



Articles and Sermons :: A New Covenant of Grace

A New Covenant of Grace - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/28 3:39

From Andrew Murray's book "The Two Covenants":

Chapter 14

The New Covenant: A Covenant of Grace

"Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."—Rom. vi. 14.

The words, Covenant of grace, though not found in Scripture, are the correct expression of the truth it abundantly teaches, that the contrast between the two covenants is none other than that of law and grace. Of the New Covenant, grace is the great characteristic: "The law came in, that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly" (Rom. 5:20). It is to bring the Romans away entirely from under the Old Covenant, and to teach them their place in the New, that Paul writes: "Ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). And he assures them that if they believe this, and live in it, their experience would confirm God's promise: "Sin shall not have dominion over you." What the law could not do—give deliverance from the power of sin over us—grace would effect. The New Covenant was entirely a Covenant of grace. In the wonderful grace of God it had its origin; it was meant to be a manifestation of the riches and the glory of that grace; of grace, and by grace working in us, all its promises can be fulfilled and experienced.

The word grace, is used in two senses. It is first the gracious disposition in God which moves Him to love us freely without our merit, and to bestow all His blessings upon us. Then it also means that power which this grace bestows upon us to work in us. The redeeming work of Christ, and the righteousness He won for us, equally with the work of the Spirit in us, as the power of the new life, are spoken of as Grace. It includes all that Christ has done and still does, all He has and gives, all He is for us and in us. John says, "We beheld His glory, the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). "The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (1:17). "And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" (1:16). What the law demands, grace supplies.

The contrast which John pointed out is expounded by Paul: "The law came in, that the offence might abound" (Rom. 5:20) and the way be prepared for the abounding of grace more exceedingly. The law points the way, but gives no strength to walk in it. The law demands, but makes no provision for its demands being met. The law burdens and condemns and slays. It can awaken desire, but not satisfy it. It can rouse to effort, but not secure success. It can appeal to motives, but gives no inward power beyond what man himself has. And so, while warring against sin, it became its very ally in giving the sinner over to a hopeless condemnation. "The strength of sin is the law" (1 Cor. 15:56).

To deliver us from the bondage and the dominion of sin, grace came by Jesus Christ. Its work is twofold. Its exceeding abundance is seen in the free and full pardon there is of all transgression, in the bestowal of a perfect righteousness, and in the acceptance into God's favour and friendship. "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sin according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7). It is not only at conversion and our admittance into God's favour, but throughout all our life, at each step of our way, and amid the highest attainments of the most advanced saint; we owe everything to grace, and grace alone. The thought of merit and work and worthiness is for ever excluded.

The exceeding abundance of grace is equally seen in the work which the Holy Spirit every moment maintains within us. We have found that the central blessing of the New Covenant, flowing from Christ's redemption and the pardon of our sins, is the new heart in which God's law and fear and love have been put. It is in the fulfilment of this promise, in the maintenance of the heart in a state of fitness for God's indwelling, that the glory of grace is specially seen.

In the very nature of things this must be so. Paul writes: "Where sin abounded, grace did more exceedingly abound" (Rom. 5:20). And where, as far as I was concerned, did sin abound? All the sin in earth and hell could not harm me, were it not for its presence in my heart. It is there it has exercised its terrible dominion. And it is there the exceeding abundance of grace must be proved, if it is to benefit me. All grace in earth and heaven could not help me; it is only in the heart it can be received, and known, and enjoyed. "Where sin abounded," in the heart, there "grace did more exceedingly abound; that as sin reigned in death," working its destruction in the heart and life, "even so might grace reign," in the heart too, "t

through righteousness into eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:20-21). As had been said just before, "They that receive the abundance of grace shall reign in life through Jesus Christ" (5:17).

Of this reign of grace in the heart Scripture speaks wondrous things. Paul speaks of the grace that fitted him for his work, of "the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of His power" (Eph. 3:7). "The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love" (1 Tim. 1:14). "The grace which was bestowed upon me was not found vain, but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Cor. 15:10). "He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9). He speaks in the same way of grace as working in the life of believers, when he exhorts them to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" 2 Tim. 2:1; when he tells us of "the grace of God" exhibited in the liberality of the Macedonian Christians (see 2 Cor. 8:1-3), and "the exceeding grace of God" in the Corinthians; when he encourages them: "God is able to make all grace abound in you, that ye may abound unto every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8).

Grace is not only the power that moves the heart of God in its compassion towards us, when He acquits and accepts the sinner and makes him a child, but is equally the power that moves the heart of the saint, and provides it each moment with just the disposition and the power which it needs to love God and do His will.

It is impossible to speak too strongly of the need there is to know that, as wonderful and free and alone sufficient as is the grace that pardons, is the grace that sanctifies; we are just as absolutely dependent upon the latter as the former. We can do as little to the one as the other. The grace that works in us must as exclusively do all in us and through us as the grace that pardons does all for us. In the one case as the other, everything is by faith alone.

Not to apprehend this brings a double danger. On the one hand, people think that grace cannot be more exalted than in the bestowal of pardon on the vile and unworthy; and a secret feeling arises that, if God be so magnified by our sins more than anything else, we must not expect to be freed from them in this life. With many this cuts at the root of the life of true holiness. On the other hand, from not knowing that grace is always and alone to do all the work in our sanctification and fruit-bearing, men are thrown upon their own efforts, their life remains one of feebleness and bondage under the law, and they never yield themselves to let grace do all it would.

Let us listen to what God's Word says: "By grace have ye been saved, through faith; not of works, lest any man should glory. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10). Grace stands in contrast to good works of our own not only before conversion, but after conversion too. We are created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God had prepared for us. It is grace alone can work them in us and work them out through us.

Not only the commencement but the continuance of the Christian life is the work of grace. "Now if it is by grace it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; therefore it is of faith that it may be according to grace" (Rom. 11:6; 4:16). As we see that grace is literally and absolutely to do all in us, so that all our actions are the showing forth of grace in us, we shall consent to live the life of faith—a life in which, every moment, everything is expected from God. It is only then that we shall experience that sin shall not, never, not for a moment, have dominion over us.

"Ye are not under the law, but under grace." There are three possible lives. One entirely under the law; one entirely under grace; one a mixed life, partly law, partly grace. It is this last against which Paul warns the Romans. It is this which is so common, and works such ruin among Christians. Let us find out whether this is not our position, and the cause of our low state. Let us beseech God to open our eyes by the Holy Spirit to see that in the New Covenant everything, every movement, every moment of our Christian life, is of grace, abounding grace; grace abounding exceedingly, and working mightily. Let us believe that our Covenant God waits to cause all grace to abound toward us. And let us begin to live the life of faith that depends upon, and trusts in, and looks to, and ever waits for God, through Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit, to work in us that which is pleasing in His sight.

Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied!

Re: A New Covenant of Grace - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/11/28 6:39

Dear sister,

Thank you for posting per my question in the other thread. Tho I was hoping to hear from you personally I accept that you allow Mr Murray to speak for you in your understanding of grace.

While I by no means want to cause you distress or offence, I strongly disagree with this presentation of the grace of God. Without starting an argument I'll just point out a few biblical truths... Firstly - God is the same and has not and will not change... (man divided up the Bible not God) the same God that gave us the law is the God of grace in fact it was an act of grace to even give us the law. The two are not in contrast but are in concert. Secondly - the scriptures, as Mr Murray points out, do not refer to the new covenant as the "covenant of grace" and that's because it would be not only misleading but inaccurate, otherwise God would have not withheld this from His beloved children. Thirdly - never not once does the scriptures say that grace is eternal and yet clearly declares that the law is eternal....yea even our Lord Himself declares it! In fact 1 John clearly states that if we say we love Him but don't keep the commandments we lie. Fourthly - Jesus Himself (according to scripture) didn't use the word grace even once! I bring this up not to thwart grace, God forbid, but to simply illustrate its role in our salvation. Jesus did however preach the law and repentance and He is our eternal life:) So (for me) the presentation of grace by Mr Murray could not possibly be fair and accurate as it seeks to frame the grace of God in a narrative that is incomplete and therefore false,... which the scriptures themselves clearly and repeatedly warn about.

Again dear sister, I mean no offense to you or anyone who may read these words tho I do hope you will pray and seek the Lord on this as I am confident that He, by His spirit, will bear witness to the truth.

Re: Flether, on: 2016/11/28 7:20

Brother respectfully I beg to differ with you. Our brother Andrew Murray has adequately summarized the contrast of the Old and the New Covenant. In my understanding of the New Testament I do not see a perpetuity of the law particularly in ruling the heart of the believer.

If anything the following scriptures teach that there is a distinction between the old and the new covenant. A distinction between law and Christ.

John 1:17

For the law was given through Moses, Grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

Romans 7:4

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the law through the body of Christ, so that we might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead in order that we might bear fruit for God.

Romans 10:4

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Colossians 2:16-17

Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day - things which are a mere shadow of what is to come but the substance belongs to Christ.

There are other scriptures that I could bring the bear in this discussion. But the New Testament teaches that the believer is under a different Covenant. I would prefer to call it the New Covenant. The New Testament teaches that the believer under the new covenant is ruled by the Holy Spirit. He has not ruled by the law of Moses.

Galatians 5:18

For those who are led by the Spirit, are not under the Law.

Romans 8:1-5

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do weak as it was in the flesh, God did, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Brother as you say my intention is not to start an argument. But I am reasoning from the scriptures that we are under a new covenant. And that there is a distinction between the old and the new covenant. Brother Andrew Murray has quite adequately explained the distinctions. And those distinctions are borne out by the scriptures. Particularly the New Testament writings.

Again simply my thoughts respectfully submitted.

-bbs-

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/28 7:23

Fletcher,

So how do you become holy as God is holy?

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2016/11/28 7:28

Surely the clue is in the title, 'A NEW covenant'.

Re: Jade, on: 2016/11/28 7:32

Sister I think the following verses below will answer your question,

Peter 1:13-16 (NASB)

13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action, **keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely ON THE GRACE to be brought to you AT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.** 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, ~~“Be holy, for I am holy.”~~

In other words it is the grace of Jesus that makes us holy as God is Holy.

