

## **THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD (Acts 20:24)**

### **I. The need for grace.**

- A. When we read the Bible, it very vividly describes man's true spiritual condition.
  - 1. Romans 3:23.
  - 2. James 2:10.
  - 3. Romans 6:23.
  - 4. Isaiah 59:1-2.
  - 5. Isaiah 64:6.
- B. What do all of these verses teach us about where we really are spiritually?
  - 1. First, we must all plead guilty as charged.
    - a. Every accountable person has sinned.
    - b. There is no one that can say they have earned heaven by being so good as to deserve it on their own.
    - c. The very best of us are without merit in the eyes of God because there is sin in all or our lives.
  - 2. Second, our sins have separated us from God.
    - a. When we sin, we lose the wonderful relationship we have with God.
    - b. This is the idea of spiritual death, because there is separation from God.
    - c. If this is left as the status of our relationship it will result in eternal separation from God.
    - d. While we are spiritually dead, we are cut off from God and any spiritual blessings.
  - 3. Third, we cannot accomplish the removal of our sins and guilt on our own.
    - a. We cannot run away from this guilt.
      - (1) Adam and Eve tried to hide.
      - (2) Jonah ran from God.
- C. We cannot try to deceive ourselves about our own goodness.
- D. Each accountable person is a sinner in need of salvation.
- E. The very first thing we need to do in order to be saved is to realize our true guilt.
  - 1. Jesus said that one is blessed first who becomes poor in spirit. (Matthew 5:3).
  - 2. This person realizes where he is spiritually and that is, separated from God.
- F. Once we have this realization and can acknowledge our sinfulness, it will lead to an appreciation of our next point.

### **II. The provision of grace.**

- A. Out of love, God has provided His Son.
  - 1. It was out of love that God sent His Son to die so that we could live (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9).

2. It was out of love that God allowed Jesus to take our place (1 John 4:10).
  - a. A "propitiation" is a sacrifice designed to appease.
  - b. God offered His Son as a sacrifice to appease His Justice (Isaiah 53:11 - God's justice was satisfied\_.
- B. Out of justice, God provided His Son,
  1. In order to satisfy His justice, God provided redemption through the blood of His Son (Romans 3:24-26).
  2. Romans 5:9.
- C. Notice, then, how God's grace functions:
  1. God's justice required an appropriate sacrifice for the sins of mankind.
  2. Because God loves us so much, He provided His Son as a sacrifice for those sins.
  3. Therefore, God recognizes the death of Jesus on the cross as a suitable ransom for our sins.
- D. So to satisfy both His justice and His love, God graciously provided salvation through His Son.
- E. That which we could not earn, God graciously supplied.
- F. However, the provision of grace is not unconditional, else all would be saved and that is why we need to understand this next point.

### III. **The reception of grace.**

- A. Receiving God's grace that saves requires obedience.
  1. Hebrews 5:9.
  2. Freedom from sin comes when we are willing to obey from the heart (Romans 6:17-18).
  3. This obedience involves certain things:
    - a. Belief in Jesus as the Son of God who died in our place (John 3:16).
    - b. Repenting of those sins for which Jesus died (Acts 17:30).
    - c. Confession of Jesus as our Lord (Romans 10:9-10).
    - d. Immersion in water so those sins we have committed can be washed away with His blood (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
- B. However, this obedience has nothing to do with meriting or earning salvation.
  1. Salvation is by grace and not by our works (Titus 3:4-5a).
  2. But by God's mercy, he saves us (Titus 3:5b).
    - a. When a penitent sinner comes to Jesus is baptized into Christ two things happen:
      - (1) He is united with Christ in baptism into Christ's death, and therefore to rise up and walk in newness of life (Romans 6:3-8).
      - (2) He is clothed with Christ, able to enjoy all spiritual blessings made possible by the death of Jesus and His resurrection (Galatians 3:26-27; Hebrews 7:24-25).

- b. It is through the “washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” that one is “born again of the water and the Spirit” (Titus 3:5; John 3:5).

From a sermon by Mark Copeland