

Every election cycle we observe what I call the “pendulum fallacy.” Basically there is a candidate who is liberal, socialist even and wants us to bury all guns and carry flowers. This guy is wrong. So, the other candidate believes he has to swing all the way to the other end of the spectrum to be right. This is a fallacy. Going all the way over to saying 3 year olds should have AK-47s is not the answer. The truth includes a balanced assessment of the issues and may include some of each man’s policy.

We can make a similar mistake in religious discussion. Last week we discussed Calvinism, and the extreme liberal mentality of God’s Sovereignty begin all there is with salvation and man’s works being irrelevant. But we must be careful, lets we think the right answer is as far from that as we can get, and we end up emphasizing works and actions and choices to the point of abandoning grace.

The truth is not necessary “in the middle” but it is what the Word says it is, which must include elements of man’s behavior AND God’s sovereignty. Last week we talked at great lengths about man’s choices being vital to his salvation, but let’s not forget **The Amazing Grace of God.**

*My biggest fear for my children, two of whom are growing up fast, is that they will become so conditioned to teach on what we must do and what is right and sin kills that they completely forget that every hope they enjoy, every ounce of spiritual joy and peace is of God’s Grace, not their Own Actions. --- And then, I fear that they will swing so far to the – God’s Grace is the Greatest Thing – that they might get to God’s grace is the ONLY thing and abandon the principles of Scripture. JUBILEE is FIRST and above all else and appreciation and full heart of the GRACE OF GOD. And by extension, like a burning fire within, a producer of immensely joyful godly living.*

There are many ways to study grace. We could start with Greek word or even Webster dictionary definitions to try and grasp it. We could simply read through a handful of the 111 occurrences of the word “grace” in the New Testament. It doesn’t take long to become impressively overwhelmed at the magnitude of the Unmerited Favor of God.

Today, we will see it in one small section of Scripture – **Romans 3-6.** Paul is writing to Christians like us, who lived in a culture like ours, and teaches us all about the greatest gift of all time.

Let’s examine 6 things this text teaches us about the Grace of God.

**1) It Accomplishes things for us we could never do alone (Romans 3:21-26)**

- a. **Propitiation** – (v25) Appease, or quench God’s wrath against sin. He can’t be near me because of my sin. But, by Grace, He is made to be at peace with me in Christ’s blood.
- b. **Redemption** – (v24) So now that my own sin is not between us, He can bring me back. I was with him, but sin separated us, but through Christ I can be with Him again.
- c. **Justified** – (v24) – Because of His Son and the price paid – I am pronounced “not guilty.” Though I was and am guilty, I am pronounced innocent by His favor alone.

**2) It Fills us and Sustains us with Hope and Joy (Romans 5:1-11)**

- a. “we **exult** in hope in the glory of God” (v2)
- b. “not only this, but we also **exult** in our tribulations” (v3)
- c. “we also **exult** in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom...reconciliation” (v11).
- d. “hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within us” (v5)

**3) It is Christ, God’s Free Gift to all Mankind (John 1:14,16-17,29)**

- a. John makes the two words inseparable – Grace and Jesus – He is it, the fullness of it.
- b. **Romans 3:24; 5:1-2** – This concept present in what we read already.
- c. **Romans 5:12-15, 17,19** – He made us righteous. He is God’s Free gift for our good.
- d. When you want to know Grace, know Jesus. But when you question it – when you doubt that God can receive or forgive you, or redeem or bless – that’s questioning Jesus!

#### 4) It is Greater and Stronger than any and all Sin (Romans 5:18-21)

- a. Law, from the Old Law, to timeless moral laws, to the New Law – all prove one thing: we are sinners. Sins increase with an increase in laws. BUT... Grace is Greater!
- b. