

June 5, 2022

Viewpoint from the Valley Grove Church Of Christ

“Those Who Had Believed Through Grace”

By Ron Daly

The word “grace” (Grk. *charis*), in connection with God’s plan of redemption for mankind, refers to favor, or God’s acts of kindness in bestowing salvation on those who willingly submit to the conditions God’s has mandated. God’s grace is not earned, neither is it deserved. God extends his grace to sinners because he wants all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2:4) Paul told Titus, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people.” Without grace there is no salvation. Paul told the brothers and sisters in Ephesus, “by grace you have been saved.” (Eph. 2:5) Every person who has ever been saved, was saved by the grace and mercy of the loving God.

Yet, there are many false notions about the grace of God. Most denominational theologians, and many among the Lord’s own people misrepresent scripture’s teaching about the grace of God. There are those who say, “Since we are saved by grace, and inasmuch as grace is God’s part, there is nothing we can or should do. Doing something involves ‘works’ and we are not saved by works.” This is the old Calvinistic concept popularized by the French reformer, John Calvin, in the 1500’s. The fact is: John Calvin was wrong then, and his religious puppets are wrong now. The Bible does not teach that salvation by grace negates the acts of obedience with which a person must comply *before* God will save them. The New Testament clearly teaches that Christ is “the source of eternal salvation to *all who obey him*.” (Heb. 5:8-9; Mat. 7:21) Those who teach grace saves without a person rendering full compliance to God’s conditions, are guilty of not accepting all the Bible teaches on the subject of salvation.

Others teach the concept that since grace is extended to all people, those who die in denominational error, and those who die as disobedient children of God, may be received into heaven on the day of judgment. This doctrine is as smooth as molasses, as sweet as honey, and as comforting as a summer breeze. But there is a major problem with it; God’s word teaches it is not true! Paul asked the Romans, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that

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grace may increase? **By no means!** How shall those of us who died to sin live in it any longer?” (Rom. 6:1-2) Grace is not designed to give hope to anyone who dies in defiance of God and his word. It provides a way out of sin, into the kingdom of God, and finally a way into heaven when time is no more. Grace does this by teaching us how to live. “The grace of God has appeared, teaching us. . .” (Titus 2:11-12)

An interesting statement was made by Luke when he wrote about the work of Apollos among the brothers and sisters in Achaia. He said Apollos “greatly helped those who had believed through grace.” (Acts 18:27) How had they “believed through grace?” Everything that God had done (sending his unique Son to die on the cross (Jn. 3:16); providing for the establishment of his congregation (Eph. 3:8-11); sending the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles in their work of preaching the saving gospel (Jn. 16:13; Rom. 1:16; 10:17; 1 Cor. 1:18,21); and giving commands to be obeyed in order to have forgiveness of sins (Mat. 28:19; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4) was an act of grace. When the people in Achaia obeyed the gospel of God, the very grace that was manifested through all that God did was the means by which they became believers, for it was the God of grace who saved them!

Which Disturbs You The Most?

A soul lost in hell — Or a scratch on your new car?

Missing a church assembly — Or missing a day at work?

The sermon running 10 minutes too long — Or taking lunch a half hour late?

The church not growing — Or your garden not growing?

Your Bible unopened — Or your daily newspaper going unread?

Not participating in church activities — Or not cleaning your house?

Missing a Bible study — Or missing your favorite TV show?

The fact that your neighbor is lost — Or the fact that he’s got a better yard than you?

A needy saint in another congregation — Or your out-of-date furniture?

Decreasing your giving — Or decreasing your income?

Your children late for Bible classes — Or your children late for school?

Which disturbs you the most? Why?

Christianity Is Undenominational!

By Shane Williams

Have you ever considered if it is possible for one to accept Christ, be saved from his sins, worship God according to the scriptures, live a faithful life as a Christian, and go to heaven when this life is over — all without ever joining a denomination??

Of what denomination was the man in Acts 8 a member after he heard the gospel, confessed his faith in Christ, and had been baptized? (Acts 8:26-39). I encourage you to read the account and see if you can find out of which denomination he was a member.

The Bible also tells us that when one is saved he is added to the church (Acts 2:47). Which denomination is he added too? If you study your Bible very much you know that the church to which the Lord adds the saved is not a denomination. This is the church that Jesus talked about in **Matthew 16:18**, when He said *“upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.”* Did Christ establish denominationalism? Certainly not, but He did purchase His church with His own blood (Acts 20:28). No Christian that you read about in the Bible was a member of any denomination but they were all members of Christ’s church. Think about it!

In the New Testament, religious division such as we have today in denominationalism was condemned. Jesus prayed for all believers to be one (Jn. 17:20-21). Do you see oneness in denominationalism today? If all who desire to follow Christ would obey Him the way that He established without joining the denominations that men have established through the years, we could have undenominational Christianity today just like they did in the first century!

Christianity is not difficult to understand except as man has made it difficult. The saved have been added to the church by the Lord (Acts 2:47). The church is the spiritual body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23) and there is only one body (Eph. 4:4). Christ is the head of the body, the church, and every member is a member of the body (Col. 1:18; I Cor. 12:12). You will not find a headquarters of the church on the earth. The headquarters are in heaven, where Christ rules.

In the New Testament, congregations of saved people existed wherever the gospel had been preached and obeyed. Each congregation was overseen by mature men known as Bishops (overseers) (Phil. 1:1). These men were also called Elders, Pastors, and Shepherds (Acts 20:17, 28; Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). These men served only in their local congregations and were never over a plurality of churches (1 Pet. 5:2).

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Also, in each congregation there was a plurality of men known as deacons. They were “ministers” or “servants” (Phil. 1:1).

The church of Christ makes a plea for undenominational Christianity. They teach the same plan of salvation as was taught by the inspired apostles in the first century and they are organized in the same simple undenominational way. You are invited to worship with the church of Christ and see that Christianity is undenominational!



And so to build your character and build it strong and true, use pleasant words, do kindly deeds and let your thoughts be true.

“I would if I could,” though much it’s in use, is but a mistaken and sluggish excuse. For many a man who could if he would, is often heard saying, “I would if I could.”

I preached a sermon to a man concerning him, no other. And when he heard it, how he laughed, he thought I meant his brother.

***Visitors — We pray
that you benefit spiritually
from our worship together
and hope to see you again.***

June Birthdays: The 13th Ethan Collins; The 18th Mary Randolph.

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Sunday
Bible Study . . . 9:30 A.M.
Worship 10:30 A.M.
Worship 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday
Bible Study . . . 7:00 P.M.

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