



The Grace that Saves

For by grace are ye saved through faith... (Ephesians 2:8)

Modern Christianity gives too little attention to the grace spoken of in the title of this study, and yet the *Grace of God* has a much greater mission and ministry than is generally understood. Grace is the method and means through which God works in the soul, divinely influencing the heart toward repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. For the Bible tells us that the soul is saved *by grace through faith*. Never in all the Scriptures will you find it specifically stated that the soul is saved by the *Holy Spirit*.¹ Indeed the work of the Holy Spirit is implied, present, and active in conversion—though not in the way that is generally believed.

The Various Gospels

One reason for confusion is that the Bible does not mention just one Gospel—it mentions at least thirteen!² Though all may be summed up succinctly as the One True Gospel of Jesus Christ, the various titles represent different aspects of involvement of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.³

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| 1. Gospel of the Kingdom (5 times) | 8. Gospel of the Uncircumcision (1 time) |
| 2. Gospel of Jesus Christ (1 time) | 9. Gospel of the Circumcision (1 time) |
| 3. Gospel of the Grace of God (1 time) | 10. Gospel of your salvation (1 time) |
| 4. Gospel of God's Son (1 time) | 11. Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 time) |
| 5. Gospel of God (7 times) | 12. Glorious Gospel of the blessed God (1 time) |
| 6. Gospel of Christ (11 times) | 13. Glorious Gospel of Christ. (1 time) |
| 7. Gospel of Peace (2 times) | |

These titles are from the New Testament alone; however a number of Gospel designations also appear in the Old Testament under the various names and titles of God. And although all are worthy of individual attention, this study will focus on the *Gospel of the Grace of God*.

“Grace” or “Grace”

The *Grace of God* is most often defined in the Church as “God’s unmerited favor.” This is a true definition. The soul is saved through no merit of its own;⁴ and it is only through God’s divine love for the creature that He bestows mercy, and therefore gives grace, granting the soul salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

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However another definition for *grace* that is often overlooked is *Divine Power*, or, “The Divine Influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life.”⁵ This illustrates the *method* God uses to *move the heart* toward repentance and conversion: through His divine, moving, and active *grace*. Some will say it’s the Holy Spirit at work. True; but not in the way that is commonly taught.

Conversion of Old Testament Saints

Question: How were Old Testament Saints converted to faith in the Messiah—without the Holy Spirit? *Answer:* Certainly it was not by keeping the Law of Moses.⁶ Old Testament Saints were saved in the same way that New Testament⁷ Christians are saved: *By grace through faith.*⁸ Old Testament believers looked ahead to what Messiah would do—and placed their faith in the Promise. New Testament believers look back to what Jesus did 2,000 years ago—and place their faith in the Promise.

Saved without the Holy Spirit?

Question: Were the disciples of Jesus Christ considered saved during His earthly ministry, since they had no Holy Spirit available to them? Jesus answered this question in the priestly prayer He offered up to the Father just before His arrest:

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.... and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. (John 17:6,8)

Jesus confirmed that His disciples *already* belonged to God the Father (*Thine they were*); and that the Father had given them to Him. Their names were *already* written in Heaven;⁹ Thus they were *already* saved—*without receiving the Holy Spirit*. Jesus said they had kept (understood and obeyed) the Words of the Father. Therefore, they were *already* converted (saved) *by grace through faith* in the God of the Old Testament—and were now converted to faith in Jesus Christ. They had believed both the Old Testament Scriptures and the message of Jesus; had kept and obeyed His teachings—*without receiving the Holy Spirit* as an indwelling presence—for Jesus had not yet gone to the cross.¹⁰

The Promise of the Father

Jesus also confirmed that during His earthly ministry, His disciples *already* had the Holy Spirit “with them,” as the *Spirit of Truth*, and that this Comforter and Spirit of Truth was available to NONE who were of this world; for Jesus said, “Whom the world *cannot* receive.”

Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; **for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.** (Joh 14:17)

Jesus told His disciples that *they already knew* this Spirit of Truth—for He was *already* dwelling “with them” in the physical presence of Jesus Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit *in Him*; and that this Spirit of Truth would later be “in them.” This happened on the Feast of Fruitfuls, when the resurrected Christ *breathed* the Holy Spirit *into them*. This is what Paul meant when he said, “We shall know Jesus after the flesh no more.”¹¹

The Gospel of the Grace of God is correctly understood as the presence and work of God’s Spirit, moving in the heart of the seeking soul, leading it to faith in the Only Savior of the World—the Lord Jesus Christ; For it is God the Father who *sends* (gives) the soul to His Son.¹²

And yet this is still not the *Promise of the Father*, the *Gift of the Holy Ghost* given as a conscious, tangible, and permanent indwelling presence.

To be continued...

NOTES & SCRIPTURES

Scriptures are from the King James Bible

1 Some will point out Titus 3:5: *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and **renewing of the Holy Ghost***. But this passage is not speaking of conversion, but rather of an inward work that the Holy Spirit performs once the Spirit is *inwardly* received. In conversion we change our minds about God—but it's still the old mind. Only the indwelling Christ can renew the mind.

2 King James Version.

3 Distinctions between the various Gospel messages will become evident as these studies progress.

4 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)

5 Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionary, #G5485.

"The free and eternal favor and good will of God, which is the well-spring of all the benefits that we have." (A Christian Dictionary, Thomas Wilson, 1612)

"The sense and feeling of the favor of God, being reconciled unto us by Christ." (A Christian Dictionary, Thomas Wilson, 1612)

"Grace which is given to us by God, for the special performance of some particular good thing, as to enable us to resist a temptation." (Universal Etymological English Dictionary, Nathan Bailey, 1737)

6 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. (Gal 2:21)

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. (Heb 10:1-4)

7 There is a difference between a "New Testament" Christian and a "New Covenant" Christian. The New Testament Christian represents a timeframe, or a person who comes to faith AFTER Jesus Christ came in the flesh 2,000 years ago; thus we are living in the New Testament Era. A "New Covenant" Christian is one who has both come to faith in Jesus—and has received the Promise of the Father as an indwelling presence. This distinction will become apparent as these studies continue.

8 Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. (Jas 2:23)

Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith. (Hab 2:4)

9 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. (Luk 10:20)

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that* of Abel. (Heb 12:22-24)

10 But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified. (Joh 7:39)

11 Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more. (2Co 5:16)

12 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (Joh 6:44)