---CAPS for emphasis only---

-bbs-

Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/11/28 7:49

It is important to remember that both the law and grace reflect our God's nature. Grace does so more fully than the law. "For the law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." John 1:17. "We beheld his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14. Jesus in the flesh is the fullest expression of God. "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" Hebrews 1:3.

The law is the schoolmaster of Israel to bring them to Jesus, keeping them even today in a tutelage and guardianship until all Israel shall be saved. Galatians 3:24, Romans 11:26. It works, too, as a mirror of the sinfulness of unbelieving Gentiles. Romans 3:19. All have sinned. Romans 3:23. Sin is the transgression of the law. 1 John 3:4.

It is the knowledge of the law that makes a man complete. It converts the soul. Psalm 19:7. How does the law of God act as the grace of God? By making me aware of my sin and bringing me to godly sorrow. Romans 3:20. Godly sorrow leads to repentance unto salvation. 2 Corinthians 7:10. It is the goodness, kindness and grace of God in this respect that leads me to Christ. Romans 2:4.

The law is the beginning of grace. Grace is the fulfillment and purpose of the law because law brings us to it. Romans 10:4. The law, if I am allowed to make the imperfect comparison, is like the tubes inside a plant stem that bring us from the miry clay to the flowery fruit of grace in Christ Jesus.

One plant, two components, neither without the other, one purpose, to bring us to the light of the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ, and to hold us there until we be transformed into His image in the eschaton.

Re: sister Jade - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/11/28 8:02

Copied from the other thread;

"Whereas holiness and righteousness are eternal and are therefore more demanding of our attentiveness. Holiness is the result of righteousness, which is the result of obedience, which is the result of faith toward God which can't come without repentance. While it's true that grace enables to respond to the Lord, a person can be justified/forgiven but if there is no repentance then that person makes the grace of God of no effect and we ultimately fail the grace of God-which teaches us to live holy lives."

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/28 8:18

Thank you Dave. Exactly.

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/28 8:19

Thank you Brother Blaine. Perfect answer.

Re: Fletcher - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/28 8:22

We are talking about grace, not repentance.

After you have repented, how do you become holy as God is holy?

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/11/28 8:56

Jade, when you use the word "holiness" are you talking about positional holiness or actual holiness? There is a huge and glaring difference.

It always seems that persons who push the grace type threads are playing word games so they are hard to follow.

I don't have anything against grace, in fact it is amazing.

The Israelites were told to be holy in the old covenant. If God commanded them to be holy but also knew they could not

ever be so, and then hold this against them, it would not seem very God-like. It would be like a person beating his dog for not being able to recite Shakespeare.

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/28 9:23

Todd, I am talking about actual holiness.

Yes..... a dog must become a man to recite Shakespeare.

And..... a man must become a new creation in Christ to be holy as God is holy.

Heb. 8:7-8

For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. For finding fault with them, He says,
"Behold, days are coming, says the Lord,
When I will effect a new covenant
With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah..."

It is 1.20am here in Sydney. Back tomorrow.

excerpt from : The Spirit Of Law And The Spirit Of Grace by Denny Kenaston - posted by proudpapa, on: 2016/11/28 9:4

"Fifteen Differences Between Law and Grace

Let us look at a few of these differences. I have fifteen of them, believe it or not. But I don't plan to spend a long time on them, because I'd like you to get the principle of operating under law, and operating under grace. I want you to see the difference between the two.

1. The spirit of the law demands. It allows no excuse, it must be this way, and no other! You'll do this, and you have no choice, no excuse! This is the way it must be, this is the way you must do it. The spirit of grace encourages. It comes alongside and encourages you in the direction of holiness and righteousness. "Go this way! That's right! That's good! Keep on going! Keep your heart open! Just keep going! This is the way to go." One is the spirit of law; the other is the spirit of grace. They have a tremendous effect on how we relate to people, don't they?

2. The law condemns. Condemnation is judgment. Condemnation is heavy. It brings the heart down low. Grace convicts, enlightens the heart. It is that still small voice, that sweet prompting of the Spirit of God inside of the heart of God's people. The gentle Spirit comes alongside, and enlightens the heart: "You know, you shouldn't have done that."

Think of it, think of how the grace of God works in your life. You make a mistake, you say something out of sort, and it might be five minutes and all of a sudden you have that little quiet moment there by the kitchen sink or at your workbench and the grace of God says: "You shouldn't have done that." But the spirit of law condemns: "That was wrong! You are wicked!" and all of those kind of things that go along with it.

If we are moving in the spirit of law, that's going to have a very different effect than if we're moving in the spirit of grace. I believe that when we work with people, God would have us work like the Holy Spirit, not like the law. Rather than condemn, judge, and give feelings of failure and judgment, come alongside and give a gentle encouragement as the gentle wooing of the Spirit of God.

3. The law brings bondage. The word bondage means just what it says: Bound. The spirit of law brings bondage, it binds, it hinders. If you're moving under the principals of law, you're probably failing in your Christian life. You probably try, but fail, and try, but fail, and try, but fail. But the spirit of grace brings liberty. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. That is, power to do God's will. Liberty: Emancipation Proclamation. You are free! You can do what you want to do now

, you can do the will of God, you can serve the Lord, and you can have victory over your sin in your life! The spirit of grace gives liberty, freedom, or emancipation to do the will of God. The other brings bondage.

4. The spirit of law is never good enough. Did you ever feel that way? It's never good enough. Well, that's the spirit of the law. You always fail under the spirit of law. The principal of law is always never good enough. You always fell short of it. You maybe got it here, but you lost it here. You gained a little here, but you lost down here. But the spirit of grace is always excited by each step that is taken. The spirit of grace is acceptance, encouragement, praise. Often heard: "If you want to raise your children right, give them about 9 doses of praise, to every 1 dose of correction; then another 9 doses of praise, and then 1 dose of correction." Why? Because the spirit of grace is an encourager, it's always excited by each step that is gained. When you take even a baby step in your Christian life, the grace of God is right there to say, "That's good! That's right! You're going the right way! Keep on going! Don't quit now! Keep on going!" But the spirit of law, when you take one step in the right direction is right there to say, "That's not good enough. You could've done better than that. Why didn't you do it this way? What about your motives?" The spirit of law and the spirit of grace are very different one from another.

5. The spirit of law: Curses. You've failed. Judgment is coming! There's a payment due for that which you did wrong! You failed! But the spirit of grace blesses, and shows the way to victory, even in total failure. The spirit of grace comes along and says, "There's a way out! Get up! God will help you! Keep on going!" Ah, but the spirit of the law comes along side of one who fell and curses, and brings judgment, and tries to make the load heavier on top of them. Big difference between the two.

6. The spirit of law is critical, always finding something wrong. It's a little bit like "never good enough," but I think it's worthy of a point in itself. The spirit of law is critical. It's always finding something wrong. But the spirit of grace gives the benefit of the doubt. The benefit of the doubt? I thought of these verses over in 1 Corinthians 13 where it's giving a definition of love, and it says of love (among other things): "Love hopeth all things, and believeth all things." Love gives the benefit of the doubt. Love believes in the other. Love hopes the best of the other. The spirit of grace gives the benefit of the doubt, rather than looking for something wrong, trying to find something to put a finger on it, and being critical. If the grace of God is stirring in the heart of an individual, the first response will be, "Oh, there must be some other explanation," or "Surely, there must have been a reason for that." Wouldn't you like to have the benefit of the doubt? So would your brother, so would your sister, so would your children, so would your wife or husband! Wouldn't you like to have the benefit of the doubt? The spirit of law is critical, always finding something wrong.

7. The spirit of law remembers sin again, and again, and again. Just like in the Old Testament, under the law, they would offer their sacrifice on the Day of Atonement, but a year later they'd have to come back again, and offer it again, and a year later they came back, and offered it again. The spirit of law remembers sin. But the spirit of grace forgets it. "What was that? I don't even remember! What was it you did? I didn't even remember it." The spirit of grace forgets! The spirit of law remembers it, reminds you, reminds you again, reminds you again, and again, and again, and again, and again, and again. The grace of God just forgets it, buried in the deepest sea. Separated as far as the east is from the west, so are my sins separated from me.

8. The spirit of law exposes sin, and then leaves you there. That's all the law could ever do. But the spirit of grace comes along side, and forgives and covers, where we're willing to deal with it. The grace of God will come along side and encourage you to repent, to be forgiven, and to cover it, so that it is gone, so nobody else finds out about it.

9. The spirit of law is rejection. And the spirit of grace is acceptance. Law drives you away. It will drive you away from God, it will drive you away from people, and it will make people want to run away from you. They won't want to be around you. The spirit of law is rejection. But the spirit of grace is acceptance. It says: "Come! Come to God! Come the way you are! Come and be forgiven! Come and be cleansed!"

Probably the greatest motivation of the growth in our Christian life comes from the acceptance that we have of the Heavenly Father, is it not so? I don't know of anything that motivates me more to go on in my Christian life than to know that God accepts me right where I am. I don't mean God accepts sin! But God accepts me right where I am. If I'm clear in my heart, God accepts me. Sure, maybe 6 months from now, He'll begin to show me something else I need to deal with, and I'll see it. But all those 6 months, God was loving me! He was accepting me! He was blessing me! He was encouraging me! That very acceptance caused me to have my heart open, so God could minister to me about another need in my life. The spirit of law makes you want to run away from God, but the spirit of grace makes you want to run to God.

10. The spirit of the law tends to be exclusivist. The spirit of grace is free to all! Hallelujah. "Red, brown, yellow, black a

nd white, they're all precious in His sight!Â” But not so with law. The principals of law, and those who live after the principals of law, they tend toward being a sect, or they tend toward being an individualist. Â”This is how I see it, this is the way itÂ’s going to be, and I donÂ’t care if I have to be by myself, this is the way weÂ’re going to do it.Â” ItÂ’s not that way with the spirit of grace. Rather it says: Â”Others, Lord, yes others. Let this my motto be.Â” Quite a difference between the two of those isnÂ’t it?

11. The spirit of law has no mercy. When you have failed under the spirit of law, there is no mercy. But under the spirit of grace: thereÂ’s complete mercy. Release! Forgiveness! Encouragement! Acceptance! Total mercy through the blood of Jesus Christ. Total mercy compared to no mercy, no forgiveness. The spirit of law and the spirit of grace are very different.

