

November 17, 2013

SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

Of Princeton, New Jersey

Jesus Christ

For by Him were all things created,
that are in heaven, and that are in earth,
visible and invisible ...

And He is before all things,
and by Him all things consist.
- Colossians 1:16-17

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday: 10:15 AM Bible Class
11:00 AM Morning Service
Thursday: 7:30 PM Mid-week Service

Services Broadcast Live @
www.FreeGraceMedia.com/live

WEB ADDRESS

Be sure to bookmark our website for daily articles and audio messages:
www.FreeGraceMedia.com

WEEKLY MEETING LOCATION

Rocky Hill Firehouse, 2nd floor
150 Washington Street
Rocky Hill, NJ 08553

MAILING ADDRESS

7 Birch Street
Pennington, NJ 08534
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If you would like to receive this bulletin sent weekly to your email then send a note to the email address above. Articles in this bulletin are by the pastor unless otherwise noted.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

10:15 a.m. Bible Class followed by short break

11:00 a.m. Service

Opening Hymns

Scripture Reading

Message

Closing Hymn

B'Days:; Kevin D-8th; Rachael D-9th; Scott K-9th; Peter D-20th; Abigail L-23rd; William K-23rd; Robert K.-29th; **Wedding Anniversaries:** Ravi and Urmilla I—17th; **Nursery Today:** Carol D. **Nursery Thurs:** Melinda C.

SECONDARY IMPORTANCE?

By Henry Mahan

I have noticed that the main issue that men grapple with over the doctrine of election is not whether or not the Scriptures teach it. Any honesty at all will make a man admit the Scriptures do teach this doctrine. What men grapple with is whether or not it is essential to believe this doctrine and preach this doctrine. Most preachers will admit the Bible does teach election, but they relegate it to a doctrine of secondary importance (Judgment day will reveal the motive behind such actions).

But will the Scriptures support such a position? In Exodus 33:18 Moses said to God, "Show me Thy glory..." To which God replied, "...I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious." Paul quotes this in Romans 9 to answer the carnal mind's objection to election (Romans 9:14-15). According to Scripture, God's glory and election go together. If the glory of God can be thought to be doctrine of secondary importance, so can the doctrine of election. But we know the glory of God is of primary importance. What does that make God's electing mercy in Christ.

THE CURSED MAN & THE BLESSED MAN

Jeremiah 17: 5: Thus saith the LORD; Cursed *be* the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. 6: For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land and not inhabited. 7: Blessed *is* the man that

trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. 8: For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and *that* spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

What a great contrast! This is not a moral issue, it is a heart issue. No word could be plainer. A man cannot trust in God and trust in man. It is not possible to do both and be saved by grace alone. Salvation is not partly by free will and partly by free grace; partly by man's works and partly by Christ's work. Either a sinner is saved by his works (which he cannot be) or he is saved by grace (which he must be) but it can never be both. Salvation is entirely of the Lord Jesus Christ, apart from the works of the flesh.

Contrast in Plants

The cursed man is like a desert heath; the blessed man as a tree planted by the waters.

A heath means destitute. It was a scrubby, shrub, fruitless, seedless and useless. It is a description of naturally religious man. The man who trusts in his will, works, power, wisdom, and whose heart departs from the Lord, is trusting in a curse and is cursed in every way there is to be cursed. The dead sinner is a fruitless, scrubby, little, heath plant dwelling in a salt land where no fruit can be produced.

The blessed man is one who is planted by God in Christ: planted in Christ by divine election, planted in the likeness of Christ's death and resurrection, planted in the house of the Lord by his regenerating, calling grace. (Jn 15: 1; Is 60:21; 61:3) By God's grace, through faith, Christ becomes the Blessed Man in whom we are blessed, our River of Life. We are trees of righteousness in Christ the Tree of Righteousness in whom we are grafted. (Ps 1: 3; Is 61: 3; Rev 22: 1-4) Believers grow in rich soil of his love, with much water of the Holy Spirit and the Word preached, are evergreen, fragrant in Christ by grace through faith, rooted and grounded in his love. (Eph 3: 17) What a contrast between the sinner trusting in himself and the believer who is the planting of the Lord.

Contrast in Sight

The cursed "shall not see when good cometh"; the blessed "shall not see when heat cometh but her leaf shall be green."

When good comes, like the sound of the gospel, then those looking to the arm of the flesh are not benefited in the least. One of the saddest things in the world is when men have the rare privilege to have the gospel of Christ preached near them yet they regard it with complete indifference. Or when men attend for a time then become contentious and walk away from the gospel. It had been better not to have heard than afterward to turn away. (Heb 10: 26-27)

Yet, those blessed of God "shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green." While the heat of persecution for the truth, the heat of trials, the heat which requires commitment and faith in the Lord, withers and dries up the man whose root is in self, the blessed man is given a continual supply of the Water of Life from Christ the River of Life so the heat only makes his "leaf green." The Lord sends the heat to the man trusting in his flesh to dry him up. (Mk 4: 16-17) But God sends the heat to the blessed man to make him more fruitful, to make his roots run deeper into Christ the River of Life, to make his branches cling more firmly to Christ the Tree of Righteousness. (Jn 15: 2) Believer, why would God have our leaves to be green? Green leaves give shade from the heat. Dead leaves fall from the tree and cause a mess to clean up.

Contrast in Fruit Bearing

The cursed man "shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited"; the blessed man "shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit."

There is no spiritual fruitfulness from the man who is trusting in his will, his works, or his worth. He inhabits "parched places", "the wilderness", "a salt land and not inhabited."

Yet, when draught comes, the believer planted and rooted in Christ shall not be careful because he has plenty of spiritual water from the ever-flowing River of Life. Let the world change like the seasons, let natural waters dry-up, the believer never ceases bearing fruit due to the goodness of Christ; let man curse us, Christ's church is kept and watered every moment by Christ. (Is 27: 2-3; Ps 92:14)

What a striking contrast between those planted in Christ and those trusting in the arm of flesh. One is most blessed; the other most cursed. The Lord Jesus Christ is the unceasing source of eternal life, strength, and fruitfulness. Cast all your care on him and abide in him!