

THURSDAY - JANUARY 24TH

07:00 pm..... **Curtis A. Cates, Sr.**
..... Does the Grace of God Exclude Faith and Works?
08:00 pm..... **Keith Mosher**
..... True Grace of God Provided The Church (1:8-12)

FRIDAY - JANUARY 25TH

09:00 am..... **Jerry Martin**
..... True Grace of God Provides Election & Lively Hope (1:2-4)
10:00 am..... **Garland Elkins**
..... True Grace of God Provides Security Through the Power of God (1:5-7)
11:00 am..... **Dave Leonard**
..... True Grace of God Provides Holiness (1:13-16)
01:00 pm..... **Daniel Cates**
..... True Grace of God Provided The Priesthood of Believers (2:5-10)
02:00 pm..... **Johnny Burkhart**
..... True Grace of God Provides the Open ear of God (3:8-12)
02:00 pm Ladies= Class (**LADIES ONLY**) **Annette Cates**
..... Growing in the Christian Graces (2 Pet 1:5-8)
07:00 pm..... **Barry Grider**
..... Peter: Impatient Fisherman to Patient Follower
08:00 pm..... **Robert R. Taylor, Jr.**
..... True Grace of God Warns Against Our Adversary (5:8)

SATURDAY - JANUARY 26TH

09:00 am..... **Chris Butler**
..... True Grace of God Provides Daily Standard of Living (2:11-18)
10:00 am..... **Cliff Goodwin**
..... True Grace of God Provides Perfect Example (2:19-25)
11:00 am..... **Patrick Morrison**
..... True Grace of God Provides Defense of What We Believe (3:15)
01:00 pm..... **Gary McDade**
..... True Grace of God Does NOT Provide for Second Chance at Death (3:16-22)
02:00 pm..... **Andy Cates**
..... True Grace of God Provides Leadership Through Elders (5:1-4)
02:00 pm Ladies= Class (**LADIES ONLY**) **Irene Taylor**
..... (Be sober, be vigilant... 1 Pet 5:8)
07:00 pm..... **Billy Bland**
..... True Grace of God Provided the Means of Redemption (1:17-25)
08:00 pm..... **B. J. Clarke**
..... True Grace of God Provides A Warning Against Wells Without Water (2 Pet 2:17)

SUNDAY - JANUARY 27TH

09:00 am..... **Chip Horton**
..... True Grace of God Provides An Abundant Entrance Into Kingdom (2 Pet 1:5-10)
10:00 am..... **Bobby Liddell**
..... True Grace of God Provided A Pattern for Husbands and Wives (3:1-7)
01:30 pm..... **Wayne Jones**
..... True Grace of God Provides A New Heaven and a New Earth (2 Pet 3:13)

TRUE GRACE OF GOD PROVIDES LEADERSHIP THROUGH ELDERS - I

Peter 5:1-4

Andy Cates

Introduction:

- 1 The work of elders is a vital part of the local congregation.
 - a In the text we are noticing Peter exhorts elders to be faithful in this work.
 - b He gives guidelines to be followed as they lead the church.

- 2 The word Aelder@ refers properly to one who is old, but in this text and in other passages of the New Testament it refers to an officer of the church, an overseer of the church (Acts 20:28).
 - a The word Aelder@ comes from the Greek word Apresbuteros,@ a presbyter.
 - b Presbuteros reflects righteous wisdom and maturity. This is why no novices are to be appointed elders (1 Tim. 3:6).

- 3 Peter wrote this section to elders, not only as a person with apostolic authority, but also as a fellow elder.
 - a He put himself on their level in this respect.
 - b He was not placing on them anything that he would not also perform (v. 1).

1 CONGREGATIONS ARE TO HAVE MULTIPLE ELDERS (V. 1).

- A The word Aelders@ is in the plural form.
 - 1 Peter referred to himself as Aan elder,@ not as Athe elder.@
 - 2 In the early church, a plurality of qualified men made up the eldership of the local church (Phil. 1:1).

- B Other scriptures, such as Acts 14:23, refer to local congregations having more than one elder.

C The true grace of God provides leadership through multiple elders.

II CONGREGATIONS ARE TO HAVE LOCAL ELDERS (V. 1, 2).

A Peter states in verse one, AThe elders which are among you and in verse two he says, AFeed the flock which is among you.@

1 The elders and the members whom they oversee are among each other.

2 Elders are local.

3 The congregation they oversee is the one of which they are members (Acts 20:28).

B Other passages attest to this fact.

1 Acts 14:23 says, AThey had ordained them elders in every church, and

2 The Apostle Paul addresses the Philippian letter to the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.

C It is clearly pointed out in Holy Writ that the true grace of God provides leadership through elders to the local church.

1 This principle excludes elders from overseeing more than one congregation.

2 It excludes their ruling over congregations where they are not members.

III CONGREGATIONS ARE TO HAVE EXHORTED ELDERS (V. 1).

A In verse one of our text, Peter spoke of himself as the exhorter.

1 AThe elders which are among you I exhort,

- 2 To exhort or exhortation was strong encouragement or urging, carrying the idea of authority in doing so, and is far stronger than Aencourage.@
- 3 AExhortation@ was commonly used in the New Testament.

B Elders are exhorted by the inspired Word of God.

- 1 The elders that God desires rely on His inspired Word as their guide and pattern.
- 2 Paul wrote that AAll scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect (complete in righteousness), thoroughly furnished unto all good works@ (II Tim. 3:16, 17).
- 3 In the area of church leadership and in all other areas, the New Testament contains Aall things that pertain unto life and godliness@ (II Peter 1:3).
- 4 The elders Ahold fast the faithful word@ (Tit. 1:9).

C Further, it needs to be stated here that faithful elders should receive honor and encouragement from the membership of the congregation whom they oversee.

- 1 Paul told Timothy, ALet the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine@ (I Tim. 5:17).
- 2 Also, members need to make mention of the eldership in prayers, public and private.
- 3 AThe effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much@ (James 5:16).
- 4 The true grace of God provides leadership through exhorted elders.

IV CONGREGATIONS ARE TO HAVE QUALIFIED ELDERS (I TIM. 3:1-7; TIT. 1:5-9).

- A The only way a person can scripturally be an elder of the Lord's church is if he meets the criteria that are laid down in the New Testament.
- 1 The qualifications of an elder are given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
 - 2 Like any faithful Christian, the elder must be one who seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt. 6:33) and realizes that no man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9:62).
- B An elder must count the cost of being a shepherd of God's flock.
- 1 It involves great cost but it is the highest position in the land.
 - 2 President James A. Garfield is quoted as having said that he stepped down from the highest office on earth as an elder to become president of the United States.
- C Parents, we are told in Proverbs 22:6 to train up a child in the way he should go.
- 1 May we provide training and encouragement to lead young men in the direction someday to be faithful elders of the Lord's beloved church.
 - 2 Truly, true grace of God provides leadership through qualified elders.

V CONGREGATIONS ARE TO HAVE PROVIDING ELDERS (V. 2).

- A In verse 2 of this text, Peter exhorted the elders to feed the flock of God which is among you.
- 1 Here we see a similarity between the work and care of a shepherd for his sheep and the duties of elders in overseeing members of the local church.
 - 2 Shepherding was common in Palestine.
 - 3 Shepherds would feed, care for, tend to, lead, and protect the sheep of their flock.

- B Elders, in like manner, perform these duties toward those of the congregation of which they are appointed elders.
- 1 They care for the flock and provide their needs as sheep in God=s pasture.
 - 2 They Afeed the flock@ (cf. Acts 20:28).
- C This is a feeding of sound doctrine, the truths of God=s Word.
- 1 They make sure that which is preached from the pulpit is sound and that which is taught in the class rooms is sound (1 Pet. 4:11; 11 Tim. 4:2; et al.).
 - 2 A faithful eldership knows that Awhosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son@ (11 John 9-11).
 - 3 Yes, the elders Afeed the flock of God.@
- D The flock belongs to the One who is the Chief Shepherd.
- 1 They will one day give account to the Chief Shepherd (Heb. 13:17).
 - 2 The true grace of God provides leadership through providing elders.

VI CONGREGATIONS ARE TO HAVE MINDFUL ELDERS (V. 2).

- A Peter further said in verse two that elders must Atake the oversight thereof.@
- 1 The words Ataking the oversight@ are translated from the Greek word meaning Abishop@ or Aoverseer.@
 - 2 Bishops, or elders, are to Ahave the rule over@ the congregation of which they are members (Heb. 13:17).
- B They direct that congregation=s affairs.
- 1 They have the authority in making sure that the will of the Lord is carried out in that congregation of the Lord=s people.

- 2 They make the decision to be faithful to the old paths or to fall into the clutches of error.
- 3 Elders have to keep up with what is going on in the brotherhood and beware of the kinds of false teaching that could destroy the flock.

C Peter speaks of the elder=s motivation which is to be carried out Anot by constraint.@

- 1 It is not to be service that is brought about by pressure or by force.
- 2 No one is to serve because he feels forced into doing so.
- 3 Paul said that one must desire this work.
- 4 Alf a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work@ (1 Tim. 3:1).
- 5 One must have a Awilling@ motivation to serve as an elder.

D One=s motivation to serve should not be Afilthy lucre.@

- 1 In New Testament times, elders were sometimes financially supported so they could give much of their time and dedication to looking after the flock.
- 2 Peter points out that money should not be the motivation to serve as an elder.
- 3 If money is a high priority, decisions may be made stemming from materialistic motives.
- 4 The elder must have a ready mind, eager to do this great work without need of materialistic motivations.
- 5 Can we picture Peter serving in this role for material gain? Hardly.

- E Elders are not to be lords over God's heritage@ (verse 3).
- 1 They are given authority, but this authority is not to be abused.
 - 2 They are not to be dictators.
 - 3 They are not to rule high-handedly or work with an iron fist.@
 - 4 They are not to be men of arrogant, domineering dispositions.
 - 5 After all, the flock is called God's heritage, not their heritage.
- F Elders are to be caring and sensitive to the needs of the flock.
- 1 For them to be otherwise would be damaging to the Lord's work and to the members of the congregation over which they preside.
 - 2 The true grace of God provides leadership through mindful elders.

VII CONGREGATIONS ARE TO HAVE MODEL ELDERS (V. 3).

- A Elders are to be examples to the flock@
- 1 They are to be models, examples, and patterns to those of the local church over whom they preside.
 - 2 Elders are to be leaders and they must lead by example, as well as having authority.
 - 3 Again we see the shepherding concept.
 - 4 Unlike cowboys who drive cattle, shepherds were in front of the sheep leading them.
- B Elders must be in front of God's flock leading the way.
- 1 They should lead the way in faithful attendance of worship and Bible classes.
 - 2 If an elder does not attend the services of the church faithfully, how can a member be expected to do so?
 - 3 The same goes with leading the way in the areas of personal work, kindness, edification, morality, etc.
 - 4 Christ and Paul realized the power of examples (1 Pet. 2:21; 1 Cor. 11:1).
 - 5 We can be truly grateful for men who serve as elders of example.
 - 6 The true grace of God provides leadership through model elders.

VIII CONGREGATIONS WITH FAITHFUL ELDERS WILL HAVE REWARDED ELDERS (V. 4).

A To the faithful elder Peter wrote, AAnd when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away@ (verse 4).

1 The AChief Shepherd@ here refers to Christ.

2 He is the one who is the AGood Shepherd@ of John 10:14.

3 He is the Shepherd of shepherds, the ultimate Shepherd, the supreme Shepherd.

4 This implies that all elders are among those under Him.

B The appearance of Christ at His second coming is mentioned here.

1 When He appears, those elders who have been faithful to the Lord=s will shall receive a glorious crown that will never fade away.

2 This crown is unlike crowns of men that soon fade, losing their luster and glory.

3 This crown of glory is not a corruptible crown but an incorruptible (1 Cor. 9:25).

4 It is a Acrown of righteousness@ (11 Tim. 4:8).

5 It is a Acrown of life@ (Rev. 2:10), a glorious crown of eternal life.

C This crown of glory represents victory won by the one crowned.

1 Like Paul, he can say that he has Afought a good fight, he has finished his course, he has kept the faith, Henceforth there is laid up a crown of righteousnessY@ (11 Tim. 4:7, 8).

2 Faithful elders shall receive a great reward in heaven.

CONCLUSION:

1 We have noticed in numerous ways that true grace of God provides leadership through elders.

- 2 We have also noticed that true grace of God provides a reward to faithful elders.
- 3 The church cannot rise above its leadership; God give us the capable, courageous, and caring elders!

GROWING THE CHRISTIAN GRACE - II Peter 1:5-8

Annette B. Cates

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 The best instruction on how to grow spiritually is found in the Bible.
- 2 God intends for us to grow as Jesus did (Luke 2:42).

I SPIRITUAL GROWTH BEGINS WITH FAITH.

- A Faith provides a foundation on which to grow as Christians (Heb. 11:1).
- B Faith grows through prayer, keeping us aware of the omni-presence of God (I Thess. 5:17).
- C Faith grows through Bible study (II Tim. 2:15).
- D Faith grows through seeing the goodness of God in all things (Psa. 27:13).

II FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH, ADD VIRTUE.

- A Virtue is moral and spiritual courage.
- B Without faith, one cannot have virtue.
- C Without virtue, one cannot add other qualities of spiritual living.
- D Biblical examples of virtuous lives include Joseph, Moses, Ruth, Vashti, and Esther.

III FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH, ADD KNOWLEDGE.

- A Knowledge justifies faith and fortifies virtue (John 8:32).
- B Knowledge changes behavior.

IV FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH, ADD TEMPERANCE (SELF-CONTROL).

- A The Apostle Paul compared the Christian life to that of an athlete in training (1 Cor. 9:24-27; Heb. 12:1).

- B Temperance develops from overcoming materialism and placing priority on spiritual values.

- C We become slaves to Christ and forsake the life of sin (Rom. 6:1-6; Luke 9:23; Prov. 16:32).

V FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH, ADD PATIENCE.

- A Patience includes steadfastness and endurance.

- B Patience gives us strength to stand for that which is right, even when we are in the minority.

- C The trying of faith brings patience, which makes us perfect and entire, wanting nothing (James 1:2-4).

- D Biblical examples of patience include Job, David, and Paul.

VI FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH, ADD GODLINESS.

- A Godliness is devotion to goodness, honor, and duty, and expresses an attitude of reverence and obedience (I Tim. 4:7, 8).
- B Some have only a form of Godliness (II Tim. 3:5).

VII FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH, ADD BROTHERLY KINDNESS.

- A The first commandment is to love God, and the second is to love others as ourselves (Matt. 22:37-39).
- B Brotherly kindness is shown through words and actions (Eph. 4:32).

VIII FINALLY, FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH, ADD LOVE.

- A Love desires the highest and best for others.
- B Biblical love includes loving our enemies and the unlovable.

CONCLUSION:

- 1 Spiritual growth produces fruit.
 - a We will not be idle in the work of the Lord (I Cor. 15:58).
 - b We will be examples of Christianity before a world that is lost in sin (I Cor. 11:1; Matt. 5:13-16).
 - c We will lead others to Christ (Rom. 1:13-15).
 - d Spiritual growth will prevent our own falling away (I Cor. 9:27).
- 2 Spiritual growth will assure us of a heavenly home (II Tim. 4:18).

PETER: IMPATIENT FISHERMAN TO PATIENT FOLLOWER

Barry Grider

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 Patience is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22) and one of the Christian graces (2 Pet. 1:6).
 - a ALord give me patience and hurry.@
 - b Patience and fortitude conquer all things C Ralph Waldo Emerson
- 2 If you suspect you have a problem with patience take the following test:
 - a How do you handle interruption?
 - b Are you easily irritated?
 - c How do you handle inconvenience?
 - d How do you feel when incapacitated?
 - e How do you handle things imponderable?
- 3 Keep in mind, the way a Christian reacts to something may say more about his character than how he acts.
- 4 Through patience the Christian turns obstacles into opportunities.

I WHAT IS PATIENCE?

- A What patience is not?
 - 1 Not just the ability to endure pain, suffering, or irritable people.
 - 2 It is not just sticking it out in a bad situation.
- B What is patience?
 - 1 Patience is knowing that everything will work out (Rom. 8:28).
 - 2 Patience says you do not quit.

II PETER AND PATIENCE.

- A Early life and as disciple of Jesus
 - 1 Peter was a commercial fisherman.
 - a Employed with Andrew, his brother, and the brothers, James and John.
 - b Fishing business operated on the Sea of Galilee.
 - c One of the chief characteristics of a fisherman must be patience.
 - 2 Often as a disciple Peter, because he was impetuous and immature, which caused him to be impatient.
 - a Immature and impetuous Peter
 - 1) Jesus took twelve men with varied backgrounds and little formal education and trained them.
 - 2) Peter=s name was changed from Simon which demonstrated a more stable character.
 - 3) His immaturity and impetuosity caused him to:
 - a) Question the reasoning of the Lord (Luke 5:5).
 - b) Misunderstand the nature of Christ compared to the prophets (Matt. 17:4).
 - c) Misunderstand the reason for Christ=s coming (Matt. 16:22)..

- d) Caused him to make rash statements.
 - Luke 22:33
 - Matthew 14:28
 - John 21:15-17
 - e) Caused him to behave rashly (John 18:10).
- b) Immaturity and Impetuosity lead to Impatience.
- 1) Who is mature but one who is full grown.
 - a) No maturity without patience (James 1:3,4).
 - b) Peter had not mature because he had not learned to be patient and patience come through trials.
 - c) Patience was necessary if he was to be converted (Luke 22:31,32).
 - 2) Facts about impatient people.
 - a) Complainers.
 - b) Easily led astray (cf. Prov. 25:28).
 - c) Unhappy (James 5:7).
- B) Peter the apostle.
- 1) Peter's trials brought him patience, his patience brought him maturity.
 - 2) Patience made Peter:
 - a) The proud proclaimer (Acts 2).
 - b) The bold defender (Acts 5:29).
 - c) The joyful servant (Acts 5:40-42).
- C) Peter and his epistles
- 1) Guy N. Woods C A The key words of First Peter are patience and hope C resignation in suffering, and an expectation of deliverance in the by and by.
 - 2) Patience and Hope are inextricably linked (Rom. 8:25).
 - 3) Peter says we are to be patient:
 - a) In our trials and sufferings (1 Pet. 1:7; 3:13-17; 4:12-14).
 - b) In our submission to authority (1 Pet. 2:13-15; 20).
 - c) In marriage (1 Pet. 3:1,7).
 - d) In our Christian growth (1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18).
 - e) When tempted by the devil (1 Pet. 5:8,9).