12. Under the spirit of law the highest goal is performance. Under the spirit of grace the highest goal is a relationship. The one: performance. The other: relationship. There is a big difference between the two of those! If we are living our lives to perform, and weÂ’re basing our acceptance on performance, when we donÂ’t measure up we donÂ’t feel GodÂ’s acceptance. Or if we base otherÂ’s acceptance on performance, when they donÂ’t measure up, we donÂ’t accept them. Because the highest goal is how you perform. Not so with the spirit of grace. With the spirit of grace the highest goal is relationship. O Lord, help us to see that one.

As I pondered this message, I had to think of many of the plain churches, and how they are so much on the performance side. If you come among them and you donÂ’t look quite right, or you say Â”kidsÂ” instead of Â”children,Â” or a few things like that, there is this silent, mysterious wall that comes up. It comes up because of the theology of performance, and you didnÂ’t perform right so things donÂ’t go right. But let the grace of God come over our hearts as individuals, and as a church with relationship as the highest goal. Relationship with the God of Heaven, relationship with GodÂ’s people, and a relationship with a lost and dying world out there!

There is a big difference between the spirit of law and the spirit of grace if you come and visit a church like that! The one youÂ’ll go away wondering what happened, not feeling accepted. But the other youÂ’ll go away saying, Â”They loved me! They accepted me just the way I am! I want to go back again! ThereÂ’s something magnetic about those people!Â” I tell you what it is: itÂ’s magnetic because itÂ’s like God. ThatÂ’s exactly the way God is with every one of us. God wants a relationship with us! ThatÂ’s number one! HeÂ’ll walk with us when we have long hair! And HeÂ’ll walk with us before we get rid of our cigarettes! HeÂ’ll walk with us when weÂ’re failing in this area. HeÂ’ll walk with us when weÂ’re not as meek and quiet as we ought to be! And HeÂ’ll walk with us when weÂ’re not as modest as we ought to be! Because number one on GodÂ’s list is a relationship!

We have to be the same way, because itÂ’s godliness to be like God. Amen? So itÂ’s godly to accept somebody right where they are. ItÂ’s godly to come up and put your arm around some fellow who has long hair whoÂ’s born again for only 2 weeks. ItÂ’s godly to come up and put your arm around him and bless him, and encourage him, and accept him, and love him. ItÂ’s God-like to do that. In the law, the highest goal is performance. We all come up with our own levels of performance, Â”You had better measure up with my level of performance...Â”

I had to think this one comes pretty close to home when you begin to ponder our children. I think we need to have some performance in our minds, I am not against that. But let number one be relationship. I donÂ’t know anything that motivates a child to do what Mama and Papa say more than a sweet relationship with Mama and Papa! Nothing! But oh, the burden of a little child whose father and mother move under the principals of law, and sets up the rules of performance, and withdraw their acceptance, and their blessing, and their encouragement when the performance isnÂ’t what it ought to be. Poor child. That childÂ’s view of God will be very mixed up.

13. The spirit of law tends to details. The spirit of grace tends to flexibility. What do I mean by that? Well, I guess a good way to put it is: The Letter of the Law vs. The Spirit of the Law. You know letter of the law. We can follow the Pharisees, and study Jewish history, and it doesnÂ’t take us long to find out what the spirit of law does if you leave it by its self. It will make up 5,000 Sabbath rules over the course of about 200-300 years, of things you should do and shouldnÂ’t do. ItÂ’ll make a thick book to read so you can learn how to behave on the Sabbath! But in the spirit of grace is the principal, and in principal is flexibility. There is a big difference between the two of those. Law tends to details. YouÂ’ll do it this way, down to the detail. YouÂ’ll wear these, youÂ’ll part your hair here, youÂ’ll wear this kind of covering, youÂ’ll wear black shoes and only black shoes. The principals of law tend toward details, but the spirit of grace, or the principals of grace, tends toward flexibility. There is flexibility on how itÂ’s lived out.

14. The spirit of law tends to be negative. The spirit of grace tends to be positive. If youÂ’re one who struggles with being

g negative I would encourage you to take a study of the Gospels and study the Pharisees. Do a study on the Pharisees in light of this whole matter of negative, doubtful, unbelief. You'll find an answer to your need. Because the principal of law tends toward the negative, that's just the way it is. Because you can never measure up, and there's no faith where there's law. They can't dwell together! Where there's a spirit of grace, there's this positive, faith-filled, encouraged, up-lifted look toward the God of Heaven, trusting Him in the circumstances of life.

15. And last of all, we said it already but I think its worth making it a point. The spirit of law is like a Pharisee. The spirit of grace is like Jesus. Consider this: the Law creates rebellion, stirs up the flesh, and drains spiritual life. I don't know how many times a brother or a sister who has been born again—I mean one of those fresh new births, when they're about a month old in the faith—go back to their old church, sit in the service, listen to the message, and when they get out they feel like they need to go to church because all the life has been drained out of them. That is what law does. Read it there in Romans 7. It's supposed to! God gave it so that it would create rebellion, so it would stir up the flesh, so that sin would be revived, so we could see our evil condition. But brothers and sisters, if we're in the grace of God, if we're washed in the Blood of Jesus, if we're no longer walking after the flesh but after the Spirit, we should have no part with any of that which the law does, but rather the spirit of grace working in our heart to produce a holy life. I know that we'd all have to agree, that the end result of grace is always higher than the end result of law—always! It will always be higher; it will always reach higher than law.

Which Spirit are You Living In?

read more at :

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or listen at :

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid=13205>

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/11/28 10:07

Jade wrote:

"Todd, I am talking about actual holiness.

Yes..... a dog must become a man to recite Shakespeare.

And..... a man must become a new creation in Christ to be holy as God is holy. "

Then why did God command the Israelites to be holy and punish them when they could not be holy? They had no means to become a new creation. We can sit here and say that the Israelites were only an object lesson for us (how it is not possible to keep the law), but they had to bear the actual brunt and misery of God's "displeasure." I must put that word in quotes, because how can a reasonable God be displeased when his creation fails at doing the impossible?

Re: , on: 2016/11/28 10:23

Todd respectfully from Romans 9:19-20

... You will say to me then why does He still find fault? For who resists His will? On the contrary, who are you O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder "Why did you make me like this," will it?

Brother our finite minds cannot pierce the infinite mind of God. As brother Tozer would say it is the infinite mind of God that must pierce our finite Minds.

-bbs-

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/11/28 10:24

Brothers Dave and Blaine- I didn't say to mean to suggest there isn't a "new" covenant. Please forgive me and my clumsy words for not being clearer... what I am saying is that God, knowing the end from the beginning, gave both and that they are not over and against one another. Often when the apostle Paul speaks in the negative regarding the law it's to the response to the law and not the law itself, as he (Paul) says the law is good. Further I'm not attempting to "yoke" anyone to the law, rather yoke them to Christ which fulfills the law:)

Sister Jade, Holiness is only possible after repentance so it is not separate but is integral. Many who "preach grace" and not the gospel don't like the word repentance, much less the works meet with repentance. But to your point/question; in 1 John 3:7 we see it said "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous." Now the word interpreted as righteous is "dikaïos" which according to Strong's is defined as; ὁ δίκαιος, dīk-aios, dik'-ah-yos; from G1349; equitable (in character or act); by implication, innocent, holy (absolutely or relatively):â€"just, meet, right(-eous).

So a person, as previously stated, becomes or is counted as holy by the implication of righteousness which itself comes from faithful obedience which in turn is enabled by divine grace:)

Hope that helps to clarify what I'm attempting to communicate and I do appreciate your patience with me:)

Re: Fletcher, on: 2016/11/28 10:26

Brother thanks for your clarification. Sorry if I misunderstood.

-bbs-

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/11/28 10:52

Bear wrote: Todd respectfully from Romans 9:19-20

... You will say to me then why does He still find fault? For who resists His will? On the contrary, who are you O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder "Why did you make me like this," will it?

Brother our finite minds cannot pierce the infinite mind of God. As brother Tozer would say it is the infinite mind of God that must pierce our finite Minds.

-bbs-

I am not the one finding fault with God. Do you believe that God punished the Israelites for not doing the impossible, solely for our benefit?

I think that God held them accountable because they were accountable.

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/11/28 11:01

Also it's worth mentioning here that the apostles taught and expounded the grace of God exclusively from the Law and the prophets while they lived so (for me) it's clearly there and they didn't seem to have or teach the disconnect that is so often taught today, rather they found wisdom in the continuity of God's plan to redeem us which obviously includes the law:)

So just to be clear, I am grateful for divine grace for without it where would any of us be but lost. I'm simply stating that in my understanding the grace of God and the law of God work in concert and without the law, grace would have little value.

I offer this analogy again to illustrate my understanding;

Offering grace to someone who hasn't first become convicted as a sinner under the law is tantamount to offering free chemotherapy to a person who has not been diagnosed with terminal cancer. The law, much like an MRI does the work of diagnosis to determine the health of an individual and only after that has occurred and the diagnosis of terminal cancer (sin) is given can there be a legitimate use/prescription of grace/chemo. Now after applying chemo/grace one is taken back to the MRI/law to measure the effects of the application, then more treatment is given followed by more tests until a di

agnosis of (divine) health is finally given. Chemo doesn't save you in your cancer, it saves you from your cancer much like grace doesn't save us in our sins but from them. In this analogy Jesus is our oncologist who gives us the grace/chemo to make us whole. Now to get mad and condemn the MRI/law for giving us the diagnosis of cancer/sin is utterly foolish, for without it we would not know of our dire condition. Likewise the chemo/grace doesn't cancel the effect of the MRI/law, but rather works in concert with it to produce health. After receiving a clean bill of health the patient is still instructed to return to the MRI/law from time to time to make sure the cancer/sin has not crept back in. After all, it is the MRI/law that declares a person cancer/sin free and not the chemo. But where cancer abounds, chemo is applied all the more.

Hope that helps-

TMK - posted by proudpapa, on: 2016/11/28 11:18

The Law was given to expose their true condition and cause them to seek Mercy but instead it became something that they used to pride themselves in and condemn others with.

Re: TMK - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2016/11/28 15:38

I just want to link to a good exposition on the place of OT law in the life of the New Testament believer.

