

SAVED BY GRACE

by Charles W. Wages

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

The above Scripture is from the book of Romans, chapter 3. Special emphasis is given to verse 24 which states: “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

I would like to bring to your attention, that the grace of God has been acclaimed, or announced, in the Word. Now grace simply is God doing something for us that we cannot do for ourselves. Some have spoken of it as the “unmerited favor” of God to fallen mankind. But we cannot define it, because it is of God, and God cannot be defined. We can only express it in our own words, our own hearts, and our own feelings.

However, we sincerely do believe that God's grace has allowed us to be saved. Therefore, we could never have become Christians apart from the grace of God. (None of us are worthy to be saved.) Because God so loved us that He gave His only begotten Son, He has acclaimed through Him His grace. We are saved by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. If it were not for the grace of God, there would not be a person go to heaven. We must emphasize again, no one from Adam to this present time, except the Lord himself, is worthy or good enough to go to heaven. Too many times people try to justify themselves by their good works or by their own intelligence. But we must understand that all are of fallen Adam and apart from the grace of God could never be saved from sin and enter into heaven's glory. Now that grace has been acclaimed in Jesus Christ. The Bible says in John 1:17: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The Lord Jesus Christ is full of the grace of God, and He manifested that grace to its fullness when He laid down His life on the Cross of Calvary for the sins of the whole world. "Christ died for our sins, according to the scripture. He was buried and he arose again the third day, according to the scripture." He has ascended back into the glory and through Him redemption is offered to all who will trust His grace. So we can speak of grace being acclaimed in the redemption that is in

Christ Jesus.

In the book of Romans, chapter 5, we read in verses 20 and 21 these statements:

“Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

You can easily see that the Apostle Paul is emphasizing the abounding grace of God. Not only has God’s grace been acclaimed in Jesus Christ, but God’s grace abounds in Jesus Christ. Now we are sinners by nature and practice, but the grace of God overabounds our sins. In other words, though our lives might be sinful, yet the grace of God overflows or overabounds all sin. Now this must be attributed to the grace of God. How else can we account for the fact that the vilest, poorest, most miserable sinner can be saved from the degradation of sin and raised into the highest life of God’s creation. This is what God can do for anyone who trusts Him.

So anyone can be saved by grace, but no one will be saved apart from the grace of God. No one can say “I have done it myself,” “I am good enough,” “I have given enough,” or “I’ve labored enough to enter heaven.”

It should be known that everyone has access to God's grace because in the book of Romans, chapter 5 and verses 1 and 2 it is stated:

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

Not only has this grace been acclaimed, not only is it an abounding grace, but it is an accessible grace. That is, it is open to all. And you know even after we have been saved by grace we need to be taught by the grace of God. “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.” As we continuously need this grace, it is open, accessible to all who will come to Christ.

And it should be said that God's grace is an applied grace. “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.” This grace of God can be applied to anyone's heart when they simply give up of their own effort, and say, “Yes, Jesus, come into my heart, I need to be saved by Thy grace.” You

see, there are a lot of people today who are trusting in their religion, whatever kind it might be. It might be the mystical kind of the East, it might be the new kinds of the West, it might be the old traditional kind of Western Europe. It doesn't make any difference what kind, religion will not save. Religion might satisfy the flesh and give a false peace of mind or lulling of mind by Satan, but not salvation. It will not bring forgiveness of sins, nor a new life. This wonderful complete salvation only comes through the finished work of Jesus Christ and as His work is applied to the heart by God's grace. Yes, for by grace are you saved, and it is this grace that keeps us, even until the day of redemption.

It should be understood also, that in God's great plan for the age, that we live in the "dispensation of the grace of God." As we study the Bible, we realize that in the Old Testament there was a strict adherence to the law of Moses. God gave the law of Moses to the people of Israel in order for them to be governed properly. It governed their social life, their religious life, and their governmental or political life. When Jesus Christ came he said "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free," yet, today many people are still struggling under the Old Testament economy. Many religions today are based partly or wholly upon an Old Testament concept of the law. But you see, Jesus Christ came to fulfill the

law, and He did. And now, through His grace, we are saved apart from the law of Moses. We must also understand that we do not live under the Old Testament economy, but live in a new age, the dispensation of the grace of God. The Apostle Paul tells us in the book of Ephesians, chapter 3:

“For this cause, I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages (or past dispensations) was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.”

Later on the Word reveals that today God is calling out His Church, the Body of Christ. Those who receive Jesus Christ as personal Saviour are baptized by the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12); raised into a newness of life (Romans 6); and added to the Church which is the Body of Christ (Ephesians 1 and Colossians 1). We are sealed until the day of redemption and waiting for God to come for His purchased possession (I Thessalonians 4). This dispensation of the grace of God will

culminate when Christ comes in the air to catch His Church into glory. This is the hope of every believer. Yes, we are living today, not under the law, not under innocence, promise, human government—we are living under the dispensation of the grace of God. This is the age in which Christ is saving men by grace, apart from their works, adding them by the baptism of the Holy Spirit into the Church which is the Body of Christ, and there to wait until the redemption of the Body of Christ into glory. This is the truth of the Scripture given through the Apostle Paul to the Church of this age. This is the mystery spoken of in the book of Ephesians, chapter 3. Therefore, we are now saved by grace, we are kept by grace, we are taught by grace, and we will be taken into glory by the grace of God.

We can always be sure that God loves us, and that His grace is always available and sufficient. We have seen that this grace has been acclaimed, that it abounds, that it is accessible, and that it can be applied to the heart and life of anyone who will trust Christ. The Scripture says: “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.”

*"Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace,
Freely bestowed on all who believe;
You that are longing to see His face,
Will you this moment His grace receive?"*

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