

The Word of Life Messenger

“Holding forth the word of life” Phil. 2:16

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THE MINISTRY OF GRACE

Titus 2:11-15

This passage of scripture emphasizes the ministry of God’s wonderful grace. When we consider that we were headed to hell and that God’s grace through our Lord Jesus Christ rescued us, we have the greatest reason in the world to live godly. Grace is not a license to sin, but it is the liberty to live godly (Rom. 6:1-20).

In this study, we want to see the ministry of grace as it is pointed out in this passage by the Apostle Paul.

Grace dispels darkness. The grace of God is unmerited favor that brings salvation. Grace is getting what we do not deserve. We do not deserve heaven. God’s grace is the bestowing of the greatest gift - salvation - upon those who deserve the greatest punishment - hell. God’s grace brings salvation to the lost. Without grace there is no hope, mankind would go to hell. Man could not be saved. We would be in darkness, we would spend eternity in darkness. “Grace came to rescue man from the greatest possible evil, namely, the curse of God upon sin; and to bestow upon him the greatest possible boon, namely the blessing of God for soul and body through all eternity” (Hendriksen 370). God’s grace alone brings salvation; not works (Eph. 2:8-9), not baptism (Acts 2:41), not self-righteousness (Isa. 64:6). Salvation is all of grace. The grace of God has appeared to all men (Mal. 4:2). When men were sitting in the shadow of death, the grace of God dawned penetrating our moral and spiritual darkness.

Grace appeared when Jesus was born (Luke 1:79). Grace appeared when Jesus spoke words of life and beauty. Grace appeared when Jesus healed the sick. Grace appeared when Jesus cleansed lepers. Grace appeared when Jesus cast out demons. Grace appeared when Jesus raised the dead. Grace appeared when Jesus was nailed to the cross, suffering for man’s sin. Grace appeared when Jesus willingly laid down His life for the sheep. Grace appeared when Jesus took His life again on the resurrection morning. Grace appeared one Wednesday night at East Howard Baptist Church when by grace I was saved. God’s grace appears to: young and old, male and female, rich and poor, all classes of people.

Grace leads us along. God’s grace trains us. The grace of God leads us along step by step to maturity. Grace teaches us to renounce ungodliness, wickedness, immorality and whatever is not like God. Renounce worldly lusts by not letting the world set our standards of dress and living. Renounce fornication, adultery, drunkenness, lust and corrupt fleshly desires. Live soberly to have self-control and restraint. “We are to be spiritually controlled because we have bowed before Christ” (Draper 79). We are to let Christ live through us (Gal. 2:20). Live righteously. This speaks of our dealings with other men. We are not to take advantage of others. We are to be honest with our neighbor. Be godly. Godly means to live like

God. Our responses and reactions are to be like His responses and reactions. If we are going to live like God, we must know God and walk with Him daily by spending time in the Word, time in prayer, and time in worship. Live right in this present age. We live in the world, but we are not to live like the world. Christ has redeemed us from the world (Gal. 1:4), therefore we can live right. We are not to conform to the world (Rom. 12:1-2).

Grace gives us hope. “Looking” is an active verb which means “to give attention to something.” “Looking for” means personal expectation in the personal return of Christ. We are to be looking for the return of Christ. The return of Christ is called the blessed hope (1 Thes. 4:16-18). It is blessed because: the dead in Christ shall rise first and those alive at the return of Christ will rise. We will be changed “in a moment in the twinkling of an eye.” We will receive new bodies. This verse strongly affirms that Jesus is God, “the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Grace redeems sinners. Christ gave “himself for us.” Christ became our substitute, He took our place (1 Peter 2:24; 3:18). Jesus gave nothing less than Himself for us, in our interest and in our stead. Christ died to redeem us from all iniquity. Redeem means “to set free by paying a price.” We were slaves to sin and could not free ourselves (Titus 3:3). The price He paid was

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GOD'S GOOD PLEASURE

The title of God's pleasure - **GOD OF PEACE.** Romans 15:33 - "Now the God of peace be with you all, amen." 1 Thess. 5:23 - "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." We have peace through Jesus Christ. Eph. 2:14 - "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."

The man of God's pleasure - **OUR LORD JESUS.** Proverbs 8:30 - "Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."

The act of God's pleasure - **BROUGHT AGAIN FROM THE DEAD.** Acts 2:22, 24 - "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know, whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains

of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

The Sacrifice of God's pleasure - **THE BLOOD OF THE EVER-LASTING COVENANT.** Isa. 53:10 - "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Heb. 12:2 - "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

The people of God's pleasure - **MAKE YOU PERFECT.** Eph. 1:5,9 - "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to the good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself." This is ours through the gospel. Eph. 1:13 - "in whom ye also trusted, after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel

of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

The purpose of God's pleasure - **TO DO HIS WILL.** Heb. 10:36 - "for ye have need of patience that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

The process of God's pleasure - **WORKING IN YOU THAT WHICH IS WELLPLEASING IN HIS SIGHT THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.** Heb. 13:21 - "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever amen."

This is according to the good pleasure of his will. Eph. 1:5. It is a joy to the sinner to be saved by the grace of God. We rejoice to know that Jesus died for our sins and was raised again for our justification. But it is also God's good pleasure to save us.

- Charles Ellis

SAFE AND SECURE IN CHRIST

The Bible teaches us that the child of God is saved eternally, safe and secure in the Lord Jesus Christ. What is eternal life? The Bible answers this question for us in John 17:3 - "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." This verse makes it clear that when we come to know the Lord Jesus Christ, we have eternal life. Coming to know Him means that we believe in His finished work at the cross and His resurrection from the grave.