CONCLUSION:

- 1) Patience is maintained by a promise (2 Pet. 1:4).
- 2) Peter reminds Christians that the perfect example of patience is the Lord.
 - a) Patient in life (1 Pet. 2:21-23).
 - b) Patient regarding His second coming (2 Pet. 3:9)

THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD PROVIDES THE MEANS OF REDEMPTION

I Peter 1:17 - 25

Billy Bland

PURPOSE: To aid us in understanding the relationship between God's grace and our redemption from sin.

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 Some very important words in our subject.
 - a God
 - b Grace
 - c Redemption
 - d Means

- 2 Also, some very serious implications in our subject.
 - a Redemption implies bondage, being sold into sin, and a need of redemption (buying back).
 - b Grace is unmerited favor with a view to save (redeem), fallen man.
 - c God is the One Who initiated the redemption process.
 - d Redemption also implies a price paid - a purchase price.

- 3 Redemption is a major theme throughout the Word of God.
 - a First usage is with reference to bringing Israel out of bondage, **Wherefore** say unto the children of Israel, I *am* the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will **redeem** you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments@ (Exo. 6:6)
 - b **Redeemed**@ used a total of 56 times and **redemption**@ a total of 20 times in the K.J.V.
 - c Because of redemption, we have the promise of eternal inheritance. Heb. 9:15

I THE AUTHOR OF OUR REDEMPTION - (1 PETER 1:17).

- A **The Father**@ - encouraging term (Root word = **A** nourisher, protector, upholder,@ Mat. 6:9, 7:7-11)

- B He is without respect of persons - **Then** Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him@ (Acts 10:34-35).

- C Judges according to every man's work. AFor we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad@ (2 Cor. 5:10). Cf. Ecc. 12:13-14
- D Consequently, should spend our time here in fear. Heb. 12:28-29

II THE MEANS OF OUR REDEMPTION - (I PETER 1:18-19).

- A The means (or cost) of our redemption from sin is not cheap!
- B Negative:
- 1 Not with silver and gold. (Worldly price)
 - 2 Money cannot buy many crucial things. (Good health, long life, **redemption**)
- C Positive:
- 1 The precious blood of Christ. Heb. 9:22, 10:1-4, Mat. 26:28
 - 2 Jesus is the Lamb of God, without blemish or spot. John 1:29, I Pet. 1:19, Heb. 4:15, II Pet. 2:22
- D Redemption is **Ain Christ@** - AIn whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace@ (Eph. 1:7).
- E The means of our redemption is accomplished by our obedience to the truth. I Pet. 1:22
- 1 Born again by the Word of God. I Pet. 1:23 cf. John 3:5
 - 2 Example of conversion - compare Acts 2: 8-11 with I Pet. 1:1, then Acts 2:37-38 **results** = Aborn again@ (A Divine commentary on John 3:5)
 - 3 The Word of God endureth for ever. I Pet. 1:23-25.
- F Connection of blood of Christ and water baptism.
- 1 Remission of sins: Mat. 26:28 - Acts 2:38
 - 2 Sins washed away: Rev. 1:5 - Acts 22:16
 - 3 Saved: Rom. 5:9 - Mark 16:16
 - 4 Shed blood in death: John 19:34 - Rom. 6:3-4

III THE FOREORDINATION OF OUR REDEMPTION. (1 Peter 1:20-21)

- A God anticipated the need of our redemption.
- B He followed through with His Divine plan.
- C Consequently, Christ=s death on the cross was no accident or afterthought. Acts 2:33, 15:18

IV THE RESPONSIBILITY AFTER OUR REDEMPTION.

- A After soul purified, we are to **A**love one another with a pure heart fervently.@ I Pet. 1:22
- B Being **A**born again,@ we have the same Father. I Jn. 3:1
- C Have the same name. Acts 11:26

CONCLUSION:

- 1 **A**Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it, Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb!@
- 2 The Psalmist prayed - **A**Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and **my redeemer**@ (Psa. 19:14)
- 3 Job stated -**A**For I know *that* **my redeemer** liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth@ (Job 19:25).
- 4 Have you been redeemed?

TRUE GRACE OF GOD PROVIDES A WARNING
AGAINST WELLS WITHOUT WATER (2 Peter 2:17).

B. J. Clarke

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 What a great theme has been chosen for this study!
- 2 Peter=s inspired mention of Athe true grace of God@ (1 Pet. 5:12) proves beyond any reasonable doubt that there was/is a brand of grace being promoted which is not, in fact, the true grace of God.
- 3 2 Peter chapter two is proof positive that there have always been those who would pervert the gospel of the grace of God.
- 4 In this brief outline of 2 Peter 2, we wish to develop five major ideas.

I. THE REALITY OF FALSE TEACHERS

- A. Note carefully the first word of 2 Peter 2:1, the word Abut.@
 1. The word draws a contrast with what Peter has just said in the closing portion of chapter 1.
 2. Therein, Peter spoke of Aholy men of God@ who Aspake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.@
- B. In contrast to those who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, Peter notes two things.
 1. ***There were false prophets also among the people.***
 - a. The phrase Athe people@ most likely refers specifically to the Jews (Rom. 15:11; Jude 5).
 - b. Even a casual study of the history of Israel proves that there were false prophets among them (Deut. 13:5; 18:20-22; 1 Kings 22; Jer. 23:11-36; 28:1-17; Ezek. 22:28).
 2. ***There shall be false teachers among you.***
 - a. This is not a surprising prediction in view of what Jesus and the apostles taught (Matt. 7:15; 24:4-5, 24; Acts 20:28-31; 2 Tim. 4:1-4; 1 John 4:1).
 - b. Nevertheless, Peter=s readers needed to be on guard for the false doctrine that was already swirling around them, as well as any false teachers who might be on the horizon.

II. THE REASONS THAT FALSE TEACHERS EXIST

- A. There are a number of reasons that explain the existence of false teachers.
- B. Two of these reasons are prominently discussed in 2 Peter 2.
 1. ***Revenue*** (2 Pet. 2:3, 14-15).
 - a. ARevenue@ is Athe gross income returned by an investment@ (Webster=s Dictionary).

- b. In this case, the investment was the time and energy invested by the false teachers to promote false doctrine so that they might receive revenue from their happy hearers!
- c. It was through covetousness that these false teachers endeavored to make merchandise of their hearers (2 Pet. 2:3).
- d. They taught what they taught because they had hearts full of covetousness (2 Pet. 2:14).
 - (1) Their attitude was like that of the Old Testament prophet Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness (2 Pet. 2:15).
 - (a) Balak, king of Moab, was afraid of the children of Israel; hence, he attempted to bribe Balaam into pronouncing a curse upon them (Num. 22-24).
 - (b) When God would not give Balaam permission to curse the children of Israel in his official prophetic declarations, Balaam, apparently, decided to give some advice off the record to Balak.
 - (c) Evidently, Balaam said something like this to the Moabites: "Look, I cannot officially curse the children of Israel, but if you could seduce them into worshipping idols, then the harm you seek for them will naturally follow."
 - (d) According to Scripture, Balaam taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication (Rev. 2:14; cf. Num. 25).
 - (e) Why did he teach this? Peter tells us that he did it for the money!
 - (2) Many false teachers are only in it for the money (1 Tim. 6:5).
 - (3) There were many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers among those of the circumcision, who were teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake (Tit. 1:10-11).

2. **Rebellion** (2 Pet. 2:10-12).

- a. *They were recalcitrant in their attitudes.*
 - (1) The word recalcitrant refers to those who are stubbornly disobedient, obstinately defiant of authority or restraint (Webster's Dictionary). They despised government.
 - (2) They were so brazenly presumptuous, and self-willed that they spoke openly and defiantly against dignities, i.e., those in positions of authority.
 - (3) Even angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord (2 Pet. 2:11).
- b. *They were ravenous in their actions.*
 - (1) Because they had no regard for God's authority over them, they eagerly pursued the lusts of the flesh.
 - (2) They were reasonless. They were like natural brute beasts, and they spoke evil of things that they did not understand (v. 12).
 - (3) They were not willing to deny self and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23).

III. THE RECIPE FOR BECOMING A FALSE TEACHER

- A. Careful study of 2 Peter 2 provides a compelling description of the modus operandi of a false teacher.

- B. While we pray that no one would ever want to become a false teacher, 2 Peter 2 shows some of the ingredients necessary to being/becoming one.
- C. From a study of this chapter we learn the following about false teachers.
1. ***They repress their real intentions*** (2 Pet. 2:1-3, 13-14).
 - a. They bring in their damnable heresies *Aprivily*,@ i.e., *Ato smuggle in, ...to bring in secretly...creeping along under some sort of cover*@ (Linguistic Key To The Greek New Testament, Fritz Rienecker & Cleon Rogers, p. 774). Jude referred to certain false teachers as those who *Accept in unawares*@ (Jude 4).
 - b. They do their work *Awith feigned words*.@ Their arguments are made up and artificial, like *Acunningly devised fables*@ (2 Pet. 1:16).
 - c. Their relationships with others are but a ruse to get their foot in the door to teach their false doctrines (2 Pet. 2:13). They use occasions of fellowship as an opportunity to gain the trust of the very people whom they will deceive.
 - d. No wonder Peter describes them as those who engaged in *Abeguiling unstable souls*@ (2 Pet. 2:14).
 2. ***They recruit their followers by promising what they cannot deliver***.
 - a. Peter describes them as *Awells without water*.@ Though these false teachers portrayed themselves as offering the refreshing water of life to their hearers, they were, actually, wells without water.
 - (1) Picture a tired and weary traveler in the wilderness, longing for water. Imagine this weary traveler spotting a well, (or spring) and rushing to it in full anticipation of slaking his thirst.
 - (2) Envision his countenance when he arrives, only to find that the well is empty, the spring is dry!
 - b. Peter describes them as *Aclouds that are carried with a tempest*.@
 - (1) The analogy is the same as above; only the figure is different.
 - (2) Imagine a dry and parched land longing for rain. On the horizon there is the clear sight of black storm clouds. However, just when it looks like the much-needed rain is about to fall, high winds blow the storm away before it can emit its life-giving moisture.
 - c. They recruit their followers by enticing them to believe that pursuing their natural desires will fulfill them and make them happy.
 - (1) They speak great swelling words of vanity. Their words are bold and, perhaps, even eloquent.
 - (2) Yet, they are *Avanity*,@ i.e., empty and worthless!
 - (3) Their encouragement to others to pursue the lusts of the flesh, did not bring about the promised liberty. Instead, it only put them in more bondage

IV. THE RESULTS OF FALSE TEACHING

- A. False teaching produces many tragic results.
1. ***It results in a repudiation of the Savior Who died for us*** (2:1).
 2. ***It results in many following after lasciviousness*** (2:2; Jude 4).
 3. ***It results in the way of truth being evil spoken of*** (2:2).
 - a. This is true because those who see the wickedness produced by the *Acheap grace*@ philosophy are going to speak evil of those promoting such a philosophy.

- b. If we maintain that we are preaching the truth, and Athe truth@ we are preaching leads to lustful and lewd behavior, you can be sure that the way of truth will be evil spoken of.
- 4. ***It results in the damnation of its hearers and practitioners*** (2:1).
 - a. Hearing a lie, believing a lie, and acting upon that lie, will lead to disaster (Gen. 3; 1 Kings 13).
 - b. If we believe a lie we shall be damned (2 Thess. 2:10-12).
 - c. It is only through obedience to the truth that man=s soul can be purified (1 Pet. 1:22-23).
- 5. ***It results in the corruption and damnation of those who teach it*** (2:3).
 - a. These false teachers would bring upon themselves swift destruction (2:1).
 - b. This was not an idle threat on God=s part. God did not spare the angels that sinned. God did not spare the ungodly from the flood. God did not refrain from turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes (2:4-6).
 - c. God knows how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished (2:9).
 - d. Just as brute beasts are made to be taken and destroyed, so these false teachers, who spiritually were like brute beasts, would be taken and destroyed (2:12).
 - e. They were servants of corruption (2:19) and they Ashall utterly perish in their own corruption@ (2:12).
 - f. They shall receive the reward of unrighteousness (2:13).
 - g. They are Acursed children@ (2:14) Ato whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever@ (2:17).
 - h. Their latter end will be worse with them than the beginning (2:20).

V. THE REMEDY FOR FALSE TEACHING

- A. As deadly as false teaching can be, there is an antidote for it.
- B. As a conclusion, let us note three things from 2 Peter 2 which serve as a remedy to false teaching.
 - 1. ***Remember the Revelation of God.***
 - a. If we remember those things taught by holy men of God who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, then we will always be on the safe ground of truth (2 Pet. 1:21).
 - (1) One of Peter=s favorite words in his epistles is the key ingredient in finding a remedy for false doctrine; it is the word *knowledge*.
 - (2) It is through knowledge that we initially escape the pollutions of the world (2 Pet. 2:20).
 - (3) After we become Christians, as babes in Christ, we are to desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby (1 Pet. 2:1-2).
 - (4) Peter wanted his readers to remember the words which were spoken by the prophets, apostles, and by Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3:1-2).
 - (5) Because there are false teachers who, as unlearned and unstable men, will wrest the Scriptures, we must beware lest we be led away with the error of the wicked and fall from our own steadfastness (2 Pet. 3:17).
 - (6) The key to this is to continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3:18).

- b. If we, like the noble Bereans, will regularly reconsider what God has revealed in His Holy Scriptures, then we will not be like children, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine (Eph. 4:14).
 - c. Rather, we will be Aperfect, throughly furnished unto all good works@ (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
2. ***Remember Your Redemption.***
- a. It will be much harder to follow after false teaching if we are in constant memory of our redemption. The false teachers of 2 Peter 2 did not properly appreciate the blood of Christ (2:1; cf. 1:9).
 - b. If we will truly reflect upon the blessings given to us by the blood of Christ, we will not be as easily seduced by the Ablessings@ offered unto us by some false doctrine (2 Pet. 1:3-4).
 - c. If we truly remember the sacrifice of Christ, it will easier to sacrifice our fleshly lusts upon the altar of service to him. Hence, when some preacher comes along preaching a doctrine that does not require as much of us as does the doctrine of Christ, we will reject the false doctrine and sacrifice our desires so that we might please God.
3. ***Remember The Righteous Example Of Others*** (2 Pet. 2:7-8).
4. ***Remember The Reward Awaiting The Righteous*** (2 Pet. 1:11; 3:13).

TRUE GRACE OF GOD PROVIDES A PATTERN FOR HUSBANDS AND WIVES

1 Peter 3:1-7

Bobby Liddell

THESIS: To show God=s pattern for the relationship of husbands and wives even as they faced trials and hardship.

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 The time of Peter=s writing was a time of trial for Christians.
 - a The faith of individuals was tried by the opposition and persecution which they faced.
 - b The culture of the day was oppressive to many including wives who were often treated as property instead of as persons.
 - c The home was under attack, tried by sin and Satan.

- 2 In the midst of discussions concerning relationships with government, masters, and brethren, in this trying time, Peter shows forth God=s pattern for husbands and wives.
 - a God=s pattern would bring peace to troubled homes.
 - b God=s pattern would elevate wives to their proper place.
 - c God=s pattern would educate husbands to show tender care and proper honor to their wives.

- 3 Major points of our study.
 - a The true grace of God gives exhortations to wives to follow God=s pattern.
 - 1) Wives are to be in subjection to their own husbands in order to win souls.
 - 2) Wives are to be in subjection that beautifies the inner person.
 - 3) Wives are to be in subjection like holy women of old time.
 - b The true grace of God gives exhortations to husbands to follow God=s pattern.
 - 1) Husbands are to dwell with wives according to knowledge.
 - 2) Husbands are to give honor to wives.
 - 3) Husbands (and wives) are to live so as to insure their prayers are not hindered.

I THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD GIVES EXHORTATIONS TO WIVES TO FOLLOW GOD=S PATTERN (vv. 1-6).

- A Wives are to be in subjection to their own husbands in order to win souls (v. 1).
 - 1 Wives are to submit (be in subjection) to their own husbands
 - a Likewise (in the same way) indicates in the same manner as that discussed in the preceding verses concerning other relationships.
 - b Wives are to submit to their own husbands even if their husbands are not Christians (the situation contemplated in this passage).
 - c God=s will is not based upon time, dispensation, or culture, nor is His law founded upon talent, ability, or superiority of one sex.
 - 2 Without Athe@ word is actually Awithout a word@ (v. 1).
 - a Their husbands had rejected the Gospel, stubbornly refusing to receive it.
 - b Further persuasion with words from their wives could become an

aggravating over-persuasion or nagging

- c Such would not accomplish what the wives= godly living would.
- 3 Wives can wield a great and godly influence of chaste conversation (pure living) coupled with fear (reverence for their own husbands) (v. 2).
- a Such daily conduct would beautify wivesBespecially in the eyes of husbands.

- b Such righteous living should win husbands to the Lord as they behold (look closely) at their wives= right living.
 - c Such commendable actions and attitudes would elevate wives, homes, and society.

- B Wives are to be in subjection that beautifies the inner person (vv. 3-4).
 - 1 To adorn (indicating harmonious order and beauty) as Christian women is to beautify the inner person by having and exhibiting submissive and peaceful spirits (the incorruptible apparel of godly wives= hearts).
 - 2 Thus, the importance is not upon what wives put on the outside, but what wives have on the inside (though it also is right and good to be clean and neat in appearance, and to dress properly and attractively within the bounds of modesty).
 - 3 Such women are precious and valuable (of great price) to God.

- C Wives are to be in subjection like holy women of old time (vv. 5-6).
 - 1 These exemplary women of old were holy because they were in voluntary subjection to God.
 - 2 Therefore, they trusted (put their hope) in God.
 - 3 In holiness and subjection to God, they willingly submitted to their husbands.
 - a As wives do so today, they become Adaughters@ of Sarah.
 - b As long as they do well in keeping with God=s pattern.
 - c As long as they are not fearful, but with meek and quiet spirits continue faithfully in the fulfillment of their roles.

II THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD GIVES EXHORTATIONS TO HUSBANDS TO FOLLOW GOD=S PATTERN (v. 7).

