

THE GRACE OF GOD

Sunday Morning: March 18, 2001

Text: Hebrews 2:9 "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that **he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.**"

We are not trying to do a verse by verse or a word by word study of the book of Hebrews. I would like to focus our attention on verse 9, but I am going to read a few verses beginning in Hebrews 2:9-14 "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10. For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12. Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;"

I want us to reflect upon the grace of God. In Hebrews 2:9 we see that "He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." When Jesus Christ was in the heavenlies, he was above the angels. When he became a man he was reduced in rank to being lower than the angels. As long as Jesus Christ was above the angels or equal with angels, he could not die. He had to be reduced in rank below that of an angel before he could die according to Luke 20:36 "Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children [sons] of God, being the children [sons] of the resurrection." Jesus Christ took upon himself flesh, the seed of Abraham, and he became a man so that he could die for every man.

GRACE IS THE POWER

2 Corinthians 12:9 "And he said unto me, My **grace** is **sufficient** for thee: for my **strength** is made **perfect** in **weakness**. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that **the power** of Christ may rest upon me."

In Hebrews 2:9 there is the reference to the grace of God that Jesus used to taste death for every man. In 2 Corinthians 12:9 we find that grace is power. Jesus needed the power of God to endure the suffering of death for every man. In this verse Jesus is talking to Paul and he tells him that His grace is sufficient. You do not need anything else Paul. You may have a thorn in the flesh as Paul, or you have problems out of your control, you are hurting and can't find relief, His grace is enough. Jesus wanted Paul as well as us to know that His grace will sustain us. Paul had a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan and he would not go away. The Lord would not remove this condition even though Paul prayed that the Lord would take it from him. Have you ever had a problem and you prayed about it and it did not go away. The Lord wants us to look to His grace to sustain us and we need to know that the problem or condition may never go away. Part of His grace is learning to pray "Abba, Father", which is an expression of submission to the will of God.

The Lord continues when he says "My strength is made perfect in your weakness." Paul responds with "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the Power of Christ may rest upon me." When Jesus Christ became a man, he needed grace to sustain him through out his earthly ministry and in particular, the tasting of death for every man. Jesus needed the grace that His heavenly Father gave him to endure the cross. He needed the power to endure the

cross. Becoming a man subjected him to weakness that he had never experienced before. He would have some idea what those weakness were because he gave us the ability to experience those infirmities in the flesh. As a man, Jesus thirsted, he hungered, he suffered rejection, he suffered pain when his hands were nailed to the cross and His back opened with the lash of a Roman whip. It took the grace of God for Jesus to endure these afflictions.

GRACE IN DEATH

Hebrews 2:9 ". . . he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

Another point of this verse is that he tasted death for every man. Tasting death for every man means that every man can be saved. No one is excluded as far as the common salvation is concerned. Believe that Jesus Christ's death was sufficient for you and accept for yourself personally and you will be saved.

IT TOOK THE GRACE OF GOD

Mark 14:34-36 "And saith unto them, My soul is **exceeding sorrowful** unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. 35. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and **prayed** that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36. And he said, **Abba, Father**, all things *are* possible unto thee; **take away this cup** from me: **nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.**"

In the garden before his crucifixion, Jesus was exceeding sorrowful unto death. He had his closes apostles Peter, James, and John with him when he prayed, but they were limited in the help they could give because they were asleep. It takes the grace of God to know that he can change anything in our lives, and that He will not make those changes. Jesus had to drink His cup of suffering and so will we.

THE GRACE OF GOD

Titus 2:11 "For the grace of God that bringeth **salvation** hath **appeared** [give light] **to all men,**"

We are told in Titus 2:11 that it was the grace of God that brought salvation to every man and that every man is given this light. It is for every man because by the grace of God Jesus Christ tasted death for every man.

THE GRACE OF GOD

John 1:29 "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold **the Lamb of God**, which taketh away the sin of the world."

