

Grace II – Actual Grace

Grace in action

- I. Intent is to help understand through this weekend what grace is
 - a. Given freely at tremendous cost
 - b. God's grace is there to help us become what we have the potential to be
 - c. Given not forced upon us
 - d. We all have the potential to be friends of Christ
 - e. We have the freedom to reject or embrace God's grace
 - f. Grace comes to all persons
 - g. That same grace is also experienced on a more concrete and personal level
 - h. That experience of grace is Grace in Action
 - i. Grace in Action is appropriated by us as we seek to live a life in the grace which God has already given.
 - i. We all have the possibility to live a life in grace
 - j. But it only comes to those who embrace the aid which God gives to live more closely to him
- II. Grace vs. Grace in Action
 - a. Zacchaeus
 - i. Grace was Jesus coming to his house
 - ii. Grace in action was Zacchaeus' response
 1. Of selling his belongings
 - b. God's action
 - i. God gives us his gift of love, his grace
 - ii. And then he gives us grace to live in that grace
 - iii. A young child loves to wrap and give gifts
 - iv. But then also wants to help the recipient unwrap it
 - v. That's like God
 - vi. He's so excited to give it
 - vii. And then he can't wait to help unwrap it
- III. That is why he gives us the Holy Spirit's
 - a. The Holy Spirit is able to transform our lives from that of routine, to that of enjoyment
 - b. Third Article of the Apostles Creed
 - i. I believe that I cannot, by my own understanding or effort, believe in my Lord Jesus Christ or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has

- called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and kept me in the one true faith.
- ii. God's grace is revealed to us by his Spirit
 - 1. John 6:44 – No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me, draws him
 - 2. 2 Corinthians 3:5
 - iii. We are able to embrace his grace
 - iv. Through the power of the Holy Spirit
 - 1. Augustine says, "What we can do is not little, but nothing"
 - 2. It is God who gives us the kind of support we need to develop the potential which he has already given.
 - v. We are not able to live out any kind of spiritual potential without God
 - vi. Martin Luther – for the mind of man is not fully able to understand God's grace which is imparted to each of us as his children
- c. Through
- i. Mind
 - 1. He is more willing to give help than we are ready to receive that help
 - 2. We want to go it on our own and God is standing by with his support
 - 3. We are like an actor who refuses the prompt when he has forgotten his line.
 - 4. He wants to remember on his own.
 - 5. The Spirit is there and sometimes intercedes even before we ask
 - ii. Will
 - 1. Changes the pattern of our actions
 - 2. As we are fed on a diet of God's Word
 - 3. Through hearing it read and preached
 - 4. Through the sacraments
 - 5. Through the lives of others
 - 6. Even through a Via de Cristo weekend
 - 7. These are his gifts to you
 - 8. Your response is your gift to him
 - iii. Events
 - 1. God's grace makes my actions desirable

- 2. My refrigerator was not covered with pictures painted by unknown artists
- 3. But by the imperfect pictures drawn by my children
- d. Can be difficult
 - i. Simon of Cyrene
 - ii. Grace was actually an act of service
 - iii. Literally bearing the cross of Christ
 - iv. For the good of the Savior

IV. Continued giving

- a. 2 Corinthians 12:9 – my grace is sufficient for you. my power made perfect in your weakness
- b. We may be thinking we are going to be shackled with some burdens for life that we don't want.
- c. He promises that if we take his yoke upon us, his yoke is easy and his burden is light
- d. Shared relationship
 - i. It is through the power and love of his community and body, the church, that we are enabled to develop our gift of life in grace, because we share together in his glory
- e. We can refuse what God gives
- f. Philippians 2:12-13– work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God at work in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure
- g. It is we who do the work, but God is working in us
 - i. A farm was left to go wild
 - ii. A farmer purchased the farm and worked it and in a year made it productive
 - iii. Friend said, “Look what God has done in this field”
 - iv. Farmer said back, “But you should have seen it when God had to do it all by himself”
- h. There is a danger in not responding
 - i. Luke 13:6-8 – parable of the fig tree
- j. Matthew 11:20... - unbelieving cities

V. Prayer

- a. A force that we cannot understand
- b. We see miracles when there is no other explanation
- c. Not a secret code but conversation
- d. A touchstone with God

VI. Palanca

a. Definition

i. Spanish for 'lever'

b. Actual examples

VII. Conclusion

a. Ephesians 2:8-10 – works he has prepared for us in advance to do