

THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE PRODIGAL SON (Luke 15:11-32)

I. The prodigal in the beginning.

- A. When we first meet the prodigal, he represents those who want grace without responsibility.
- B. His words are "Give me" (vs. 12).
 - 1. This is society today - everyone wants things given to them without doing anything.
 - 2. This is also reflected in the thinking of Christians who choose a congregation based on what the congregation offers them and not what they can offer the congregation.
 - 3. It is was not unusual for inheritances to be divided before death, Isaac did it, but it was unusual to ask for the inheritance before death.
- C. The doctrines of salvation by grace or faith only.
 - 1. These are "give me" doctrines.
 - 2. You don't have to do anything to be saved.
 - 3. God saves you and will keep you saved removing any responsibility from the individual.
- D. The impossibility of apostasy.
 - 1. I can't undo what God has done is what this teaches.
 - 2. I have no responsibility now because God has saved me and I can't be lost.
 - 3. No false doctrine has caused more people to be lost than this in my opinion.

II. The older brother.

- A. The older brother represents those who embrace responsibility but feel little need for grace.
 - 1. Notice verses 29-30.
 - 2. "I, I, I."
 - a. Everything he had, had been given him.
 - b. He didn't even realize this.
 - c. All he had done is what it was his duty to do.
- B. This is represented in Pharasaism (Luke 18:9-14).
 - 1. The Pharisees "trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others."
 - 2. He had an "I don't do..." list.
 - 3. He had an "I do..." list.
- C. This is also represented in what might be called "ChurchofChristism."
 - 1. Our "don't do" list:
 - a. We don't have women preachers.
 - b. We don't have instrumental music.
 - 2. Our "we do" list:
 - a. We do take the Lord's Supper every Sunday.
 - b. We do teach immersion for the remission of sins.

- c. We do teach the possibility of apostasy.
 - 3. If we think that because we do right makes us right we have a big problem.
 - a. We are right because we obeyed the gospel and God's grace made us right.
 - b. We stay right by doing that which we are commanded (Luke 17:6-10).
 - c. We must be careful not to be self-righteous.
 - d. We are saved by the grace of God and should never forget it.
- D. Those who feel no need for God's grace have little interest in extending it to others.
 - 1. Substitute the word forgiveness for grace in that sentence.
 - 2. Those that feel they are never wrong or need forgiveness and they are not willing to give it to others.

III. **The prodigal in the end.**

- A. When the prodigal comes to himself he represents those who realize the value of grace and are willing to accept the responsibility to obtain it.
- B. When you read the text, he started with "give me" and came back with "make me."
 - 1. He realized he couldn't do it on his own and did not deserve it because of his actions.
 - 2. He knew that he needed grace and mercy from his father.
- C. There is a definite pattern that exists for one to appropriate the grace of God.
 - 1. God's grace is offered (Ephesians 2:5-10; Acts 15:11).
 - 2. God's law is given (Isaiah 2:2-3; Acts 2; Galatians 6:2).
 - 3. Man's faith and works (James 2:14-26).
 - 4. God's reward given to man (Matthew 7:21-23).

IV. **Illustrations of the pattern for grace.**

- A. Noah is an illustration of this.
 - 1. Grace warned Noah of the flood.
 - 2. God's law was to build the ark in a prescribed way.
 - 3. Noah's faith and works led to the building of the ark.
 - 4. God's reward was salvation from the flood.
- B. The giving of Jericho is an illustration (Joshua 6:1-21).
 - 1. Grace: "I have given Jericho into your hand (vs. 2).
 - 2. Law: "You shall march around the city" (vs. 3-5).
 - 3. Faith: "They marched around the city" (vs. 14).
 - 4. Reward: "The wall fell down flat" (vs. 20).
- C. Naaman is an example (2 Kings 5).
 - 1. Grace: the Israelite girl revealing the prophet to others (vs. 3-8).
 - 2. Law: "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times" (vs. 10).
 - 3. Faith: "He went and washed seven times in the Jordan" (vs. 14).
 - 4. Reward: "His flesh was restored" (vs. 14).
- D. The blind man of John 9 is an illustration.

1. Grace: "Jesus passed by" (vs. 1).
 2. Law: "Go and wash in the pool of Siloam" (vs. 7).
 3. Faith: "He went and washed" (vs. 7).
 4. Reward: "He came seeing" (vs. 7).
- E. The plan of salvation is also an illustration.
1. God's grace: Titus 2:11-14.
 2. God's law: Matthew 7:21-27.
 3. Man's faith and works: hear, believe, repent, confess, be baptized and live faithfully for God.
 4. God's reward: Revelation 2:10; 22:14.

From a sermon by Todd Clippard