

Light and Life

Noah Found Grace

Many have defined grace as ‘unmerited favor’. In some ways this is a good definition. It is very true that we cannot earn, nor do we deserve, our salvation. But the ‘unmerited favor’ definition of grace can easily be abused to say that there is no condition placed on salvation! Many in the religious world are motivated to preach that anything done by man in search of salvation nullifies the grace of God. After all, if you are doing something righteous to obtain salvation, surely you must be trying to earn it!

That is not how grace works. To prove it, all we must do is look at Noah. During Noah’s life, the world was so wicked that God decided it needed to be destroyed. “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord” (Gen. 6:8). Out of all the world, why did Noah find grace? Did God blindly throw a dart at the map and Noah just got lucky? Of course not! Rather, there was a difference between Noah and the rest of the world. “Noah was a just man, blameless in his generations. Noah walked with God” (Gen. 6:9).

Whereas the rest of the world had “corrupted their way on the earth” (Gen. 6:12), Noah was different! It was because of this moral distinctiveness that Noah found salvation. God said to Noah, “Come into the ark, you and all your household, **because I have seen that you are righteous** before Me in this generation” (Gen. 7:1).

Noah was shown grace because of his righteousness compared to the rest of the world! Does this mean he was trying to earn his salvation? Did this nullify God’s grace? Of course not! Noah’s obedient faith was a condition of receiving God’s grace! God’s instruction to Noah on how to survive was part of how that grace was shown (Gen. 6:14-22; Heb. 11:7)!

Is grace deserved? No! But is it conditional? Just ask Noah.

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

Psalm 5 – Rejoice & Sing!

“Let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth” (Jer 9:23-25). In Psalm 5, these three qualities of God are brought to light in the life of David.

David knew the abundance of God’s steadfast **love** and he worshipped Him because of it! He submitted to God’s path and allowed God to lead him because of His **righteousness**. The enemies of David were destroyed because of God’s **justice**! David knew his God and took refuge under His shield.

David turned to God in prayer and, in turn, God gave attention to his groaning. God provides a path, protection, blessings, and favor to those who seek His refuge! David’s response was to rejoice, to sing, and to worship God! The God that David knew and served is the very same God that we worship!

Our hearts must align with God’s heart – and having a knowledge of God produces this heart within us. We will hate evil as God hates evil. We will not surround ourselves with wickedness because God cannot be in the presence of wickedness. We will cast these things far from us because we want to please Him. In doing so, we can come before God and be jubilant!

David called for all who take refuge in God to rejoice and sing! Why? Because God blesses those who trust in Him. He surrounds with favor those who love Him! When we truly understand God and know Him, we can genuinely radiate and shine as we walk on this earth, praising His **love**, rejoicing in His **justice**, and confident in His **righteousness**. David knew God deeply. May God also help us to know Him completely and be filled with Him. The more we know God, the more cause we will have to rejoice and sing, bringing glory to His name!

- Lucas Griggs (edited for space)

ASSEMBLY TIMES

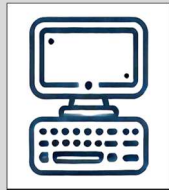
Sunday

Morning Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

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P.O. Box 447
201 W. Chestnut Street
Rogers, AR 72757
479-636-3575



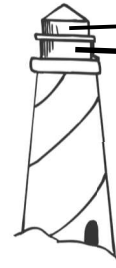
Life is hard; but it's
harder when you
are undisciplined.

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

TJ Burleson
Scott Hale
Jason Hill
Chris Johnson
Brock McKeel
Randy Potter
Tim Roberts
Randy Shell



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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What Piety Looks Like

The Bible has precious little to say about mothers-in-law, though the best 'indirect' advice is probably found early on: "A man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife" (Ge 2:24). Lots of in-law spat could be avoided if all parties involved simply honored this simple rule.

How blessed I was for more than half a century to have an MIL who respected our marriage – there for help and advice when we needed it, there for fun and games when the circumstances allowed it, and wisely absent when we needed 'our' time. She did not fit the MIL stereotype – and I am grateful for that.

As we have been studying in our Wednesday night classes, showing 'piety' (respect, honor, fidelity – 1 Ti 5:4) in the home is foundational to a healthy family, and a healthy society. As parents age and become more feeble physically and mentally, the 'kids' (even those approaching 'old age' themselves) have an obligation to ensure their parents are being cared for. It is the last act of piety (respect/honor) that we can give.

So 'thank you', Billie, for being the mother-in-law that many sons-in-law can only long for. And 'thank you' to The Woman for showing me – and the world – what true piety looks like.

- *WKing*

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: KFletcher, Swims, JMarshall, RStarr, MiBader, JTerrell, ACorder

Shut-ins: SCole, SWiese, VCarter, KHeiligenthal, AHopper

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

IMPORTANT DATES: Mar 9-12 TommyP mtg; Apr 18 Stevens-Shepard singing; Jul 13-17 ColtonM VBS; Aug 1-3 ChuckD Youth Weekend

OUR SYMPATHY – Sympathy is extended to the family of Billie Pennington (Debi's mom), who recently passed away. Thanks to all who reached out.