

The Church Of The Lord Jesus Christ

Radio Broadcast

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Bible Text: Isaiah 62:2

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Welcome to the Grace Abounding Broadcast brought to you by the congregation of the Shreveport Grace Church that meets at 2970 Baird Road in Shreveport, LA. My name is Ken Wimer and it is my privilege to bring to you today a message that seeks to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ and his glorious person and finished work of salvation accomplished for sinners at the cross. Please stay tuned.

I want to speak with you today about the true church of God. I know there are many that claim to be the true church of God but we need to consider what the word says, the word of God, about the true church of God and there is a portion in Isaiah 62:2 where the Lord declares,

2 And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.

Now, congregations typically name their meeting places in a way to distinguish themselves from others. Our particular congregation is registered under the name "Shreveport Grace Church." Shreveport Grace Church is just a title that identifies us as a body of believers but very simply expresses who we are and what we believe. Take, for example, the title of "Shreveport." Why Shreveport Grace Church? Well, that's where we meet as a body of believers. In the New Testament, the churches were identified by different towns in which they met; the epistles are called after the names of the towns and regions where the believers were located. For example, Paul's epistle to the Romans or Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians. There is no greater blessing for a city or a region than that God should raise up a Gospel church there.

But the second part of the title is "Grace." You say, "Why Shreveport Grace?" Well, grace is the reason for our meeting together to worship God. There are only two religions in this world: people are either endeavoring to come to God through their works or they rest wholly in God's grace and the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. We unashamedly yet humble acknowledge that salvation is all of grace through the Lord Jesus Christ and his perfect obedience and sacrifice accomplished for sinners. God gives his grace to those

that he has chosen in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, even before the foundation of the world. That's how Paul identifies it in 2 Timothy 1:9. It is a grace that has been ordained and given in Christ before the foundation of the world. If we are the Lord's today, it is because God chose us in his eternal grace and then Christ redeemed us by his blood and the Spirit of God has graciously brought us to Christ in faith which is repentance. Those are synonymous: faith and repentance.

Peter in writing to the churches in Galatia and Cappadocia in Asia says this of them, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Grace unto you and peace be multiplied." That really sums it up. Who are these who are the church of the true and living God? Well, they have been elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. It doesn't mean that God in foreknowledge looked down through time and saw who it is that would believe and therefore chose them. No, his foreknowledge is his prior knowledge of those that he has chosen. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

Then it says "through sanctification of the Spirit." Every one that God the Father has chosen and given to his Son, the Spirit does in time set apart unto that holiness and that righteousness which the Lord Jesus Christ came and worked out. That's what sanctification is. It's not anything in us that is holy or getting holier as some would think in calling it progressive sanctification. No, through sanctification of the Spirit, the Spirit taking the sinner and drawing him to the Lord Jesus Christ who is his righteousness and his holiness.

But it also says here "unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." There, again, we need to be careful. Unto whose obedience does the Spirit of God separate out the sinner? Well, it's unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. These two elements are the condition of God saving the sinner. It is the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's not in the sinner, it's in Christ.

So the Father has chosen, the Spirit has called, and the Son has paid the sin debt of those who are his own and that's the church and that's why Peter says here, "Grace unto you and peace be multiplied." That's the only way that there can be the grace of God shown where there has been satisfaction of his justice through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the only way there can be peace and that these can be multiplied. It's not to everybody but it's unto those that the Father has chosen, the Spirit has called, and that Christ has redeemed.

So that's the significance of the word "grace." It's a distinguishing grace. It's a distinctive grace. It's a special grace from God the Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ by his Spirit to otherwise worthless and guilty sinners.

Then the word "church," Shreveport Grace Church. The name "church" signifies what we are as an assembly. Actually the word in Scripture means "the called out ones," and so as the redeemed of God, the Spirit of God has called us by his grace from our sin and

darkness to the glorious light of his Son and that is according to his eternal purpose that we might be to the praise of his glory in Christ Jesus. In fact, in Isaiah 60:3, we read, "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Christ is that light and those that the Spirit of God draws, he makes to be priests and kings unto God.

So regardless of the earthly name that is given to a congregation, what is the name of God's true and living church? Here in my text in Isaiah 62:2, it says, "and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name." So here we see three important qualities. First, who are the members of God's church. Secondly, what is that name by which they are called. Thirdly, who is her founder and maker?