An innocent lamb was slain for the sins of Israel in the Old Testament. Jesus Christ was the lamb according to John 1:29. The lamb was not guilty but innocent of any wrong. Jesus was to be executed being innocent any sin. If we are in a situation where we are going to be executed for something that we did not do, it will take the grace of God to endure that. Jesus Christ was not guilty, but as the lamb of God he was going to be crucified for sins of the whole world and took grace.

HE DIED FOR ALL BY GRACE

2 Corinthians 5:14 "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if **one died for all**, then were all dead: "

I have repeated the thought that Jesus Christ died for all so that there would be no misunderstanding about the fact that all can be saved. The fact is that all of mankind are sinners and in need of a saviour. It took the grace of God for Jesus Christ to become the saviour and be sacrificed for the whole human race.

THAT THEY WHICH LIVE

2 Corinthians 5:15 "And *that* he died for all, that **they which live** should **not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him** which died for them, and rose again."

This verse is tell those who accept Jesus Christ as their personal saviour are expected to live, not for themselves, but for others. We are not to live a selfish life. That life is to be lived for the honor and the glory of the Jesus Christ and God the Father. For us to live this life we have to live it by the grace of God and not in our own strength. We need the power of Christ in our life and he has given us instructions and exhortations about this power. We need grace. We need power.

There are those who teach that the grace of God as being unmerited favor. Grace just oozes from God and splashes on us. If that is the case, why do we need the exhortation of 2 Timothy 2:1 to be strong in the grace of Christ Jesus. We need to appropriate grace in our lives and he is the source of that grace.

BE STRONG IN GRACE

2 Timothy 2:1 "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the **grace** that is in Christ Jesus."

The strong exhortation is to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. We need this power in our life if we expect to live an unselfish life.

SEEK GRACE AT THE THRONE

Hebrews 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly unto the **throne of grace**, that we may **obtain mercy, and find grace** to help in time of need."

This verse tells us where we are to get the grace of God. Grace has to be sought and found. It just does not splash on you without seeking it. In reality we must obtain mercy before we can find grace. When we are coming to get the power of God on our lives, and you are still in bondage to sin, why is God going to give you his power to serve sin. The mercy seat is where the blood is and it is through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ that we are delivered from the bondage of sin. Without the shedding of blood there is no liberty, there is no deliverance. To obtain mercy there needs to be the confession of sin, appropriating the blood, and then God will provide us with His grace.

GROW IN GRACE

2 Peter 3:18 "But grow in **grace**, and *in* the **knowledge** of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen."

This verse tells us that we grow in grace. That means that full grace is not given at one time, but as we are able to receive it. We do not become "Charles Atlas" the first time we receive grace. The receiving of grace is a process and it take time to receive the grace of God. Associated with grace is knowledge. Bible study. Bible memorization. This is part of growing in grace.

CONTINUE IN GOD'S GRACE

Acts 13:43 ". . .many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, **persuaded** them to **continue in the grace** of God."

Paul had been kicked out of a synagogue in Acts 13. In verse 43 it says that many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas and Paul persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. To continue in the grace of God requires that they continue grow in grace. One astonishing thing is that those who followed Paul had to be persuaded to continue in the grace of God. If the grace of God is unmerited favor, why do you have to continue in the grace of God? If we want the power of Christ in our lives, we must make the effort to grow in grace

and then to continue growing in the grace of God.

WE LIVE BY GRACE

Ephesians 2:8 "For by **grace are ye** [ye endure or dureth, Mark 4:11, Mat 13:21] **saved** [having been saved, in the past] through faith (we have grace); and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God:*"

