

Articles and Sermons :: This Grace Wherein We Stand -brayley

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This Grace Wherein We Stand

by Eli Brayley

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." - Romans 5:1-2

There are many different opinions within the Christian Church regarding the doctrines of our faith, but I do not believe any have been abused so much by men than the doctrine of grace; this five letter word of paramount importance that has everything to do with our salvation and hope in Jesus Christ. On the one hand, grace has been almost entirely rejected and replaced by this kind of cold and abrasive legalism, which allows no room for mercy and rests its confidence upon the works of man and the flesh, as if a person could earn their way to heaven! On the other hand, grace has been abused by the rejection any sort of discipline and holiness whatsoever, claiming that since a man cannot work his way to Heaven, there is no need for any outward righteousness or inward character worthy of any eternal necessity. The late German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer rightly called this "cheap grace." Both of these views seem to attract and polarize the Body of Christ, either to one side or the other, but sadly both views are terribly wrong and many lives are destroyed as a result. Therefore, let us examine the Scripture above.

Now, I am a firm believer in justification by faith, but what does that mean? It is important to know that faith alone cannot save a soul... otherwise any other religion could save and one would not have to look unto Jesus. There must be blood to make atonement for sins, for "without shedding of blood is no remission." (Hebrews 9:22) It is also important to know that blood alone cannot save a soul... for unless faith is exercised upon that blood then no salvation can happen. It is justification by faith IN the Blood of Jesus Christ that saves; that makes atonement for our sins and washes us whiter than snow. For Jesus said, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matthew 26:28)

By this faith we have access into the ever-flowing grace of God! It is by this faith that we boldly approach the throne of grace to obtain all that we need from the Father above. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5) As long as you have this faith you are connected to God through Jesus Christ; Jesus, our Great High Priest and Advocate by which we can obtain mercy for sins, the empowering Holy Spirit, etc... "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." (John 16:23) We have access to this undeserved grace of God by our faith in Christ.

Now, Scripture is not only clear about the grace of God we have in Christ Jesus, but also the purpose for which the Son of God came into the world: to save sinners from being sinners! "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:14) When the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream He announced the name of Messiah, JESUS: "For he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21) John the Baptist declared: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) All of this can be summed up in 1 John 3:8: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

Christians are saved to be holy, and upon that very fact, a person who is not holy is not a Christian. This may seem surprising for many people, but it really shouldn't be. Scripture is clear about the consequences of living a lifestyle of sin, and even believers are in danger when they allow themselves to be entangled once again by the yoke of bondage. But does this mean that a Christian never sins? Or if he does sin is he cast out forever? By no means.

It is interesting to note that as Paul rebuked those who used the grace of God as a license to sin, we catch a glimpse of the nature of this very grace: an overwhelmingly merciful grace, where we can go to the Father for forgiveness again and again. It is because of this very fact that those people sought to abuse the grace of God as a license to sin, but they were only fooling themselves: their hearts were revealed by their own evil intentions.

While it is true that a Christian cannot live in continuous sin and still be a Christian, it is also true that "if any man sin, we

have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:1-2) I have searched the Bible looking for one case where a truly humbled and repentant soul was ever denied mercy and grace from God and cannot find one. If we hold on to our faith that Jesus Christ suffered and died for our sins, that His blood was shed ONCE for ALL eternity, and that He rose again on the third day and sits at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us continuously, then we have access into this grace wherein we stand. It is this grace that cleanses us and empowers us to go on.

What a wonderful Savior we have in Jesus! Let us never lose faith and fall from the grace of God. Let us never abuse this grace with an evil heart of wickedness and so fail of the grace of God. Let us walk in righteousness before our God, who bought us with His own blood, and access this grace through faith that we may be given the power to be the called sons of God! What a joy and privilege to stand within this holy grace.