- A Husbands are to dwell with wives according to knowledge.
 - 1 That is, to conduct themselves within the marriage relationship with proper understanding.
 - 2 Husbands must understand the responsibilities of husbands to wives.
 - 3 Husbands must understand the responsibility of Christian homes to society, and of both husbands and wives to God.

- B Husbands are to give honor to wives.
 - 1 Husbands must respect wives as honorable (precious); thus, elevating them to the lofty position to which husbands should, within their hearts, assign them.
 - 2 Husbands must recognize their wives= physical weakness in comparison to them and refrain from abusing their wives just because husbands, generally, are stronger physically.
 - 3 Husbands must realize both husband and wife are vessels to be used in service to God.

- C Husbands (and wives) are to live so as to insure their prayers are not hindered.
 - 1 Prayers will be hindered by ungodly attitudes toward the respective God-given roles of husbands and wives.
 - 2 Prayers will be hindered by bitter strife between husbands and wives in rejection of God=s pattern.
 - 3 Prayers will be hindered by inconsiderate and hateful words and actions which display to one=s mate and to the world, disdain for one=s mate and disobedience to God.

CONCLUSION:

- 1 God=s grace reveals His will for husbands and wives.
 - a The true grace of God gives exhortations to wives to follow God=s pattern.
 - 1) Wives are to be in subjection to their own husbands in order to win souls.
 - 2) Wives are to be in subjection that beautifies the inner person.
 - 3) Wives are to be in subjection like holy women of old time.
 - b The true grace of God gives exhortations to husbands to follow God=s pattern.
 - 1) Husbands are to dwell with wives according to knowledge.
 - 2) Husbands are to give honor to wives.
 - 3) Husbands (and wives) are to live so as to insure their prayers are not hindered.

- 2 Today, when the world reels from the impact of ungodly homes,
 - a God=s Word shows the right way,
 - b God=s Word shows the good way,
 - c And, God=s Word shows the best way for husbands and wives to conduct themselves.

- 3 Let us all follow God=s pattern for husbands and wives (1 Peter 3:1-7).

TRUE GRACE OF GOD PROVIDES AN
ABUNDANT ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM

II Peter 1:11

Chip Horton

THESIS: To give hope and encouragement to the obedient child of God.

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 *True Grace* comes down from the **A**Father of Lights@ (James 1:17).
 - a It is described as God=s favor, **A**But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD@ (Genesis 6:8).
 - b It is inclusive of the gospel, **A**For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ@ (John 1:17).
 - c It is the source of salvation, **A**But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they@ (Acts 15:11).
 - d It is pictured by Paul as a **A**free gift@ to mankind by the Divine (Romans 5:15-20).

- 2 *True Grace* provides abundantly to the obedient.
 - a Abraham - **A**And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold@ (Genesis 13:2). **A**In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates@ (Genesis 15:18).
 - b Isaac - **A**And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him@ (Genesis 26:13,14).
 - c Job - **A**And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before@ (Job 42:10).
 - d Paul - **A**But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God@ (Philippians 4:18).
 - e Christians - **A**For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ@ (II Peter 1:11).

- 3 We will examine to whom this grace (in the form of an abundant entrance into heaven) is to be extended.
 - a To All Who **Answer** The Divine Call.

- b To All Who *Accept* The Divine Cleansing.
- c To All Who *Add* Divine Character.

I TO ALL WHO ANSWER THE DIVINE CALL.

- A The Lord called directly at one time.
 - 1 Adam - *And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?@* (Genesis 3:9).
 - 2 Moses - *And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I@* (Exodus 3:4).
 - 3 Samuel - *That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I@* (I Samuel 3:4).

- 4 Isaiah - *AListen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath **called** me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name@* (Isaiah 49:1).
- B Peter preached that God is still calling in the first gospel sermon. *AFor the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall **call**@* (Acts 2:39).
- C How is it that God calls mankind today?
- 1 A subtle formation of the clouds to spell out a message?
 - 2 A fuzzy, warm feeling in one=s chest?
 - 3 A sign from a near fatal car crash?
- D One is called by the gospel of Jesus Christ. *AWhereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ@* (II Thessalonians 2:14).
- 1 When godly sorrow is realized by the individual, God is calling through the power of the gospel (Romans 1:16). *AFor godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death@* (II Corinthians 7:10).
 - 2 Accompanied by the realization, is an inclination: this is God calling through his living, active word. *AFor the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart@* (Hebrews 4:12).
 - a The crowd before Peter had a realization and an inclination. *ANow when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?@* (Acts 2:37).
 - b The council before Stephen had at least a realization. *AWhen they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth@* (Acts 7:54).
- E The gospel call is loud and clear to *Aall that labour and are heavy laden@* by sin (Matthew 11:28-30).
- 1 Hear the word of God. *ASo then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God@* (Romans 10:17).
 - 2 Believe the inspired Aoracles.@ *A But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him@* (Hebrews 11:6).
 - 3 Repent of sinfulness. *ARepent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord@* (Acts 3:19).
 4. Confess with the mouth the name of Christ. *AThat if thou shalt*

confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation@ (Romans 10:9,10).

5 Baptism for the remission of sins. *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost@ (Acts 2:38).*

6 Live for Christ always, even in the face of persecution. *AFear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life@* (Revelation 2:10).

F Those who heed the call of the gospel can expect an abundant entrance into the heavenly abode on high. (I Thessalonians 4:13-17).

II TO ALL WHO ACCEPT THE DIVINE CLEANSING.

A The cleansing under consideration (vs. 9) is the purging of one=s sins by Christ=s blood.

B Purge:

1 Webster - *ATo make free of something unwanted; the removal of elements or members regarded as undesirable and especially treacherous or disloyal.@*

2 Thayer - *AA cleansing from the guilt of sins wrought now by baptism, 2 Peter 1:9, now by the expiatory sacrifice of Christ.@*

C Our sins before the Lord are as a crimson stain on our spiritual garment. *ACome now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool@* (Isaiah 1:8).

D The Saviour (Matthew 1:21) came to earth to make the removal of sins possible.

1 The *Aone-time@* sacrifice of God=s only begotten purges our sins (that, according to Webster, which is *Aundesirable@*). *AWho being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high@* (Hebrews 1:3).

2 Obviously then, one must come in contact with that which will cleanse.

a By participating in the death, burial and resurrection of the Christ. *AKnow ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life@* (Romans 6:3,4).

b Now one might better understand the WHY of I Peter 3:20,21. *AWhich sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a-preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth*

also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:@

3 Only Jesus= blood can cleanse one of the undesirable sin found on that spiritual garment. *AFor it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins@* (Hebrews 10:4).

E The cleansing, purging power of Jesus= blood is needed by God=s people today!!

1 Man is not sinless (only one was sinless). *AIf we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us@* (I John 1:10).

2 However, if one remains in fellowship with the Lord, the blood of Christ continues to purge or cleanse. *ABut 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@* (I John 1:7).

F Let us NEVER forget that this great sacrifice was made once and for all. Praise God for His matchless grace!!

III TO ALL WHO ADD DIVINE CHARACTER.

A We are made in the very image of God, *ASo God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them@* (Genesis 1:27).

1 This is not to say we are a Spirit as He, *AGod is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth@* (John 4:24).

2 Man does have a spirit, however, *AFor what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God@* (I Corinthians 2:11).

3 God is omniscient (all knowing), omnipotent (all powerful), omnipresent (ever present), and omnibenevolent (ever giving); we are not!

B We strive, this side of eternity, to become more like our Master every day.

1 *AThy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path@* (Psalm 119:105).

2 *ABe ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you@* (I Corinthians 11:1,2).

C We gain knowledge of those undesirable things (works of the flesh) one is not to have in his life from the study of God=s word. *ANow the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders,*

drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God@ (Galatians 5:19-21).

D We also gain knowledge, through much study, of that which one should apply to his life as a Christian. *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity@* (II Peter 1:5-7).

1 We have a mandate, in this same epistle, to continue to grow, *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever@* (II Peter 3:18).

a A...add to your faith@ - we are, by implication, to be growing in faith.

- 1) Through much prayer (Psalm 55:17; Philippians 4:6).
- 2) Through much study (John 5:39, Acts 17:11).
- 3) By practicing evangelism (Acts 2:20, 31; I Corinthians 11:1).
- 4) By demonstrating compassion (Mark 14:7; Galatians 6:10; I John 3:17, 18).
- 5) By daily cross bearing (Luke 9:23; II Timothy 3:12; Matthew 10:38).
- 6) By scriptural worship (John 4:24 - right action, object, attitude and authority; John 17:17).
- 7) By trusting in God (Romans 8:28; Hebrews 2:13).

b Virtue - (ἀρετή) Moral excellence or courage; power under control.

- 1) This characteristic is found in second place behind faith, thus we have the first test of our faith.
- 2) The word under consideration appears only four times in scripture: II Peter 1:3, 5 (twice); Philippians 4:8.

- 3) Examples:
 - a) Joseph around Potiphar=s wife.
 - b) Moses, in resisting the riches of Egypt.
 - c) Joshua and Caleb, in their insisting that the Apromised land@ could be successfully taken.
 - d) David, in fighting the lion, the bear and Goliath.
 - e) Elijah and Elisha in their constant struggles with God=s chosen, but rebellious nation.
 - f) Peter and Mark who lacked virtue at one time but, in time, grew.
 - g) Christ as He faced the suffering of the crucifixion.
- 4) In these examples, virtue should be defined as Aacting in spite of our fears.@

c. Knowledge - (γνTMσις) To have a justified, true belief about a certain thing...*truth* (John 8:32).

- 1) Truth must be sought out by the believer (Matthew 5:6; 7:7, 8).
- 2) One must have honesty and courage in seeking truth (I Thessalonians 5:21).
- 3) There is a Aprice@ to pay for dligently seeking knowledge of the truth (Ecclesiastes 12:12).
- 4) The identity of false knowledge is available because there is such a thing as Atrue@ knowledge (I Timothy 6:20).
- 5) Knowledge by itself is useless, it must be applied.

d. Temperance - (έγκρ[□]τεια), more literally Self Control (άκρατ[□]ς).

- 1) AThe devil made me do it!@ This flies in the face of fundamental, biblical teaching, for we are all responsible for our actions (II Corinthians 5:10).
- 2) Compare self-control in the athlete to the Christian (I Corinthians 9:25-27).
- 3) To crucify Aself@ is to demonstrate self-control (Galatians 5:24; Colossians 3:5).
- 4) Jesus speaks hyperbolically of this Aspiritual surgery@ in Matthew 5:29).
- 5) *AHe that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city@* (Proverbs 16:32).

e. Patience - (↓πομονήν) Active determination of the will. Longsuffering or perseverance.

- 1) APatience strengthens the spirit, sweetens the temper, stifles anger, extinguishes envy, subdues pride, bridles the tongue, restrains the hand and tramples

upon temptation@ (Robert R. Taylor, Jr. quoting Horne).

- 2) It is directly connected to trials and temptations (James 1:2-4; Romans 12:12).
- 3) It is eloquently demonstrated in the life of the Patriarch, Job (James 5:10, 11).
- 4) As shown earlier in Job=s life, it has its reward (Job 42:10).

f Godliness - (ε<=>σέβειαν) Holiness, piety, devoutness, reverence; The right attitude toward God in worship and obedience.

- 1) Biblical examples (O.T.):
 - a) Proverbs 1:17 *Athe fear of the Lord.@*
 - b) Isaiah 11:2 *Athe fear of the Lord.@*
 - c) Isaiah 33:6 *Athe fear of the Lord is his treasure.@*
- 2) Biblical examples (N.T.):
 - a) Acts 3:12 *Aby our own power or godliness.@*
 - b) I Timothy 5:4 *Alearn to show piety at home.@*
 - c) II Timothy 3:5 *Ahaving a form of godliness.@*
- 3) It is living holy lives (Leviticus 20:26).
- 4) It is feeding on God=s word (Matthew 4:4).
- 5) It will be manifest in daily lives toward the brethren.

g Brotherly Kindness - (φιλαδελφίαν) Brother loving, love among Christian believers; Never used of an erotic type of love.

- 1) *ASeeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently@* (I Peter 1:22).
- 2) *AHereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren@* (I John 3:16).
- 3) Advise: Let us taste our words before expelling them from our mouths. We ought not be brutish in our speech to others. *AA word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver@* (Proverbs 25:11).
- 4) We can learn this brotherly kindness by observing our elder=s actions toward others.

h Charity - Love - (□γάπη) *A*Self-giving and has its source in God=s sacrificial love for man@ (J.P. Lewis). *A 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@* (John 3:16).

- 1) There are four kinds of love:
 - a) *Eros*, sexual desire, doesn=t appear in the Bible.
 - b) *Storge*, family affection.

- c) *Phileo*, the love of affection and personal attachment (Lenski), brotherly love.
 - d) *Agape*, the highest form of love. It does what is right simply because it is right. *If ye love me, keep my commandments* (John 14:15).
- 2) True Agape love is pictured in Genesis 22:1-14, as Abraham and Isaac journey to Moriah to worship.
 - 3) True Agape love stands behind I Corinthians 15:58, *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*
 - 4) If I love God, and myself, and you are lost, I am then filled with compassion for you, and will seek you and tell you of your soul's situation!
- E None of these characteristics is impossible to engraft into our lives! God would not do that to anybody.
- F According to verse 8 of this text, **IF** these characteristics *be yours in abundance*, we will not *be idle* nor *unproductive* for the Lord.
- G **BUT** - (now the contrast) If these characteristics are not ours, we become spiritually blind and near-sided, thus losing our sight of that eternal reward for which God's only begotten gave His life.
- H The spiritually blind cannot expect an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God, prepared from the foundation of the world. *For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them* (Matthew 13:15).

CONCLUSION:

- 1 It is reasonable to assume that each of us desires the abundant entrance into that heavenly abode one day.
- 2 Thankfully, Peter, by the inspiration of God gave us the key to that entrance, *Wherefore the rather, brethren (instead of being blind and near-sighted), give diligence (work hard) to make your calling (by the gospel) and election (the choice of God) sure: for if ye do these things (add these characteristics), ye shall never fall (or stumble)* (II Peter 1:10). [Parenthetic thoughts added by C.H.].
- 3 That heavenly home and abundant entrance therein can be ours this morning, if we will just do our part. Remember Peter's great exhortation, *And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward*

generation@ (Acts 2:40).

4 *ABut grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen@* (II Peter 3:18).

Thank you to the eldership of the church of Christ at Nesbit for this opportunity.

True Grace of God Provides Daily Standard of Living

I Peter 2:11-18

Chris Butler

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 The Grace of God Provides Daily standard of living.
- 2 It is indeed a great blessing to be a Christian and to live the only life there is to live.
- 3 Maybe you have heard someone say; Even if there were no God, the Christian life is the best life there is to live.
- 4 Certainly that is not the case. For, the fact is, there is a God. And the Christian life is the only life to live.
- 5 Our focus for this lesson is the Christian life. How can I live a life that *Ashines as a light in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation?*@ Phil 2:15-16.
 - a Matthew's record of the sermon on the mount reveals characteristics that a Christian must have. Mat 5:3-12
 - b In the following verses, Christ taught that we are the *Asalt of the earth*@, and *Athe light of the world.*@
 - c Verse sixteen is the command to, notice, *ALet your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*@
- 6 Our ultimate goal in this life is to be like our Saviour, in manner of life.
 - a In answering the Gospel call, we understand we are to be *Aconformed to the image of his son.*@
 - b We submit our will, just as Christ did, to the Father. Obedience.
- 7 Christ was the Light, sent into the world of darkness. John 1:7-9
- 8 Today, we reflect the light, as we strive to live up to the standard set in Christ Jesus.
- 9 Peter directs us in that daily walk of life and in a small way helps us understand how to make the application of Matt.5:16.

I **PETER WILL MAKE A SECOND ADDRESS THE SAINTS THAT ARE SCATTERED ABROAD THROUGHOUT THESE DIFFERENT REGIONS. CF. 1 PET.1:1 (ASTRANGERS AND PILGRIMS@)**

- A Here are these brethren scattered throughout these different regions, and Peter addresses them in a different manner than the first address.
 - 1 These brethren were under a great deal of persecution and temptation.
 - a 1 Peter 1:6 tells of the *Amanifold temptations*@ these brethren faced.
 - b Notice also verse 7. *ATrial of your faith*@
 - 2 They were scattered throughout the regions of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

- 3 Thus, they were as strangers and pilgrims in these lands that were perhaps foreign to them.
- a They were not at home.
 - b Perhaps you have been on a vacation in a foreign land.
 - c Different languages, laws by which to live.
 - d But being a stranger to a land does not make one immune to the laws.
- B Being born in this great country makes us citizens of it. Thus one must obey its laws inasmuch the are in agreement with the word of God.
- 1 Like wise, being born of water and of the spirit makes us citizens of the Kingdom of God. Jn. 3:3-5
 - 2 Phil 3:20 *Asv. AFor our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ@:*
 - 3 As citizens of a country, we are to live a life that is beautiful, honest, and good in the sight of all men. We are subject to the laws of God.
- C As citizens of the Kingdom of God we understand that this world is not our home.
- 1 1 Jn. 2:15-17 *ALove not the world, neither the things in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.@*
 - 2 The word abideth means to stay, dwell, remain in a place or state.
 - 3 And so, for those who do the will of God, they shall go to their home.
- D They, as citizens of the Kingdom of God, can go home when that time comes.
- 1 Abraham is a great example for the Christian today.
 - 2 Heb 11:8-10 *ABy faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.@*
 - 3 Notice verse 13 also. *AAnd confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. for they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly.@*
- E Today, like Abraham and others, we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and Peter addresses us as such.
- 1 Stranger and Pilgrim defined.
 - a Stranger: Temporary resident, foreigner
 - b Pilgrim: Residing in a country not one=s own.
 - 2 Thus we are like Abraham, in searching for that city.
 - 3 We are not yet home, but journey in the Christian life looking for that heavenly home, in which we have our citizenship.
 - 4 It may be that we find ourselves with the feelings of Paul. Phil 1:23 *AFor I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.@*
- F And it may also be the case that we find ourselves comfortable here in this world.

- 1 In our home we feel comfortable. And we should.
- 2 We go on a vacation, and no matter how beautiful we always get home sick. Why???
- 3 But it should never be the case that the Christian gets too comfortable with this world.
- 4 Remember the words of 1 John 2:15-17. *ALove not the world.*@
 - a Our affections are to be set on things above, not on things on the earth. Col 3:1 *Alf ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*@
 - b Since our affections are to be set on things above, and not on things on the earth, Peter gives us a warning.

