

Series: 2 Corinthians
Title: Grace and Peace
Text: 2 Cor 1: 2
Date: February 12, 2017
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

2 Corinthians 1: 2: Grace *be* to you and peace from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Grace” was the salutation used by the Gentile. “Peace” by the Jew. But natural man’s salutation, only meant whatever he imagined to be an ideal condition of temporal happiness in the earth. With God it means much more.

For our Divisions we will look at Grace and Peace three ways: 1) Grace which saves, 2) Grace which gifts, 3) Grace which effects 4) Peace with God, 5) Peace of conscience 6) Peace of brethren

Remember this theme as we look at grace and peace: salvation for sinners is entirely by the Grace of God our Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, who gives his people peace.

GRACE WHICH SAVES

God our Father chose whom he would by grace.

Exodus 33: 19: ...[God said, I] will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.

Grace means his choosing was not based on anything in those God chose.

Romans 9: 11: (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

This is good news because since God chose his people by grace, not based on anything in us, therefore when we fell in Adam, God’s grace toward us did not change. We changed. Every sinner died in Adam and we became God-haters. But God’s grace did not change toward those he chose in eternity.

We try to define grace. But when we say grace is undeserved favor we fall short of grace. If I supplied all the need of a poor, helpless beggar, that would be undeserved grace. But supplying all the need of one who slew everyone in my house and robbed me is a much better illustration of the grace of God toward his ungodly, God-hating people. We were not neutral beggars. After the fall, we became entirely opposed to God in enmity against him.

Yet, for God-haters, Christ made himself the least by grace.

2 Corinthians 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

By grace, Christ took the human nature of his people so that he would have a human body in which God made him sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be the righteousness of God in him. (2 Cor 5: 21) For unjust sinners, God numbered Christ with the transgressors, imputing sin to him in order to make it so there would be no sin to impute to his people by grace. Representing cursed sinners, God made him a curse for us—by grace—pouring out on him in our place all the bruising and stripes that justice demanded. For dead sinners, Christ arose from the grave to God’s right hand with his people in him—by grace. Oh, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Romans 5:21: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Then God the Holy Spirit regenerated us through the preaching of the gospel by grace. In our carnal hearts, we were crying out, “No, God.” We were not seeking God. But the Spirit of God begot us again by irresistible grace of God.

Ephesians 2:5: Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

God our Father chose us by grace. Christ redeemed us by grace. And the Spirit regenerated us by grace. Believers are saved entirely by grace, apart from our works.

GRACE WHICH GIFTS

Every blessing believers have is a free gift from God by grace—“*what hast thou that thou didst not receive?*” (1 Cor 4: 7)

Spiritual and eternal life are the gift of grace.

Romans 5: 15...the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ,...

Faith and repentance is the gift of grace.

Ephesians 2: 8: For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: 9: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

We are justified by grace—what a gift?

Romans 3:24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Romans 8: 1: *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,...33: Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. 34: Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

God's elect are adopted, accepted and forgiven by grace.

Ephesians 1: 5: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6: To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

All spiritual gifts—to preach, to comfort, to give, to be helpers to each other, to sing, to exhort, to be peacemakers, etc—all are the gift of God's grace

Romans 12: 6: Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; 7: Or ministry, *let us wait* on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8: Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

We could go on and on with the gifts given to us by God. But all are of his grace, freely given. We say with the apostle Paul “*By the grace of God I am what I am.*” (1 Cor 15: 10)

GRACE EFFECTUAL

We could say much about the effect of God's grace.

Since all God's promises are by grace, the promises of God are sure, effectually brought to pass by God by grace.

Romans 4:16: Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might* be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed;...

Believers are effectually adorned by God by grace. (Pr 1:9) The effects of these gifts create a beauty in the character and conduct of God's saints. It is beauty in the newly created inner man of heart and mind in the image and likeness of God.

By effectual grace every believer engages in the work God would have us to do for his name. The apostle Paul said,

1 Corinthians 15:10...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.

We shall be kept by grace until the very last sinner is saved by Christ effectually, “*crying, Grace, grace unto it.*” (Zec 4: 7)

But I want to move on to peace and that is, indeed, the great effect which God's grace works for and in his people.

Isaiah 32: 17: And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

PEACE WITH GOD

The gospel of Christ is called the “gospel of peace.” (Rom 10: 15) It is because it declares that Christ accomplished peace between God and his people and Christ is our Peace with God.

Psalm 85:10: Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*.

Romans 5:10: For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

The gospel is the gospel of peace because it does not teach you to do in order to have peace with God. But it declares the peace Christ has wrought on our behalf with God.

Romans 14:17: For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Romans 5:1: ...being justified, by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

In Christ, believers are no longer enemies to God but friends. That is peace!

PEACE OF CONSCIENCE

There is nothing worse than a guilty conscience. Until our conscience is seared, the older we get, the closer to death we come the worse it will get. You can have no rest as long as your conscience is terrified of meeting God.

God gives peace by purging our conscience from dead works with the blood of Christ.

Hebrews 9: 14: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

It is only when our conscience has been purged that we will cease trying to earn salvation by our works because then we have no more conscience of sins. We see and believe that Christ has, indeed, put away our sins past, present and future. Therefore, we rest in him from all our works.

Hebrews 10: 2: For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

When God has purged the conscience, he produces peace in the new man. We begin beholding with joy, Christ and his works, illustrated in the things God created. That is why God says,

Isaiah 55:12: For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

Peace of conscience is the peace of no longer being at war with God. It is a conscience no longer tearing us apart in guilt and terror of meeting God. The only way to get this peace is to be filled by God with “peace in believing.” (Rom 15: 13) Sinner, believe on Christ today and you will have this peace of conscience.

Oh what peace there is now simply to be honest and sincere in the preaching of Christ: no fake, phony disguise, not handling the word deceitfully.

2 Corinthians 1: 12: For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

2 Corinthians 4: 2: But [we] have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.

Peace is having a conscience submissive to the will of God (1 Pet. 2:19) and obedient to Christ (1 Pet. 3:21) in that he has made us believe on him and love our brethren, not putting any trust in our own works. The peace Christ gives banishes that trouble-maker called self-will. Peace of security triumphs over temporal fears. The peace of a sure future will not allow the shadows of sorrow and uncertainty to reign in our hearts. Do you have a good conscience? Oh, may God be pleased to give you a good conscience by the blood of Christ, today.

PEACE WITH ONE ANOTHER

This world has its popular crusaders for peace. But only God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ gives peace among brethren.

Christ removes all the walls that we used to exalt ourselves and belittle others.

Ephesians 2:14: For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace;

God creates this peace by teaching us Christ in our hearts.

Isaiah 54:13: And all thy children *shall be* taught of the LORD; and great *shall be* the peace of thy children.

Christ creates a new man in us in which we no longer exalt ourselves over others but exalt Christ only.

Colossians 3: 10: And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: 11: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all.

Now we see something of the great, great blessing contained in this salutation of the apostle Paul,

2 Corinthians 1: 2: Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen!