

SAVED BY GRACE

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. We Are Saved By Grace - The Unmerited, Unearned, Undeserved Favor Of God.
- B. There Are Many Perversions Of This Great Doctrine.
 1. Calvinists say that "saved by grace" means that only a limited number, predestined to the election of grace, will be saved.
 2. Universalists say that "saved by grace" means that *all* men will be saved.
 3. Protestant denominationalists say that "saved by grace" excludes all works.
 4. There is a growing misconception among some of our own brethren that grace excludes all law.
 5. Some in the denominational world teach that it is impossible to fall from grace.

II. AIM.

- A. To Show The Error Of These Perversions.
- B. To Show The True Meaning Of Being Saved By Grace.

III. OUTLINE.

A. BIBLE ANSWERS TO PERVERSIONS OF THE GREAT DOCTRINE OF SALVATION BY GRACE.

1. Will only a select few, foreordained to the election of grace, be saved as taught by Calvinists?
 - a. Christ died for all men, not just a limited number. (*Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:2; 1 Tim. 2:3-6; 2 Pet. 3:9*)
 - b. Christ calls all men through the gospel. (*Matt. 11:28-30; 2 Thess. 2:14*)

- c. God's plan from the beginning was that all who accept the gospel call will be saved. (2 Thess. 2:13-14; Rom. 1:16)
2. Will *all* men be saved by grace, as the Universalists teach?
- a. God's grace has made possible the salvation of all men. (Titus 2:11; Rom. 5:15-18)
- b. But, all men will not be saved. (Rom. 2:6-11; 2 Thess. 1:7-12; 2:12; 1 Pet. 4:17-18; 2 Pet. 3:7)
3. Does being saved by grace exclude all works, as denominationalists teach?
- a. Works done to earn, or merit, salvation are excluded. (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5)
- b. Works of faith are essential to salvation.
- 1) Faith is a work. (John 6:28-29; 1 Thess. 1:3)
 - 2) It is impossible to please God without faith. (Heb. 11:6)
 - 3) Faith cannot save without works. (James 2:14-26)
- c. Only in Christ do we have access to grace. (Rom. 5:1-2; 3:24)
- 1) We must be baptized *into* Christ. (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27)
 - 2) We must *abide* in Christ. (John 15:5-6)
 - 3) This requires action, effort, or work of faith on our part.
 - 4) These are *not* actions of *merit to earn* salvation, but actions of acceptance of the unmerited favor of God.
 - a) God's grace reaches down to man in the *provision* of salvation through the sacrifice of Christ for sin.
 - b) Man's faith reaches up to God for release from sin and reconciliation to God in obedience.

- c) *God's grace and man's faith* meet in Christ, when man *accepts* reconciliation made possible through the gift of God's grace.
- d) Acceptance of the gift on man's part involves faith in Christ as the sacrifice for sin, repentance of sin, confession of Jesus as Lord, and baptism into Christ for the remission of sin, and a new life consistent with the confession of Jesus as the Lord and Master of life.

d. By grace we are saved and are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. (*Eph. 2:8-10; Titus 2:14*)

4. Does being saved by grace exclude all law?

- a. The Law of Moses, or *laws obeyed for the purpose of bringing God into our debt*, are excluded. (*Rom. 4:4*)
- b. Obedience to requirements, commands or laws of Christ are essential to salvation. (*Heb. 5:8-9*)
 - 1) We are under law to Christ. (*1 Cor. 9:21*)
 - 2) God's new covenant law is written in our hearts. (*Heb. 8:10; 10:16; 2 Cor. 3:3*)
 - 3) We must fulfill the law of Christ. (*Gal. 6:2*)
 - 4) We have been given commandments to keep. (*Matt. 28:18-20*)
 - 5) Failure to do what Christ says will bring condemnation. (*Matt. 7:21; Luke 6:46*)

5. Is it impossible to fall from grace?

- a. By sinning wilfully, after acceptance of God's grace, we insult the Spirit of grace. (*Heb. 10:26-29; 2 Pet. 2:20-22*)
- b. By embracing anything, in addition to Christ as the way of salvation, we fall from grace. (*Gal. 5:4*)

B. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SAVED BY GRACE?

1. Salvation is of God.

- a. Salvation was planned by God. (*1 Cor. 2:9; Eph. 1:3-6, 11-12*)
- b. Salvation was initiated by God. (*John 3:16; Rom. 5:8*)
- c. Salvation was provided by God. (*1 John 4:9*)

2. We are saved by the unmerited, unearned, undeserved favor of God.

- a. Man broke faith with God by disobedience in the garden. (*Gen. 3:1-6*)
- b. God had already announced the penalty for this disobedience - *death!* (*Gen. 2:16-17*)
- c. Being true to His word, God withdrew fellowship from man that day. (*Gen. 3:23*)
- d. This meant the spiritual death of man. (Physical death followed because God separated man from the tree of life.) (*Gen. 3:24*)
- e. Even though man did not deserve fellowship with God, or release from the penalty of death, God took the initiative in making possible reconciliation and life. (*Eph. 2:4-10; Rom. 5:10*)

3. Man is free to accept or reject this gift of God.

- a. Man's first step in acceptance of this gift is an awareness of his helpless and hopeless condition in sin. (*Matt. 5:3-4*)
 - 1) Realization of the fact that he is a sinner. (*Rom. 3:23*)
 - 2) Recognition of the fact that he is helpless to save himself. (*Titus 3:5*)
- b. Man hears through the testimony of the Scriptures that God, through centuries of providential care, made possible reconciliation and forgiveness of sin through the sacrifice of His Son.