<http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/doctrine/rulelife.htm>

Let me ask you: Do you think that it was possible for OT saints to perfectly keep the LAW in every respect? If so, you are what is known as a pelagianist. The purpose of the law was twofold:

- 1) To show the exceeding holiness and righteousness of Almighty God.
- 2) To show man he does not and cannot measure up to this level of righteousness by his own efforts and resources.

The law should have led to deep humility and poverty of spirit. The law was given 1500 years before Christ. It was necessary for them to have been under deep conviction of sin before Christ came otherwise they would have said, "What sin? We don't need a Savior". So the law was a schoolmaster to bring people to a place where they saw their need for Christ.

So was God unfair in giving commands that they could not keep perfectly? Well, God will accept contrition associated with a broken heart over sin. And there were all the sacrifices and rituals for cleansing to cover their sin. Unrepentant sin however will result in punishment.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/11/28 16:11

No I do not believe an OT person could keep the law.

Nor do I believe that a NT saint can, at least none that I have met or heard of.

- posted by proudpapa, on: 2016/11/28 17:09

Luke 18 :

- 9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:
10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.
11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.
12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.
13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.
14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2016/11/28 17:16

RE : /// Nor do I believe that a NT saint can, at least none that I have met or heard of.///

That has been my observation as well.

"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise"

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one"

"21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;
22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference"

Re: Fletcher - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/29 7:04

OBEDIENCE

Agree, Fletcher. Obedience is all-important.

And God has made a way when we had no way.....

“Then he said to me, ‘This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts.” (Zech. 4:6 NASB)

"I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. (Ezek. 36:27 NASB)

Re: Fletcher - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/29 7:05

FIXING OUR EYES ON JESUS, THE AUTHOR AND PERFECTER OF FAITH

“Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.” (Rom. 7:4)

“But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.” (Rom. 7:6)

I see Jesus only and trust the Holy Spirit completely to lead me, teach me and make me holy in Christ.

Re: Fletcher - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/29 7:07

GRACE FOREVERMORE!

You said: "..... obedience is enabled by grace...."

There surely will be superabounding grace to keep us super holy in heaven through all eternity!

Agree?

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/11/29 8:32

2 Peter 1:3-5 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. But also for this very reason, ****giving all diligence, add to your faith***** virtue, to virtue knowledge. (Emphasis supplied)

God gives us all things now. What more can He give in heaven?

Further, despite the fact that he gives us all things now, we are instructed to be "diligent" and "add to" all things.

I can only interpret this as meaning that God has done His part and we must do our part. And we are the ones doing our part because the above verses show that God has already given us all things, therefore we must add to these things ourselves.

Re: Todd - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/29 9:12

His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness....

I do believe that now we only have a deposit.

"...in the ages to come He might show us the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Eph . 2:7)

V.2 - Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Edit:

Our part: The just shall live by faith. According to your faith it is done for you.

Re: Todd - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/29 9:14

Todd, you asked:

"Then why did God command the Israelites to be holy and punish them when they could not be holy? They had no means to become a new creation. We can sit here and say that the Israelites were only an object lesson for us (how it is not possible to keep the law), but they had to bear the actual brunt and misery of God's "displeasure." I must put that word in quotes, because how can a reasonable God be displeased when his creation fails at doing the impossible?"

These are my thoughts:

Our God is a good and gracious God.

“But as for Israel He says, ‘ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE.’” (Rom. 10:21 NASB)

God knows that we and all the works of our hands are just dust to dust.

The Lord Jesus says, “Apart from Me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)

It is man who is blind to that.

The Israelites themselves pledged to do everything that God required.

“So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded him. All the people answered together and said, ‘All that the LORD has spoken we will do!’ And Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD.” (Ex. 19:7-8)

“Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, ‘All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do!’” (Ex. 24:3)

So God made a covenant with them requiring them to perform, promising blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience.

They failed and bore the consequences.

The way for us is the way of the cross. Not I but Christ. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20 KJV)

Just some thoughts.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/11/29 9:50

Quote: Our part: The just shall live by faith. According to your faith it is done for you.

Then why does Peter tell us to "add" to our faith?

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/11/29 9:54

Brother Todd wrote; "I can only interpret this as meaning that God has done His part and we must do our part. And we are the ones doing our part because the above verses show that God has already given us all things, therefore we must add to these things ourselves."

Yes dear brother! We share the same spirit and this is why He gives us grace,...to do the good works we were predestined for.

An OT prophetic pattern for this is as follows- God raised up, saved and delivered the people of Egypt out of bondage, parting the Red Sea and doing the fighting by Himself exclusively. (Which is us before salvation) However after they crossed the Jordan (baptism) God gave them the land as an inheritance but it was they, not God, that had to fight the giants to take it.

This (for me) was to grow them in faith... God said it and the ones who believed acted in faith and by Gods grace, took the land tho it was occupied by giants. Those who didn't have the heavenly vision saw that they were but grasshoppers and had no faith in God to Himself be faithful to equip them for the task they were called, but rather drew back due to their carnal vision thinking they would have to do it on their own merit, which like fulfilling the law, was impossible. We see it written in Hebrews that these things were recorded for our benefit so that we didn't fall into unbelief as they did and were destroyed by the destroyer.

Sister Jade,

Let me ask you, after a tomato has become fully ripened (perfected) does it yet remain in the vine to rot or is it harvested ?

Re: A New Covenant of Grace - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2016/11/29 16:41

Thanks for posting Jade!

Excellent book with clear teaching on "The Two Covenants."

Re: Fletcher, on: 2016/11/29 23:02

"...they had no faith in God to Himself be faithful to equip them for the task they were called, but rather drew back due to their carnal vision thinking they would have to do it on their own..."

Yes! Thanks for describing so well the difference between a believer who lives under the law and the believer who lives under grace.

Re: Todd - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/30 3:08

2 PETER 1:5

New American Standard Bible

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge,

Young's Literal Translation

And this same also -- all diligence having brought in besides, superadd in your faith the worthiness, and in the worthiness the knowledge,

The Zondervan Greek and English Interlinear New Testament

For this very reason, make every effort by your faith to produce virtue, and by virtue knowledge,

Re: A New Covenant of Grace - posted by Lysa (), on: 2016/11/30 7:04

Quote:

-----by JFW

Thirdly - never not once does the scriptures say that grace is eternal and yet clearly declares that the law is eternal....

So (for me) the presentation of grace by Mr Murray could not possibly be fair and accurate as it seeks to frame the grace of God in a narrative that is in complete and therefore false,... which the scriptures themselves clearly and repeatedly warn about.

I haven't read all the replies, just the first page and yours gave me pause, so please forgive me if it's already been addressed.

First, one of the huge, major differences between Old and New is that everyone, literally every.single.person in the Old Testament (before Christ) went to hell when they died in the time when the Law reigned supreme (except of course, Elijah & Enoch).

Can you explain this? Can anyone explain this?

And secondly, you stated that grace is not eternal??

John 1:16 Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Do you believe that Christ's reign will end? Is Jesus Christ eternal?

If grace came through Jesus Christ and His kingdom is without end, wouldn't that logically make grace eternal?

I'm just trying to follow your thinking, JFW, not argue with you.

God bless,
Lisa

Re: Fletcher - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/11/30 7:54

You asked me: "...after a tomato has become fully ripened (perfected) does it yet remain in the vine to rot or is it harvested?"

â€œTherefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.â€ (Rom. 7:4 NASB)

â€œI am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.â€ (John 15:5-6)

â€œâ€œ. the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-controlâ€ (Gal. 5:22-23)

Fruits, of course, are to the glory of God and when ripened must certainly be harvested to be shared with and enjoyed by all.

And harvest will follow harvest season after season to yield an ever-continuing supply.

BUT the BRANCH must NEVER be broken away!! That would be absolutely disastrous!!

The branch must forever abide in the vine to go on producing fruit, more and yet more fruit, now and into never ending eternity. And moment by moment, now and forever, it must draw all that it needs to be a healthy and fruitful branch from its Great Vine. Forever there will be superabounding GRACE! Forever the Great Vine will freely give and provide!

Re: Sister Lysa - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/11/30 8:24

Good morning sweet sister,

BTW, have been joining you in prayer for all those affected by the fires and for those trying to extinguish them- thanks for the heads up as you had alerted me before the news and I am grateful for your efforts:)

Ok like you I have no heart to argue, or even debate...having said this I am as perplexed by your suggestion that all the OT characters are in hell as you are that I suggest that grace ends prior to and would not be needed in heaven...

First to your point...The scriptures are replete with evidence to the contrary for example we read of Abraham receiving Lazarus into his bosom and of course David, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Abel others still who are mentioned in Hebrews 11 & 12. There seems to be a clear consensus that these (and others) are in fact not in hell.... so could you clarify what you mean when you say "all are literally in hell"....

To the point of grace not being needed in heaven,... First we don't have even one scripture that plainly says it is eternal but rather a few that this could be read into it if one is so inclined. However when I read Revelation 22:11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city

So (for me) verse 11 kinda puts an end to both grace and mercy prior to heaven or "entering into the city". This is not the only or even the primary scripture for my belief but it's one that is pretty clear and often overlooked.

Hope that helps to clarify:)

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/11/30 11:02

I think the general idea is that grace and mercy are not needed in heaven.

" Behold, I make all things new."

Re: A New Creation IN Christ Jesus - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/1 1:37

Therefore if anyone is IN CHRIST, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (2 Cor. 5:17 NASB, my emphasis in caps)

I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, FOR APART FROM ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. (John 15:5-6, my emphasis in caps)

And he who is JOINED to the Lord is one spirit; (1 Cor. 6:17 YLT, my emphasis in caps)

Edit to add:

...so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us IN Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:7, my emphasis in caps)

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/12/1 7:34

Yes dear sister!

I confess each of those to be true as well:)

I'm sorry you found my words or even the concept of my understanding so offensive,... that wasn't my intention.

I think bother Todd-TMK said it succinctly when he said that grace wouldn't be needed in heaven....

that's just consistent with my understanding of what grace is and its function in us, I mean if "where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more" and we know there is no sin in heaven.... see where I'm going?

Not asking you to agree so much as can you see the train of logic being followed that leads to this conclusion?

So in that line of thought,... the sap flows from the vine thru the branches to produce fruit. The sap/grace would only be necessary till the fruit was harvested...