II **PETER WARNS TO ABSTAIN SIN. TO AABSTAIN FROM THE FLESHLY LUST, WHICH WAR AGAINST THE SOUL.**@

- A To Abstain from sin, and to Act like the Saviour.
- 1 The word here abstain means to hold oneself off, or refrain. To refrain from lusts.
 - a Lust defined: a longing for what is forbidden, desire.
 - b These brethren should have understood that. And we should today.
 - c 1 Pet 1:14 *AA obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the **former** lusts in your **ignorance**.*@
 - 1) The old ways of life were to have been put away.
 - 2) They were to Stop the sinning business. Rom 6:1-6
 - 3) 2 Cor. 5:17 *ATherefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*@
 - 2 We should put behind us the thing of the past and press toward the mark. Phil.3:13-14 *ABrethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*@
 - 3 To help us in that effort, are many examples who have fallen to lusts.
 - 4 Remember King David and the sin committed with Bathsheba. The bible says she was *Abeautiful to look upon.*@
 - a No doubt David, upon seeing her, harbored lustful thoughts.
 - b This is the case because of his actions, and the sin committed
 - c David **saw** her beauty, **sent** the messengers, and **sinned** with Bathsheba.
 - 5 Again remember the example of Adam and Eve.
 - a The bible tells us in Gen 3:1-5 of God=s law, and the temptation by satan.
 - b Verse 6 its evident that Eve harbored those thoughts presented by the serpent. The Bible says; *AAnd when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes,*@
 - c She then *Atook the fruit thereof, and did eat.*@
 - 6 Christ taught that our of the heart of a person proceed evil actions. Mat 15:19
 - 7 Christ also taught to look upon a woman to lust after her, well this person has committed adultery with her already in his heart. Mat 5:28
 - a So then we can understand just how important it is for us as the children of God to control our thoughts.
- B Jam 1:14-15 teaches us how sin is committed. When one fails to dismiss evil thoughts, lust conceives and brings forth sin.

- 1 *ABut every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.@*
- 2 So it is the case when an individual has a evil thought, and allows that thought to conceive, it brings forth sin.
- 3 Peter teaches us to refrain from those things which war against the soul
 - a Those lusts which, literally means to fight, to serve in a military campaign.
 - b 1 Pet 5:8 teaches of the adversary and the warfare in which he engages. Adversary, Roaring lion, walketh, seeking, devour.
 - c No wonder Paul would teach us to adorn ourselves with the armor needed to protect ourselves in this fight. Eph 6:11.
 - d Thus to stand against the wiles of the devil we need the armor God provides.

III PETER UNDERSTANDS THE CHRISTIAN PROPERLY DRESSED FOR BATTLE WITH BRING FORTH ACTIONS WHICH ARE SEEMLY.

- A The evil doers would speak against the Christians to whom Peter wrote, saying all manner or evil against them.
 - 1 Brother Woods would elaborate on the accusations which these brethren faced.
 - 2 AThe disciple of the period in which Peter wrote, and for many years afterward, were subjected to the most bitter calumny and the severest sort of persecution. They were charged with Aturning the world upside down@, with acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, and with blaspheming the names of the popular gods and goddesses of the day. Unbelieving gentiles, encouraged and led on by Jews, were most active in leveling false charges against the saints, charges based on numerous grounds. On political considerations they were charged with being enemies of the government (Acts 17:6-7); on religious considerations as opposed to the prevailing idolatry (Acts19:27-29); on business grounds as having interfered with the manufacture of idols; and on ethical considerations as having sought to abolish the customs and practices of the day. They were, by their enemies, held responsible for, and blamed with, all the national evils of the day..... Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny - all prominent and well known Roman authors and historiansB imbibed the prevalent spirit and described the early Christians as being possessed of a perverse and excessive superstition, wicked and deadly in its nature.@
 - 3 In light of all the persecution, and because of the dispersion, Peter writes and tells the Christians scattered abroad as strangers to live lives that are good, honest, beautiful, or seemly.
- B A good conversation, manner of life has great influence on those in its midst.
 - 1 Peter understands that the Christian will endure hardships.
 - 2 Read I Peter 4:16 *AYet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.@*
 - 3 2 Tim 2:3 *AThou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.@*
 - 4 Yet in spite of the persecution Peter encourages the Christians to live a beautiful Christian life.
 - a Titus 2:11-14 *AFor the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.@*
 - b We are to have the same mind of Christ our saviour. Phil 2:5-11
 - 1) Willing to be a servant.
 - 2) To submit our will, to that of the Father.
 - c We are to be the light of the world.

- 1) We are to reflect the Light, a light that aids those in darkness
 - 2) We are to be followers of Christ, as Paul said, *ABe ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*@ 1 Cor.11:1
 - 3) Note Phil 2:15 *AThat ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life*@
 - 4) Jam. 1:22 *ABe ye doers of the word and, not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*@
- d Peter instructs the Christian to live a life, in these matters where they are accused, in such a way that the accusers may see their good works and glorify God.
- 1) This man will be blessed because of his faithfulness. Jam 1:12 *ABlessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him*@.
 - 2) And perhaps, as a result of his enduring, the ungodly might be converted, and glorify God .
- e Perhaps you have heard the statement; *AThere are times when deeds are more eloquent than words.*@

IV CONCERNING THE AUTHORITY OF THE LAND, PETER TEACHES WE SUBMIT.

- A Submit yourselves to every ordinance. Gods Condition.
- 1 Submit meaning to put ones self under.
 - a Here is the idea of a man enlisted in the military, and he submits himself to an officer.
 - b As children of God we place ourselves under the laws of the land.
 - 2 To every ordinance of man.
 - a An ordinance is a law, statute or commandment.
 - b Thus we submit to the laws created by man.
 - c God has given laws which help us live well spiritually.
 - 1) But he commanded no civil laws under which we are to live.
 - 2) God never said we are to obey the speed limit, or to stop at a stop sign, or to pay taxes.
 - 3) Man, however, did make laws for the good and safety of the majority.
 - 4) These laws are set up for the good of man, and so that chaos and anarchy are not the ways people live their lives.
 - 5) Without law, man would simply do that which he wanted to do. He would be a law unto himself.
- B For so is the will of God. It is because of this cause we obey.
- 1 God has instructed us in ways of righteousness, and expects us to obey those laws. Remember from verse 13 the words; *Afor the lord=s sake.*@
 - 2 In the same way we are to obey the laws of the land. Just as the laws of God are to be obeyed, God expects of us to obey the laws of the land.
 - a Rom. 13:1 *ALet every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God the powers that be are ordained of God.*@
 - b Man shows his love for God when he keeps his commandments. 1 John 5:3.

- c Thus man should obey the laws of the land, simply because it is the will of God.
- 3 The only exception to this rule is when there is a contradiction between what we think is fair, and what we ought to pay, and the laws of the land. We know this not to be the case. The only contradiction is when the laws of the land contradict the ultimate authority, the law of God.
 - a Notice Acts 5:28: *ASaying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.@*
 - a. Here was the command of the council. Do not teach in this name.
 - b. However, the apostles remembered the words of Christ where he taught them to *AGo into all the world and preach the Gospel..@*
 - c. Thus, our only exception to the laws of the land is when there is a contradiction. Our attitude should be the same as the apostles. *AThen Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.@*
- C The good life of a Christian will silence the foolishness of men. The conclusion of this good life that is lived.
 - 1 To silence means literally to muzzle. To put to silence.
 - 2 By the Christians serving and obeying the rulers who were persecuting them, the mouths of the foolish would be stopped.
 - 3 Being in Christ is the greatest of all blessings.
 - a Freedom from sin and its bondage. John 8:32-36
 - b However freedom does not take away from the Christians responsibility. Jam 1:22
 - c Having the *Aperfect law of liberty@* does not give one the license to do as he pleases.
 - d But rather our freedom rests in the fact that we obey.
 - e It is shown in our wilful obedience. Rom 6:1-6
 - 4 To be a servant of God is one of the greatest of all titles.
 - 5 Notice, in so many of the epistles, the writers start by calling themselves servants.
 - 6 James, the brother of Jesus, did not mention how close he was to the Lord in the flesh. He did not with pride say in any manner he was the brother of the Lord.
 - 7 But, rather, he referred to himself as a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jam. 1:1
- D And verse 17 teaches the Christian's Charge in all areas of life.

CONCLUSION:

- 1 Peter Addressed the Saints and reminded them that they were stranger and pilgrims.
- 2 He further instructed the type of life they were to live.
- 3 To Abstain from Sin.
- 4 To bring forth Actions that are Seemly.
- 5 And concerning the Authority of the land, to Submit.
- 6 Today Peter=s words have just as much meaning as the time when penned.
- 7 We are strangers and pilgrims in this world that look for, and can know we have our citizenship in heaven.
- 8 Like those in Peter=s day, we must strive to live a life that is free from sin.
- 9 In contrast to that sinful life, we have an obligation to live one that is beautiful, and honest in the sight of all men. In hopes that our example will bring others to Christ.
- 10 And we must submit to the authority of the land.

THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

(I Peter 2:18-25)

Cliff Goodwin

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 The grace of God is a reoccurring theme throughout the book of First Peter.
- 2 For example, Peter mentions God=s grace with regard to the fact that the prophets of old had prophesied of its special manifestation during the Messianic kingdom (1:10). A few verses later he points out that the culmination of God=s grace will be enjoyed by the saved at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (1:13).
- 3 It is seen as being that which provides eternal life (3:7) and as being offered only to the humble (5:5).
- 4 But in 2:18-25, the grace of God is seen as providing man with the perfect example of how one should live. This example was given in the life of Christ.

I. CHRIST PROVIDES THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF SERVICE (V. 18).

- A The section of scripture serving as the text for this sermon was specifically written for Christian servants and slaves.
- 1 They were commanded to be in subjection to their mastersCwhether the masters were good and gentle or even crooked and cruel.
 - a Such loyal and submissive service would prevent the name and doctrine of God from being blasphemed (I Tim. 6:1).
 - b Instead, this behavior from Christian servants and slaves would adorn the doctrine of God in all things (*make Christianity look good in the eyes of their masters* [Titus 2:9-10]).
 - 2 Such service can only come from a heart that is in total subjection, or submission, to the will of one=s master.
 - a In submitting themselves to the will of their earthly masters, Christian slaves were actually submitting themselves unto Christ, their heavenly Master, and they would be rewarded accordingly (Eph. 6:5-8).
 - b Submissiveness is at the heart of Christianity for all adherents, regardless of social class. This also is a reoccurring theme throughout First Peter.
 - \$ *All Christians are told to submit to the laws of their governments (2:13).*

- \$ Christian servants are instructed to submit to their masters (2:18).
- \$ Christian women are commanded to submit to their own husbands (3:1, 5).
- \$ Angelic powers are depicted as being submissive unto Christ (3:22).
- \$ Younger Christians are told to submit themselves to the elder (5:5a).
- \$ All Christians are instructed to submit themselves to one another (5:5b).

B While upon this earth, Christ portrayed the perfect example of a servant.

- 1 A servant does not do his own will, but instead, he does the will of another. Christ did the will of God the Father.
 - a His purpose for coming to this earth was to do the will of the Father (Heb. 10:9).
 - b He sought the will of the Father (John 5:30), working the works that God had given Him to do (John 9:4).
 - c Near the end of His life, Jesus was able to pray, *“I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do,”* (John 17:4b).
- 2 A servant does not think of himself, but instead, he thinks of others. As He performed His redemptive work on Calvary, Jesus was not thinking of Himself; rather, He had the spiritual welfare of humanity in mind.
 - a He was selflessly looking to the needs of others (Php. 2:3-8).
 - b He came in order to serve, and in serving, to offer His life as a ransom for many (Mat. 20:28).

II CHRIST PROVIDES THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF SUFFERING (VV. 19-21, 23).

A Along with the grace of God and the submissiveness of Christians, trials and sufferings form another reoccurring theme in the book of First Peter. Each of the five chapters contains at least one important passage pertaining to this subject.

- 1 1:6-7 B Trials are seen as being only temporary fires that purge and refine one's faith as gold is purified in a crucible.
- 2 2:19-23 B When one suffers wrongfully and endures it patiently, he is following in the footsteps of Jesus.
- 3 3:13-18 B One must endure sufferings with meekness (a quite courage abiding deep within; a strength properly controlled) and with a readiness to explain the hope that affords such fortitude.
- 4 4:12-19 B Suffering for Christ and His church is cause for rejoicing, not shame or embarrassment. It is a token of our future salvation.
- 5 5:8-10 B God affords the grace necessary to carry us through our sufferings, trials, and afflictions, and He can use such problems to strengthen us.

B God is pleased with the soul who, for the sake of his conscience toward God, patiently endures suffering that is inflicted upon him wrongfully, or unjustly.

- 1 Christian servants are told to obey their masters even the harsh ones (v. 18, cf. NKJV).
- 2 The Lord will reward such submission and punish infidelity and disobedience (Col. 3:22-25).
- 3 The *Little Bible* of Romans twelve contains principles directly relating to how one should react to mistreatment and wrongful suffering.
 - a Rom. 12:17 B Christians are not to recompense evil for evil to anyone.
 - b Rom. 12:19 B Vengeance belongs to God, and He will repay accordingly.

- c Rom. 12:21 B Christians are to overcome evil by repaying it with good.
 - 4 There is no glory in patiently enduring suffering that is the result of one=s faults, or transgressions, for the sufferer is simply receiving what he deserves.
- C Christ is the supreme example of One who suffered wrongfully and patiently endured it, committing Himself and His vindication unto God.
- 1 He was reviled (*verbally mocked and scorned*) numerous times during His trial and crucifixion, but He never once retaliated with a verbal berating of His own.
 - a The murderous Jews covered the Lord=s face and slapped Him mocking, AProphesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?@ (Mat. 26:68; cf. Mark 14:65).
 - b The Roman soldiers mocked Jesus by placing a crown of thorns upon His head and saying, AHail, King of the Jews!@ (Mat. 27:29).
 - c As He was hanging on the cross, He was further reviled by passersby, the chief priests, and even the thieves crucified there with Him (Mat. 27:39-44).
 - 2 Even as He suffered the agony of the cross, Christ did not lash out with threats of vengeance or Hell. He simply prayed, AFather, forgive them; for they know not what they do,@ (Luke 23:34).
 - 3 Such endurance was possible because Christ committed Himself unto God. He simply placed the situation in God=s hands, realizing that all vengeance belongs ultimately to God and He will dispense righteous judgment (Rom. 12:19; II Ths. 1:6).

III CHRIST PROVIDES THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF SINLESSNESS (V.22).

- A Christ never sinned in any form or fashionCHe never did, said, or thought anything that was contrary to God=s will. He never neglected doing something that God=s will called for Him to do (cf. Jas. 4:17).

- 1 The remarkable nature of this fact is compounded when one notes the intense suffering and humiliation Christ endured on the cross. Yet, He never retaliated with any words or actions.
- 2 Such sinlessness, not only in His death, but also in His life, provided the purity of sacrifice needed for the propitiation of man's sins (cf. I Pt. 1:18-19; 3:18).

B Christ overcame sin by overcoming temptation.

- 1 He was tempted in all points common to man, yet without ever sinning (Heb. 4:15).
- 2 Because He has suffered temptation, and overcome, He is able to comfort us who are tempted (Heb. 2:18).
- 3 Desires must be checked and temptation must be refused in order to avoid sin (cf. Jas. 1:13-15).
 - a Christ relied on the word of God to confront temptation and turn away the devil (Mat. 4:11; cf. Psa. 119:11).
 - b He also taught the importance of prayer and vigilance and practiced the same (Mat. 26:41).

C Though no one rather than Christ is completely without sin (I Jn. 1:8, 10), sinlessness should always be the mark for which we shoot (I Jn. 2:1).

- 1 We must desire the pure milk of the word (I Pt. 2:2), shunning both the ways and the wisdom of evil men (cf. Psa. 1:1-2).
- 2 As we do the work of the word (Jas. 1:22-25), the word does work in us (I Th. 2:13), and we can one day stand approved before God (cf. II Tim. 2:15).
- 3 We will never be sinlessly perfect, but we can certainly be better (cf. II Pt. 3:18).

Illus. An average AC student will likely never make straight 100's. However, if he continues to work hard and apply himself, he could very well become a AB or even AA student.

CONCLUSION:

- 1 Paul taught that the grace of God teaches us (Titus 2:11-12).
- 2 In the word of His grace (Acts 20:32), we have recorded sundry events in the life of Christ.
- 3 These records of Christ=s life portray for man the perfect example of how one should live.
- 4 In order to follow in the steps of Jesus, we must humbly submit ourselves to the will of God as His servants. We must always strive for sinlessness, even in the face of sufferings.

DOES GRACE EXCLUDE LAW AND WORKS?