First of all, the members. Here it says, "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness." The word "Gentiles" literally means "nations." So we see that the church of the living God is not comprised of any one particular race. I know there is a pride of race today and there is a pride of grace, but in regards to the church of the living God, there is no such place for either pride of race or pride of grace.

Here, "the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness," it says, that is, the nations, and when you come over to Revelation 5:9 and 10, you see why it is that the prophet Isaiah spoke of the Gentiles or the nations being redeemed and brought unto Christ. Here it says, "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

So here we see the church summarized. Who are her members? Well, they've been redeemed unto God by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. I don't believe that any political kingdom has ever been able to accomplish what the Scriptures describe here of God's spiritual kingdom and that is to convocate people from every tribe, nation and tongue and that none will be absent whom the Lord himself has purposed should be there. Such is the church of God that is described here in the Scriptures and that's who her members are.

But secondly, and this is the heart of this message: by what name will they be called? Just as in a traditional wedding, the bride takes the name of the husband, so here prophetically Isaiah declares, "thou shalt be called by a new name." So when there is a traditional wedding, the bride takes a new name; she takes the name of the husband. So here, her married name, that of the church, is the church of the redeemed ones. Now, she is here spoken of in the singular, it says, "thou shalt be called by a new name." Even though the church is made up of many members, again, that the Father himself has chosen and that Christ has redeemed, the Spirit called, yet there is one faith, one hope, one glory that belongs unto Christ alone. It is one people.

In Revelation 21:9, John as he was given a revelation of the church here, was beckoned to come and to behold the bride and then it adds, "the Lamb's wife." One wife. One bride.

John writes in Revelation 21:9, "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." Throughout the Scriptures, there are different names that we find to describe the church of God, but this is the primary name. It bears Christ's name. It's Christ's church. It's the Lamb's wife and these have been loved from eternity and for eternity and it's built on a covenant marriage that can never be broken because the Lord himself is faithful. Our Lord Jesus Christ before he went to the cross to lay down his life for his church, that's who he shed his blood to redeem, his church.

The sheep is another name that has been given, but in John 17:23-24, listen to the words of the Lord Jesus. He says, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." What spouse doesn't desire to be with his beloved wife? Where there is a wedding, where there is a marriage, there is a leaving, there is a cleaving; even as described in Genesis 2 as to what it is for two to be made one. It says in verse 24, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

This is how our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world, leaving the glory that he had with his Father in order to come and pay the sin debt that those that the Father had given him. You see, traditionally according to the Bible, it was the Father who chose the bride for the son and there was no problem there. The son trusted the father. The father had the best interest of the son in mind and so sought out that bride for the son. Things have changed so drastically today, but we're talking about in Scripture, we're talking about what the Bible declares to be a marriage and it's founded upon a true and unconditional love. That's how Christ describes his love for these that the Father had given him. He says, "Hast loved them as thou hast loved me." The Father sees no difference between those that he has chosen and the Son has redeemed and his own Son. They are one and he says in his prayer in John 17:24, "that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." What love? What unconditional love? John wrote in his epistle, "We love him because he first loved us."

So we see here with regard to the church, that Christ is her living head and the church bears his name and the reason the church bears his name is that he has most definitively purchased the church in a way of strict justice. This is a legal marriage, a legal binding and so strict justice has been satisfied and that with Christ's most precious blood. Although having been born with the maiden name of sinner, the church is now called by a new name which his righteous and that's what my text describes, what the nations would see in coming to Christ.

It says that the nations would "see thy righteousness." Not any righteousness in them but another way of reading that, they would "see him who is thy righteousness." This is the effect of the Lord Jesus' death in that the church is called holy, the redeemed, and not

forsaken. In the same chapter in Isaiah 62:11 and 12 it says, "Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion." You see the church is described as the daughter of Zion. That's another name that she bears. "Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold." Who is "thy salvation"? Well, that's he who is the Savior, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sin. Behold, his reward is with him and his work before him." Here it describes the salvation of sinners to be entirely the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and his reward is with him. What is the reward of him dying for his church? Well, it is that they might be called by his name.

So verse 12 states it plainly, Isaiah 62:12, "And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." How on earth could a group of sinners brought together ever be considered as a holy people? We know better than to think that that's anything in us. In fact, that's where most trouble starts when you try to get a bunch of sinners together. Even if it is for worship, trouble is afoot. There are divisions. There is backbiting. There is all that goes on when you get sinners together.