Hope that helps (not to convince you but) to explain where I'm coming from:)

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/1 7:38

Fletcher,

Are you the branch or the fruit???

Edit to add:

I did not find your words or your understanding offensive. I just do not agree with you at all that there is no grace in heaven.

Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/12/1 8:23

Reading over the NT verses that contain a form of the word "grace" it looks like grace is given for various purposes. Grace is purpose oriented, I guess. God is the giver and source of every good and perfect thing, and certainly He gives grace. I cannot find a proof text, but God being a God with His own purposes, and His purposes never ending, won't grace always be an element of our relationship with Him? Can we do anything without Him?

No, we know better than that.

I am not jumbled or jammed up on the question, but God's goodness extends to us most completely in the resurrection and eternal life. He has saved us to that. It is a bounty to us. I can't get my mind around that not being grace. Am I missing something?

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/1 9:08

Dear Fletcher,

Is grace to you just for the forgiveness of sin? if so, then I can see why you believe that there is no need for grace in heaven. To me, grace is also needed to live the Christian life that is pleasing to God. And to me it is also needed to supply all our needs and to give us every spiritual blessing.

If you believe that grace is not needed in heaven, how will you live your life in heaven? Will you be an independent, self-sufficient being who does not need anything from God at all? If there is no grace, can you even have access to any of the unsearchable riches of Christ? To me the fullness of God dwells in Christ alone and we can only have access to that when we are joined to Christ.

Union with Christ is the most precious thing to me. Christ is the great Vine and I am so blessed to be a branch in Him, t

otally dependent on Him. As His branch, I have a life of complete rest and joy and peace. I have nothing in myself. He gives me everything moment by moment as I abide in Him. This is so now and will be so in eternity.

If our understanding of grace is different then it will be fruitless to continue this discussion.

God bless you.

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/12/1 9:58

Brother Tim,

Your outline is almost identical to my wife's understanding and we've had some very fruitful discussions where we've both been challenged to expand and or refine our understanding.

Sister Jade,

You ask if I believe that grace forgives sin?... No ma'am not at all tho it does empower the believer (just as you outlined) to bear acceptable fruit unto God.

You ask if I/we are the branch or fruit? In my understanding, according to scripture, we are both and perhaps this is where the disconnect is occurring. We seem to share a common understanding of what grace is but maybe we differ on its function and what's more, it's ultimate purpose.

In any case I have no quarrel on the matter, and neither of our positions (for me) cause any sort of break in fellowship:)

Thank you again for your patience with me and we all abound in Christ!

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2016/12/1 10:25

May I invoke another thought here concerning Grace In the hereafter?

If sin will be done away with in the hereafter,..will have no more pull on us,...if sin is non-existent, done away with forever, then why Would we need grace?

We know Grace is, unmerited favor, a gift, we do / did not deserve this mercy and much necessary and enabling, help,...enabling power to do His / The King / the Kingdom ' will,...

Grace: The Divine influence upon the heart and it's reflection in the Life.

(1) The Divine influence upon the heart,... (The hearing / drawing of His Word Spirit.

(2) And it's reflection in the life / Life,.... The doing of the Word, ... Spirit.

So, in most kindness,I ask,...I do not understand,why would we still need grace?

Thoughts ,

elizabeth

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/12/1 10:26

My thoughts too Elizabeth.

Re: , on: 2016/12/1 10:38

Maybe these verses will deepen our understanding of grace.

Titus 2:11-14 (NASB)

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

-bbs-

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/12/1 10:44

Brother Bear,

That passage, for me, is a prime example of the function and purpose of divine grace, and to echo sister Elizabeth and brother Todd in the context of this passage of scripture... why when in heaven there would be no ungodliness would grace still be needed to deny it?

Re: Fletcher, on: 2016/12/1 11:51

///why when in heaven there would be no ungodliness would grace still be needed to deny it///

Brother I would say the obvious answer is no. If there be no ungodliness on righteousness in heaven then certainly there would be no grace to deny it.

But certainly we would be praising God for His grace that we got to heaven.

Simply my thoughts brother.

-bbs-

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/12/1 12:12

Jade,

I appreciate your heart with this and please "be not offended" with the responses being posted, they are not meant to hurt.

If I think of grace it is always connected with faith. Will faith be a requirement when we see our Lord face to face and we are perfected and receive glorified bodies etc?

"NOW remains these three, faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love"

Faith and hope will be unnecessary when we are with our Lord but LOVE will always remain.

Blessings,

Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/12/1 13:25

The examples of scriptures about grace in the past few posts allude to purposeful grace. That said, those verses don't exhaust all purposes for God's giving nature. Eternal life is a gift. Life is a gift. Grace is the English word for "charis". It is so entwined in the personality and nature of God to be the charis-giver, and there is no indication that He changes in eternity to come.

I will try to frame it this way. We will worship God and reign with Christ. Those are purposes of God for us in the age to come, and by no means all of His purposes. But, those two alone require God's gift of ability, power, spirit, life, knowledge, etc. to DO those purposes. How do we receive those gifts if not from God's grace?

To what extent are we conflating grace with mercy? Mercy is a particular kind of grace. It is not the bulk or the whole of what grace is.

Re: - posted by Elibeth, on: 2016/12/1 14:12

Dear Brother,
Wasn't it The Lord' mercy, in giving us God' Grace ?
Am I wrong ? ... In all kindness,..that is really what I see.

elizabeth

Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/12/1 17:37

Elibeth, You are not wrong, sister, at all. Point is that grace is God's giving of every kind to His children. All of His giving is grace. He will never not give, eternally.

The idea expressed here -- and folks who say it are not wrong, either -- is that grace is the unmerited favor of God that allows us to repent and believe and come to Christ and walk in Him. Certainly that is grace. It just isn't nearly all there is to grace. That grace is a particular grace for purposes of redemption, among other purposes. We would think of that grace as mercy.

Hebrews 4:16 is helpful. We go to the throne of grace, that eternal throne of our eternal God who does not change, to receive mercy, a particular gift (or, charis, or grace) and for other graces that we need for different kinds of help that we need.

The giving God of charis/grace, who does not change, and whose purpose for us is eternal, and upon whom we utterly and eternally depend for our own existence and everything related to it, will always do so in eternity.

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2016/12/1 17:47

Tim,

Good posts on what grace is. I was thinking the same thing, that there appeared to be a confusion over the distinction between grace and mercy. Grace must absolutely be as eternal as God Himself is. We will all live in that grace (life and provision of God) for all eternity.

Add: William, you are right in that faith and grace are always connected in regard to salvation. "We are saved by grace (God's gift) through faith. But as Tim pointed out grace involves a whole lot more than salvation.

Re: Fletcher - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/1 20:39

"....and we all abound in Christ!"

AMEN!

Re: William - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/1 20:42

"Will faith be a requirement when we see our Lord face to face and we are perfected and receive glorified bodies etc?"

William, I am afraid we are heading into another battleground what is faith?

Will think about this and write again.

- posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/1 20:46

Tim and Dave,

I am so glad I am not alone in my understanding of grace.

Tim,

You have explained grace clearly and beautifully. Thank you!

Re: William - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/6 1:45

William,

Let us discuss this amicably.

FAITH

To keep it short and simple, to me grace is eternal so faith must also be eternal since grace is through faith.

NEW CREATION

Just some thoughts:

Your statement ".....when we see our Lord face to face and we are perfected and receive glorified bodies etc?" gave me food for thought.

Do you see the new creation as God making each one of us new and perfect and filling each one of us with the riches of Christ and the fullness of God so that each one of us can function INDEPENDENTLY as complete, perfected and self-sufficient glorified beings?

This rings alarm bells to me.

It brings to my mind that grave misconception that caused a tragic fall and utter ruin: "and you will be like God , knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3:5)

There was a perfect being that fell...

"How you have fallen from heaven,
O star of the morning, son of the dawn!
You have been cut down to the earth,
You who have weakened the nations!
"But you said in your heart,
"I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God,
And I will sit on the mount of assembly
In the recesses of the north.
"I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High."
"Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol,
To the recesses of the pit." (Isa. 14:12-15 NASB)

AND

"You had the seal of perfection,
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.
"You were in Eden, the garden of God;
Every precious stone was your covering:
The ruby, the topaz and the diamond;
The beryl, the onyx and the jasper;
The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald;
And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets,
Was in you.
On the day that you were created
They were prepared.
"You were the anointed cherub who covers,
And I placed you there.
You were on the holy mountain of God;
You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.
"You were blameless in your ways
From the day you were created
Until unrighteousness was found in you.
"By the abundance of your trade
You were internally filled with violence,
And you sinned;
Therefore I have cast you as profane
From the mountain of God.
And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub,
From the midst of the stones of fire.
"Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;
You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor.
I cast you to the ground" (Ezek. 28:12-17)

To me, my life now and in eternity is the CRUCIFIED life. I am crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live (Gal. 2:20). Definitely, NOT an independent and perfected and glorified ~~â€œI~~. Eternal life and all its power and riches and glory are in Christ alone, never inherently in me. I receive it, moment by moment, unceasingly, eternally, as I abide in Christ.

I will forever be just a mere branch in Christ. I will forever be absolutely nothing in myself but will be absolutely dependent on Christ for everything. And forever He will give to me immeasurably more than all I can ask or imagine. And in His presence is the fullness of joy and at His right hand are pleasures forever. (Ps. 16:11)

This is our great safeguard against pride and independence from God. Because forever I am nothing and have nothing in myself, forever I will remain humble. And it is as I am humble that I will be highly exalted IN Christ.

Every moment of my eternal life will be a gift from God. Every moment of it will be made possible, empowered and enriched by God's ongoing superabounding grace. Grace is received through faith. Therefore faith will eternally remain.

As to hope, Christ in us is our hope of glory (Col. 1:27). Forever I will be in Christ and He in me (John 14:20; 17:20-26). The object of our hope will eternally remain.

These are my thoughts. (Always open to correction in light of new revelations.)

Blessings

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/12/6 15:24

Hi Jade,

Thanks for the post and I assure you, my middle name is "amicable"...
Not really, it's John ~~öŸ~~ „öŸ†

But seriously, with the Lords help I always try to encourage, not offend or cause needless controversy. If the truth offends, so be it, but that is not my intention or motive. Simply to share my understanding. I will try to respond in as few statements as possible.

