

## Grace—The Love of God

It has been the grace and love of God that man has been able to know his faults and lackings. This knowledge, a clear personal knowledge of sin, is a gift of God. The love of God would not permit man to withdraw and remain depressed, but rather cultivates a yearning for reconciliation, a share in love and unity. All the work by which God leads and guides man to Him is His grace and love.

When the prophets proclaimed judgement to the people, they did God's grace work. If the people accepted the warning and were converted, God's good will had occurred. It was grace from God. If, on the other hand, the people did not heed the warning and disastrous events occurred, God's grace could be seen even in the cleansing disaster. God severed the way of sin with misfortunes in order that His blessing could again be distributed in new conditions. He did not reject His people. Thus, His long-suffering is also grace.

Many have sought reconciliation from different levels. There have been many prayers and sacrifices. It has been attempted to earn reconciliation by fulfilling the law of God. In works of the law, man has always been left in uncertainty because there he is driven to measure sins and estimate forgiveness. The psalmist sees the situation as bleak. "They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Ps 14:3)

During his own life, the Apostle Paul experienced the transition from being under the law to being under grace. He was able to feel the fulfillment and redemption begin founded in God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2: 8,9)

God took the initiative and marked the way in His saving work. He gave the gospel in Christ, in which there is strength to create new. It gives birth to and maintains faith. Faith is counted as righteousness for a believer. "Therefore, it is of faith, that it might be by grace." (Rom. 4:16) The grace of God, like sunshine enlightening and warming, falls upon all in the gospel that is to be received by faith. The gospel, faith, and grace are connected. Through them God justifies the ungodly.

Having received grace, a man is free from the curse of sin and is a partaker of God's mercy with its many gifts. The peace of God goes even beyond his understanding. His yearning has been fulfilled. The vessel of his heart may overflow when he feels that the completeness of life has been realized.

Life, on man's part, contains known difficulties; sin and burden. The grace of God is also the power in the endeavor of faith. It teaches and helps man to reject ungodly life. (Tit. 2:11,12) It removes sin and burdens. It makes the proclamation of the gospel a new obligation: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." (Eph. 3:8)

They who now have been saved by grace will, in the future, receive the yet greater "exceeding riches of his grace." (Eph. 2:7) Thus, to grace belongs the hope of future good. Grace always increases until the appearance of Christ. (Rom. 5:15)

The grace of God is a rich and many-sided treasure, to the point of being unsearchable.