Curtis A. Cates

INTRODUCTION:

1. One of the most misunderstood teachings of the Bible is that of the grace of God.
 - a. Man is saved from the guilt of sin, his sins are remitted by God=s amazing grace (Isa. 59:1,2; Gal. 2:8,9).
 - b. God=s grace is seen in the gracious giving of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16); it is seen further in Christ=s giving His life and shedding His cleansing blood that we might be forgiven (Rom. 5:8; Heb. 2:9; Matt. 26:28; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:13,14; Rev. 1:5).
 - c. The innocent Lamb of God shed His blood, Athat taketh away the sin of the world@ (John 1:29), life for life (Gen. 9:4-6); persons when they sin commit spiritual suicide [take their own spiritual lives, and the price is eternal separation from God in Hell fire, because of the justice of God], life for life; however God=s grace made/makes it possible for our sins to be punished in the person of the Son of God -- who shed His precious blood to pay the price of human redemption.
 - d. Now, the question is, is there anything man must do, is there any response on the part of each of us to have it so?
2. Virtually all of denominationalism says there is nothing man can or must do to appropriate the grace of God; grace according to sectarian doctrine excludes law and works.
 - a. Many teach the doctrine of Agrace alone.@
 - b. Other teach the doctrine of Afaith alone.@
 - c. Even others teach (as the writer heard a denominational preacher say on the radio recently), AMan is saved by grace alone, through faith alone@ -- a clear self-contradiction.
3. False teaching on grace has invaded even the church of Christ.
 - a. Some who once preached the unadulterated gospel have now abandoned the truth on this vital subject.
 - b. Rubel Shelly stated, AIt is a scandalous and outrageous lie that salvation arises from human activity. We do not contribute one whit to our salvation.@
 - c. Max Lucado stated that one is saved by praying the sinner=s prayer -- not by obedience to Christ in baptism (Mark 16:15,16); he suggested on the radio that those thus saved be baptized, Anot to be saved but because you are saved.@

II. NEVER A PERSON SAVED EXCEPT BY GRACE, LAW, FAITH, AND WORKS

A. But someone says, "Does not Paul say we are saved by grace through faith?"
Indeed, in Ephesians 2:8,9.

1. A. .for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man shall glory.@
 2. But, does this mean that we have no responsibility, no response in the matter? Such is a misunderstanding of the passage and of the whole Bible.
 3. Now, note the passage: We are saved by grace through the Afaith,@ the system of faith, the scheme of human redemption which was in God=s eternal purpose, the gospel of Christ (see Jude 3; Acts 6:7; 13:8; 14:22; Gal. 1:23; 6:10).
 4. That system of faith, the gospel by which we are saved, Athat not of yourselves, it is the gift of God@ [note the nearest antecedent of Athat,@ which is Afaith,@ the scheme of redemption] was not invented or concocted by man; it was in God=s eternal purpose (Eph. 3:2-11) and was thus God=s gift through His grace.
 5. Observe also that Athe faith@ did not come about by the works of man, Athat no man should glory,@ the point being that man cannot by his own plan or doctrines save himself; one cannot lift himself up by his own bootstraps; if man could do that without the grace and scheme of human redemption provided by God, then man could have grounds for glorying.
 6. Thus, the plan of salvation by which man is saved through God=s grace came not by the works, or concoction, of man; and yet, man is Acreated in Christ Jesus for good works, which God [not man] afore prepared that we should walk in them@ (2:10).
- B. But someone says again, AWhat about John 3:16, where the Bible teaches that we are saved by faith only?@
1. Is that what the passage teaches when it states, AFor God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on [in, KJV] him should not perish, but have eternal life@? Does it teach that one, to be saved eternally, must have mere consent that Christ is the Son of God, as most of sectarianism teaches? See James 2:19; John 12:42,43. What does John 3:16 really teach?
 2. First, the word Abelieveth@ (pisteuo, Greek) has two major, indispensable elements, trust and obedience: Thayer=s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 511, defines pisteuo herein Aused especially of the faith by which a man embraces Jesus, i.e. a conviction, full of joyful trust, that Jesus is the Messiah -- the divinely appointed author of eternal salvation in the kingdom of God, conjoined with obedience to Christ.@
 - a. God joined trust and obedience, and man has no right to attempt to separate them (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5,6; Rev. 22:18,19).
 - b. One could as easily be saved without Ajoyful trust@ in Christ as without Aobedience to Christ.@
 3. Second, observe where salvation is available.
 - a. The words Abelieveth in Christ@ are most significant, for the word Ain,@ or Aon@ (ASV), translates the word eis in the Greek.

- b. The word eis in its oldest and most common usage expressed into or relation to place (Liddell and Scott, A Greek English Lexicon pp. 491,492. Thayer defined this word as Aa Prep. Governing the Accusative and denoting entrance into, or direction and limit: into, to, towards, for, among@ (Thayer, p. 183). Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christians Literature, p. 228, states that it indicates AMotion into a thing or into its immediate vicinity.@ Thus, the phrase Ain Christ@ shows location, the place where one may receive eternal life -- in Christ.
 - c. Now, notice verse 15 in the American Standard Version (1901): A. . .that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life@; do you see where eternal life is available, both from the Greek and from the English translation? Now what does that mean?
 - d. One, it means that one does not already have salvation when he has mere consent that Christ is the Son of God; he has not demonstrated either trust or obedience. For example, if a parent said to his child, AGo to the store and bring back milk and bread, and you may have a piece of candy,@ does that mean he already has the candy? He may have it if he complies with the conditions; one may have salvation when he complies with the conditions of Bible belief and gets into Christ, where salvation is.
 - e. Two, John 3:16 teaches the necessity of baptism into Christ, for the alien sinner is saved through the faith, the system of faith (Gal. 3:26), when he is baptized into Christ (3:27). See also Romans 6:3,4; I Corinthians 12:13; et al.
4. Compare the King James Version and the American Standard Version as they translate John 3:36:
- a. AHe 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.@ (KJV)
 - b. AHe that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.@ (ASV)
 - c. The ASV translators wanted the reader to see both elements involved in Biblical faith -- trust and obedience, as they translated the text. One who omits obedience Ashall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.@

II. WERE PEOPLE SAVED BY GRACE, LAW, FAITH, AND WORKS OF OBEDIENCE IN THE PATRIARCHAL DISPENSATION? INDEED!

- A. An example is Noah, who was saved from the waters of the universal flood; was he saved by mere consent that God could save him without trust and/or obedience?

1. Noah was saved by grace [which, incidentally, existed in the Old Testament as well as in the New]: ABut Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord@ (Gen. 6:8). Was that sufficient?
 2. Noah was saved by faith: ABy faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith@ (Heb. 11:7). Was that alone sufficient?
 3. Noah was saved by law, God=s commands: Make thee an ark of gopher wood. . .@ (Gen. 6:14ff). Was that enough?
 4. Noah was saved by obedience: AThus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he@ (Gen. 6:22).
- A. Man has always been saved by Biblical faith, which is trust and obedience to God=s commands.
1. In this way, God=s gifts [such as Noah=s salvation in the ark from the flood water] have always been conditional, yet not meritorious.
 2. Faith which blesses is faith which obeys; Noah did not merit salvation, but he did have to obey.
 3. God has never saved persons without their having received His commands, trusted in Him, and complied with the conditions which He stipulated.

III. WERE PEOPLE SAVED BY GRACE, LAW, FAITH, AND WORKS OF OBEDIENCE IN THE MOSAIC DISPENSATION?

- A. First, notice the principles which provided the Israelites the land of Canaan.
1. Note that it was a gift -- grace (Josh. 1:2,3); A. . .the land which I do give to them.@
 2. Notice that they did not deserve, merit the land (Deut. 9:1-8). The people of Canaan were much stronger than Israel, and Israel had been wicked; yet, God fought their battles and stirred fear in the hearts of the Canaanites.
 3. They had to have faith in God and trust Him (Heb. 11:29,30).
 4. They conquered the land also by God=s commands, His law (Josh. 3-6)
 5. They crossed over Jordan and took Jericho when they obeyed God=s commands; God=s gift of Canaan was not received by mere consent that God could give it to them, else they would have possessed the land while still on the east side of Jordan, had they not passed over, had they not gone Armed@ into Canaan and taken the land which God had given them (Josh. 2:14). Why were Amighty men of valor@ needed, why did the other tribes need the help of the two and one-half tribes who had been given land east of the Jordan, in order to conquer the land, if God=s grace is always unconditional -- grace only?
 6. How was their trust in God demonstrated; was it not by the priests stepping into the raging river, the people trusting God to hold back the waters as they crossed, the people marching around the city of Jericho as God commanded?

- B. Second, observe the principles necessary for the Jews to be saved under the law of Moses.
1. The Israelites were commanded to offer animal sacrifices, Afor without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins@ (Heb. 9:22).
 - a. Those sacrifices (works of obedience)produced faith in the cross, in the Lamb of God who would shed His blood once for all for remission of sins (John 1:29); He would bruise the head of the serpent; Abraham saw Christ=s day and was glad (John 8:56); Athe gospel was preached before unto Abraham@ (Gal. 3:8).
 - b. The law of Moses (John 1:17) alone could not save; there had to be faith in the coming Messiah. Obedience (works) to the Law of Moses alone would be Alegalism@; works minus faith is Adead works.@ The Jews would have to have their hearts cleansed Afrom dead works to serve the living God@ (Heb. 9:14).
 - c. Their works of obedience conjoined with, producing faith, enabled God=s grace to flow to them, thereby forgiving their sins in promise [providing an avenue of approach, around those sins, to God]; however, those sins were remembered year by year until the cross (Heb. 10:1-10; Rom. 3:24-26; et al.). See also Matthew 11:28-30.
 2. By what kind of law were the faithful Israelites saved? Was it a law of works as many suppose?
 - a. The law of Moses was not a law of works but a law of faith; man has never been saved by a law of works; else, the Lord would not have had to die on the cross, and man could have been saved by legalism, apart from faith.
 - b. Most of the Jews attempted to make the law of Moses a law of works, which it was not!
 - c. Listen to Paul in Romans 9:30-33.
 - d. The Gentiles attained to the purpose, the end of the law of Moses, for they had faith in the Messiah (v. 30).
 - e. Israel, even having the law, did not arrive at the law=s purpose (v. 31).
 - f. Why not? It was because they Asought it not by faith, but as it were by works@; they refused to believe in the Messiah and made it a law of works -- thereby seeking to be saved by law without faith -- legalism; note Romans 10:4ff.
 3. So, how were the faithful Israelites saved, their sins forgiven in promise (Heb. 11:40)?
 - a. They were saved by the same principles and elements through which men have always been saved.
 - b. They were saved by grace, law, faith, and works of obedience; if not, which one could they have omitted?

IV. Are people saved by grace, law, faith and works of obedience in the Christian Dispensation? Indeed!

- A. In the New Testament, the process is reversed, but the same principles are involved and necessary.
1. Whereas under the Law of Moses the sacrifices (works of obedience) produced and had to be tied by faith to the coming Messiah who would die for every man (Heb. 2:9), under the law of Christ the message of the cross produces faith in the reigning Messiah who died for the sins of the world; And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself (John 12:32). See John 8:24,21; Mark 16:16.
 2. Faith must produce works of obedience, else faith minus works is dead faith (Jas. 2:20-26); it is as lifeless as a corpse, thus cannot save.
 3. One who denies the necessity of obedience to the commands of Christ flies into the face of and denies such clear passages as Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 6:46; John 14:15; Acts 2:26-41; Hebrews 5:8,9; John 12:48; Philippians 2:12; et al.
 4. Faith which obeys enables God's grace to flow to the sinner.
- B. But, denominational preachers say, Trust God and do nothing; if you have to obey (work), then you take the grace out of it.¹
1. They have no exhibition of faith.
 2. But, Bible belief is trust conjoined with, combined with obedience (See the earlier discussion on John 3:16).
 3. Trust is expressed in action; if not, it is not Bible faith.
 - a. No blessing is received anywhere in the Bible until faith expresses itself vividly.
 - b. Note James 2:18 where it is clear that one must show his or her faith by works, else it is not saving, Biblical faith; it must be shown, visible, demonstrated; it can be seen.
 - c. Bible faith is an expression of one's trust in God, in the manner directed by God.
 - d. How did the Israelites show their trust and thus conquer Canaan (cross over Jordan on dry land, capture the city of Jericho)?
 - e. The very moment they trusted God, according to A faith only/A grace only doctrine, the two to three million Israelites should have been all over in Canaan, and should have been in possession of Jericho with the walls having fallen [A He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.] The very minute they responded, We trust thee, then the receiving of God's Gift should have been immediate; but that is not the way it happened: By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land to receive the gift (Heb. 11:29); By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had been compassed about for seven days (11:30). Was Rahab saved before, or after she hid the spies, hung out the scarlet cord, and stayed in her house (11:31)?

4. Salvation is by faith which expresses itself in any direction God commands; never is it Bible faith otherwise.
 - a. Why is such obedience never meritorious?
 - b. It is because by trusting in God and by that trust expressing itself as God directs, it is never a work of merit; trust in God takes away the merit.
 - c. Scriptural obedience is but an expression of one=s trust.
 - d. That is why obedience (even to Christ=s commands) must never be separated from trust, faith in the cross, because if it were separated from faith and if it brought any blessing through it, then that would become action that had merit; it would become legalism (The attempt to be saved by obedience alone, apart from trust in the redeeming blood of Christ).
 5. Thus, scriptural saving trust that is expressed in obedience enables grace to provide the blessing, and therefore is not meritorious.
- C. We are saved also by law, the system of faith, the scheme of redemption, the law of Christ.
1. Some attempt to affirm that in the Christian Dispensation, we are Asaved by grace, not by law or by Alaw-keeping@; even some of our Abrethren@ have attempted to promote this sectarian falsehood, a gross misapplication of John 1:17 and other passages which teach we are not saved by the law of Moses today.
 2. On course, this is a blatant denial of such clear passages as Isaiah 2:2-4; Romans 8:1,2; I Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:2; James 1:22-25; 2:8,12; et al.
 3. The law of Christ is a law of faith, just as was the law of Moses; had the law of Moses been a law of works and salvation would have been through works alone (apart from faith), then Christ would not have had to die; we would be saved by a law of works, the same way, today. However, a law of works has never saved; however, that is not to say that one is saved apart from obedienceBfar from it!
- D. Now, which element can one leave out and still be saved?
1. Can grace be omitted? Can we save ourselves?
 2. Can one scripturally affirm that there is no plan or pattern (law) given by God for our lives?
 3. Can we be saved without trust in Christ? If so, why would one Acall@ upon Him (Rom. 10:13-17)?
 4. Can one reject submitting to the commands of Christ and obedience from a heart of love, and still demonstrate his trust?
 5. To leave out even one of these necessary ingredients of salvation is folly!

CONCLUSION:

1. Man cannot save himself.
2. Never in history has anyone received God=s blessings apart from grace, law, faith, and works.
3. Paul stated, therefore, AFor this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace@ (Rom. 4:16).
4. The Holy Bible is a book of tremendous harmony and consistency.
5. Submit your life to the law of Christ by the obedience of faith in repenting of sin, confessing Christ as God=s Son, and being baptized into Christ, thus trusting and obeying for remission of sins, saved by God=s Aamazing grace.@

ENDNOTE

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- i. I am indebted to the late Franklin Camp (outstanding preacher and scholar whose classes for several years the writer was privileged to attend from 1966-1969 while preaching at Warrior, Alabama) for some of these vital points.

THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD PROVIDED THE PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS

I Peter 2:5-10

Daniel F. Cates

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 In I Peter 2:5-10, Peter twice, through inspiration, made reference to the members of the early church as composing a priesthood.
 - a In verse 5 the priesthood of believers is holy.
 - b In verse 9 the priesthood of believers is royal.
- 2 This study will seek to make a connection between the subject of true grace and the priesthood of believers.
- 3 This connection will be made after opening up the idea of priesthood in general to see the blessings therein, explaining the existence of a priest before the Levitical priesthood was established, and examining the progression of the Levitical priesthood through Bible history.
- 4 Finally lessons will be gleaned from this study.

I AN EXPLICATION OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

- A The responsibilities and requirements were costly.
 - 1 The priests had to take time to be cleansed and clothed before they could even begin to perform their duties as priests (Exodus 29:1-9).
 - 2 The priests had to make offerings on behalf of themselves and the people for whom they were mediators (Exodus 29:10-28,38-42).
 - a There were various types of offerings:
 - 1) Sin offering of a bullock (Exodus 29:10-14).
 - 2) The burnt offering of a ram (Exodus 29:15-18).
 - 3) The peace offering of a ram (Exodus 29:19-28).
 - a) This involved a wave offering (Exodus 29:23-25).
 - b) This also involved a heave offering (Exodus 29:26-28).
 - 4) Also, there were daily meat offerings (Exodus 29:38-42).
 - 5) Many other offerings had to be made, not counting general service around the tabernacle.
 - 6) All of the offerings had to be according to a pattern (Exodus 30:9).
 - b The offerings have been singled out to show that the priest's life was not the most pleasant.
 - 1) Imagine getting cleansed and dressing in beautiful garments and having on a crown and then being anointed.
 - 2) Imagine then having to kill a bullock and rub its blood, with your fingers, on the horns of the altar, then having to dissect that bullock, burning the inwards on an altar and then carrying the skin, and the waste outside of the camp to burn those remains.
 - 3) Imagine the stench as the skin, with the hair, and the waste all begin

- to slowly burn up in the flames.
- 4) Imagine then having to take a ram and kill it, and again with your fingers taking the blood and sprinkling it upon the altar, then having to cut the ram in pieces and to wash it and then having to smell it as it burned.
 - 5) Imagine having to take another ram and to kill it and having that blood dabbed upon your right ear, right thumb, and right great toe, then having to sprinkle that blood around the altar, and having it sprinkled on you.
 - 6) Imagine having to take those inwards and three pieces of bread, and there having, with blood all over you and the stench of burning hair and flesh and waste all over you, to wave the offerings up and down.
 - 7) Imagine having to take the breast of that ram to wave it.
 - 8) Imagine having to take two lambs offering one in the morning, and one in the evening, imagine doing that every day of your life.
- c The image is sickening, the smell would have been atrocious-to man that is-but not to God for to Him it was a Asweet savour@ (Exodus 29:18,25).
- 1) When these things were done God was pleased.
 - 2) When they were done God was close (Exodus 29:42).
 - 3) When they were done there was in return true grace!

B There was true grace in the Old Testament!

- 1 The first part of Exodus 33:16 records Moses speaking to God, *AFor wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us?@*
- 2 Without question wherever there is obedience there is found true grace!
- 3 A New Testament passage portraying this eternal principle is Hebrews 5:8,9, *AThough he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.@*

C Relation to God.

- 1 The true grace of God toward the obedient priests was found in their proximity to God.
 - a The average Jew could not approach the throne of God except through the priest (Leviticus 16:16).
 - b The priest could make sacrifices on his own behalf (Leviticus 16:17).
 - c According to Exodus 25:10-22, the high priest was able to commune with God in the off-limits for others holy of holies.
- 2 The true grace of God was found in God=s concern for the priests..
 - a The true grace of God toward the priests is seen in the instructions God gave to them.
 - 1) For the priest to be obedient he had to be faithful.
 - 2) To be faithful he had to have instructions.
 - 3) Such was the purpose of the book of Leviticus: To show men who were imperfect and who acted on behalf of imperfect men how to

approach God who is perfect.

- b The true grace of God is seen because of the goods received by the priests.
 - 1) They received land (Leviticus 27:21).
 - 2) They received tithes (Numbers 18:8-18,26-32).
 - 3) They received first-fruits (Deuteronomy 13:3-5).
 - 4) Other goods and benefits were also enjoyed by the priests.

II AN EXPLANATION OF THE PRE-MOSAIC PRIESTHOOD.