FAITH

Faith generally has to do with the unseen, not the seen, and as such applies to our earthly lives in the body, similar to hope.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"

We hope for things yet to be made manifest and faith gives substance to hope because we believe God's promises.

"...having not seen Him (Jesus) we love Him, and still not seeing Him, we believe in Him and rejoice with a joy inexpressible and full of glory"

1 Corinthians 13 verse 12:"for now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then, face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, even as I was also fully known. But NOW remains faith, hope and love, these three, and the greatest of these is love"

Why does he contrast the now and the then if there will be no difference?

Now is where faith, hope and love are necessary. Faith and hope will not be necessary once we have obtained the fulfillment of the promise and see Him face to face. Why is love the greatest of the three. I believe because, of the three, it is the only one that will remain forever.

We cannot know the fullness of the perfection God has prepared for us now. We see in a mirror dimly. We actually have no experimental reference for what to expect, we only have His promise.

John says:" ...beloved, now we are children of God. We know not what we shall be but we know we will be like Him because we will see Him as He is (in the glorified state)

Wow! That is amazing! Sister Jade, I think you may be underestimating the glory of the perfection the Lord has planned for us. Let us not be afraid to enter in and believe greatly. Yes, we are humbled by the grace God has given us, absolutely, but also look forward to the day when our redemption will be made complete and we will be like Him!

Lucifer never needed to have faith in God for He always dwelled in His presence. He will never know salvation or redemption so we cannot compare our experience with his.

A crucified life applies in this life, because we are still in the presence of sin and live in sin tainted bodies. When sin is finally swallowed up in victory and mortality is clothed with immortality, there will be no necessity to take up our cross... Christ in us is now the hope of glory, but when we fully share in His glory it will no longer be hope but fulfillment! Glory to God!

Be encouraged and comforted, little children, be not afraid. If our Father gave us His Son, will He not freely give us all things?

Don't you know that you will rule and reign with Him?

Blessings,

Re: William - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/7 7:50

Hi William,

Your reply gives me MORE food for thought. I am a slow thinker, so let me ponder on all that you wrote and I will reply ASAP. It is a challengeâ€œâ€œ

Meanwhile, William, what is your understanding of Eph. 2:7 â€œâ€œin order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesusâ€œ?

Blessings

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/12/7 8:04

Thanks Jade,

Actually, my reply has given ME more food for thought.

I don't think any of us are ever 100 percent right and there are many different angles to this. I have only come from the angle of NOW (life in the body) and THEN (life in glorified bodies where we actually SEE Jesus Christ our bridegroom face to face)

By no means am I belittling GRACE. May it never be!

I also will add some more thought as soon as I can :)

What is the time there now? Time difference is also a challenge...

Blessings,

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/12/7 8:13

As to Ephesians 2 verse 7 my immediate thought was that we will forever be trophies of God's grace. We will always and eternally be "on show" as those who were highly favoured by God.

I did have a quick look at one of the bible commentaries and the one states thus:

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Whole Bible

That in the ages to come - In all future times. The sense is, that the riches of divine grace, and the divine benignity, would be shown in the conversion of Christians and their salvation, to all future times. Such was his love to those who were lost, that it would be an everlasting monument of his mercy, a perpetual and unchanging proof that he was good. The sense is, we are raised up with Christ, and are made to partake of his honor and glory in order that others may forever be impressed with a sense of the divine goodness and mercy to us.

The exceeding riches of his grace - The "abounding, overflowing" riches of grace; compare the notes, Ephesians 1:7. This is Paul's favorite expression - an expression so beautiful and so full of meaning that it will bear often to be repeated. We may learn from this verse:

(1) That one object of the conversion and salvation of sinners, is to furnish a "proof" of the mercy and goodness of God.

(2) another object is, that their conversion may be an "encouragement" to others. The fact that such sinners as the Ephesians had been, were pardoned and saved, affords encouragement also to others to come and lay hold on life. And so of all other sinners who are saved. Their conversion is a standing encouragement to all others to come in like manner; and now the history of the church for more than eighteen hundred years furnishes all the encouragement which we could desire.

(3) the conversion of "great" sinners is a special proof of the divine benignity. So Paul argues in the case before us; and so he often argued from his own case; compare the notes at 1 Timothy 1:16.

(4) heaven, the home of the redeemed, will exhibit the most impressive proof of the goodness of God that the universe furnishes. There will be a countless host who were once polluted and lost; who were dead in sins; who were under the power of Satan, and who have been saved by the riches of the divine grace - a host now happy and pure, and free from sin, sorrow, and death - the living and eternal monuments of the grace of God.

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/7 8:17

12.15 am (!). Signing out.

Re: William - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/17 2:42

Hi William,

Your reply raised several points that were challenging to me.

The challenge was not to refute you and prove you wrong. Rather, it was a challenge to me to have a better understanding of these things.

I will share my thoughts with you in the following posts.

Your comments will be very much appreciated. I certainly will not be offended if you disagree.

Re: William (1 of 7) - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/17 2:45

VESSELS OF GOD'S GRACE

William, I agree with you. In eternity, we will be God's precious vessels displaying the exceeding riches of His grace.

I just do not believe that there will be billions of vines in God's vineyard, each a stand-alone filled with all the riches and fullness of God.

I believe that there is only one great Vine, Christ, and it is in Him alone that it is the Father's good pleasure for all fullness to dwell (Col. 1:19).

There will be just one Great Vine having billions of branches that are us. As the Vine is so are the branches. So as the glory of Christ passes all knowledge, each one of us will also be perfect and glorious beyond our imagination IN Christ.

And as branches are every moment dependent on the vine for their ongoing life and fruit and glory, in the same way, in our eternal life out of His fullness we will eternally be receiving, grace upon grace.

His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,
His power no boundary known unto men,
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.

Re: William (2 of 7) - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/17 2:49

ETERNAL TRUTH: I AM THE VINE, YOU ARE THE BRANCHES

All earthly things are the shadows of heavenly realities—the expression, in created, visible forms, of the invisible glory of God. The Life and the Truth are in Heaven; on earth we have figures and shadows of the heavenly truths. When Jesus says: "I am the true Vine," He tells us that all the vines of earth are pictures and emblems of Himself. He is the divine reality, of which they are the created expression. They all point to Him, and preach Him, and reveal Him --- Andrew Murray, in his book "The True Vine".

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse (Rom. 1:20).

I AM the vine, you are the branches (John 15:5).

This is one of the great I AM's in the Gospel of John.
And John says that we have eternal life in His name (John 20:31).

Now they may say to me, "What is His name?" What shall I say to them? God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM" (Ex. 3:13-14 NASB).

“I AM.”

“Jesus said to them, 'Verily, verily, I say to you, Before Abraham's coming -- I am'” (John 8:58 YLT)

The Lord Jesus is the eternal, the invariable and the unchangeable I AM.

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Ps. 90:2 KJV).

"For I, the LORD, do not change (Mal. 3:6 NASB)

“I AM the vine, you are the branches.”

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb. 13:8).

Re: William - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/17 2:54

Will continue writing when free.

Now is also the time of great "tidyings".....

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2016/12/17 15:00

Thanks Jade,

Keep 'em coming.

I will add some thoughts as well as soon as I can.

Blessings,

Re: William (3 of 7) - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/19 2:24

WHAT IS FAITH?

Hebrews 11:1

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (KJV)

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” (NASB)

“And faith is of things hoped for a confidence, of matters not seen a conviction,” (Young’s Literal Translation)

The Greek word translated as "substance" in KJV, "assurance" in NASB and "confidence" in YLT is hypostasis, from a compound of hypo³, "under" and hēstemi, "to stand".

The Greek word translated as "evidence" in KJV and "conviction" in NASB and YLT is the Greek word ἄλογος. Thayer's Greek Lexicon defines it as "1. a proof, that by which a thing is proved or tested.... that by which invisible things are proved (and we are convinced of their reality)"

MY THOUGHTS:

Things hoped for and not yet seen stand on this something called "FAITH" and this "FAITH" is the conviction that things hoped for and that are not seen WILL be seen.

GOD'S GREAT FAITH! I HAVE SAID IT, I HAVE DONE IT.

All true things to hope for are things from God as all other things like the grass will wither and fade away.

Everything of God comes into being by the word of God.

Gen. 1 "Then God said...and there was."

And so by God's Word, all that which did not exist came into being and all that which was not seen was seen Light, Heaven, Earth, Seas, Grass, Plants, Trees, Sun, Moon, Stars, Living Creatures, Birds, Sea Monsters, Cattle, Creeping Things, Beasts of the Earth, MAN.

Can God speak and nothing happens?

Absolutely NOT.

God's Word stands on God's own FAITH which is God's own supreme and absolute conviction that what He says will be so. With God, there is never a doubt, only absolute certainty, that His Word will be done.

God's FAITH, like God's LOVE, is WHO God HIMSELF IS. God is Love (1 John 4:16). And, Christ is called "Faithful and True" (Rev. 19:11). He is the "Amen, the faithful and true witness" (Rev. 3:14).

HELPS Word-studies explains "Faithful" as:

"Cognate: 4103 πιστός (an adjective, derived from 3982 /πειθώ, "persuaded") properly, faithful (loyalty to faith; literally, fullness of faith); typically, of believing the faith God imparts.

Therefore God's Word stands on God's faith which properly is WHO God is and HE IS the God who makes things unseen seen and He never fails.

"God is not a man -- and lieth, And a son of man -- and repenteth! Hath He said -- and doth He not do it? And spoken -- and doth He not confirm it?" (Num. 23:19 YLT)

With God, there is no variation, or shadow of turning" (Jas. 1:17).

"I, the LORD, have spoken and will do it" (Ezek. 36:36). "Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done it," declares the LORD" (Ezek. 37:14).

“For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.” (Ps. 33:9)

“Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'” (Isa. 46:10 NASB)

"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.” (Isa. 55:10-11 NASB)

WE ARE CALLED TO HAVE GOD’S FAITH

“BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM” (Heb. 10:38).

Our own personal faith will not make a pebble move a planck. How much less can our own personal faith secure for us the supreme things of God.