- c. A further study of the Scriptures reveals that to accept this gift of God's grace, man must believe in God and believe that God will forgive sin through Christ. (*Heb. 11:6; Eph. 4:32*)
 - d. But at this point of faith, man's sins are not forgiven.
 - e. Peter told people who had reached this point in faith that they were to repent and be baptized for remission of sins, with the promise that they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (*Acts 2:38*)
 - 1) Repentance is turning from an independent, self-willed way of life, to a dependent submission to God's will and way of life.
 - 2) Baptism is an act of faith which visually demonstrates man's complete dependence upon God's grace to save through the blood of Christ. (*Matt. 26:28; Rom 3:25; Rom. 6:3-4*)
 - 3) Consciousness of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit motivates holy living. (*1 Cor. 6:19-20; Rom. 8:11*)
 - f. One is raised from baptism to walk in a new life in fellowship with God and Christ. (*Rom. 6:4-13; Eph. 4:17-24*)
 - 1) Failure to walk in the light will cause this fellowship to be broken as surely as did Adam's disobedience. (*1 John 1:6*)
 - 2) To abide in Christ, we must keep His commandments and walk "even as he walked." (*1 John 2:4-6*)
4. Illustration and analogy to clarify the meaning of *saved by grace*.
- a. Consider a case of a man afflicted with cancer.
 - 1) The man becomes aware of the terrible affliction of his body.

- 2) After hearing the testimony of friends about a physician who, through a lifetime of research, had found the cure for cancer, the man calls upon the physician for help.
- 3) The physician uses the knowledge gained through his lifetime of research to prescribe the cure for this man - a cure which the one afflicted could never have discovered on his own and a cure of such value that he could never repay the physician for all the effort and expense involved in providing the cure.
- 4) Is the man cured at this point?
 - a) His faith in the physician has motivated him to call upon him for help.
 - b) The knowledge from a lifetime of research by the physician has been graciously applied to his case.
 - (1) But suppose the man carried the prescription around in his pocket - praising the physician for giving him the cure. Is he, or would he ever be, cured by this alone? (When asked about his behavior, he replies: "Well, I have such great faith in the doctor that if I were to take the medicine, it would nullify my faith in the physician.
 - (3) Or, suppose the man refused the treatment the doctor prescribed. Is he, or would he ever be, cured apart from the treatment? (He may say: "I have faith in the doctor, but I just can't see how these treatments could help me.")
- 5) Now suppose the man says: "Well, I don't see how this treatment can cure me, but I have such great faith in the physician that I am going to take whatever treatments he prescribes."
 - a) The man doesn't have to have faith in the treatments.

b) He must have enough faith in the physician to take the treatments.

6) Through grace, God has prescribed the treatment for man's hopeless case of sin, but man's faith in God (not in the treatment) must motivate him to do what God prescribed.

7) The treatment for sin has been made possible through long centuries of the providential working out of God's plan - a cure of such value to man that he can never repay the Great Physician.

8) If man rejects God's remedy for sin, he will be lost - will die of the great "sin cancer" of the soul.

b. Consider the illustration from another figure: A man drowning in the sea.

1) The man realizes that he is drowning.

2) All the thrashing about in the water (his own power) cannot save him.

3) Through efforts of another, a lifeboat is put in the water, a life line and life preserver are thrown to the drowning man.

4) Is the man saved when he sees and acknowledges with thankful heart that help has come?

5) The man must put on the life preserver and be pulled up into the lifeboat.

a) Would anyone say that it nullified the grace of the one who provided the life preserver for the drowning man to put on the life preserver and be drawn into the lifeboat?

b) Would the effort of the man to put on the life preserver make void the saving power of the rescuer?

6) Having been saved from the waters, the man must stay in the lifeboat and not jump back into the sea, nor must he ever be without the life preserver.

- 7) If the man chooses to reject the help made available, he will drown - *not because he refused the help made available, but because he is in the water and cannot save himself.*

c. The analogy is this:

- 1) Man is hopelessly lost in sin. (*Rom. 6:23, 3:23*)
- 2) All the works of human merit (thrashing about) he is capable of, will not save him. (*Titus 3:5; Eph. 2:8-10*)
- 3) God's grace has provided redemption in Christ. (*Rom. 3:24*) (Christ could be compared to the life preserver; the gospel to the life line; the church to the lifeboat).
- 4) Is a man saved when he sees and acknowledges with thankful heart that Christ has come to save him?
- 5) The man must put on Christ in baptism (*Gal. 3:26-27*) and be added to the church. (*Acts 2:47*)
 - a) How could anyone say that it nullifies the grace of God, who provided Christ, the gospel, and the church, for man to put on Christ in baptism?!
 - b) Does the effort of man make void the saving power of Christ and the gospel?!
- 6) Man must remain in the church, rather than going back into the world, and he must never again be without Christ until he reaches the heavenly shore.
- 7) If man rejects Christ and the gospel, he will be lost, not because of rejecting Christ, but because he is hopelessly lost in sin.
 - a) We are lost in sin, not because Christ came to condemn us, rather,
 - b) We are condemned in sin, and Christ came to save us. (*John 3:17; 1 John 4:14*)

IV. CONCLUSION.

- A. It Is Through The Grace Of God That Salvation Is Provided For Man. (*John 3:16*)
- B. The High Cost Of God's Grace Is A Lesson In Itself That Should Make Us Wary Of Any Man Trying To Pawn Off On The Religious World "Cheap Grace."
- C. Grace Itself Teaches Us That Man Is Not To Disregard God's Commands, Violate His Law, Nor Disobey His Will. (*Titus 2:11-14*)