KNOWING GOD

LESSON 15

Title: The Grace of God

Text: John 1:14-18

1. **Review:**
   1. “Mercy is that eternal principle of God’s nature which leads Him to seek the temporal good and eternal salvation of those who have opposed themselves to His will.” ––Bancroft
   2. Mercy assumes a need on the part of him who receives it and resources adequate to meet that need on the part of Him that shows it.
2. **The Meaning of Grace.**
   1. Grace and mercy are often found together in Scripture.
      1. Grace and mercy both flow from the same principle of God’s goodness.
      2. Tozer wrote: “In God, mercy and grace are one; but as they reach us they are two, related but not identical.”
   2. Defined and Explained:
      1. Grace is the act of God, in His own good pleasure, bestowing benefits upon the undeserving.
      2. Grace is God giving to man what we do not deserve.
3. **God Has Always Been Gracious.**
   1. Grace is not an attribute of God that finally showed up in the New Testament.
   2. God always extended grace to man.
      1. Genesis 6:8 “Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”
      2. Genesis19:19 Abraham appealed to God’s grace when praying for Lot.
      3. Exodus 33:12,17 God told Moses, “Thou hast found grace in my sight.”
   3. Grace is an eternal attribute of God’s nature.
4. **Four Truths Must be Acknowledged Before One Can Have Faith in God’s Grace.** 
   1. The four points of this portion of the outline are borrowed from J. I. Packer’s book, “Knowing God.” Again, it is a matter of seeing our condition as God sees us and a matter of thinking of God equal to what He has revealed about Himself. These four truths are essential to understanding His grace.
   2. Man is spiritually and morally depraved.
      1. This is such a clear teaching in Scripture.
      2. Man is deceitful and desperately wicked.
      3. If that is not so, then there is no need for grace.
      4. Man will never seek the saving grace of God unless he sees himself as God sees him; a depraved sinner is need of grace.
   3. God will judge sin – His justice demands it.
      1. If man does not see the sinfulness of his condition, then he will not care about the judgement of God.
      2. If he cannot see that God will judge sin, then who needs grace?
      3. But, to see our sinfulness and God’s wrath against sin is to send one before God seeking mercy (withholding of wrath which we deserve) and grace. (bestowing of forgiveness we do not deserve.)
      4. You’ll never appreciate grace until you see your sin and God’s hatred for it. Then you can believe in grace.
   4. Man is totally helpless.
      1. Ephesians 2:1 makes the point very clear – “…who were dead in trespasses and sin.”
      2. To borrow a phrase from J.I. Packer, “we cannot repair our own relationship with God.”
      3. In other words, you can’t do a lot of good things and obligate God to erase your sin.
   5. God’s sovereignty extends grace.
      1. By that I mean, God has extended salvation to fallen man by an act of His sovereign will, not because He was or is obligated to do so.
      2. To accept or reject salvation is man’s choice, but that salvation is available through faith in Jesus Christ is purely of the grace of God; favor bestowed that we do not deserve.
5. **We Need Grace for Salvation and Life.**
   1. Ephesians 2:8,9 – Salvation has always been of grace.
      1. Whether Old Testament or New, man has always been saved by grace.
      2. Who invited Abel and Cain to bring sacrifices to the altar? God! Why? Grace!
   2. John 1:17:
      1. The law was given by Moses, but the principles and spirit of the law was before Moses. Through Moses it was given as a standard for God’s chosen nation.
      2. Likewise, grace and truth have always been characteristics of God, but it came to man by Jesus Christ. Furthermore, Jesus Christ is the Lamb slain through faith in Jesus Christ.
6. **Conclusion:**
   1. All our life depends upon the grace of God, not just salvation.
   2. As a Christian, I must realize that I need God’s grace for all matters and responsibilities of life.
   3. I need grace as a citizen, as a father, as a husband, etc. Notice in many of Paul’s prayers and salutations that he prayed grace from God upon their daily lives. Romans 1:7 is one example.