

What Is God's Grace? OR Why Can't A Work's Gospel Save Anyone?



Introduction

We wish to look at what God means when He talks about grace, **saving grace** in particular. If we have the wrong idea of what is God's grace (the grace of God that saves a soul), then we may yet be lost in our sins and under the wrath of God, a most serious situation to be in. We can be sure that God's grace has nothing to do with the works of man, since God contrasts His grace with man's works:

"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." [Romans 11:6]

According to the Catholic church and some Protestant denominations there are several types of grace, each associated with (obtained through) a church "sacrament" (a ritual or ceremony). One is the grace of **baptism** (Catechism of the Catholic church paragraph #265) that supposedly starts you off as a Catholic or Christian. This is a "works based" sacrament, like the communion wafer (and ceremony) in the Catholic church and others, where the participant DOES something to GET something from God. The person DOES the sacrament (gets baptized or eats a wafer) to GET some "grace" (favor from God or some kind of enabling power). Then the theory is that when you GET this grace, you are thereby enabled to DO good works, the kind of works

that the Catholic church calls “merits” (see Catechism of the Catholic church paragraphs #2009 & #2011). These merits are like salvation “points” that count towards your salvation, although the Catholic church never tells anyone how many “merits” it takes to get to heaven. They do say that some people actually earn more than they need and these extra merits get stored in a treasury in heaven to be distributed somehow to people that don’t earn enough of them while here on earth (see Catechism of the Catholic church paragraphs #1476 - 1478).

We need to look to the Bible, God’s Word, for answers

We need to ask ourselves, is that really what the saving grace of God is all about? According to God, according to the Bible, what is grace? It is not some words you say before you eat dinner nor is it merely something that “enables” you to live a life good enough or worthy enough to qualify for heaven. God’s saving grace is His wonderful provision of a free and complete pardon from sin to undeserving rebellious sinners. To put it another way, God’s grace, in particular, is His salvation plan and that salvation plan is manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ, the all-sufficient sin-bearer and substitute who suffered the wrath of God for all the ungodly sinners that He came to save. Are you one of those sinners? How do you know?

Here is a description from the Bible of what God’s saving grace is all about (keep in mind that these verses only apply to those whom God saves - i.e. grants salvation to):

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 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.” [Romans 5:8-10]

Notice in verse 8 above, that Christ came to save sinners and the label “sinner” applies to everyone. God’s grace involves His love for those who do not deserve love: sinners - people who daily and continually ignore and violate God’s commandments, even when they think they are being good (because then they are being self-righteous and ignorant of sins that God sees but they don’t see). God’s love is displayed by the fact that He came to earth as a man and suffered and died to pay the price for sins that sinners could not pay.

In Romans 5:9 above, we see God’s grace has to do with **saving a guilty hell-deserving sinner at the expense of Christ**, who suffered the punishment due to those sinners He came to save. Christ’s atoning death is sufficient to justify (make perfectly and completely righteous) those sinners whom Christ saves. We also learn from Romans 5:9 that we are saved from the **wrath of God** which is **eternity in hell** as made clear in Luke chapter 12:

“And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.” [Luke 12:4-5]

Regarding Christ’s saving blood:

Romans 3:25 - “Whom God hath set forth to be a **propitiation*** through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;”

*this has to do with appeasing God, satisfying His requirements for Divine justice

Ephesians 2:13 - “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”

Hebrews 9:14 - “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

Hebrews 9:22 - “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”

1 John 1:7 - “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Regarding God’s wrath:

Romans 1:18 - “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;”

Romans 8:1 - “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

John 5:24 - “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.”

1 Thessalonians 1:10 - “And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come”

Regarding the eternal nature of God’s wrath:

Revelation 14:11 - “And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.”

Matthew 8:12 - “But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 13:42 - “And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 13:50 - “And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 22:13 - “Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 24:51 - “And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with

the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 25:30 - “And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Matthew 25:46 And these shall go away into **everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.**

Luke 13:28 - “There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.”

Regarding what Christ’s saving blood accomplishes:

Romans 5:1 - “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”

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

Romans 3:26 - “To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

Romans 8:30 - “Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

In Romans 5:10 above we see that before God saves a person they are His enemies. Those who are enemies against Christ includes anyone who is not yet saved. **It is the grace of God that saves them from the wrath of God even though they deserve God’s wrath for their sins:**

