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The Grace of God

*But God, who is rich in mercy,
for his great love wherewith he loved us,
Even when we were dead in sins,
hath quickened us together with Christ,
(by grace ye are saved;)
Ephesians 2: 4-5 (KJV)*

God's Grace defined.

Please do not take just my words on this, definition of God's Grace but study within the Bible to determine God's grace for yourself.

God's grace, shown partly through the somewhat synonymous term Love in the song "The Love of God", states "Nor could the scroll contain the whole, [Love of God] Tho stretched from sky to sky." (The Hymnal for Worship & Celebration)

Even if I wrote all the time I could never even dare to explain God's grace. I'll try to give a glimpse of how it is partly to me and what I have learned from others about God's grace. If you ask me say in one year maybe one month maybe one day I might explain it even different for I am continually learning of God's grace.

God's grace saved me from my sins through leading me to Him and sending His Son to die on the cross for my sins. As I walk the path of life His grace has no doubt been with me constantly because He, for one thing, is always forgiving me and is helping me throughout my life in many ways, of which many I don't even recognize or know.

As I write this I remember God's grace yesterday for me. I had the opportunity to drive three youth up to a Christian camp. I was able to listen to their testimonies of how they were saved from their sins by God.

Another way God's grace has been in my life a great deal is that my parents have raised me up like the saying "in the way that he should go." There has been up and down times but throughout it all their love has been there for me. God's grace has given me wonderful parents, family, friends, and new friends.

As you can see God's grace works in many ways. I'll try to bring more ways through out the rest of this paper, perhaps repeating some in deeper detail from a different view, same view or different times.

God's Grace

God's Grace through out the fall of man.

Blood shed to protect Adam and Eve.(blood of a lamb)

Genesis 2:17 sin=death

Through the sin of one man, Adam whom God created in his own image. That sin, Adam's sin was a sin of disobedience to God. We may think well disobedience is not that big of sin however the Bible teaches: *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one*

point, he is guilty of all. James 2:10 (KJV) As well God can not allow no wickedness to enter into his presence: As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. Psalms 68:2 (KJV)

Genesis 3:19 consequences of eating, disobeying God.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed by eating of the tree of good and evil. Eve was lead by Satan to believe that she would be like God knowing good and evil: *And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. Genesis 3:4-5 (KJV)* Then she gave unto Adam the fruit to eat. Since they had done this they knew that they were without clothing, naked. In essence becoming ashamed I believe.

Sacrifices provided.

Genesis 3:21 The blood of lambs shed to cover their sin.

When God came to speak with Adam and Eve, He asked where they where? The answer He already knew, but as Pastor Dennis Kirkland has said before God was probably giving them a chance to come and say we have done something wrong, please forgive us. However they did not, but still through God's grace. God provided a way for them to still be right with Him. He shed the blood of lambs and covered Adam and Eve with the lambs, skin in this symbolizing Jesus' blood on the cross one day. Adam and Eve where made to go out of the Garden of Eden and now because of sin they would die someday.

Now if they would be obedient to God sacrificing to Him, they would one day die but only die physically but would be resurrected into eternity, because of Jesus. On the other hand if they where not obedient they would die a physical death and spiritual death.

God's Grace to His chosen people.

Ten Commandment provided.

The Ten Commandments where given to Moses by God. These commandments provided rules and laws for the children of Israel to live by. To this day they are good moral standards but no one can hope to be able to do them all for it is impossible. The laws where for the time of Israel before Jesus Christ came and died for our sins. The commandments provided rules for the children of Israel to sacrifice so that they could remain under God's Grace. Sacrificing signified a greater sacrifice yet to come.

God sent prophets to guide Israel according to His plan.

These prophets wrote the Old Testament which we have even unto this day. God's grace was unto his people at that time but also was extended unto us through the Bible.

The prophets like Jeremiah warned Israel to forsake their evil ways. God's grace was extended unto Israel over and over again. Gentiles even had God's grace during that time. They could become part of God's chosen people, Israel and become saved through sacrificing and following the commandments God provided. You may think why would someone have to sacrifice to be saved, but that this is no longer needed today. Sacrificing then was to symbolize and covered their sins only for a time until Jesus came and took away the sins of "all Times" past , present, and future.

God's Grace to all.

Jesus Christ sent to die once and for all people and all sins.

Jesus Christ came to earth born of a virgin with no stain of Adam's sin by birth. He came, lead, witnessed, and guided those to God that would call upon Jesus' name asking for forgiveness. He was and is pure and spotless with out sin. He died upon the Cross for your sins and mine. Jesus even died for Apostle Paul who said "I am the chief of sinners". Paul said this because he killed Christians, and yet Jesus saved Paul. So however vile you think your sin is, Jesus died for you! *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Acts 2:21 (KJV)*

God's Grace leads you unto Him. (Gary Belair)

God leads people unto Himself, a small nudge, a pricking of the heart, a wonderment of that around you, wanting more, sometimes, possibly always God is working within you to come unto Him. Have you ever wondered why or how you where saved? It was not of your own doing but of God's. He lead you by His Grace unto Himself.

God's Grace to Christians.

The Holy Spirit, Comforter sent to help and guide us. (Delton Koehn)

During the time of the Old Testament people where saved by the grace of God and the Holy Spirit dwelt within those chosen by God.

