

The Grace of God in our lives.

1 Corinthians 15:9-11 *“For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.”*

Here we see two favorites of mine. First a man, a man that God took from a lost state, a hater of God, Jesus, and the church. God made Saul of Tarsus a man that we all love and admire, and named him Paul, and made him an Apostle to the Gentile and church age. God gave the Apostle Paul the grace to pen 13 books in the New Testament, and maybe more than 13. When Paul had served his Christian life, maybe 40 years or so, after God had made him one of the most important men in the New Testament, and maybe in the entire bible, Paul said, *“But by the grace of God I am what I am”*. Paul wanted no credit for his life work as the Apostle Paul and gave God all credit. Paul recognized his blessing to do what God has blessed him to do through grace, and Paul went on to say, *“and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain”*. Paul never forgot the grace of God on him, neither did he ever forget the sin he committed against God, Jesus Christ, or the Church at Jerusalem. I believe His life as a hater of God, made him such a great servant of God. Because it made him labor for Jesus Christ and the Lord’s churches so much harder. *“but I laboured more abundantly than they all”* and all the time crediting God for his accomplishments. *“yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”* Paul ended verse 10 recognizing that God could have used anyone to accomplish this work, but God chose this poor lost Jew that hated everything Christian to accomplish this great work. *“Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.”* See, it is not who we are that delivers success in the ministry, in the churches, or in the world, it is how much grace God gives us. Thank God for grace.

John Bunyan once wrote this about the grace of God for us. *“Grace can pardon our ungodliness and justify us with Christ’s righteousness; it can put the Spirit of Jesus Christ within us; it can help us when we are down; it can heal us when we are wounded; it can multiply pardons,”*

A. Grace is so powerful it cancels out everything else.

1. We can’t be anything without grace, but by grace we can be anything God chooses.

2. **Romans 11:5 - 6** “*Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (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.*” We are not servants by works but by grace, we do not save ourselves, nor do we plan and master our destiny. Our life is only by God’s grace. - It would do us all well to memorize 1 Cor. 15:10 and never forget it.
3. God made our life work very clear in **Ephesians 2:8 – 10** “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*”

B. God’s grace is the only reason we can stand.

1. **Romans 5:2** “*By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*” The word “stand” here means – to hold up
2. Paul also wrote in **1 Corinthians 1:3 - 7** “*Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. (4.) I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; (5.) That **in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;** (6.) Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: (7.) So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:*” The word “utterance” is defined as, thought or reasoning – the word “enriched” means to be made wealthy in these things.
3. Brother John Trapp, one said, we “cannot be poor in whom the word of God dwells richly”.
4. **Colossians 3:15 – 17** “*And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. (16) Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another **in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.** (17) And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*” Praising God continually and for everything, because everything is by God’s grace!

5. God through the Apostle Paul left us with this reminder. **Romans 12:3** *“For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”* – No matter how hard we labor, how much success we have or do not have, God has dealt to us all our measure of grace, and Paul reminds us, - *“But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”*