The phrase "are ye" is translated "endure" or "dureth" in Mark 4:11 and in Matthew 13:21. What is the significance of this? It is by the grace of God that we endure. If the grace of God was not present in our lives we would quit. We would become exhausted or weary in well doing. We would be come discouraged and cast down. This verse of scripture is used for salvation to the point that no one ever uses this verse to encourage themselves to continue in the grace of God. Let me finish this verse. "for by grace ye endure, having been saved." The saved is in the perfect passive tense. Salvation happen in the past and continues to the present. You have been saved, now, endure by the grace of God. The devil uses miss-information about a verses of scripture to keep us weak and off guard. He takes a verse like Ephesians 2:8 and applies it to salvation which obscures the true meaning of the grace of God. After we are saved we need the grace of God to help us to endure and not become weary in well doing and faint. Satan wants us to apply verses, as in the case of Ephesians 2:8, to salvation and then the verse's real application is lost to Satan's advantage. Satan would have us believe that we are saved by the blood, so once we are saved, the blood is no longer used in your daily walk. The blood of Jesus Christ delivers us from the bondage of sin and we need that daily. "For by grace ye endure, having been saved, through faith." What does faith provide us with? It provides us with the grace. We get grace on the basis of faith. How do we get salvation? On the basis of the verb believe. Faith is a noun. Salvation comes when we believe on the Lord Jesus to be saved.

WE HAVE GRACE WHEN

2 Corinthians 9:8 "And God *is* able to make all **grace** abound toward you; that ye, always having all **sufficiency** [contentment] in all *things*, may **abound** to every **good work**:"

How do we know when we have grace? How do I know when grace is working? After going to the throne of grace and have obtained mercy and received His grace by faith, how do I know that grace is operative in my life? In 2 Corinthians 9:8 we have an indicator that grace is working in our hearts. First thing I know is that God is able to make all grace abound to me and can add extra grace when needed. The word 'sufficiency' is also translated 'contentment'. How do I know when grace is working? When I am contented. This contentment is evident in the midst of the trial and testing we are experiencing.

Another indicator of the grace of God is the desire to abound to good works. God is working in us both to will and do of his good pleasure. Philippians 2:13 "For it is God which worketh in you **both to will** and to do of *his* good pleasure." Grace is working when we have a servant's heart. Not serving ourselves but others.

DESIRE FOR THE WORD OF GOD

2 Peter 1:2 "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the **knowledge** [επιγνωσις, knowledge upon knowledge] of God, and of Jesus our Lord,"

A second indicator of grace is peace. Philippians 4:7 "And the **peace** of God, which passeth all **understanding**, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." We know that grace is working when we have peace. We know that we have peace when our stomach is not in a knot or we are ringing our hands. We are resting in God's will for our lives. There is nothing wrong with getting up tight, sin enters when we stay up tight and careful about our circumstance.

There is another indicator in this verse and that is a desire for a deeper understanding of the Word of God. The word 'knowledge' in this verse is a stronger word than to 'know'. This stronger knowledge is experiential knowledge or knowledge applied. This knowledge is knowledge upon knowledge because of the preposition ἐπι in this compound word meaning 'upon'. We are talking about knowledge upon knowledge. Isaiah 28:10 "For precept *must be upon* precept, precept **upon** precept; line **upon** line, line **upon** line; here a little, *and* there a little:" Grace and peace are multiplied to us through knowledge of the Word of God and of Jesus Christ.

WHEN WE ARE WEAK

2 Corinthians 12:9 "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in **weakness**. Most gladly therefore will I **rather glory in my infirmities**, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Grace cannot work when you feel strong. This is a reverse indicator. Grace is working when we realize that we are dependent upon the power of Christ. When we are not in charge then we know that grace can and will work if we appropriate it. When we can glory in our infirmities, then we know that grace is working. It takes grace to glory in our weakness and our infirmities, which are other expressions for our limitations, then we know that grace is working.

GRACE FOR THE HUMBLE

James 4:6 "But he giveth more **grace**. Wherefore he saith, God **resisteth the proud**, but giveth **grace** unto the **humble**."

Humility is not something that we know that we have. If you think you are humble, you are not. When I was in college we would brag about the book we were writing about our humility and how we obtained it. The book was written in the first person singular, that is I, me, my, mine, etc. and color photos of me. A tongue in cheek expression about humility. We do know when we are proud. We know pride is working when we are offended. Pride makes us feel strong and self sufficient where we do not need any one. When you know pride is working, you know you do not have grace working. When you submit to others, pride is not evident, and grace is working.

