

# **Making Use of the Means of Grace**

Sermon 8 in the Philippians Series

## **Philippians 1:27-30**

### **I. One Spirit and One Mind 1:27**

Throughout the Book of Philippians we can see that Paul is concerned about the Unity of the Philippian believers.

However, Paul's exhortations of:

Stand fast

One spirit

One mind

Striving together for the faith of the gospel

Tell us that maybe – just maybe – there were some underlying problems.

### **II. Progressive Sanctification comes by the Means of Grace**

A.A. Hodge defines a “Means of Grace” as having these qualities:

1) It is something of divine institution

2) It carries with it, from Scripture, a promise of blessing

3) It is objective rather than subjective

Feelings may be attached – but it is a reality – not just a feeling.

1. The Scriptures are a means of grace – 2 Timothy 3:16-4:5; 1 Peter 1:23-2:5

Individual Bible reading is vital. You need it to grow.

But, the preached word is absolutely vital and must not be neglected.

The Word of God is the means God uses to build us up in the most holy faith!

As the Word of God is preached – the hearers are built up in the faith.

2. Prayer is a means of grace.

3. Assembling with the Saints, the Fellowship of the Saints Heb. 10:23-25

We need the Word and we need the Assembly of the Saints.

Christians are not meant to be alone.

The church is vital to our spiritual growth.

#### 4. Baptism is a means of Grace – Romans 6:1-4

Baptism is identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. It shows forth our in-grafting into Christ. It is a visible symbol of a spiritual reality. It is a means of grace to the one baptized – and should be a means of grace to those who witness the baptism and then remember our baptism.

#### 5. The Lord's Supper is a means of grace – 1 Cor. 10:15-21; 11:17-34

At the table, if we partake properly, we see the reality of sin, repentance, forgiveness, and the truth that we are one body in Christ.

LBCF 30:7 -- “worthy receivers...inwardly by faith...really and indeed...spiritually feed upon Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death, the body and blood of Christ being **spiritually present** to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.”

You are identifying with him:

In the past according to His death.

In the present by faith

In the future by acknowledging soon His coming again

### III. What has been Granted to Us 1:28-30

#### 1. To believe in Him v. 29b

**Our Confession of Faith – 14:2 reads** “...the principle acts of saving faith have immediate relation to Christ, accepting, receiving, and resting upon him alone for justification, sanctification and eternal life by virtue of the covenant of grace.”

Dr. Dennis Johnson, “The Christian gospel is that I am so flawed that Jesus had to die for me, yet I am so loved and valued that Jesus was glad to die for me. This leads to deep humility and deep confidence at the same time.”

#### 2. To suffer for His sake