And yet here it says, "they shall be called, The holy people." It can only be by the imputed righteousness of God through the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, God accounting those for whom Christ died to be righteous, to be holy, and that because of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So all of this is summed up in that name by which the church should be called. Regardless of the earthly denomination, the one common denominator that every one of the Lord's redeemed ones share is that he sought them, that's what Isaiah 62:12 says, "sought out." They were sought of God who did not leave them in the lost ruins of sin and the fall, and although he found them in a most miserable and damnable condition, yet he is pleased to call them by a new name, that is the name of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Here's the glorious truth, dear friend: their sins and their iniquities, he remembers no more. In Hebrews 8:12, the Lord says, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness." You see, that's all we have to bring in this matter is our unrighteousness. But he says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness." Mercy is withholding what one deserves. God withholds the punishment and judgment and condemnation that we as sinners deserve for whom Christ died. He withholds it from us but he put it to Christ's account and when Christ died, their sin was put away and therefore the Lord says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness," and he also adds, "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Wonder of wonders. Mystery of mysteries that the all-knowing God should remember no more any sin of those for whom Christ died. They are presented in him before the Father as spotless, without blemish, because he is spotless. He is without blemish. Not a wrinkle in that garment of righteousness that he has procured for his own.

The final point to consider is: who is the founder and maker. By now that should be pretty obvious but the Scripture here in Isaiah 62:2, coming back to it, it says, "thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name." So we see whose

name the bride bears and that it speaks to the glory of her Maker and Founder alone which the mouth of the Lord shall name. If the Lord is the one that names the name, it is because he it is who has purchased the bride and therefore all the glory belongs unto him. Today, many women are keeping their maiden names. Too many have found out that by changing the name and giving themselves to their spouses, that in reality it hasn't been what they had thought and so they go back to their old name. Well, I'm happy to tell you, dear friend, that such is not the case with the Lord Jesus Christ. When he vows to have and to hold so long as we both shall live, it is a faithful saying and worthy of all exception that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief. He has already shown himself faithful unto death and the Scriptures say that he ever lives now to intercede on behalf of his own.

I like the way that ancient hymn puts it,

"The church's one foundation,
Is Jesus Christ her Lord.
She is his new creation,
By water and the word.
From heaven he came and sought her,
To be his holy bride.
With his own blood he bought her.
And for her life he died."

The second verse states,

"Elect from every nation.
Yet one 'or all the earth.
Her charter of salvation,
One Lord, one faith, one birth.
One holy name she blesses,
Partakes one holy food.
And to one hope she presses,
With every grace endued."

There is no name so sweet and precious as the name of the Lord Jesus and there is privilege so great as to be called by that name. When you think in terms of a wedding, even as I've described to you being wed to the Lord Jesus Christ and given his name, the wedding, according to the Scripture, is celebrated with the new wine of the Gospel of peace and it is based upon and accomplished through his death. We serve a living Savior. Yes, he came and died but he rose again. He died for our offenses but he rose again for or because of our justification. So just as in a wedding ceremony, there is new wine that is served and there is rejoicing and celebrating the bride and the groom, according to Scripture, all of the glory belongs unto the groom. He it is that has purchased this salvation and that's why there is new wine that is being served, but there is also a new song being sung and that song is, "Salvation to the Lamb that was slain." I read for you a little while ago in Revelation 5:9 and if you go back there, you'll see the content of the

new song that is being sung and this is only the redeemed that can sing it. It says, "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God." So there is only one worthy and that is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our modern day ceremonies of marriage have it backward. The bride is put in the spotlight, but according to the Scripture and even what I've read for you here with regard to the church, any glory that the bride has is much like the moon. There is no light in the moon, it shines, it reflects the light of the sun. So here, the bride, any glory that she has is not her own, it belongs to the one who has sought her and has bought her and the Spirit that has brought her to himself.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17, the Apostle Paul wrote, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." To be in Christ is to be so not only by election, but by his death and his redemption. When he died, those in him died as well, that judgment fell upon Christ as substitute and not on them. And in Christ by his Spirit when he calls them out and draws them to him, old things are passed away. Those in Christ no longer called by that old name of Adam or sinner, but they bear the name of Christ and his robe of righteousness and therefore are holy before God. What a glorious truth. May the Lord God in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, be praised.

You've been listening to the Grace Abounding Broadcast brought to you by the congregation of the Shreveport Grace Church in Shreveport, LA. We meet at 2970 Baird Road and invite you to join us each Sunday beginning at 10 a.m. For more information, please visit our website at www.shrevegrace.org or call 318-687-4943. Please plan to join us again next week.