

I Should Be Burning in Hell, But ...

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Not because I'm denying Jesus' grace and the wondrous works of the cross. I know that I am saved only by grace according to Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, so that no one should boast" (MEV).

No, I am talking about timing—God's timing. Unlike we humans, God isn't quick to take vengeance upon those who disobey Him and His Word. While our flesh wants swift justice, God, much to our benefit, will wait on our repentance. "The Lord is slow to anger and great in power ..." (Nahum 1:3, MEV).

I am well aware of the fact that there have been a couple of times during my life that God's grace has saved me from death. I remember two specific incidents while driving that it was only by His grace that I didn't end up on a slab in the morgue.

One of those incidents came when I had yet to accept Jesus and lived a life of wretched sin. The other came after my "supposed" salvation, but yet I hadn't fully surrendered my life to Jesus. You know the verse—"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:9-10, MEV). Somewhere, one of those adjectives had to describe me.

So, why me? Why have others died in car accidents and yet God decided to spare me in those moments? I can only assume it is because He had greater plans for me—which I believe I'm

presently carrying out—and that He had delayed His anger for my disobedience. Or, it could be a promise He made to my praying mother.

Just as I am grateful for the grace of the cross, I am also grateful for God's delayed anger.

But don't take God's grace—or his delayed anger—as a license to continue to wallow in sin. Just as he eventually destroyed Nineveh in 612 B.C. (after the inhabitants of the city fell back into immorality), His justice on this earth eventually will be carried out. God will not allow sin to go unchecked forever. You can rest assured of that.

When people wonder why God doesn't punish evil immediately, help them remember that if He did, none of us would be here. We can all be thankful that God gives people time to turn to Him. And believe me, we've all had plenty of time.

I implore you. Won't you surrender your life to Him and His Word completely today?

And as I always like to say, "there is that." {eoa}