you the the second thing about God's grace. This is truth about God's grace, God's riches at Christ's expense.

2. God's grace is always just and right. If you look over Romans chapter 5, look at verse 21. Here's what you need to understand: what ever God does, no matter what it is according to the word, it's just, it's right, it's the right way. If God loves me, he has to do it in a just way. He cannot love unjustly. If God hates me, it's a just way. What is God's hatred? It's not like our sinful hatred. See, when we hate, it's sinful. Because we love our selves; selfish pride. But when God hates, it is not sinful. It's God's rejection of a people based on a just ground. That's righteous indignation, righteous hatred, if you will. That's why he said I hate all workers of iniquity - all those to whom iniquity is imputed. Well, God's grace is always just. If God is gracious to me, he's just in doing so. If God's merciful to me, he's just in doing so. Look at Romans 5:21. It says here, *"That as sin hath reigned unto death (sin justly deserves death) even so might grace reign through righteousness (now righteousness is another word for justness) unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."*

Now, that's the issue of God's grace. God's grace is the salvation of sinners based upon righteousness and where is that righteousness found? It is not found in you; it's not found in me. The Bible says, of us, that by nature there's none of us righteous, no not one, Romans 3:10. There is none to do a good, according to God's standard of goodness. We're sinners. We've all sinned and come short of the glory of God. That means we've missed the mark. The mark is the glory of God. Where do you see the glory of God? In Christ Jesus. Who is Jesus Christ? You see, grace is not about who you are or who I am. It's about who Christ is. Well he's God manifest in the flesh. In order for God to save sinners, he had to do it through a person who is able, willing, and ready to do it. And that's Christ. If God came down here and picked any individual born of Adam and said I will make you to do all the work of salvation for my people, it would fail. Because we're sinners. We're not able. The Bible says, Christ is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him. Paul said, *"for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."* 2 Timothy 1:12. What have I committed to him? My own salvation. Before the foundation of the world, God chose a people and made Christ their surety. What that means is that he accounted, charged, imputed the whole sin debt of the people he chose to Christ. And then he sent Christ into this world. Galatians 4:4-5. *"God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law..."* What does that mean? That means that Christ had to become a man without sin, God in human flesh, the God man, and as our surety, substitute himself in my place and suffer unto death that which I've earned and deserved in my place. And what was the result? He redeemed me by his blood. He paid the redemption price. And that's grace. Grace is always just and right. It's never arbitrary. Mercy is the same way. That's why the death of Christ is called a propitiation which is a sin bearing sacrifice that brings satisfaction to the law, satisfaction to the justice of God. Christ took my hell and drank damnation dry. And what he did in his obedience unto death is the righteousness of God. The Bible says the gospel is the revelation of the righteousness of God. What is that? It's God's justness to save his people based upon the merits of Christ imputed, charged, accounted to

them. And Grace brought forth righteousness. Grace reigns unto eternal life through righteousness by Jesus Christ our Lord. So grace is always just. God is never unjust whether he loves or hate whether he saves or damns.

Here's what you need to understand. You can't climb into God's mind and see things that he hasn't revealed. You just have to go by his word. And his word says this: now listen to me - you have no hope of salvation, you have no hope of experiencing God's grace except through Jesus Christ and based upon his righteousness, his blood, his death imputed to us. That's the only way. Our sins were imputed to him, our debt was imputed to him, his righteousness to us. Grace is always just. Let me give you this third thing about Grace.

3. God's grace is always free. Now, doesn't that stand to reason? Look over Romans 3:24. There is no charge for God's grace. Somebody said, so I gave up a lot for God and God's grace. You gave up nothing. What you think was a lot, was only that the dung and the rabble of this earth. That's what Paul said in Philippians chapter 3 when he saw the glory of God in Christ. He counted all that he held dear as dung but that he may win Christ and be found in him. But grace is free. It says in Romans 3:23, "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*" but verse 24, "*Being justified (what is it to be justified? It's to be forgiven. It's to be counted righteous in God's sight, but we're being justified freely, unconditionally without a cause, by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus)*"

Do you realize that everything about salvation, every blessing of it, every means that God uses to bring it, every fruit of it, is free? The Bible says (Romans 8:32), that "*He that spared not his own Son...how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*" (Ephesians 2:8) "*For by grace are ye saved through faith;*" and that brings us to the fourth one.

4. God's grace is always saving. if God's grace, his sovereign, his just, his free grace has been set up on any individual sinner from before the foundation of the world, here's what the Bible teaches, that sinner will be saved. There is no such thing as God showing forth or shedding forth his grace and it not resulting in the salvation of that sinner. God's love is not in vain for those who go to hell. They're like Esau - God hated him. God's grace, God's righteousness, Christ blood is never shed in vain. Grace is always saving.

Ephesians 2:8. The Bible says, "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*" Grace is always saving. God's grace is not an offer up for man's acceptance or rejection. Here's the point: if you know what the Bible teaches about our sinfulness and depravity and spiritual deadness, if it's left up to us we would never choose God. God chooses his people. If it is left up to us, we would never desire to believe in Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:14 "*the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God:*"

for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” Grace being always saving, it's always fruitful. That's what that means, the fruit of God's grace.

In order to be saved, two things must take place for us. Number one, we have to be legally justified before God. The ground of our condemnation must be totally obliterated and moved out of the way. How is that done? By Christ on the cross working forth righteousness. But also, we must be given life from the dead, spiritual life from the dead, and kept under glory. That's the work of the Spirit in the new birth bringing us to faith in Christ, repentance of dead words, and perseverance in the faith. That's what Grace is. Grace is a powerful thing. It's not empty. It's not just an offer. It's not left up to you and me. It is the salvation of God's people. God's grace is powerful. The doctrine of grace, the doctrine of the glorious person in the finished work of Christ, is a beautiful thing. We must hear it. That's how God reveals himself to his people. And then, Grace is a powerful dynamic within God's people by the Holy Spirit who gives us, in the new birth, life from the dead by God's grace.

I heard a preacher say one time that the way you're born again is you first believe and then you're born again. That is not what the Bible teaches. The Bible teaches that you cannot see or hear or understand or desire the kingdom of God until God sovereignly births you again by his spirit. You see, grace is sovereign and it's by under the preaching of the gospel begotten again by the word of truth, James wrote in James 1:18. You must be born again or you cannot see the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God. But the Holy Spirit comes and he gives life to the dead by God's grace. He gives them a new heart, a new mind, new affections, new will by God's grace. He brings them to faith in Christ, the true Christ, not a counterfeit but the true Christ by God's grace. He brings them to repent of their dead works and their idolatry, repent of their sins by God's grace. And he keeps them and preserves them throughout their lives by God's grace. No matter if Satan attacks them, no matter their own personal struggles within of the flesh, no matter if the world comes against them, by God's grace they are kept unto glory and he'll bring them unto glory by God's grace.

All of Grace, all of God's riches at Christ's expense. So remember this: grace is sovereign. You may not like that, nobody will by nature, but **God's grace is sovereign. God's grace is just. God's grace is always free and God's grace is always saving.** And if you think about this when we think about God's grace, don't think about it as something that God enables you to do as to establishing, or attaining, or maintaining salvation. Think about it as a free gift of God's grace through Christ, who is the person and by whose work grace comes to save sinners. God's riches at Christ's expense and oh what an expense it was. It cost him. Grace doesn't cost me anything, but it cost Christ his whole life and he gave his life a ransom for many, the Scripture says, by God's grace.