In John 3:15-16, God through the Apostle John uses the words eternal and everlasting. He reminds us in verse 15 "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have

ETERNAL life." Then in verse 16 he says: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." I believe these two words express the glorious truth of our eternal salvation. When you come to believe and rest in the fact that Jesus died for your sins, was buried and raised again, you have everlasting life. The believer receives life from God that lasts forever or is everlasting. The word ETERNAL is the kind of life God has. God is eternal, without beginning or ending. We did not have this life until we came to rest in the finished work of Christ. The moment we receive Jesus as our Saviour, we

also receive the kind of life God has, which is eternal life. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

Have you come to see that Jesus died for your sins, was buried and raised again? If so, you have life from God, which is eternal and everlasting.

- Gladwin Carpenter

GOD'S UNCHANGEABLE TRUTHS

“My son, fear thou the Lord and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change: For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?” (Prov. 24:21,22). The word “meddle” here means to mingle or engage. Don’t take part with “them that are given to change.” Even though we are living in a fast changing world, the child of God should not go along with changing things that relate to God and His Word.

First of all, may we notice that God is unchangeable. “For I am the Lord, I change not . . .” (Malachi 3:6). “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variable-ness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17). Our Lord is unchangeable in His person. “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever” (Heb. 13:8). Jesus is God the Son, manifest in the flesh, born of a woman without sin. He went to the cross of calvary and laid down His life to pay the penalty of our sins. He was buried and arose from the grave. Thus He is unchangeable in His provision for sinners. There is only one way to God and that way is unchangeable. The risen Saviour is unchangeable in His priesthood as He lives on high to make intercession for His children. “But this man (Jesus), because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them (Heb. 7:24, 25).

Second, God’s Word is unchangeable. His Word is true from Genesis 1:1 through Revelation 22:21. Why would the Bible need changing? Only that which is untrue needs changing. God’s Word is forever settled in Heaven. I love the old King James Bible that I grew up with. I cut my spiritual eye teeth on this old book and God nor His Word has never failed me. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16). We don’t need to try to change the Bible; we need to let the Bible change us. As the verse above reveals, the scripture is profitable for correction. When we need correction God’s Word will do that.

Third, the Lord’s local New Testament churches should not change from the ancient paths. The church has the right foundation, the right head, the right authority, motive, mission, and the right destination. In the New Testament, which we must follow, the word church or churches were used when referring to the places of worship. “Unto the church of God, which is at Corinth...,” unto the churches of Galatia...” (Gal. 1:2), “unto the church of the Thessalonians...” (1 Thess. 1:1:). Paul “sent to Ephesus,

and called for the elders of the church” (Acts 20:17). In some cases, the word “saints” are used when writing to a local church, but the context makes it plain that he is referring to a church. Don’t change the name of the church from that taught in the New Testament.

Don’t change the foundation. The church was built upon the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the great rock and chief cornerstone (see Matt. 16:18; 1 Peter 2:4-7). He is also the foundation of our salvation. “For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11).

Don’t try to change the message of the Bible. God’s message of salvation has always been the same. It is salvation “by grace,” “through faith,” “not works” (Eph. 2:8,9). Jesus shed His precious blood on the cross to pay the penalty of our sins to satisfy a holy and righteous God. He was buried and raised from the grave. We are saved when we believe in Him.

God’s people should be unchangeable in our love and stand for the truth. One day we will need a change, for our bodies must be changed. “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body...” (Phil. 3:21). This will take place when Jesus comes back and receives His children unto Himself.

- Gladwin Carpenter

THE MINISTRY OF GRACE

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His own precious blood (1 Peter 1:18-19). We are “redeemed from all iniquity.” Sin should no longer control us. The Christian is no longer a slave to sin, he can be victorious. Christ died to “purify unto Himself a peculiar people...” God purifies us by grace and makes us His special possession, trophies of grace. Purification means that we

are separated from sin. Peculiar means odd or strange, not like the world. “Zealous of good works” means a zest for noble deeds.

Tell of God’s grace. Titus was to speak about God’s grace, tell about salvation in Christ, and tell of truth (vs. 1). Titus was to urge folks to accept the message and ministry of grace. Titus was to rebuke with

authority those who needed reproof. Titus was to hold to what he knew to be right.

The ministry of grace dispels darkness and brings light to the soul. It sets the sinner free from sin and gives hope. Jesus is coming again. The ministry of grace trains the saved and leads them.

- Cecil Fayard

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Notice

The Northeast MS Baptist Bible Conference will meet with Reedy's Chapel Baptist Church located south of Derma, MS on Monday evening Nov. 13, 2006 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

7:05 - Cecil Fayard
7:30 - Fred Hartley
7:55 - Chris Duncan
Fellowship afterwards

Bro. Bobby Adams and the church invite you to this time of worship and Bible study.

The North Central MS Baptist Bible Conference will also meet with Reedy's Chapel Baptist Church on Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2006 beginning at 9:55 a.m. Lunch will be served by the church at 12:00 noon. Sermons for the day will be from the book of Mark. You are invited.

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John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Jesus will come and take his children up in a cloud. The only way to get to Heaven is through Jesus. The ones who don't have Jesus will be burning with fire. Please accept Jesus. Don't wait too late.

- by a friend of this paper

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