

Prayer List

Frieda
Wallace
Sheila
Ophelia
Josh
Daniel
Olene

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Pinole Tidings

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This Week's Question:

What Old Testament figure boasted to his two wives that he had killed a young man?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Song of Solomon 2:1

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God's Grace Offers Salvation to Everyone - Titus 2:11

By Wayne S. Walker

What is the most important issue to you? For a teenager, it might be, "How can I pass that chemistry text this week?" Or a little beyond that, it might be, "How can I be able to graduate, go to college, and get a good job? For those of us who are older, it might be, "How can I provide for my family, especially if I lose job or maybe have health problems?" For some it might be the moral condition of our society, the 2008 elections, or the war in Iraq. All of these issues are important in their context, but there is an even more fundamental and basic issue that we have to deal with, and that is our relationship with God.

That is why we have the Bible. Now, certainly, the Bible gives divine advice that will help with all of those other issues in some way or another, but most importantly, it tells us what we must do to be right with God. Bible teaches that we are made upright but, as we shall see, we go astray, so we need to be saved. Yet we cannot atone for our own sins. So, what can be done? "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). Here Paul tells us that God's grace offers salvation to everyone

Grace

To begin, we need to understand the grace of God. When we use the word "grace" with reference to a human being, we often mean a person who is characterized by charm, politeness, good manners, proper etiquette, and being kind. When we speak of "grace" with reference to God, we usually define it as the unmerited favor of the Lord toward sinful mankind. The source of all such

grace is God. "But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory and by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you (1 Pet. 5:10). The supreme manifestation of His grace is Jesus Christ. The Word, who was with the Father in the beginning and Himself was God, became flesh so that mankind could behold His glory, "full of grace and truth" in that "grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (Jn. 1:1, 14-17). The means by which this grace is made known to us is the "gospel of the grace of God" or "the word of His grace" (Acts 20:24, 32). The necessity of God's grace is seen in that it's the very foundation or basis upon which we're saved (Eph. 2:8-9). The Bible plainly teaches that no good works of our own can atone for sin (Tit. 3:5). So in the sense of an atonement for our sins, we are totally dependent on God's grace.

Salvation

Next, we must recognize the fact that God's grace brings salvation. Why do we need to be saved? Again, the truth is that we need to be saved because of our sins. Even in the Old Testament, it was understood that sin separates one from God (Isa. 59:1-2). All responsible human beings have sinned, and the wages or consequences of sin is death (Rom. 3:23, 6:23). Since we cannot save ourselves by ourselves, what did God do by His grace to make salvation possible? He sent Jesus to be our Savior (Matt. 1:21, Lk. 2:11). "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10). So, what did Jesus do to provide for our salvation? Paul, in his preaching and writing, emphasizes the death of Christ for our salvation (Rom. 5:8, 1 Cor. 15:1-3). "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. 1:15). Therefore, we can safely conclude that if God went to this length to save us from our sin, He must want us to be saved (1 Tim. 2:3-4). God is not some mean ogre, just waiting for us to transgress His law so that He can gleefully cast us into hell. We are His creation, the work of His hands made in His image, and He loves us enough to want us to be saved, so He did everything in His power and consistent with His will to make it possible.

All men

Finally, we are told that God's grace brings salvation to all men, or to all mankind. Even though under the Mosaic Covenant the Israelites were God's chosen people, it was prophesied in the Old Testament that when the Messiah would come, God's blessings

would be offered to all mankind. When the mountain of the Lord's house would be established, all nations would flow to it (Isa. 2:2). At that time, whoever would call on the name of the Lord would be saved (Joel 2:32). Thus, salvation would be available not just to Israelites to but anyone. These prophecies were fulfilled as Jesus sent His followers into all nations to preach the gospel to every creature (Matt. 28:18-20, Mk. 16:15-16). This shows us that it is God's will for His message of salvation to be announced to the whole world. In spite of thousands of years of racial and ethnic prejudices, Christians in first century came to understand that no one was to be denied hearing and obeying God's plan. "...God shows no partiality, but in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him" (Acts 10:34-35). Therefore, today we still recognize that God's grace can bring salvation to anyone. He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9). Everyone is invited; nobody is excluded (Rev. 22:17). This is because God's grace that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

Conclusion

Unfortunately, while God wants everyone to be saved, it is a sad truth that not all people are or will be saved. Jesus said that many would travel the road to destruction while few would find the way to eternal life (Matt. 7:13-14). Why is this so? The answer is that God has put conditions upon that salvation. "Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (Heb. 5:8-9). The simple fact is that there are just a lot of folks that do not want to obey God's will which puts them in the narrow way rather than the broad way. God wants them to be saved--and they can be saved, but they have to turn from sin and keep God's commandments. "Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14). Yes, we can be so thankful for that "marvelous, infinite, matchless grace" of which we so often sing. From Expository Files 15.6; June 2008