- A An introduction to the pre-Mosaic priest.
- 1 We read of a priest who lived before the Levitical priesthood was set up by God.
 - 2 In Genesis 14:18-20 he, the king of Salem which would later become Jerusalem, is shown meeting, blessing, and receiving a title of a victorious Abram who is returning from battle with Chedorlaomer.
 - 3 In Psalm 110:4 (repeated in Hebrews 5:10; 6:10; and 7:17) his name is mentioned in prophecy of the Messiah to come.
 - 4 In Hebrews 7 he is dealt with considerably.
 - a Hebrews 7:1,2 rehearse the Genesis account, but give us two new titles for the man: King of righteousness and King of peace.
 - b In Hebrews 7:3 a peculiar statement is made, this man was without father, mother, or descendent; had no beginning nor end; but was, like Christ, a priest continually.
 - 1) Some have speculated he was Deity, or was an angel.
 - 2) These terms are all a way to say that he was not of priestly lineage.
 - 3) This shows his superiority over Abram, and therefore explains Abram=s offering to him.
 - 4) Not being a Jew, his line was not destroyed in A.D. 70.
 - 5) One=s genealogy is not as important to God as it was to the Jews.
 - c In Hebrews 7:4-11 his superiority over the Levitical priesthood is stressed.
 - d In Hebrews 7:12-28 the position of Christ as a priest after this man=s order is emphasized, and therefore His superiority!
- B This man is identified in these places as Melchizedek, or Melchisedec.
- 1 A forerunner of Christ.
 - 2 A priest before, and above, priests.

III AN EXAMINATION OF THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD.

- A From the time of Moses to the United Kingdom.
1. Following the Exodus from Israel and subsequent giving of the Mosaic law, God setup the Levitical priesthood.
 - a. In Exodus 28:1; 29:44; 40:13-15, Aaron (the first high priest) and his sons Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar (the second high priest-Numbers 20:25-28), and Ithamar were set apart by God to serve as priests.
 - b. During this time there were good priests and bad priests (interestingly when things are bad in the Bible we primarily read of good priests and when things are good we primarily read of bad priests).
 - 1). It was during this time that Aaron made the golden calf for the people (Exodus 32) and Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire to the Lord (Leviticus 10).
 - 2). It was also, however, in this time that the righteous priest Phinehas stopped a plague (Numbers 25:7-13).
 - c. Also, at this time Leviticus was written for the priestly tribe (the Levites-Numbers 3:11-13) and family (Aaron=s-Numbers 25:13).
 2. The priesthood remained unchanged for some time (until shortly before the end of the period), but the times were turbulent.
 - a. When the Israelites entered into the promised land the Levites were given 48 scattered cities from which to serve the other twelve tribes (Joshua 21).
 - b. As the time approached for Israel to have a king, Eli, the high priest (whose own sons were wicked-I Samuel 2:12-36), reared Samuel who would anoint

the kings.

- c. Quite a lot happened to the priesthood during this time, for one of those kings, Saul, massacred the members of the priestly community of Nob (I Samuel 22:9-19).
- d. Another thing also happened, David recognizing that the priests had grown to a great number divided into twenty-four courses that served a week at a time (I Chronicles 24) down to the time of Zechariah, John the Baptist's father (Luke 1:5-8).
- e. In the time of the last kings of this period, David and Solomon, Zadok, acting at one point as co-high priest (II Samuel 8:17; 15:24-29,35; 19:11) seized the reigns of the priesthood thereby serving as the progenitor of priests well into the inter-testament period.

B. From the division of the kingdom to the time of Christ.

1. The priesthood saw Israel crumble.
 - a. Shortly after Solomon, Jeroboam, in setting up calf worship in Dan and Bethel (the extremities of what became the Northern kingdom Israel), changed numerous things about the worship of the people, including the priesthood (II Chronicles 11:13-15; I Kings 13:33).
 - b. As a result the kingdom was divided with Jeroboam reigning over Israel and Rehoboam, Solomon's son, reigning in Judah (the Southern kingdom) (II Chronicles 11:16,17).
2. Over the following years Judah and Israel were divided and desperate, and though Israel was divided the true priests were strong.
 - a. Such priests were Jehoiada who protected the young Joash (II Kings 11,12), Azariah who withstood King Uzziah (II Chronicles 26:16-20), and Hilkiyah who removing Baal worship from the temple spurred Josiah's reform (II Kings 22,23).
 - b. This does not mean that there were no wicked priests at this time, for there were (e.g. Uriah (II Kings 16:10-16) and Pashur (Jeremiah 20:1-6)).
3. After a period of captivity there was a struggle, and the priesthood suffered into the time of the Christ.
 - a. After the return from captivity, the high priest Joshua, along with the governor Zerubbabel rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 3; 6:9-15; Haggai 1,2).
 - b. In 171 B.C. Antiochus IV Epiphanes replaced the rightful priest, Onias III, with Onias' Hellenistic brother Jason, or Jesus, due to the offer of large sums of money and increased Hellenization.
 - 1). Jason later was replaced by Menelaus thereby changing the family line of the priesthood (II Maccabees 4).
 - 2). When the Maccabees gained control the role of the high priest took on more of a role around political and military leadership; such priests were Jonathan and Simon.
 - c. In the time of Jesus the priesthood became a split institution containing a Jewish priest (Annas) and a Roman appointment (Annas' son-in-law Joseph Caiaphas) (Luke 3:2) [It was to a son of Annas, Ananias, that Paul was taken in Acts 23:2; 24:1].

IV. AN EXPOSITION OF I PETER 2:5-10.

- A. The context.
1. Peter was writing to troubled people.
 - a. Peter was writing to people who were scattered (I Peter 1:1).
 - b. Peter was writing to people who were tried and tempted (I Peter 1:6,7).
 - c. Peter was writing to people who had to be strong (I Peter 1:13).
 - d. Peter was writing to people who needed to grow (I Peter 2:2).
 - e. Peter was writing to people who needed to be united (I Peter 3:8).
 - f. Peter was writing to people who would suffer (I Peter 4:16,17).
 2. Peter was writing to protected people.
 - a. Peter was writing to people who had hope (I Peter 1:3).
 - b. Peter was writing to people who had an inheritance (I Peter 1:4).
 - c. Peter was writing to people who were guarded by God (I Peter 1:5).
 - d. Peter was writing to people who possessed saved souls (I Peter 1:9).
 - e. Peter was writing to people who were purified (I Peter 1:22).
 - f. Peter was writing to people who were born again (I Peter 1:23).
 - g. Peter was writing to people who could rejoice in suffering (I Peter 3:14).
 - h. Peter was writing to people who had One suffer for them (I Peter 4:1).
 - i. Peter was writing to people who could cast their cares on a Savior (I Peter 5:7).
- B. The text.
1. Peter in I Peter 2:5-10 writes to his audience in the second of the aforementioned ways: As people who are protected.
 - a. They were stones in the house of God, priests sacrificing for themselves.
 - b. They viewed the Lord not as an enemy but as being precious, as being a foundation on Whom they could lay their burdens.
 - c. For their obedience he would not cause them to stumble but rather they were a Achosen generation@ (when generations of Jews would soon be destroyed), a Aroyal priesthood@ (when the priesthood had been changed), and a Aholly nation@ (when God=s nation had been changed), a Apeculiar people@ (when many were worldly); consequently, praise for deliverance would be expressed by them toward God.
 - d. A century earlier they were not God=s people and received no mercy, but now they were and did.
 2. These people would stand as recipients of the true grace of God, for they were obedient as priests before Him.
 - a. As priests of God two things were evident.
 - 1). They were holy-the priest could not serve without first being consecrated.
 - 2). They were royal-they did not simply know the King, they were family.
 - b. They would suffer.
 - c. They would also be comforted!
- C. Identifying the priesthood of believers.
1. The High Priest.
 - a. He was Jesus Christ (Hebrews 2:17; 3:1,2; 4:14,15; 5:5; 7:26; 8:1-3; 9:11; 10:21).
 - b. He was after the order of Melchizedek as prophecy had declared (Hebrews 5:6,10; 6:20; 7:11,12,15,17,21).
 - c. He only made one sacrifice (Hebrews 10:11).

2. The common priests.
 - a. Through Jesus the priesthood was removed from Jewish hands, and Roman hands, and placed back in God=s hands where it had been for centuries.
 - b. No longer were men appointing the priests, rather God was-as He had at first.
 - c. God still adds men to the priesthood (Revelation 1:6; 5:10).
 - 1). Cleansing is still necessary.
 - a). We have our sins washed away, are consecrated, in baptism (Acts 22:16).
 - b). We continue to have our sins cleansed by Jesus if we are obedient and faithful (I John 1:7).
 - 2). Priests today are as much priests as were the priests of Old Testament times (I Peter 2:5,9; Revelation 20:6).
 - 3). Sacrificing is still necessary.
 - a). We present our bodies as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1,2).
 - b). In worship we sacrifice (Hebrews 13:15).
 - 4). Grace is still extended (Titus 2:11; II Corinthians 9:8).
 - d. There are still blessings to be found in priestly service (Proverbs 8:18,19,21).

V. AN EXTRACTION OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY.

- A. All men are not priests.
 1. Some would say that all are saved by the grace of God.
 2. Matthew 7:13,14 shows that few have salvation.
- B. God makes the rules, man follows them.
 1. Many try to worship according to their own desires/feelings/dictates, or those of other men.
 2. John 4:24 indicates that men must worship in the right way, that is God=s way!
- C. Without inspired instructions men do not know what to do.
 1. When men leave the pages of God=s Word speculation and opinion become their guides.
 2. II Timothy 3:16,17 show that inspiration is the key to instruction.
- D. Man=s purpose is God=s pleasure.
 1. In an age where AI@ am the focus, we expect God to please Ame.@
 2. Revelation 4:11 reads, *AThou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*@
- E. Sacrifices are meant to please God.
 1. If I get nothing out of worship it is because I do not appreciate the object of my worship.
 2. When I Asuffer@ through a thirty minute lesson and Aam forced@ to sing six songs and am sitting on uncomfortable pews and am late to my favorite restaurant I should be glad, not angry, that my sacrifice-if offered correctly (John 4:24-not only in truth, but in attitude also)-is a Asweet savour@ to God.
- F. Priests can sin.

1. Many feel God=s grace eliminate man=s ability to fall from it.
 2. Paul wrote in Romans 6:1,2, *AWhat shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?@*
 3. Galatians 5:4 very simply shows that one can be Afallen from grace.@
 4. One falls from true grace when he is disobedient (II Thessalonians 1:8,9)
- G. The priesthood, the church, is not perfect.
1. The institution is perfect, but those who make it up are merely human, and are therefore imperfect (I John 1:8).
 2. Many complain that there are too many hypocrites in the church.
 3. If every other priest in the church were a hypocrite, I would not have an excuse to leave the priesthood myself-in fact I might have increased responsibility and value.
- H. Priesthood can be hurt by those inside of the church.
1. False teachers can rip the church apart (Acts 20:29,30).
 2. Lukewarm members can do the same (Revelation 3:16).
- I. Priesthood can be hurt by those outside of the church.
1. The church can be hurt by an atheistic and humanistic society-witness the departure of Demas (II Timothy 4:10).
 2. The church can also be hurt by false religions (Galatians 1:6-8).
- J. Positions in the priesthood no longer inherited physically.
1. As opposed to such doctrines as that which teaches sin is inherited, the Bible says in Ezekiel 18:20, *AThe soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.@*
 2. Win I obey, I, and only I, become a priest.
 3. Win I disobey, I, and only, cease being a priest.
- K. Positions in the priesthood are inherited spiritually.
1. If we are obedient we are God=s sons-and therefore are priests.
 2. If we are God=s sons, we are heirs (Galatians 4:7; Ephesians 1:11,14,18; Colossians 1:12; 3:24; I Peter 1:4).
- L. Priests are not just the preachers.
1. Some religions have a clerical class (the preachers, or clergy, are the priests).
 2. God plainly speaks, through inspiration in I Peter 2:5,9, of all Christians being priests.
- M. Priests are chosen by God, not man.
1. Many religions have to ordain, or certify, their priests.
 2. God simply adds those who are obedient in baptism to the priesthood (Acts 2:41,47).
- N. True grace is only found in obedience.

1. True grace does not exist where there is no obedience.
2. Hebrews 5:9 reads of our High Priest, *And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him*

CONCLUSION:

1. There is a great connection between priesthood and true grace.
2. That connection existed in the Old Testament and was manifest.
3. The same connection is seen, through implication, with reference to Christians in I Peter 2:5-10.
4. We, by obeying God's command to wash away our sins (Acts 22:16), can be priests and receive God's true grace today!
5. *Our prayer is for you—who are already priests, AElect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied@ (I Peter 1:2).*

Dave Leonard

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 Up to this point, Peter has summarized some of the blessings enjoyed by God=s Astrangers / sojourners.@
 - a Their election, sanctification, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus (v. 2).
 - b Their rebirth to a living hope (v. 3).
 - c Their incorruptible inheritance, reserved in heaven (v. 4).
 - d Their being kept secure by the power of God through faith (v. 5).
 - e Their great joy, which is unspeakable and full of glory (vs. 6-9).
 - f Their reception of salvation as preached by the prophets (vs. 10-12).

- 2 As we read the word, AWherefore@ (v. 13), we should read what follows in light of what the author has just written.
 - a vs. 1-12 B the great salvation God has bestowed upon and guaranteed for His chosen/elect people.
 - b Peter has been explaining this to encourage and strengthen his readers; he wants them to rejoice in God=s wonderful salvation.
 - c But that shouldn=t be the only response to Peter=s words; there are even more actions he expects them to take.

- 3 This passage shows us an exhortation or call to holiness that is based upon the grace of God (v. 10); cf. vs. 8-12! The doctrine of grace, rightly understood, will have a deep impact upon one=s thoughts, affections, and actions (vs. 13-14).

- 4 How would Peter encourage his readers to be able to partake in the present and eternal blessings of God=s grace?
 - a The hope abiding in these Christians would be so grounded and perfected that no persecution would be able to overcome it; it would persevere, endure to the end.
 - b This Peter did by calling the readers to holiness, which is divinely described in **I Ptr. 1:13-25**.

- 5 Look at the text again. How many commands do you see here?
 - a Only 2 commands, with modifying phrases:
 - b AHope to the end / Set your hope@ and ABe ye holy.@

 - c In light of the salvation, which God has provided through His grace, you can ASet your hope@ and ABe holy.@

I PREPARATIONS for Holiness (v. 13).

- A AGird up the loins of your mind.@
 - 1 A reference to the Oriental practice of tucking up the loose, long, flowing garments when in a hurry or when preparing to run.
 - 2 This figure would call to mind that Christians are but strangers and pilgrims on earth, subject to moving (Asojourners@), called to active service in the kingdom (**Eph. 6:14**).
 - 3 We must discipline our minds in order to be ready to serve (**Ezra 7:10**). Faith does

not simply happen, it is a result of much study/preparation in the Word of God (**Rom. 10:17**). Faith is always busy (**Heb. 11; James. 2:14-26**).

- B ABe sober.@
- 1 Meaning not intoxicated, having spiritual sobriety.
 - 2 Be watchful; do not allow lusts of the flesh, traditions of men, and allurements of the world to corrupt your sincere mind.
 - 3 One must demonstrate temperance, self-discipline, and calmness in thought as well as in action.
 - 4 This leads to one being equipped to fight the wicked one (**I Pet. 4:7; 5:8**). A clear mind keeps the goal and hope in view.
- C AHope to the end@ or ASet your hope perfectly.@
- 1 Meaning to fix your hope completely, unchangeably, without doubt.
 - 2 It is the full desire and earnest expectation of the child of God to receive all of the blessings which God=s grace provides.
 - 3 This hope would come to full fruition at the time of the resurrection.
 - 4 How can we Aset our hope,@ or Ahope to the end?@ Because our salvation is secure in Christ, by the power of God (**vs. 1-9**).

II PERSISTENCE of Holiness (vs. 14-15).

- A Holiness requires continual obedience.
- 1 AChildren of obedience@ B Aone characterized by the condition or quality of obedience.@
 - 2 They had gone through the new birth (**vs. 3, 23**), and were, therefore, obedient children.
 - 3 cf. **Eph. 2:2**, Achildren of disobedience;@ and **Rom. 6:12-16**, Aservants of sin, servants of obedience.@
- B Holiness requires a complete transformation.
- 1 ANot fashioning yourselves@ B Anot conforming or assimilating one=s self to.@
 - 2 Not conforming to their former lusts in ignorance. They were ignorant of God and His ways, and, therefore, came to the inevitable end of all who disobey God- sin!
 - 3 cf. **Rom. 12:1-2**.
- C Holiness requires a constant walk.
- 1 AAll manner of conversation@ B Aevery way of life or conduct.@
 - 2 Holiness is required in every aspect of a Christian=s life.
 - 3 **Rom. 6:16-23** sets a parallel precedent for us B just as a servant of sin is completely sinful, no righteousness found in him; so a servant of righteousness must be totally righteous, no sin found in him.

III PATTERN of Holiness (vs. 15-16).

- A AAs He which hath called you is holyY For I am holy.@
- 1 We are not to evaluate our conversation (way of life) based on the mean average of all other Christians.
 - 2 Nor can we see the true estimate of our holiness or godliness by comparing to the world.
 - 3 Our standard of holiness must be the only figure of perfect holiness that we have B God!
 - 4 cf. **Rom. 6:16-23** B see the comparison and the totality of servitude.

- B ASo be ye holy in all manner of conversation.@
- 1 To be holy is an all-encompassing necessity for God=s people.
 - a Leviticus was designed to teach the Jews how to live as a holy people in fellowship with a holy God.
 - b They were to maintain this fellowship; there were obligations to be holy.
 - 2 This quotation from the O.T. gives emphasis to the command itself (**Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7, 26**).
 - 3 They were to be sanctified/separate from the world in every aspect of their lives.
- C Truly, no one today can see the Lord without holiness (*hagios*), separation from the world for God=s use (**Heb. 12:14**).

CONCLUSION:

- 1 The true application of the teachings of God=s grace allows us to hope to the end B Why? Because our end is secure (**vs. 1-9**).
- 2 And because we have a true hope in Jesus, then we have every reason, every incentive, to live lives of holiness.
- 3 As obedient children, we have a citizenship, which is not of this world. We are citizens of a spiritual kingdom, a heavenly kingdom. Therefore, we must conduct ourselves as such:
 - a **Jn. 15:19; 18:36** B Kingdom of God/Christ not of this world.
 - b **Col. 3:1-4** B We must have our affections changedY
 - c **I Jn. 2:15-17** B This world has nothing to offer us that is worthy of living as if belonging here.