Mark 11:22 -

“Have faith in God.” (NASB)

“Have faith of God” (YLT)

Or, have God’s faith.

“yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform” (Rom. 4:20-21)

“Looking at them, Jesus said, “With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.” (Mark 10:27 NASB)

HOW CAN WE HAVE GOD’S GREAT FAITH?

The divine principle is laid down in the first of the great “signs” Jesus did that John recorded in His gospel (John 2:1-11; 20:30-31).

“Whatever He says to you, do it.” (John 2:5)

“Jesus said to them, “Fill the waterpots with water.” And they filled them to the brim.” (Verse 7)

“And He said to them, “Draw out now.” (Verse 8)

“and the water had become wine” (Verse 9)

Our part is simply to accept God’s word and fully trust that what He says He will surely do.

Our own faith in itself is worthless—like filling the waterpots with water. But it opens the door for God’s all-victorious and almighty faith to come in—that changes the water into wine

Our faith is required but it is not by our faith but by God’s own absolute faithfulness to do His word that things hoped for are seen. Our faith matters but God’s faithfulness alone is great.

“just say the word, and my servant will be healed” (Matt. 8:8).

“Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled and said to those who were following, ‘Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel’ (Verse 10)

“And Jesus said to the centurion, ‘Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed.’ And the servant was healed that very moment (Verse 13).

My thoughts:

The centurion was a man who had great authority in that small part of ‘man’s kingdom’ over which he ruled. What he said was always done. He says to his soldiers, ‘Go,’ and they go, ‘Come,’ and they come. And he says to his slaves ‘Do this,’ and they do it (Verse 9). But in the real issues of life, his authority was worthless. He could not command the pain and sickness to leave his servant. He could not just say the word and his servant would be healed. He acknowledged his subordination to the Lord Jesus. (He would not let the Lord into his house because everyone in his house was under his authority.) He believed in the Lord’s supreme authority and absolute faithfulness to perform His word. ‘Just say the word, and my servant will be healed.’ The Lord just needs to say the word and it will be so.

He had believed in the great faithfulness of God to do what He says. Our own faith cannot move a pebble. God’s faith, as small as a mustard seed, can move a mountain. Our faith is simply in trusting the faithfulness of God.

"The Galilean Fishers toil all night and nothing take,
But Jesus comes--a wondrous spoil is lifted from the lake.”

GOD NOW SPEAKS TO US IN HIS SON (HEB. 1:2)

Everything that God says to us now is IN Christ. WHO Christ is and all that He has done for us and all that He will continue to do for us is now the sum of God’s word to us. God has nothing else to say to us apart from His Son.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men” (John 1:1-4 NASB).

The Bible is God’s Word to us. And the Bible is all about Christ (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39).

The Word is the Word of Christ (Rom. 10:17 NASB).

The Gospel is the Gospel of Christ (1 Cor. 9:12).

To receive God’s Word into our hearts is to receive Christ.
“that Christ may dwell in your hearts” (Eph. 3:17).

CHRIST IN US IS OUR HOPE OF GLORY (Col. 1:27).

“And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life” (1 John 5:11-12).

When Christ lives in me, all that are His are also mine—His life, His nature, His riches etc.

HOW CAN CHRIST BE IN US?

Our part isâ€do what He saysâ€fill the waterpot with water:

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be savedâ€ (Acts 16:31).

â€This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christâ€ (1 John 3:23).

â€for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of those who seek Himâ€ (Heb. 11:6 NASB).

Then comes Godâ€™s all-powerful divine partâ€the water changed into wine:

â€But as many as received Him, He gave to them authority to be children of God--to those believing in His nameâ€ (John 1:12 Berean Literal Bible).

â€of him are ye in Christ Jesusâ€ (1 Cor. 1:30).

â€Jesus answered and said to him, â€If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with himâ€™â€ (John 14:23)

Our own faith cannot put us in Christ and Christ in us. But it opens the door to Godâ€™s great faithfulness that does it.

Hope comes true.

Christ lives in me!

â€I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in youâ€ (John 14:20)

WE NOW LIVE BY THE FAITH OF THE SON OF GOD

â€My righteous one will live by faithâ€ (Heb. 10:38).

â€I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for meâ€ (Gal. 2:20 KJV)

â€with Christ I have been crucified, and live no more do I, and Christ doth live in me; and that which I now live in the flesh -- in the faith I live of the Son of God, who did love me and did give himself for meâ€ (YLT)

It is no longer I but Christ, the Faithful and the Amen, who now lives in me and accordingly, it is no longer by my own faith BUT by the almighty all-triumphant faith of the Son of God living in me that every promise of God in Christ will be â€Yes!â€ Amen! (2 Cor. 1:20)

(These are my newly-composed thoughts. Hope you can understand what I am trying to say.....)

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/12/19 12:13

God does not need faith.

Re: Todd - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/19 23:03

Todd, what is your definition of faith?

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/12/20 7:42

No matter what definition one uses of faith, God does not need it. God is certainly faithful, but He does not need to have faith.

Re: Todd - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/20 8:50

You are right, Todd. God does not need faith. He is the fullness of faith.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/12/20 9:41

What do you mean when you say that? Do you mean fulfillment?

Fullness generally describes someone or something that is full of something.

Using that description, I would say fullness describes God in regard to love (among other things) but not faith, because God is not full of faith. He is full of faithfulness, which is a dramatic difference.

By the way- I am enjoying this discussion. It is making me think.

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/21 2:34

Will continue this discussion after Christmas. We have just done some house renovation and have cleaning up to do.....

Re: Todd - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2016/12/27 8:10

On further thought, I would define "faith" more correctly (I think) as:

Things hoped for and not yet seen stand on this something called "FAITH" and this "FAITH" is the PROOF that things hoped for and that are not seen WILL be seen.

God can be full of faithfulness to us because of His great faith in Himself: "I have said it, I have done it" (2 Tim. 2:12,13 NASB).

"If we deny Him, He also will deny us;

but if we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim. 2:12,13 NASB)

My thought:

But if we believe in Him we lay hold of His faith and make it our own.

I think we are back to square one: What is your definition of faith?

Re: William (4 of 7) FAITH AND HOPE REMAINS - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2017/1/11 3:16

GOD MIGHTILY SAVES TO GREATLY BLESS

In the Old Testament, God delivered ancient Israel out of Egypt to pour rich blessings on them:

"So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey" (Ex. 3:8), a land filled with "great and splendid cities which you did not build, and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you eat and are satisfied" (Deut. 6:10,11).

"I, the LORD, am your God, Who brought you up from the land of Egypt; Open your mouth wide and I will fill it" (Psalms 81:10 NASB).

Likewise, God has delivered us out of the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son (Col. 1:13) to super-abundantly bless us with "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1:3, 3:20), to grant us whatever we ask in Jesus' name (John 14:13, 15:7) and to "show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7).

"The LORD gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly" (Ps. 84:11).

"I would feed you with the finest of the wheat, And with honey from the rock I would satisfy you" (Ps. 81:16 NASB).

"they who seek the LORD shall not be in want of any good thing" (Ps. 34:10).

"And let them say continually, 'The LORD be magnified, Who delights in the prosperity of His servant'" (Ps. 35:27 NASB).

"How blessed is the one whom You choose and bring near to You To dwell in Your courts. We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Your holy temple" (Ps. 65:4 NASB).

"They feast on the abundance of your house; you give them drink from your river of delights" (Ps. 36:8 NIV).

THE GLORIOUS HOPE OF OUR SALVATION: CHRIST IN US, THE HOPE OF GLORY

God is God of all grace (1 Peter 5:10).

Before the foundation of the world, God had chosen us to be IN Christ (Eph. 1:4) and freely bestowed the glorious riches of His grace on us IN CHRIST (Eph. 1:6, 2 Tim. 1:9).

In Christ we have, according to the riches of God's grace, redemption:

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace (Eph. 1:7).

In Christ we have, according to the riches of God's grace, God's eternal glory:

and whom He declared righteous, these also He did glorify (Rom. 8:30 YLT).

the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ (1 Pet. 5:10).

To this He called you through our gospel, so that you may share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 2:14).

For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ (2 Cor. 4:6 NASB).

The Lord Jesus prayed to His Father before His crucifixion:

that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us. The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity. Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them (John 17:20-26 NASB).

the riches of the glory of Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Col. 1:27)

In Christ we are, according to the riches of God's grace, to be filled up with all the fullness of God:

God has an eternal purpose which is the "summing up of all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:9-10, 3:11, 4:10). According to God's purpose we are to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:28-29). Christ is to dwell in our hearts through faith and we are to be filled up to all the fullness of God. (Eph. 3:16-19).

It is the Father's good pleasure for all fullness to dwell in Christ (Col. 1:19) and out of His fullness we receive, grace upon grace (John 1:16).

and ye are in him made full (Col. 2:10 YLT)

Each member and the whole body of Christ are to be the fullness of Him that fills all in all.

And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all (Eph. 1:22,23).

â€œâ€œâ€œ put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created himâ€œâ€œ Christ is all, and in allâ€œ (Col. 3:10-11).

â€œâ€œâ€œ. that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christâ€œ (2 Thess. 1:12).

In Christ we are, according to the riches of Godâ€™s grace, Godâ€™s sons and heirs of God:

â€œâ€œâ€œ so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal lifeâ€œ (Titus 3:7 NASB).

â€œFor you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesusâ€œ (Gal. 3:26 NASB).

â€œHe predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Belovedâ€œ (Eph. 1:5-6).

â€œThe Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christâ€œ (Rom. 8:16-17).

THE INCONCEIVABLE GREATNESS AND RICHES OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

â€œO LORD my God, You are very great; You are clothed with splendor and majestyâ€œ (Ps. 104:1 NASB).

â€œGreat is the LORD, and highly to be praised, And His greatness is unsearchable.â€œ (Ps. 145:3 NASB)

The Lord Jesus is the radiance of Godâ€™s glory and the exact representation of Godâ€™s nature (Heb. 1:3)

â€œâ€œâ€œ by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Himâ€œ (Col. 1:16-19)

â€œand all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them.â€œ (John 17:10 NASB)

In Him are hidden all the treasure of wisdom and knowledge (Col.2:3).