DESIRE TO SERVE

1 Corinthians 15:10 "But **by the grace of God I am** what I am: and 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."

The phrase 'But by the grace of God I am what I am.' When the grace of God is working, then we are men and women of peace, contentment, satisfaction, being anxious for nothing.

FALL FROM GRACE

Galatians 5:4 "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are **justified** by the **law**; ye are fallen from **grace**."

When we are doing that which is our duty to do we are trying to be justified by the law. Justification by the law is obedience apart from faith. We must be obedient to the law if we expect to be just. We can be just but if there is no living by faith then our righteousness will be that of the law and not of faith. When we are looking for approval on the bases of obedience alone, we know that we have fallen from Grace. It takes faith to have grace for justification. Many teach that to fall from grace is to lose your salvation, but salvation is something that you can't lose.

ONLY OBEDIENT

Luke 17:10 "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded

you, say, We are **unprofitable servants**: we have done that which was our **duty to do.**" If we are trying to stand approved by obedience to the law alone you are doing that which is your "duty to do." When we are doing that which is our duty to do, then we have fallen from grace and we will not be justified. Faith go beyond our duty to do. Doing that which is our duty to do is being just, and that is not enough to stand approved at the judgment seat of Christ. We must be just and also live by faith. If we are not living by faith then we are not accessing the grace required to please the Lord.

JUSTIFIED BY GRACE

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

Associated with justification is redemption. What is redemption? The concept of redemption is to be drawn from the Old Testament. You redeemed land sold to another to satisfy a debt To be redeemed in the Old Testament was to be released from the bondage of that debt so that you could work you own land and be with your family. Redemption is a family matter so grace is given to those in the family so that they can serve the Lord and not another master. From the New Testament point of view, we are released from the bondage of sin so that we can serve God acceptable by His grace. Serving the Lord acceptably will allow us to be approved in his presence.

GRACE ACCESSED BY FAITH

Romans 5:2 "By whom also **we have access by faith into this grace** wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

This verse affirms that fact that we access grace by faith. How do we exercise faith to obtain grace? By coming in prayer and telling the Lord what you are doing. Just tell Him that you are coming to the throne of Grace to submit to the authority of the grace of God. You tell him that you need to obtain mercy and be redeemed from your other master what ever or who ever it might be. Tell the Lord that you have come for the grace needed to please him. After you have done that, believe you have the grace needed for what ever the task or situation you may find yourself in. I do not feel anything, I do not see any flashing lights, and I am not looking for any experience from him, I just believe what he says is the truth and do what He says to do and leave the results up to Him.

JUSTIFIED BY FAITH

Galatians 2:16 "Knowing that a man is not **justified** by the works of the law, but by the **faith** of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be **justified** by the **faith** of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be **justified.**"

This verse is trying to help us to understand justification by faith. It states that we know that we are not going to stand approved, that is be justified, by the works of the law. Justification is on the bases of faith that works by love and obedience. Notice that salvation come first. "We have believed in Jesus Christ." The word 'believe' is a verb in contrast to the noun 'faith.' After salvation then it states "that we **MIGHT** be justified by faith of Christ. Do not associate justification by salvation. There is no might be saved when you believe. You will be saved when you believe, but you might or might not be justified by faith. You must not depart from the faith or make shipwreck of the faith if you expect to be justified. That is the reason the Holy Spirit used the subjunctive mood in the verb 'might be justified' used in this verse.

FAITH COME BY THE WORD

Romans 10:17 "So then **faith cometh by hearing**, and hearing by the **word of God.**"

I have included this verse in our study to emphasize how faith comes. Our faith comes by hearing and studying the word of God or Christ. If we are not hearing or studying the word of God then our faith will be small and if our faith is small so will our grace be small. If we have accessed little grace we will have little power in our life. We increase our faith and as we increase our faith then we will grow in grace.