God sent the Holy Spirit to help Jesus Christ. *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: Matthew 3:16 (KJV)*

The believers such as Peter, Paul, and many others had the Holy Spirit come upon them at the time known as the Pentecost.:

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:1-4 (KJV)

A person who has been saved through Jesus Christ has the Holy Spirit dwelling within them. The Holy Spirit comforts, guides, chides, and helps us in many other ways, in our daily walk with God.

God allows us to have trials.

Through out our lives God leads and directs sometimes by allowing trials, and temptations. Why would God allow trials come upon us? Sometimes we need to know and understand that we cannot get through this world alone, but that we need God's help. As James writes we have our faith strengthened through trials and temptations.

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Blessed 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. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But 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.

James 1:2-4, 12-15 (KJV)

When we look unto God in trials and temptations we shall surely grow.

For example:

Your driving on your way to a meal at the king's palace. Pride has managed to get the best of you once again. You had been bragging earlier that day about going to the palace. Pride really swelled within you as you spoke to your friend about that banquet you were going to that evening. As your driving to the palace on a cold and windy night with a touch of snow whispering along the ground. You hear this loud bang then the chariot starts to shake and rattle as your going down the cobblestone. Jumping out you check around the chariot and notice the wheel has lost several spokes and realization hits you that you forgot to pick up a few spokes earlier that day.

Then you remember that your friend lives only a short way up the road, and that most likely he has a few spare spokes.

All of this could have been brought about to help you realize that pride is the downfall of man and that you need to be humble.

As you start walking to your friend's house you have time to think about how you treated him earlier that day and by the time you get there readiness in your soul brings you to make amends with him when you greet him.

God could possibly work this way and/or in many other ways in our lives even through trials and temptations.

God's Grace in my life.

Testimony

When I was in the 3rd or 4th grade, age 9-10. One evening after coming home from Church is when I gave my heart to the Lord. A few things that stick out to me are: I had brought a toy airplane home from the church nursery that evening, which really should have stayed there. I can't remember for sure if I prayed the sinner's pray or not but I believe I did. Later on as I was playing with that airplane, flying it around the table. I remember thinking something along the lines that this needs to go back to the nursery. Because I didn't want to get in trouble. I believe

right after that I had a calming peace of mind about it. I believe this is when the Holy Spirit entered into my life.

Minister Leroy made mention to my Dad that I seemed a bit different. I don't remember how long from then till I was baptized but I do remember bringing my testimony before the congregation, and being baptized with my cousin Dalen and my sister Chandra. I was baptized by Minister Doug Koehn at the "Church in Christ Mennonite" in Livingston, California. As I went through life later on I seemed to walk away from God, but as we started going to Richfield Bible Church and as I was preparing for Cedar Mountain Retreat in the summer of 2001. I searched deeply trying to remember more and more about my testimony. In the week before camp I really searched also when I went to camp it was a very good experience for me. As I made new friends and after camp someone really helped me work through worry. As I look back upon remembering my testimony I take great comfort in the peace of the Holy Spirit within me.

I would hope that readers would realize that they need to bring their testimony to the front of their minds every so often or better yet continually remembering that time when they gave their soul to Jesus Christ. I believe even through me not remembering as I would have like to the Holy Spirit has used this lesson to bring me closer to God.

Realizations of Grace.

God works through the Holy Spirit even in our day to day lives. The working of the Holy Spirit seems to work within us constantly to a degree. When we try to do everything on our own is when the Holy Spirit says "Wait a minute there!, Are you sure about that?" Sometimes through guidance, chiding, comforting, and many other ways the Holy Spirit works in our lives. For example: As you start making decisions that may affect the rest of your life. Then out of nowhere it seems a door is shut, and you realize that you no longer will be able to take that path in life, but another door opens up and you begin to think and head in the way that God has chosen for you. For no matter how hard you try sometimes it seems that is the only way to go.

God's Grace can help you.

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-9 (KJV)

As the above passage said we are saved by Jesus Christ through God's grace.

In the Bible we are told how Jesus Christ died on the Cross for our sins once and for all if we would pray to Jesus Christ asking him for our forgiveness of our sins, and believe Jesus Christ the Son of God died for our sins then we are saved from death eternal, and when we die we are saved by Jesus Christ before God in heaven. That we might live eternally with Jesus Christ forever and ever.

Notes:

Quickened means to be: made one with Jesus Christ.

Song:

"The Love of God"

1. The love of God is greater far Than tongue or pen can ever tell, It goes beyond the highest star
And reaches to the lowest hell; The guilty pair, bowed down with care, God gave His Son to
win: His erring child He reconciled And pardoned from his sin.
2. When years of time shall pass away And earthly throngs and kingdoms fall, When men, who
here refuse to pray, On rocks and hills and mountains call, God's love so sure shall still
endure, All measureless and strong: Redeeming grace to Adam's race- The saints' and angels'
song.
3. Could we with ink the ocean fill And were the skies of parchment made, Were every stalk on
earth a quill And every man a scribe by trade, To write the love of God above Would drain
the ocean dry, Nor could the scroll contain the whole Tho stretched from sky to sky.

Chorus:

O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
It shall forever more endure- The saints' and angels' song.

Author: Frederick M. Lehman

The Hymnal for Worship & Celebration

Works Cited:

KJV (King James Version), "Thompson Chain-Reference Holy Bible"

Delton G. Koehn, My Dad

Dennis Kirkland, Former Pastor

Gary Belair, Friend

"The Hymnal for Worship & Celebration"