The riches and wealth of Christ are unsearchable, unfathomable, immeasurable, infinite, boundless and inexhaustible. (Eph. 3:8)

His power is inconceivable. â€œâ€œâ€œ in Him all things hold togetherâ€œ. He â€œupholds all things by the word of His powerâ€œ (Heb. 1:3). The Lord Jesus is maintaining and preserving all things just by the word of His power.

"To whom will you compare me? Who is my equal?" asks the Holy One. Look up into the heavens. Who created all the stars? He brings them out like an army, one after another, calling each by its name. Because of his great power and incomparable strength, not a single one is missingâ€œ (Isa. 40:25-26 NLT).

Look up into the heavens! The vastness of the universe defies our imagination. It is too big for our brain to fully grasp.

The observable portion of the universe has been calculated to be a gigantic bubble about 93 billion light years across and the universe is still expanding.

Look at the stars! They are numberless. Astronomers estimate that there are more than 100 billion galaxies in the observable universe and each galaxy contains billions of stars. And this could be a gross underestimation.

How inconceivably and infinitely greater is the Lord Jesus, the Creator.

He lives in me. He fills me. And as He is unimaginably rich and powerful, how immense and boundless also are His riches and His power in me!

Lord Jesus, may I never limit You.

“Yea, they turn back, and try God, And the Holy One of Israel have limited” (Ps. 78:41 YLT).

And limited the Holy One of Israel - The idea is, that they set a limit to the power of God; they fancied or alleged - (and this is a thing often done practically even by the professed people of God) - that there was a boundary in respect to power which he could not pass, or that there were things to be done which he had not the ability to perform. The original word - אָרַךְ אָרַךְ אָרַךְ - occurs but three times in the Scriptures; in 1 Samuel 21:13, where it is rendered scrabbled (in the margin, made marks); in Ezekiel 9:4, where it is rendered set, that is, set a mark (margin, mark); and in the place before us. It is rendered here by the Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate, to provoke to anger. DeWette translates it troubled. Professor Alexander, “On the Holy One of Israel (they) set a mark.” The idea in the word would seem to be that of making a mark for any purpose; and then it means to delineate; to scrawl; or to set a mark for a limit or boundary. Thus it might be applied to God - as if, in estimating his character or his power, they set limits or bounds to it, as one does in marking out a farm or a house-lot in a city or town. There was a limit, in their estimation, to the power of God, beyond which he could not act; or, in other words, his power was defined and bounded, so that beyond a certain point he could not aid them.” Barnes Notes on the Bible)

God will do in us according to the riches of His grace and glory, “exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think (Eph. 3:20).

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Cor. 2:9 ESV) “the Holy Spirit will lead me into all truth and disclose Christ to me (John 16:13-15).

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PRESSING ON TOWARD THE MARK THAT I MAY GAIN CHRIST

“We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ” (Col. 1:28 NASB).

Conversion is not the end of our salvation story. It is just the starting point of a great Christian journey the end of which is that we will be filled with the fullness of Christ (Eph. 3:19) and Christ is formed in us (Gal. 4:19).

“until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, as we mature to the full measure of the stature of Christ” (Eph. 4:13 NASB).

The journey is a race to be run and “one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14 NASB).

the high calling Lit., the upward, or upper calling. The word rendered high is the same as that rendered Galatians 4:26 as Jerusalem which is above: and cp. John 8:23, I am from (the things) above. This calling is celestial, at once in origin, operation, and final issue. Cp. Colossians 3:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 2:14. In the Epistles the words call, calling, denote not merely the external invitation but the internal and effectual drawing of the soul by grace. See in illustration 1 Corinthians 1:23-24. --- Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges.

We are called away from earthly ground, to set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth (Col. 3:2).

Ye are from beneath, I am from above; ye are of this world, I am not of this world (John 8:23 YLT).

We are called to a heavenly position, to enter into the Holy of Holies (Heb. 10:19), to be seated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6) and to be in Christ and He in us (John 14:20, 15:4, 17:21-26).

We are called to look away from everything else and fix our eyes on the Lord Jesus alone (Heb. 12:1-2).

The grand pursuit from start to finish is: that I may gain Christ (Phil. 3:8).

The prize is the Lord Jesus Himself. It is Him that we receive (John 1:12).

The way is the way of the cross:

But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead (Phil. 3:7-11).

Fiery trials will meet us to try us. But, when you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you (Isa. 43:2 NASB).

For God has said, I will never fail you. I will never abandon you (Heb. 13:5 NLT).

Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire? Look! I see four men loose and walking about in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods! (Dan. 3:24-25).

The fiery trials burn away the bonds of flesh and the world that so easily entangle us so that we may be perfect and complete (Jas. 1:4) in Christ.

Faith, NOT works, is the requisite.

not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith (Phil. 3:9 NASB).

And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ (1 John 3:23).

We receive Him by believing in His name (John 1:12).

“And my righteous ones will live by faith” (Heb. 10:38 NLT).

The race is finished by faith: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (2 Tim. 4:7 BLB).

The Holy Spirit will teach us all things, guide us into all truth and reveal Christ to us and in us (John 16:12-15).

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Grace (Heb. 10:29). He brings to us from God all that God’s grace encompasses...the fullness of the Lord Jesus Himself. He will fill us with the fullness of Christ and form Christ in us. He is the Spirit of Life who will impart to us the life of Christ. He is the Spirit of power who will enable us to live the resurrection life, the heavenly life of Christ in God’s mighty power. He is the Spirit of Wisdom who will enlighten us on all the things of God. He will fill our hearts with Christ’s own love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the LORD of hosts” (Zech. 4:6 NASB).

We will not be perfected in this life, but, “Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:12 NASB).

“After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you” (1 Pet. 5:10 NASB).

“Our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself” (Phil. 3:20-21 NASB).

“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is” (1 John 3:2).

“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.” (Jude 24-25 NASB).

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HOPE ETERNAL AND BOUNDLESS: A RIVER THAT CANNOT BE FORDED

“that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God” (Eph. 3:19 NASB).

My thought:

In eternity we will certainly be filled up to all the fullness of God so that Christ will be all in us. BUT can we ever contain all of the fullness of God? Can we ever contain ALL of His glory and riches so that there is no more to hope for? To me, no.

The riches of Christ are boundless, immeasurable, unfathomable (Eph. 3:8).

“Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!” (1 Kings 8:27 NASB).

Mal. 3:10 gives the picture “I will open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.”

In my view, we will never be able to contain all of the riches of Christ.

We will continually be receiving out of His fullness, grace upon grace.

Our cups will continually “runneth over.”

The imagery in Luke 6:38 is applicable:

“A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be poured into your lap” (NIV).

Always there will be more and yet more to be received.

The Lord Jesus spoke of the water that He will give to us to drink “whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life” (John 4:14 NASB).

The Holy Spirit is symbolised by the rivers of living water that will flow from our innermost being:

“Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, “From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.” But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified” (John 7:37-39 NASB).

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Grace (Heb. 10:29). He imparts the fullness of Christ to me.

Ezekiel 47 gives this picture of the ever-increasing and limitless volume of this water:

First, the water reached to the ankles. Then, to the knees. Then, to the loins. Till finally it was a river that I could not ford, for the water had risen, enough water to swim in, a river that could not be forded.

The water is too much, too much for me.

The Spirit of Grace has too much, too much of the fullness of Christ to give to me.

The grace of the Lord Jesus is too much, too much for me.

The fullness of the Lord Jesus is too far beyond my capacity to receive.

The bounds of our inheritance in Christ: “the length, the breadth, the depth, the height, the love of Christ passes knowledge” (Eph. 3:18-19).

My View:

“Christ in us, the hope of glory” is a hope that is without limit, a hope without end, a hope never fading away through all eternity. I will never reach the point where there is nothing more of Christ’s fullness that I can still hope to receive.

ETERNAL AND UNFAILING FAITH

Christ in us is our hope of glory.

This hope is boundless and endless.

Will this hope always be fulfilled?

We will NEVER be disappointed. The Lord Jesus is the Faithful and the Amen and He never changes.

Throughout eternity we will live by faith in God’s great and unfailing faithfulness.

INFINITE AND EVERLASTING GRACE

The Lord Jesus is full of grace (John 1:14).

“There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace” (Isa. 9:7 NASB).

His throne is a throne of grace (Heb. 4:16).

The river of grace that flows from His throne cannot be forded (Ezek. 47). It is too great.

The Lord Jesus does not change. Now and forever, out of His fullness we will receive, grace upon grace (John 1:16).

“Come; and he who is thirsting -- let him come; and he who is willing -- let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17 YLT).

The grace of the Lord Jesus is limitless. We limit it for ourselves by taking too little of it.

“For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting And His faithfulness to all generations” (Ps. 100:5).

“Taste ye and see that Jehovah is good, O the happiness of the man who trusteth in Him” (Ps. 34:8 YLT).

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Re: William - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2017/1/19 8:03

Hi William,

I have decided that the remaining 3 points do not matter so I will stop writing.

God bless you.

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2017/1/19 8:36

Hi Jade,

Everything in good time and in its place :)

I appreciate the posts and the effort going into them. Please do continue if you feel inspired to do so. If I do not always respond quickly just understand that time constraints apply sometimes.

Blessings,

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2017/1/19 8:43

Oh yes...I just remembered something that came up in my mind when we were having the conversation.

The little word "union"

We will move from "faith" to perfect "union", as in marital "union", marriage supper of the Lamb, bride and bridegroom etc.

I haven't had time to fully explore this but I leave this with you to think on and explore also.

God bless,

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2017/1/22 2:38

Hi William,

I appreciate the posts and the effort going into them. Please do continue if you feel inspired to do so.

Right now I am busy with some other things. Will KIV these 3 points and write when I have time and inspiration.

We will move from "faith" to perfect "union", as in marital "union", marriage supper of the Lamb, bride and bridegroom etc.

I haven't had time to fully explore this but I leave this with you to think on and explore also.

Some quick thoughts:

In the union, the Lord Jesus will always be greater than us. He will always be the Lord, the Head, the Vine, the Provider.

All the fullness of God are in Christ and it is out of His fullness that we receive grace upon grace.

Eternal life will be like a great everlasting banquet.

"He has brought me to his banquet hall, And his banner over me is love" (Song of Songs 2:4)

Just some thoughts for now.....

Blessings.