TRUE GRACE PROVIDES SECURITY THROUGH THE POWER OF GOD

(I Peter 1:5-7)

Garland Elkins

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 Having just discussed the heavenly inheritance that is reserved for God=s faithful children (I Pet. 1:4), gives further information and instruction relative to how to obtain the great inheritance (I Pet. 5-7). Peter wrote, AWho by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time@ (I Pet. 1:5).
 - a This takes into consideration two things: The power of God by which we are guarded (kept)
 - b Our faith is in God and Jesus Christ.
- 2 There are those who make the mistake of thinking that this eternal inheritance is reserved for those who are children of God whether they remain faithful or not
 - a However they are as wrong as wrong can be.
- 3 The inheritance is reserved for those who have faith and have exercised that faith in obedience.
 - a If we deny the faith or make shipwreck of our faith we are not kept (guarded) by the power of God (I Tim. 4:1-4; I Tim. 5:8)
- 4 This inheritance is, AReady to be revealed in the last time@ (I Pet. 1:5).
 - a This inheritance is reserved until the day of judgment, which is here referred to as the last day.
 - b When the judgment day arrives the faithful will enter into heaven the home of the soul. (Mt. 25:21,23)

I WHERE IS GOD=S POWER TO SAVE?

- A It is in the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16, 17). Which is a great system of faith, often referred to as Athe faith of Jesus Christ@ (Gal. 2:16; 3:23).
 - 1 From this system of faith comes man=s individual faith (Rom. 10:17)
 - 2 Therefore, it is in this sense that our faith is made possible by the gospel Afrom faith to faith,@ as our faith complies with the conditions of the system of faith.
 - 3 Our faith (Rom.1:5; 16:25). In this way one is kept (guarded) through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

- B It is possible, however, for one's faith to fail (Lk. 22:31,32).
- 1 This happened to Israel in the wilderness, and they could not enter into God's rest because of unbelief; even so, we can be partakers of Christ only if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end (Heb 3:12-19).
 - 2 The devil seeks to devour children of God. He walks about as a roaring lion (I Pet. 5:8).
 - 3 We need to remember that those who remain faithful will receive the end of their Afaith,@ even the salvation of your souls (I Pet. 1:9).

II. THE EFFECT PRODUCED BY THIS EXPECTATION (VS. 6-7).

- A When one walks by faith he will be subjected to persecutions (2 Tim. 3:12).
- 1 Peter and John were thrown into prison, brought before the Council, and beaten, however, they departed, Arejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name@ (Acts 5:41).
 - 2 Paul and Silas with their backs still smarting, nevertheless Aprayed and sang praises unto God@ (Acts 16:25). They knew what the Hebrew writer wrote and believed (Heb. 12:2).
 - 3 Paul also gave the same assurance that afflictions @work for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory@ (2 Cor. 4:16-18), if our faith be solid and strong.

III WE ARE ASSURED THAT WHEN WE KEEP THE FAITH, STORMS MAY RAGE, BUT NOTHING CAN REALLY HARM US (MT. 10:28).

- A Many scriptures assure of God's care and protection if we are faithful to Him.
- 1 Our Lord promised to always be with us (Heb 13:5,6).
- B Our first concern must always be the approval of God (Mt. 25:)

True Grace of God Does NOT Provide for Second Chance at Death

1 Peter 3:16-22

Gary McDade

I. EXEGESIS OF THE TEXT IDENTIFYING THE SPIRITS IN PRISON.

- A. The crucial part of the text (1 Pet. 3:16-22) that comes to bear on the subject of a second chance at death is by which [in Spirit] also he [Christ] went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water (1 Pet. 3:19-20).
- B. The spirits in prison are the people who lived in Noah's day who heard him preach righteousness but did not repent (2 Pet. 2:5).
1. When the spirits in prison heard Noah preaching with the Spirit of Christ is plainly stated: While the ark was a preparing (1 Pet. 3:20).
 2. The spirits in prison were so when Peter wrote, but for some 120 years while in the flesh they had opportunity to hear Noah's preaching (Gen. 6:3).
 3. The Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years (Gen. 6:3). The Lord affirmed that His Spirit would strive with these wicked men 120 years.
 4. Noah was a preacher of righteousness who warned of the coming judgment of the flood. As an authorized agent of Christ, what Noah did Christ did through Him (cf. John 4:1-2; Eph. 2:17). Earlier Peter said, Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them [the prophets] did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow (1 Pet. 1:11).
 5. These spirits were in prison when Peter wrote because they were restrained with other wicked beings (cf. 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 20:7), who will all meet God in the judgment (Rev. 20:13).
- C. Objections presented on the assumption that Jesus in person during the three days between his death and resurrection preached to disembodied spirits from Noah's day are answered.
1. Wicked disembodied spirits are imprisoned in *tartarus*, but Jesus did not go to *tartarus* at death but to paradise (2 Pet. 2:4; Luke 23:43).
 2. On the strength of the Lord being no respecter of persons He would not single out only those from Noah's day as the audience for His preaching (Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; Gal. 2:6; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; Jas. 2:1, 9; 1 Pet. 1:17).
 3. Judgment is based according to men in the flesh or on things done in his body (1 Pet. 4:6; 2 Cor. 5:10; Job 19:25-27).
 4. Upon death the spirit enters the hades or unseen realm into either comfort (paradise) or torment (*tartarus*) to await judgment, and there is a great gulf fixed between these two such that no one may traverse either way (Luke 16:19-31).
 5. The destiny of the soul is determined at death and declared at judgment (Heb. 9:27; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:12-13).

II. EXPOSITION OF RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS ADVANCING THE POSSIBILITY OF A SECOND CHANCE UPON DEATH.

- A. Catholics--Purgatory.
- B. Mormons--Baptism for the dead.
- C. Jehovah=s Witnesses--Soul sleep/no hell.
- D. Premillennialists--Tribulation/miraculous conversion of 144,000 Jews.
- E. Buddhists/New Age--Reincarnation/transmigration.
- F. Muslims--Hell for purification/not eternal.

III. EXPOSITION OF RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS WHERE A SECOND CHANCE IS NOT EVEN NEEDED.

- A. Seventh-Day Adventists--No hell.
- B. Christian Scientists--Sin an illusion
- C. Baptists--Impossibility of apostasy.
- D. Pentecostals (Holiness)--Sanctification means the removal of both the desire and the ability to sin.
- E. Unitarians/Universalists--All saved/no hell.

IV. EXHORTATION TO CONTINUED FAITHFULNESS.

AWherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...@ (2 Cor. 5:9-11a).

BE SOBER, BE VIGILANT 1 Peter 5:8

Irene C. Taylor

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 In a world filled with turmoil and turbulence, the Christian is to be a calming, stabilizing influence.
- 2 We are to be ever ready to meet life's challenges. It is our task to raise the standard by which society operates.
- 3 It is our task to do our part in keeping the church pure. To do *so*, our lives must be pure

I "BE SOBER " DEFINED

- A To be sober "is to be calm of mind and in full control of all mental and bodily faculties" (Studies In First and Second Peter, Robert R. Taylor, Jr., author, p. 55).
- B. Our purpose for being is a serious one!
- C Webster says being sober, among other things, means "character- ized by reason, sanity, or self-control; showing mental and emotional balance."
 - D The Bible stresses the need to be sober.
 - 1 1 Thess. 5:6 "...but let us watch and be sober."
 - 2 Titus 2:12 "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, godly, in this present world;"
 - a To live soberly is the opposite of being ungodly or enmeshed in worldly lusts.
 - 3 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8 specifically address the need for for sober living by elders.
 - a How can elders properly "watch for our souls: if they are not convinced of the need for dedication to right living in the life of a Christian themselves.
 - E It is not the absence of life's light moments.
 - 1 Prov"-:17:22 "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine:..." 2. Eccles. 3:4 "...a time to laugh..."
 - a Laughter, at the proper time, is a release from the stress and cares of life.
 - b Not everything is due laughter, however. Learn the difference.

II "BE VIGILANT" DEFINED

- A Vigilance means "watchfulness."
- B Our Lord often admonished his followers to be watchful.
 - 1 Matt. 26:41 "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

2 Mark 13:35 "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh,..."

C Further admonitions to be watchful.

1 Eph. 6:18 "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watchful thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

2 2 Tim. 4:5 "But watch thou in all things..."

3 1 Pet. 4:7 "...be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."

III WHY BE SOBER AND VIGILANT?

A 1 Pet. 5:8 "...because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"

B Satan is never idle!

1 He is a roaring lion...seeking to devour.

a He is hungry, after prey.

b His aim is to harm the Christian.

c He fights good and promotes evil.

d He disperses doubts and weakens faith in God.

2 He walketh about, seeking...

a He never rests, is always active and at work.

b He strikes at our weakest point, at our weakest moment.

c He is an "equal opportunity" destroyer.

d He does not mind our being religious as long as we are not steadfastly loyal to God and His Cause.

IV WE MUST RESIST THE DEVIL

A This requires that we be steadfast, dedicated to God.

B James 4:7 "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

C Know the Scriptures and follow them.

1 Jesus showed the way (Matt. 4; Luke 4).

2 1 Cor. 10:13 "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

D Be steadfast, unmovable.

1 1 Cor. 15:58 "...be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,..."

2 Steadfastness is "rock-like stability, a solidity and firm-ness originating in faith; not, however, objective faith-- unwavering orthodoxy--but an immovable trust in God" (Guy N. Woods).

CONCLUSION:

- 1 Soberness and vigilance go hand-in-hand. These Christian attributes demand constant alertness lest we crack the door open to Satan. .
- 2 Jesus will not enter unless He is welcomed. Satan can not enter unless we let him but he stands ever ready to pounce at the slightest opening.
- 3 It behooves us, therefore, that we truly "Be sober, be vigilant" lest Satan bar the door to heaven. We must "walk by faith" (2 Cor. 5:7) "not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8: 1) .

TRUE GRACE OF GOD PROVIDES ELECTION AND LIVELY HOPE

1 Peter 1:2-4

Jerry L. Martin

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 I am honored to be a part of this great lectureship and to be discussing this important topic. I express my appreciation to the elders and brother David Jones for inviting me to come. I have the highest respect for brother Jones and his good wife and I cherish their friendship. I also want to acknowledge the reputation this congregation has for their faithfulness to God and love for the souls of man.
- 2 There is an ever increasing need to discuss the topic of grace. It is such a precious subject to the saints and yet so perverted in the world. Many want to make grace a syrupy substance that is poured out of heaven onto select people and once you are covered in it you can't wash it off. There are others who ignore grace all together and contend that man's salvation is totally dependent on his own meritorious works.
- 3 Our discussion, thankfully, deals with the true grace, which is the undeserved and unmerited favor of God, that is extended to all. It is accepted by the obedient. It is the motivation for the saved. Grace provides hopeful expectation and confident assurance to all the redeemed. In the assigned text there are some important facts to consider concerning grace, election and hope.
 1. GOD MADE THE DETERMINATION (1:2a)
 - A. In our text, we clearly see that the election under consideration is according to God's predetermined purpose.
 - B. The Aelect@ are those who are selected or chosen according to a divine plan (John 3:16-17; John 1:12-14; Eph. 1:2-5; Titus 2:11a; 1 Pet. 2:9).

II. THE SPIRIT DEMANDS SANCTIFICATION (1:2b)

- A. The elect are separated from the world and sanctified, or set apart, for a holy use.
- B. It is the Spirit of Truth that dictates the terms of this sanctification (John 14:16,17; 16:13; 17:17; 1 Peter 1:22).

III. MAN MUST MEET DIVINE STIPULATIONS (1:2c)

- A. Obedience is the stipulation man must meet if he is to be God=s elect.
- B. God has chosen to save only those who are willing to conform to His will (Titus 2:11; Heb. 5:8, 9; Heb. 6:17, 18; 1 Peter 1:22-25; Matt. 7:21-23; Rom. 12:1-2; Rev. 22:14).

IV. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST PROVIDES EMANCIPATION (1:2d)

- A. God=s grace is appropriated only through the blood of Christ.
- B. His blood is the price paid for our freedom from sin (1 Peter 1:18, 19; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:13-14; Heb. 9:22; John 1:29; 1 John 2:1-3; 1:7-10).

V. THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD DEMONSTRATE APPRECIATION (1:3)

- A. Continual thanksgiving should be offered to our gracious God for His bountiful mercy.
- B. We can demonstrate our appreciation and sincere gratitude for God's grace through prayer and practice (2 Cor. 9:6-13; Eph. 5:19-20; Col. 3:15-17; Phil. 4:6-9; Titus 2:11-14; 2 Peter 1:2-12; 1 Cor. 6:19-20).

V. THE CHILD OF GOD LIVES WITH DAILY EXPECTATIONS (1:3b, 4)

- A. Those who are begotten of God are His elect and they have a living hope.
- B. We have countless blessings here and sure expectation of an eternal inheritance in heaven (Heb. 11:1; John 10:10; Mark 10:29-30; Matt. 25:31-34; John 14:1-3; Titus 1:1,2).

CONCLUSION:

- 1 May we never forget and forever appreciate God's saving grace.
- 2 Let us determine to heed Peter's charge: *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall@ (2 Peter 1:10). Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen@ (1 Peter 5:8-11).*

THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD PROVIDES THE OPEN EAR OF GOD

I Peter 3:8-12

Johnny Burkhart

THESIS: to show God extends His amazing grace to us in answering our prayers.

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 Potentially, one of the greatest blessings of God's grace is God's willingness to hear and answer prayer.
- 2 The song, What a Friend We Have in Jesus, reminds us, O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.
 - a "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn. 15:7).
 - b "Ask , and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matt. 7:8-9).
- 3 In this lesson we will note the correlation between:
 - a The open ear of God and righteous living.
 - b The open ear of God and a "refrained tongue."
 - c The open ear of God and receiving God's grace.

I THE OPEN EAR OF GOD AND RIGHTEOUS LIVING (I PET. 3:8-9).

- A The Lord's ear is open to the righteous and righteousness involves:
 - 1 Oneness among brethren (Jn. 17:3).
 - 2 Compassion (Matt. 14:14; Lk. 7:13; Mk. 3:1-5).
 - 3 Loving our brethren (I Cor. 13:1-3).
- B Many rely on turning to the world rather than God (Jn. 15:7).
 - 1 The early Christians were joyful people (Acts 2:41).
 - 2 Many don't love life; 86 people per day commit suicide (I Pet. 3:13).
 - 3 We live in a "sad world;" Christian Psychology Today, \$200

million per year for tranquilizers, \$200 million for sleeping aids.

II THE OPEN EAR OF GOD DEMANDS WE BE CAREFUL WHAT WE SAY (I PET. 3:10).

- A The inconsistency of the mouth (Jam. 3).
 - 1 We bless God and curse man (Jam. 3:9-10).
 - 2 James give three illustrations of the tongue.
 - a Idle words will be brought into judgment (Matt. 12:36-37).
 - b Words indicate our character (Matt. 15:1-20).
 - c An informed challenge (Eph. 4:29).

III THE OPEN EAR OF GOD AND RECEIVING GOD'S GRACE (I PET. 3:12)

- A God is the God of all grace (I Pet. 5:10).

- B God is gracious with His answer to our prayers (Jam. 5:16).
 - 1 A request for a child (I Sam. 1:24-28).
 - 2 A short prayer is answered (Neh. 2:4).
 - 3 God can hear from the depths of the sea (Jon. 2:4-8).
 - 4 God is merciful to sinners (Lk. 18:10-14).

- C The true grace of God is seen daily as God hears and answers prayer (Lk. 18:1).

CONCLUSION:

- 1 Ere you left your room this morning, did you think to pray?

- 2 One of the grandest privileges a child will ever know is the privilege of prayer.

- 3 Thanks be to God for His amazing grace in hearing and answering our every prayer.

THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD PROVIDED THE CHURCH:

1 Peter 1:8-12

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

INTRODUCTION:

1. ABy Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand@ (I Pet. 5:12)
 2. The Atrue grace of God@ is not Agrace only@ as supposed by sectarians, but is the source from which the gospel of Christ originated and by whom the church was built (Pet. 1:8-12; Matt. 16:18).
 3. An exegesis of I Peter 1:8-12 should help the honest seeker of truth to understand how God=s true grace provided the New Testament Church.
- I. AOF WHICH SALVATION@ (1 PETER 1:10).
- A. Since salvation is the Aend@ (aim or goal) of the soul (I Pet. 1:9), one needs to know about this salvation.
 1. The Old Testament prophets, themselves, were curious about the new salvation (I Pet. 1:10).
 2. According to Peter, who wrote of the Atrue grace,@ the prophets were thus inquiring about a new plan!
 3. Also, the writing of the Old Testament prophets was part of Agrace@, and, therefore, the church originates out of grace (Isaiah 53; Jeremiah 31; Daniel 2; Joel 2; Micah 5; etcetera).
 - B. The second century preacher, Clement of Alexandria, wrote that Athe spirit of Christ was in the prophets in their predictions of the incarnate Lord. The fulfillment that the prophets desired would not occur in their time but ours@ (Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, p. 73).
 1. Clement was commenting on I Peter 1:11, but note that he understood that a new situation arose that did not apply to the time in which the prophets wrote.
 2. A new people were to be established.
- II. ASEARCHING WHAT@ (I PETER 1:11).
- A. The Old Testament prophets searched for answers as to just what they were prophesying (I Pet. 1:11)
 1. In that ancient day, the true grace was a Amystery@ (I Cor. 2:9-13).
 2. However, that mystery, a church consisting of Jews and Gentiles is now revealed (Eph.. 3:1-11).
 - B. Jesus came to this earth to reveal that God wanted one church (a Acalled-out@ people) in order to glorify Him (Matt. 16:13-19).
 1. Jesus came to seek the lost (Luke 19:10).
 2. Jesus came to bring true life (John 10:10).
 3. Jesus came so that God=s true grace would teach all men how to live (Titus 2:9-14).

4. Therefore, outside of the church built by Christ there is no true grace (Eph. 1:20-22; 4:1-6; 5:23-25).
5. One Asaved by grace through faith@ must be in His church (Eph. 5:23).

