

Series: This Grace in which we stand - 3

STANDING IN GRACE

Romans 5: 1 – 11

Jeremiah 32: 36 – 44

V1, *Therefore: 4: 25*, since we have been justified by faith: ie. through the death and resurrection of Christ; guilty sinners, under God's wrath, are brought into a new relationship with God as His beloved children, all by grace. Justification is completely undeserved; not achieved, or attained, but obtained. Study 2: *We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*. Today, **Standing in Grace: V2**; *Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand*. Faith is also completely undeserved; not achieved, or attained, but obtained. Faith is not the cause of our salvation but the means by which we receive God's gift; *by grace through faith*. We noted the account of Abraham; see again Paul's emphasis; **Galatians 3: 1 – 9**.

We can become so accustomed to the word 'grace', that we miss its wonderful significance. 'Being amazed by God's grace is a sign of spiritual vitality. It is a litmus test of how firm and real is our grasp of the Christian gospel and how close is our walk with Jesus Christ. The growing Christian finds that the grace of God astonishes and amazes'.¹ Do we have to maintain our position in grace? Misconception that Christianity is all rules and regulations; endless catalogue of do's and don'ts, legalistic expectations, striving to attain standards that are unattainable; rituals, meetings, performance. Grace, in essence, is Jesus Christ Himself. He never leaves nor forsakes us.

Christianity is not about us but about God; not about our struggles and strivings but His grace; the free, unmerited favour and mercy of God. Grace is God taking the initiative to come after us, seeking us, pursuing us, finding us and preserving us; *I will never leave you nor forsake you*.² --- D.L. Moody reparable of Prodigal Son: 'when the prodigal came home – Law said, stone him! Grace said; embrace him! Law said; smite him! – Grace said; kiss him! – Law went after him and bound him; grace said; loose him and let him go! Law tells me how crooked I am! – grace comes and makes me straight! --- **V2**; grace

¹ Sinclair Ferguson, *By Grace Alone: how the grace of God amazes me*, Reformation Trust, Florida, 2010, xiv

² Joshua 1: 5, Hebrews 13: 5. ² Exodus 19: 4

describes a position into which God has brought us; our life in Christ. This *grace*, into which Paul states *we have obtained access*; and having obtained access, we now *stand* in it. Used of worship to God, before covenant made on Mt Sinai;³ *I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you unto myself*. Nearness of God to those who worship Him: **Hebrews 10: 11 – 18 & 19 – 25**.

Previously condemned because of our evil, rebellion and sin; but now justified. Previously alienated and far from God, but now brought near to our Father by the Son and the Holy Spirit. Previously eternally lost and under His Holy wrath; but now standing in grace and this is permanent. If we could fall in and out of grace we would have no assurance and would need to be re-justified again and again. When God justified us He did not just pronounce us righteous in His sight. He also adopted us into His family and made us His sons and daughters **Ephesians 1:3 - 10**. He has established with us a permanent relationship of grace and nothing can separate us from His love (Romans 8:39). – What happens when we sin? In family disagreement or breakdown; tension, embarrassment, fellowship strained but relationship remains and we still belong. Apology?? Joy of confession; get on with it!!

Relationship based on birth, fellowship based on behaviour. We may grieve our Father but we do not cease to be justified for He never repudiates His children; we stand in grace in midst of storm: **Romans 6: 1 – 3**. Jesus Christ is our Lord, and in particular, Lord over sin and the grave in the new life we have in Him now that He has been raised from the dead; and we with Him. How are we to rid ourselves of the things that attract God's anger, and how are we to live in the new life we have received? Paul shows that our minds need to be focused into where Christ is rather than where we are at. – **That's refreshing!!**

If we are believers and not just religious performers we will want to express our love to the Father and our family. The devil will continue to attack us but we do not despair despite our failures. We are tempted away from the source and life of love by turning in upon ourselves, but remember, we are saved by grace and we *stand firm in grace*;⁴ secured according to His everlasting covenant. In times of despair, failure, family concern; personal hidden traps of imagination, sleeplessness; **Jeremiah 32: 36 – 44**.

⁴ 1 Peter 5: 12