

Characteristics of God's Grace

(Part 8)

Reviving Grace

We speak of a “Revival”, a movement, a movement of God’s people returning unto Him. as though a great number has turned away and need to be turned back, that may be a truth, there may be a great number as there was in the day of Jewish captivity in Babylon. I don’t know about that, but I do know my own weaknesses, especially the weakness of my faith. I mentioned a short time ago, “sometimes I wonder if I’m a Judas” just as each of the Apostles asked “Is it I Lord”? when the Lord told them of one whom would betray Him, (Matt. 26:22). I too wonder, “ I too express weakness in my faith”. Let me say one thing about that, these are the things that magnify our great Hope! A Hope that is not from within our selves, a Hope that is built on nothing less than Jesus Christ and His Righteousness! And what a great Hope that is! It is a hope in what we hear from His word! It’s a Hope in He who is Faithful to fulfill all that He has promised in His word!

(Rom 9:15-16) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

Our Hope is not a Hope that depends on our faith! This is the Gospel (good news) to a soul that is weak in every aspect of my being! Salvation is of the Lord!

THE LORD ALONE! START TO FININSH! AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN!

So in my weakness my great savior, knowing the depth of my weaknesses, for He too was tempted as I, yet without sin. He graciously brings revival (a renewing) of His relationship to my heart through the preaching of His word!

(Psa 85:2-8) Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah. Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger. Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease. Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations? Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee? Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation. I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

Lord wilt thou not revive us again? I may be alone in this, but I need “Reviving Grace” over and over again!

Listen to these words (Rom 5:1-6) 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. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Does that not give you a wonderful Hope?

The apostle Paul puts it this way; (1Ti 1:12-16) And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

Consider with me, a time recorded in the Old testament book of Ezra! The Lord hath expressly commanded in (Deu 7:1-4.) that there should be no intermarriages between Israel and the nations around. No doubt, with an eye to Christ. God's people were a nation of priests, an holy seed, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood. Therefore this mingling between Israel and the heathen people surrounding them, was in direct rebellion to God's divine law. And yet the people of God, do as they tend to do when the Lord pulls back His hand of grace, and tests His chosen people, to prove them! They faltered! Have You ever faltered? Are You any different than Jonah, or Lot, or David, or Peter or any of the names we are given of God's saints? I'm so thankful our Lord spares not the weaknesses of His people. I can relate to the people of God! I'm in good company! Sinners saved by Grace!

The profit Ezra had been given by God, through Cyrus king of Persia, permission to return to Jerusalem, and begin rebuilding the Temple. we pick up the story in;

Ezr 9:1 Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.

(Ezr 9:2) For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass.

This is what it is to mingle the things of this world in our worship! Entertainment, money drives, I get messages all the time, "we or I can help you grow your church", our worship must be "Christ and Him Crucified" alone!

(Ezr 9:3) And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished.

(Ezr 9:4) Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice.

(Ezr 9:5) And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the LORD my God,

What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear,
What a privilege to carry, everything to Him in prayer,
O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry, everything to God in prayer,
Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care,
Precious Savior still our refuge, Take it to the Lord in prayer!

Brother Kevin spoke a bit about that this last Wednesday night, even in our failings of offering up prayers, Our Great savior intercedes on our behalf! Bringing our cries unto the father as a sweet smelling savor. I think of the Apostle Paul in beseeching the Lord to relieve Him with his thorn, yet the Lord gave Him not what you may of thought the answer to be, “My Grace Is sufficient” was the answer!

Let’s read on

(Ezr 9:6) And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.

In (1Jn 1:9) we read “ **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**”.

(Ezr 9:7) Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day.

(Ezr 9:8) And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape,

and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.

(Ezr 9:9) For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.

What is this “Reviving”?

What is our wall?

It's Christ Jesus, the Son of the living God, our mediator, our Lord, our substitute! God in the flesh! our Priest, our King, our All in All!

When we spend time in His word looking for Him in the Word! We find in His word, He has provided all that He requires of us! Everytime I loose sight of that, and think I can do this or I can do that, the Lord revives my soul with His word!

Isa 27:3 **I the LORD** do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest *any* hurt it, I will keep it night and day.

Isa 41:4 Who hath wrought and done *it*, calling the generations from the beginning? **I the LORD**, the first, and with the last; I *am* he.

Isa 41:13 For **I the LORD** thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.

Isa 41:17 *When* the poor and needy seek water, and *there is none, and* their tongue faileth for thirst, **I the LORD** will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

Isa 42:6 **I the LORD** have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

Isa 45:7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: **I the LORD** do all these *things*.

Coming to the Lord's table of remembrance, brings a revival to our hearts does it not? Folks, Our peace can only be in one source, Christ!

Being blessed with all "**spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ**" as we read in (Eph. 1:3);

We see in His word, we were in Him from before the world was; **According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world**, (Eph 1:4);

We see in His word, "**that we should be holy and without blame before him**" again in (Eph 1:4);

We also see in His word, "**For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross**"; (Col 2:9-14)

That is grace that revives this poor soul when my sins have rose up against me, when mine enemy rails on my soul! (Psa 138:7-8) **Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me. The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me:**

Lord wilt thou give us a little reviving this day?

If so it will be by the preaching of His word; **“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men”**. (1Co 1:18-25)

It will be by His Grace, giving us an understanding of His grace! **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast”**. (Eph 2:8-9)

Grace, Grace, God’s Grace, Grace that will pardon and cleanse within,
Grace, Grace, God’s Grace, Grace that is greater than all our sin!

Reviving Grace; something this poor sinner needs over and over again and again!

The Lord of all that is, has made a promise and will not change; **“For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts”**. (Mal 3:6-7)

Does that not revive your soul?