III. ATHE THINGS@ (I PETER 1:12).

- A. Even angels were unaware of the Amystery@ of a new church until the gospel plan was fully revealed (I Pet. 1:12).
- B. Are angels interested in man?
 1. They have been servants of man (c.f. Heb. 1:14).
 2. They fed Elijah, gave the law to Moses, and are interested in our worship (2 Kings 1:3; Heb. 2:1-4; I Cor. 11:10).
- C. And, when the mystery was revealed, the angels were made fully aware of God=s Amanifold wisdom@ (Eph. 3:10).
 1. The Apowers and principalities in heavenly places@ are angels.
 - a. Seraphim (Isa. 6).
 - b. Cherubim (Gen. 2).
 - c. Archangels (Dan. 10).
 - d. Ministering angels (Heb. 1).
 2. When the angels saw the church, they saw all that the true grace of God provided.

IV. ATHE GOSPEL PREACHED@ (I PETER 1:12).

- A. The true grace of God teaches one to love God.
- B. But, in order to access grace one must love God (John 14:15; I John 5:3; Rom. 5:1).
- C. In order to love God, one must also love the church true grace provided (Eph. 5:25; Acts 9:1-6).

CONCLUSION:

1. God=s grace provided one church or one group of called-out people (I Pet. 2:9).
2. Therefore, one in the church is in true grace.

Ready To Answer - I Peter 3:13-16

Patrick Morrison

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 1 Peter was written during a time of great persecution upon the early church.
 - a The great fire which burned Rome prompted many to point the finger of blame at Nero, who was not very popular among the citizens of Rome.
 - b Nero quickly placed the blame on Christians, who had already been the target of numerous persecutions.
 - c The persecution against the church was about to become even more widespread and harsh.

- 2 An understanding of the manner in which many Christians were persecuted helps us better to understand the text at hand.
 - a Those who professed to be Christians, or were accused of such, were brought to trial.
 - b Those brought before these mock trials were given the opportunity to deny Jesus Christ as Lord and instead proclaim Caesar as Lord.
 - c Those who refused to deny the Lord were subjected to physical abuse so that they would renounce their faith.
 - d Death was the lot of those who refused to renounce their faith.

- 3 The above thoughts provide the background for 1 Peter 3:15.
 - a What would be the answer of those put on trial for their faith?
 - b Would they deny their Lord, or would they defend their faith?
 - c The word translated Answer comes from the Greek *apologia*, meaning, A Verbal defense; reasoned statement or argument.

- 4 The thoughts of 1 Peter 3:15 imply a few things:
 - a First, something must arouse suspicion that the one under consideration is a Christian, whether by profession or by manner of life.
 - b Second, the one under consideration will be willing to give an answer.

- 5 Being ready to defend our faith requires:
 - a Christ sanctified in our hearts
 - b Command of the Scriptures
 - c Consciousness of souls
 - d Conscience that is spotless
 - e Character that is sterling

- I. CHRIST SANCTIFIED IN OUR HEARTS
 - A. Sanctify means to set apart.
 1. Christ must be set apart in our lives.
 2. He must be enthroned in our hearts, rule our lives.

 - B. Those who set apart Christ in their lives will appear different to the world (see Acts 4:13, Gal.2:20).

 - C. That which rules the heart will rule the life (see Prov.4:23, Mt.6:19-21).

II. COMMAND OF THE SCRIPTURES

- A. Being ready to defend our faith demands that we know the answer.
- B. We must also have the willingness and the courage to make a defense of our faith.
 - 1. Perhaps not knowing the Scriptures as we should causes us not to have the willingness or the courage we need.
 - 2. If we don't defend the pure faith, who will?
- C. Do we have a command of the Scriptures?
 - 1. A lack of knowledge of the word of God has been a problem with God's people throughout time (see Hos.4:6; Jer.4:22).
 - 2. Are we ashamed of the gospel, or are we willing to defend it?
 - 3. Do we have the willingness to proclaim our faith?

III. A CONSCIOUSNESS OF SOULS

- A. Many wait on someone to come to them before giving a defense of their faith.
 - 1. Our society conditions us not to offend others.
 - 2. Many in the church want to sit back and wait on everyone to come to us.
- B. We need to be soul-conscious!
 - 1. Do we realize the value of a soul (see Mt.10:28; 16:26)?
 - 2. This should cause us to search out the lost, not wait on them to come to us.
 - 3. Everyday, souls are ushered into eternity unprepared to meet God. Are we prepared to give an answer for those we pass up?

IV. A CONSCIENCE THAT IS SPOTLESS.

- A. God instilled within each of us a conscience.
 - 1. It convicts of sin (Jn.8:9).
 - 2. It also bears witness (Rom.2:15).
- B. Our goal should be to have a spotless conscience (see Acts 23:1; 24:16).
- C. We must be careful not to ignore a conscience that has been properly trained (1 Tim.4:2).

V. A CHARACTER THAT IS STERLING.

- A. What better way to have a spotless conscience than by living what we profess?
- B. What quicker way to shut the mouths of those who falsely accuse us (see Tit.2:8)?
- C. Hypocrisy is never a good defense!
 - 1. Who will want to hear of the hope in Christ from one who is unwilling to live it?
 - 2. One who is truly convicted of what he believes is a great ambassador for truth.

TRUE GRACE OF GOD WARNS AGAINST OUR ADVERSARY (5:8)

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 Since there is so much error taught about the grace of God, both out of the church and in the church, Nesbit is to be commended for having an entire lectureship on the true grace of God wherein we all should be standing.
- 2 There were those who misunderstood and abused the true grace of God in the first century.
 - a The true grace of God implies false concepts of grace.
 - b Look at what Paul wrote in Romans 5:20-6:2.
 - c Among false teachers Jude said they turned "the grace of God into lasciviousness" (Jude 4).
- 3 Such errors persist even to our day.
 - a There is the grace only dogma accepted by many even among us.
 - b Some say there are no stipulations incumbent on men for pardon.
 - c One said he could die in the act of committing adultery with another man's wife and the grace of God still would save him ultimately.
- 4 Satan, our adversary, is happy with false concepts of grace. It's the true grace of God which he hates with a passion and fights persistently.

1 AN ANALYSIS OF 1 PETER 5:8-9.

- A As Peter wrote this perhaps he remembered what Jesus told him in Luke 22:31-32. Peter knew firsthand about the reality of Satan and what the adversary could and would do by way of powerful temptations.
- B "Be sober"--This is calmness of mind and full control of all mental and bodily faculties.

- C "Be vigilant"--This means alert watchfulness. There had been a time when Peter, James and John, the Inner Three, had not be as alert or watchful as Christ commanded them to be (Matthew 26:40,41; cf. Mark 13:35,37; Acts 20:31; I Corinthians 16:13).
- D Sobriety and vigilance are joined because of the ceaseless work of our diabolical adversary.
- E The devil is styled our adversary.
- 1 He is a slanderer. Look at how he slandered the good name of Job in Job 1,2.
 - 2 He is an accuser. He accuses man to God, God to man and man to man. This is his threefold mission of mischief.
 - 3 As an adversary he is our opponent in the grave issues of life and death, in the here and now, in the there and then. He desires no one to go to heaven and all go to hell with him.
- F He is as a roaring lion. He roars as he seeks his prey much like a hungry lion does in seeking its prey at mealtime. Lions are known for strength, fearlessness and ferociousness. In Revelation 5 Christ is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He uses his strength and fearlessness to help and heal the sin-sick; Satan uses his power and ferociousness to destroy, to devour.

- G Satan walks about. This reflects his restless and resolute determination to pursue his goal of total human destruction. Satan told Jehovah, when inquired about his actions and intents, that he had been "going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it" (Job 1:7; 2:2). Jesus "went about" in Acts 10:38. His going about was to do good and to heal all who were oppressed of the devil. What a contrast!
- H Satan seeks to devour. This means to swallow, to gulp down. It meant spiritual destruction to his victims. He seeks the whole of humanity as his victims--not just a few or most. He is unhappy with even one disciple who is loyal to the Christ and His Holy Father in heaven.
- I Verse 9 affirms that he can be resisted.
- 1 Some negative considerations first.
 - a This is not by "a miracle a day keeps the devil away" as advocated in a Pat Boone book some years ago.
 - b This is not by flirting with him and his cronies in crime here on earth.
 - c This is not by warming at the fire ignited by the devil's crew as Simon Peter did during the Lord's trials (Luke 22:55).
 - d This is not by lethal compromise.
 - e This is not by relying on the doctrines and commandments of men.
 - f This is not by relying solely on our own strength.
 - 2 Some positive considerations.
 - a What James said is tantamount to what Peter wrote (James 4:7).
 - b What Paul wrote (Ephesians 4:27).
 - c What the Psalmist wrote (Psalm 119:170).
 - d What John wrote in I John 2:15-17; Note verses 12-14.
 - e Peter supplies the key for successfully resisting himB Ain the

faith. Remain steadfast. This means rock-like stability and fullness of firmness.

f How Christ resisted him in Matthew 4 and Luke 4.

g Peter told his readers that they were not alone. Your brethren face the same afflictions. Do not forget the ones who have gone before you. They resisted him and died in the warm embrace of faith.

h The true grace of God helps us mightily. Cheap grace delivers us straight into his diabolical clutches.

II THE DEVIL HAS BEEN, IS STILL AND EVER WILL BE AN ADVERSARY.

A He was to Adam and Eve. (Genesis 3).

B He was to Job (Job 1,2).

C He was to David (I Chronicles 21:1).

D He was to Joshua the high priest (Zechariah 3:1).

E He was to Judas Iscariot (Luke 22:3).

F He was to Peter and the apostles (Luke 22:31,32). Note especially the usage of pronouns--you and then thee.

G He was to Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1ff).

H He was to the faithful at Smyrna (Revelation 2:10).

I He was to the churches of Asia as all of the book of Revelation reveals.

J He has not changed. He still is an adversary--an unrelenting one fully set for our spiritual destruction.

K He will not change. He shall ever and always be an adversary. That is his ignoble and dishonorable character.

CONCLUSION:

- 1 The true grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.
- 2 It teaches or instructs us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts which our adversary places before us so seductively.
- 3 It inculcates us to live soberly (right with self), righteously (right with others) and godly (right before God) in this present world (Titus 2:11,12).
- 4 This is inward, outward and upward living. This is the way to think, to speak and to act. Beyond question or quibble this is the "true grace of God wherein ye stand-" (1 Peter 5:8)

The True Grace of God Provides...

A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH

Wayne Jones

INTRODUCTION:

1. The above phrase is found four times in Scripture.
 - a. For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind@ (Isa. 65:17).
 - b. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain@ (Isa. 66:22).
 - c. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness@ (2 Pet. 3:13).
 - d. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea@ (Rev. 21:1).
2. In each instance it should be noted that the inspired writer is referring to a time in which God would introduce a new system or order of things.
 - a. In Isaiah=s case God has often promised a system of faith beyond that of Judaism. That new system would have new a...
 - (1) House (Isa. 2:2; cf. I Tim. 3:15).
 - (2) Law (Isa. 2:3; cf. Luke 24:47).
 - (3) Sacrifice (Isa. 53:10; Heb. 10:12).
 - (4) Name (Isa. 62:2; cf. Acts 11:26).
 - b. This new system of which Isaiah spoke was introduced on the day of PentecostBthe former (Judaism) was taken away and the new (the church) was introduced and it will remain.
 - c. Peter and John take the same phrase and once again apply it to a time in which God will take away one system and replace it with another.
 - (1) The old or former of Peter=s writings represents the current dwelling place of God=s peopleBevidenced by the phrase heaven and earth.
 - (2) The new or future place of Peter and John=s writings represents the future dwelling place of God=s people.
 - (3) Just as it was necessary for Judaism to be taken away so that Christianity could be introduced; it is necessary that God destroy the current dwelling place of His people so that He can introduce the newBheaven.
3. Furthermore, in each instance it was the grace of God that provided for that change.
 - a. In the coming of Christ, God=s grace is easily seen: AAnd the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth@ (John 1:14).
 - b. Furthermore, in hope of heaven, God=s grace is also easily seen: AThat being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life@ (Titus 3:7).
4. Thus, title of our lesson could read, The True Grace of God Provides A Place of Future AbodeBA place known as HEAVEN.
5. By noting the majority of II Peter chapter three, several things about this Anew heavens and new

earth@ are revealed. Such as, the Anew heavens and new earth@ are...

I. PROMISED BY A GREAT GOD.

- A. In two different verses of our text, the phrase Ahis promise@ is used (3:9, 13).
- B. The greatness of this promise is seen in the fact that God, Himself made it.
 - 1. Any promise of God is a great promise and is worth the wait to benefit from its fulfillment.
 - 2. Abraham stands an Old Testament example such a fact.
 - 3. Joseph and Mary stand as New Testament examples of such a fact.
- C. The greatness of this promise is seen in the fact that God did not have to make it.
 - 1. It was man=s choice to disobey God=s commands in the garden.
 - 2. God had already created a place that was perfect in which man could dwell.
 - 3. Within the borders of the perfect place was the tree of life.
 - 4. It was God=s grace that placed that tree in another place of paradise (Rev. 2:7); and it was God=s grace to promised faithful men eternal residence in that same place.
- D. The greatness of this promise is seen in the fact that it was made on several occasions by the very Son of God.
 - 1. In the sermon on the mount Jesus Christ promised a reward in heaven (Matt. 5:12).
 - 2. In various parables, Jesus foretold of this place (Matt. 25:10, 23, 34).
 - 3. In private conversations with his disciples, Jesus attempted to describe this future place of abode (John 14:1-6).
- E. The greatness of this promise is seen in the human terms used to define this divinely prepared place (Rev. 21:1-5, 10-25).
- F. Furthermore, the greatness of this promise is seen in the fact that it is the final result of other great promises (i.e., Gen. 3:15 and Gen. 12:1-2).

II. OPPOSED BY A GREAT ENEMY.

- A. Satan is known for opposing the grace of God.
 - 1. He was opposed to God=s grace in giving Adam and Eve a perfect place to live; so he tempted them to sin and to risk losing that place.
 - 2. He was opposed to Cain receiving divine forgiveness by offering the correct sacrifice; so he tempted him to sin and to risk not receiving such.
 - 3. He was opposed to God=s grace in providing Israel with a land of their own; so he hardened Pharaoh=s heart, he often turned the people again Moses and he influenced ten of the spies to be afraid of the giants; all so they would sin and risk not entering into the promised land.
- B. Friends, he is opposed to the promise of grace that God has made in heaven above; so he...tempts men to teach false doctrines concerning heaven and the promises about it.
 - 1. Some of those doctrines are mentioned in our text.
 - a. Consider II Peter 3:3, 4BSome were claiming that Christ would not return. No return would mean no judgement. No judgement would mean no reward or punishment. No reward and no punishment would mean no hell and no heaven.
 - b. Peter is quick to answer that teaching with truth (3:5-9).

2. Still other devilish doctrines were promised by Peter from those that will twist these passages and others like them (3:16).
 - a. One such doctrine is that of the Jehovah=s Witnesses.
 - (1) They claim that 3:10 is about a fire of purification that will renovate the earth so that it can be inhabited by the righteous who are not part of the 144,000.
 - (2) The answer is obvious and manifold: first, there is nothing in the text to suggest a fire of purification. Second, other elements of their doctrine such as only 144,00 going to heaven are also false. Third, in going back to a previously made pointBin order for one system to be introduced the former must be taken away!
- C. As long as time continues and Satan can still influence men to believe a lie, he will continue to twist the truth and deceive the masses about things which are clear and obvious in God=s revealed Word.

III. PRECEDED BY A GREAT NOISE.

- A. There are going to be a series of a events that will take place before we are able live in that new heaven and new earth.
 1. First, there will be the return of our Lord: AFor the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God...@ (I Thess. 4:16a).
 2. Then there will be the resurrection of the righteous and the exaltation of the righteous that are living: A...and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord@ (I Thess. 4:16b-17).
 3. Then those who are wicked will be raised (John 5:28-29). Wether the resurrections of the good and bad are simultaneous or if one is just before the other; they will take place in the same time frame for the same purpose.
 4. Finally, the wicked and the righteous will be judged and reward according to their deeds (Matt. 25; Heb. 9:27).
- B. Satan=s spokesmen have altered every conceivable aspect of the above mentioned events, but the fact remains, we have supported each event with Scripture. Satan and his followers cannot do that.

IV. OCCUPIED BY A GREAT PEOPLE.

- A. Peter clearly identifies the inhabitants of this dwelling place as the righteous (3:13).
- B. This description excludes many people.
 1. It excludes Satan himself.
 2. It excludes those who were destroyed in the flood of Genesis 7 and the fires of Genesis 19.
 3. It excludes those listed in Galatians 5:19-21, I Corinthians 6:9-10 and Revelation 21:8.
 4. In reality in excludes any who travel down the broad way (Matt. 7:13).
- C. On the other hand this description includes many people.
 1. Most importantly, it includes God the Father, Son and Spirit.
 2. It includes men like Noah and Abraham who were not sinless, but they were continually walking with and toward God.

3. It includes men like Daniel and Joseph who in the face of persecution continued to serve God.
4. It includes women like Esther and Deborah who filled the role God gave them and did so with dignity.
5. Since it will be the dwelling place of the righteous then it must contain anyone who faithfully did God's commands: My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness@ (Psalm 119:172).
6. In other words, it will be occupied by those who walked the narrow way (Matt. 7:14).

V. **REQUIRES A GREAT COMMITMENT.**

- A. While it is the grace of God that provides a new heaven and new earth wherein the righteous can dwell, it is up to us to access that grace.
 1. Paul revealed that place or person of access: Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God@ (Rom. 5:1-2).
 2. Furthermore, Paul revealed how we get into Christ so that we could find grace: For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ@ (Gal. 3:27).
- B. Once in Christ, we must be committed and that commitment must be noticed in our lives. That is what Peter reveals in our text.
 1. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness@ (3:11).
 2. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless@ (3:14).
- C. If we falter in this commitment, we will be reminded of it in the judgement: But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven@ (Matt. 10:33).

CONCLUSION:

1. Thanks be to God that his grace has provided a place for us to live if we remain faithful.
2. In that promise of heaven, is also found a motivation for us to be the kind of people we ought to be from day to day.
3. Every person has been given the same promise, but not all will be motivated by it.
4. Dear friend, what will your reaction be to the true grace of God that has provided us with the hope of a new heaven and new earth.