HEIRS BY GRACE

Acts 20:32 "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his **grace**, which is able to build you up, and to give you an **inheritance** among all them which are sanctified."

Another aspect of grace has to do with our inheritance. The word or doctrine of grace will cause us to be built up and strengthened. Grace is the power of Christ. The inheritance referred to in this verse is based upon grace used for service.

SERVE ACCEPTABLY BY GRACE

Hebrews 12:28 "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have **grace**, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:"

Our inheritance is in the kingdom of heaven. The requirements for entrance into that kingdom have been set and can not be changed. Even the requirements to see the kingdom have been set. You must be born from above to see the kingdom of God. John 3:3. If we are going to have an inheritance in the coming kingdom of heaven we have to change because the rules have been set as far as the kingdom is concerned. To enter the kingdom requires grace. The phrase 'Let us have grace' would be better translated may we have grace. The verb have is a present active subjunctive which means we need grace all the time but we may not have grace all the time. The active voice tells us that we are the ones who must be active in acquiring that grace by faith at the throne of grace.

SERVE FOR INHERITANCE

Colossians 3:23-24 "And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24. Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."

This verse deals with service and what we do we should do it heartily unto the Lord. This service must be on the basis of grace. If the service is not on the basis of grace then it will not be acceptable service and therefore the reward of the inheritance will not will awarded.

EXHORTATION AND HOPE BY GRACE

2 Thessalonians 2:16 "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* **everlasting** [agelasting] **consolation** [exhortation] and good **hope** through **grace**,"

The word 'everlasting' should be translated 'agelasting.' The word consolation should be translated 'exhortation.' This exhortation can be applied to the age to come or it can be applied to the age in which we live. If we apply this exhortation to this age, it will bolster our hope in this age to rule and reign with Christ in the age to come. If the grace of God is not working then our hope of glory will diminish and then fail.

CALLED UNTO GRACE

Galatians 1:6 "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the **grace** of Christ unto another gospel:"

The gospel of Christ calls us unto grace so that we might be justified by faith. I believe that grace is the power of God in Romans 1:16-17 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." The salvation in this verse is the salvation that is to be associated with entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Those who will believe, in the present tense, are those that are just and disciplined to live by faith.

GRACE MEASURE BY THE GIFT

Ephesians 4:7 "But unto every one of us is given **grace** according to the measure of the **gift** (δωρεα, agelasting life, John 4:10,14) of Christ."

The gift, δωρεα, in this verse is life for the millennial age. John 4:10 "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift [δωρεα] of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." John 4:14 "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into **everlasting [agelasting] life.**"

James and John asked the Lord if they could be on your right and left hand in the kingdom. Jesus told them of the baptism into suffering they would have to endure for those positions. **Mark 10:37-38** "They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. 38. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" To endure the cup of suffering required to be on the right hand and on the left hand of the Lord requires a great deal of grace. The more grace required the greater the measure of grace will be given. It takes great grace to express a heart felt submission to God by saying Abba, Father.

GRACE IS TO REIGNS

Romans 5:21 "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so **might grace reign** through **righteousness** unto [leading to] **eternal [agelasting] life** by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Do you know what is to be in charge of our lives, grace? Grace is to reign. Grace is to be in charge of your attitude and lifestyle. Grace can only reign through righteousness. Grace does not reign when you are living in sin and rebellion against God. If you are resisting the Lord you will not have peace, you will not be content, but frustration, disappointment, and angry because grace will not be working in your life. If grace reigns in our lives, it will lead to life in the coming kingdom age. This agelasting life is the preferred life that we can enter into during the millennial reign of Christ.

BY FAITH WE ENDURE BY GRACE

Ephesians 2:8 "For by **grace** are [ye endure or dureth] ye saved [having been saved, in the past] through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:"

PARAPHRASED

Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace through faith ye endure, having been saved, and that grace is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. (Ephesians 3:7 "the **gift** of the **grace** of God")