

LIVING UNDER GRACE'S TEACHINGS

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11-12).

WHEN the GRACE of God saves a man, the Holy Spirit comes into that life to guide the believer about living in the will of God in this present life. Many places in the Bible will help you to see the truth of this precious text, that you might indeed be taught by God's grace and molded into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son” (Rom. 8:29). “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32). We have got to deny ourselves, to follow the Lord Jesus, in order to be His disciples. We must seek to walk in the narrow way that leadeth unto life. If we profess to be saved by grace, but grace is not doing these things in our present lives, then we have no evidence that grace is doing anything for us at all! What does GRACE teach?

1. Denying ... We will have to *first* deny ourselves before we can go farther in the Christian journey. “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me” (Mat. 16:24). “For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14). It is GRACE that is teaching us this: “*Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good*” (Rom. 12:9).

2. Denying Ungodliness ... “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish” (Psalm 1:1-6). Here we have the contrast. The ungodly person, the person who sits with the ungodly, stands with them, walks with them, and is one of them, cannot claim the grace of God is teaching him the things of this text!

3. Denying Worldly Lusts ... “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God” (Rom. 6:12-13). “And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:2).

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17). Notice again;

4. Live Soberly ... “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). Oh, how sober we should be when the devil is on our trail! We need this prescription of the grace of God to overcome him and to overcome the world. “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18). “And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor” (Eph. 4:23-25). We are just giving you the Word of God, with very little comment, showing you how the grace of God truly teaches every person into whose heart He comes. “Let no corrupt communications proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers” (Eph. 4:29).

5. Live Righteously ... “Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God” (Rom. 6:13). “Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Rom. 6:17-18). “And if ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him” (1 John 2:29). “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:7-8).

Is the Holy Spirit of God destroying the works of the devil in your life? Make sure about it: If this grace of God that teaches us has come in and brought the Holy Spirit to live in us, He will be teaching us something about LIVING RIGHTEOUSLY. “That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men” (Titus 3:7-8).

6. Live Godly ... As newborn sons of God, we are going to show some likeness to Him into whose kingdom we have been born. “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the Firstborn among many brethren” (Rom. 8:29). We have repeated this verse, but it is worthy of a repeat — because if you claim to be saved by grace that chose you to salvation, then you ought to be heeding these words in their entirety, and your life should be reflecting what GRACE has done in you. “Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world” (Phil. 2:14-15).

I know we are giving you a lot from the epistles of Paul, but that is on purpose because Paul is the New Testament writer that tells us so much of God’s election and predestination and salvation by GRACE ALONE. But we need to see that much of Paul’s writing is by way of exhorting those who know the grace of God to continue in a life that reflects that grace. The grace of God gives repentance to every saved soul. Listen:

“Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come” (1 Thess. 1:9-10). Delivered from wrath, you surely want to honor the One who delivered you, and to seek to do the will of that One who promised to give His Holy Spirit as your inner teacher.

ALL OF THESE SIX THINGS are what the Holy Spirit is going to be TEACHING US who are “born of the Spirit,” that He might SEPARATE US FROM THIS WORLD and that we might LIVE FOR THE LORD. We are the temple of the Lord, for He does not dwell in buildings of brick and mortar, but in the hearts of His people. Listen: “And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols: for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:16-18).

And where is all this TEACHING of the grace of God taking place? Well, it is *in the heart and life of regenerated sinners*: “He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:17). “But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26). Then it takes place, according to our text, “IN THIS PRESENT WORLD.” The Lord is giving us a description of the Heavenly Manners that we are being taught down here, if we ever plan to dwell up there! Is the grace of God teaching you? If not, or if you don’t know your condition before Him, pay attention to these wonderful words of the Lord Jesus Christ:

“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give your rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Mat. 11:28-30). “And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?” (Luke 9:23-25).

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Eccl. 12:13-14). And since we are going to have to face the Judgment of God some day, we ought to be concerned about doing the will of God in this life. As we pass each day of our lives, whatever we do is done FOREVER. No opportunity in eternity to change anything! You and I cannot go to school in eternity and learn how to live better, but we must go to God’s Word NOW and seek Him in prayer, in order to find out if the grace of God is teaching us how to live in ways that will please and glorify Him.

Remember this: The Grace of God that truly saves your soul is not opposed to the Holy Law of God. The psalmist David was saved by grace, but he could say, “O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day. I hate vain thoughts; but thy law do I love” (Psalm 119:97, 113). Amen.

— G. D. Fulton (1909-1995) ¶

“Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

QUOTING THE OLD GRACE PREACHERS

THERE ARE many thousands now in Heaven, but not one unholy one among them all; there is not one sinner among all those saints; not one goat among all those sheep; not one weed among all those flowers; not one thorn or prickle among all those roses; not one pebble among all those glittering diamonds. There is not one Cain among all those Abels; not one Ishmael among all those Isaacs; not one Esau among all those Jacobs in Heaven. Heaven is for the holy man, and only the holy man is for Heaven. Thomas Brooks

HOLINESS is the habit of being of one mind with God, according as we find His mind described in Scripture. It is the habit of agreeing in God's judgment, hating what He hates, loving what He loves, and measuring everything in this world by the standard of His Word. He who most entirely agrees with God, he is the most holy man ... A holy man will strive to be like our Lord Jesus Christ. J. C. Ryle

PRACTICE according to what knowledge you have. This will be the way to know more. The psalmist warmly recommends this way of seeking knowledge in divine truth from his own experience, "I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts" (Psalm 119:100). Christ also recommends the same, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself" (John 7:17). Jonathan Edwards

TO THOSE who want to receive Christ as Saviour in order to have a passport to Heaven, but desire to remain in their sins and in the world, we must say with Peter, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." James A. Stewart

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