

Seven Fundamental Facts about GRACE

Romans 5:21

That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

REVIEW

Here we have described the 2 realms of existence. Everyone lives in one or the other. Either sin reigns over us unto death, or grace reigns over us unto life.

Natural man dwells in the kingdom where sin reigns unto death. We know something of the terrifying reigns of evil despots through history. How much worse it is when sin itself reigns over man! Sin imprisons, devastates, and ultimately damns man.

Man who has been born again by faith in Jesus Christ dwells in the kingdom where grace reigns unto life. Chains are broken; barred gates are swung open; trials become instructors; deserts bloom; warriors are more than conquerors; and heaven is home.

Grace reigns for a Christian. Does it for you? What do you know of grace? The following are seven important introductory truths for every believer to grasp:

1. Grace does not appear in the immediate divine dealings with the sins of the UNSAVED.

This essential truth is so misunderstood. God as Judge does not deal with any sin in mercy or leniency. The sinner is never forgiven because God is so big-hearted as to waive judgment. The very thought of clemency is a fatal detraction from the cross. The Lamb of God “taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The forgiveness of God toward sinners is therefore a judicial pardon of an offender. It’s an act of *justice*, not grace. We may stand forever pardoned before God, but not because God is gracious enough to *excuse* our sins, but because blood has been shed. The tornado of judgment may have passed over us, but only to crash down on Another.

A. Let’s look at the wording in Isa. 53:5.

1. He was wounded – the prophecy is that the Messiah would be violently put to death for our sins. The Hebrew word translated “wounded” is *châlal*, which means to bore through, perforate, or pierce. King James translators added the word “tormented” in the margin to indicate the connection of this Hebrew word to writhing in pain.
2. He was bruised - The word used here (*dâkâ’*) means to be broken to pieces, bruised, crushed. The same Hebrew word appears in Ps. 72:4 – “He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.” Applied to the mind, it means to crush by calamities and trials; and by the use of the word here, no doubt, the most severe inward and outward sufferings are designated. The meaning is, that he was under such a weight of sorrows on account of our sins, that he was, as it were, crushed to death.

B. See also Isa 53:6 – “the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” or, again, II Cor. 5:21 – “For he hath made him to be sin for us”

Granted, there are aspects of salvation associated with grace. Christ Himself is the greatest gift. But there was *no* grace in the immediate divine dealings with the sin of the unsaved. God overlooked nothing, excused nothing, granted clemency no where. Sin got no break.

2. Grace does not appear in the immediate divine dealings with the sins of the SAVED.

A. See I John 1:9. Note the words describing God: “faithful and just” not “merciful and gracious.”

1. He is “faithful” to what He promised He would do – see Lev. 5:5-10.

2. Likewise He is “just” in that the demands of the Law were satisfied by the death of the proxy.

B. Compare Rom. 3:23-26.

3. Grace is not WITHHELD because of our lack of merit.

A. Grace finds its greatest triumph and glory in the sphere of *human helplessness*.

1. See Gal. 2:21 – “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

2. See also Rom. 11:6 – “And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”

3. Analogy: like a moth stuck to a painted wall.

B. Grace cannot be exercised where there is the slightest degree of human merit. Here’s the logic:

1. Christ has taken away the sin of the world. He has forever disposed of condemnation for sin.

2. Hence, all questions of unworthiness have been *banished*.

3. So, God is righteously free to exercise grace in every case.

C. Man may say, “I’ve made too many mistakes, I’m too _____ or _____.”

1. To this God responds, “Merit has NOTHING to do with it.”

2. Does God give shade to a spider because it *deserves* it?

4. Grace can not be LESSENERED because of lack of merit.

A. Let’s state this again: The sin question has been set aside forever, so the opportunity for grace is extended EQUALLY to *all* who believe.

1. It is not that God ignores guilt.

2. It is that He has met this issue perfectly and finally for all men in the death of His Son.

B. So, the grace of God is now offered in perfect independence of human sin. In this sense, it is somewhat like gravity or sunshine. Are these things parried out based on *worth*?

1. Illustration: gold v. manure. Both are “given” gravity.

5. Grace can not INCUR a DEBT.

A. An act is not gracious if under any conditions a debt is incurred.

1. This is an *unrecompensable* favor. How often this truth is misunderstood.
2. But let this sink in: a gift is not a gift if it is paid for before, during, or after. We *can't* repay God for this gift. No payment is required or received.

B. If we don't get this truth right, our motive for Christian service is lost.

1. Serve Him, yes, but not to repay. See John 21:15-17. Jesus does not say, "It's pay back time."
2. We are to respond to the Lord's love by, in return, expressing love and devotion.
3. In other words – catch this – our service to Him should be *EQUALLY GRACIOUS!*

6. Grace is not given to PAY a DEBT.

A. Grace owes us *nothing*.

1. There isn't the least degree of merit on our part or guilt on God's. We are by nature "children of disobedience." This is "not of yourself." (Eph. 2:8-9) All human merit, every vestige of it, is *absent*, absolutely and forever.
2. God does not assume some responsibility for the mess in which humanity finds itself, like a parent with a guilt complex for the way his kids turned out.

B. God is utterly free to walk away.

7. Grace is never the OVERPAYMENT of a DEBT.

A. It can never be part of a deal.

B. Rather, this is a matter of *infinite* kindness, disassociated from any obligation.

1. It is not, therefore, more than it would have been if we had sinned less.
2. We are talking about a MEASURELESS blessing, since it represents in every case all that God, being actuated by infinite love, can infinitely do.

C. This is GRACE – God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

1. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3)
2. Grocery cart analogy.

DISCUSSION

1. Explain and illustrate this text: "Sin hath reigned unto death."
2. Explain how, for those who have come to Christ, all questions of unworthiness have been banished.
3. Explain the similarity between grace and gravity.
4. Explain how our proper motivation for Christian service is lost if we do not see grace as an unrecompensable favor.
5. Give illustrations of truly gracious service to God and others.