

Don't Let This Attribute Keep You From True Grace

I am astounded at the beauty of Jesus and the beauty I see in His body all over the world. From the east to the west, the love of Jesus is burning in hearts of laid-down lovers of God! It burns in the bushes of Africa, the slums of India, the streets of Europe and the Americas.

Great power, ability and resources are available in His body for all who believe are members of the body of Christ. The Bible says He is faithful till the end to equip, empower, cleanse and build up His body until we reach our full potential in His image. The apostle Paul boldly declares the gifts and anointing of the Holy Spirit will be given to build up the body of Christ until the entire body is walking in the fullness of the image of Christ:

He gave some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, for the equipping of the saints, for the work of service, and for the building up of the body of Christ, until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, into a complete man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so we may no longer be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the trickery of men, by craftiness with deceitful scheming. But, speaking the truth in love, we may grow up in all things into Him, who is the head, Christ Himself, from whom the whole body is joined together and connected by every joint and ligament, as every part effectively does its work and grows, building itself up in love (Eph. 4:11-16).

I see the Lord Jesus doing great and mighty things in the earth today, but I also see division and strife among the

members of His body. I believe one of the reasons we are experiencing such division in the church is because we have not fully understood the new covenant of grace and have allowed it to become mixed with the law of Moses. The Lord Jesus has given all, including His very body and life, to bring everyone into the kingdom of heaven; who are we to chase away another He has paid to draw near? The Bible states that before we even had the chance to turn away from our sinful thoughts and deeds Christ died for every one of us.

“While we were yet weak, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Rarely for a righteous man will one die. Yet perhaps for a good man some would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. How much more then, being now justified by His blood, shall we be saved from wrath through Him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, how much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life” (Rom. 5:6-10).

All are worthy based on the finished work of Jesus to draw near. Our sin, our sickness, our weakness, faults and failures did not stop the King from giving His life for all so who are we to turn another away based upon these things.

It seems many are steeped in self-righteousness that comes from attempting to be holy by law-keeping and have forgotten that they, too, were once sinners, only justified by the grace of God. The apostle Paul addresses the believers in Galatia who were being taught a false gospel. They had found freedom in the cross of Christ but were being taught that they must now keep the law to be holy. Paul admonishes them in love, “O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?” (Gal. 3:1a), calling them foolish to think that they could start with the Holy Spirit given only to believers and attempt to keep the law for justification or righteousness.

“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who

called you in the grace of Christ to a different gospel, which is not a gospel. But there are some who trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. 1:6-7).

We are only justified and made righteous by faith in the one who kept the law on our behalf. Believer of God, you are now dead to the law, so that you might live for God! You cannot live for the law and live for God. You must consider yourself dead to the law and alive to God's spirit and be led by His promptings to be called a son or daughter of God.

But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, why do you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

We are Jews by nature, and not Gentile sinners, yet we know that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ. Even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, rather than by the works of the law. For by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

If, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found to be sinners, is Christ therefore the minister of sin? God forbid! For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

For through the law I am dead to the law, that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God. For if righteousness comes by the law, then Christ died in vain (Gal. 2:14-21).

I see some believers fighting for holiness and demanding it from sinfully bankrupt men; that is not even something God

does. He knows we have no ability to help ourselves, to save ourselves that is why He became the propitiation for our sin and supplies us with the gift of righteousness. The gift of righteousness comes based on the belief in the work of Jesus; this is why we are called believers. We believe that what Jesus has done is enough to satisfy the justice of God, therefore fully releasing the righteousness of God. I love that the apostle Paul states that the true gospel of grace is a revelation of God's righteousness and not ours. His righteousness is revealed from faith to faith.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. For it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. As it is written, "The just shall live by faith." (Rom. 1:16-17).

Many in the church have been sold what I refer to as "laced gospel." It is the gospel of grace mixed with the Old Covenant of the Mosaic Law, and whenever you introduce the law, you bring death. The Bible boldly declares that as many as are of the works of the law are under its curse. Did you catch that? It's not keeping the law, which no man can do, but the attempt to keep it. The keeping of the law is the epitome of self-righteousness, it is saying I can follow all of God's holy standards and I don't need a Savior.

"For all who rely on the works of the law are under the curse. For it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the Book of the Law, to do them'" (Gal. 3:10).

The apostle Paul tells the deceived members that if achieving holiness came from keeping the law, then Christ died in vain. This is where the finished work of Christ becomes of no effect. What a terrible thing to have what our beloved Jesus did have no effect in our lives. Self-righteousness is a slap in the face to the person of Jesus, the work of Jesus and the

New Covenant of grace and the kindness of our Father.

“For through the law I am dead to the law, that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God. For if righteousness comes by the law, then Christ died in vain. (Gal.2:19-21).

Believer, do not become like the foolish Galatians who allowed the grace of God to be mixed with what was old and passing away. For God Himself found fault with the Old Covenant and bluntly says, “He will establish a new covenant,” (see Jer. 31:31) one based on His beloved Son.

But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, because He is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no occasion would have been sought for a second. For finding fault with them, God says: “Surely the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I rejected them, says the Lord. This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No longer shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful toward their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”

In speaking of a new covenant He has made the first one old. Now that which is decaying and growing old is ready to vanish away (Heb. 8:6-13).

Remember, true humility takes what the hand of God gives; self-righteousness says, "I can do it on my own." Beloved, take what God has given and see the blessings of unity, provision and healing flow in your lives just as surely as the blood of Jesus flowed from the cross of Calvary.

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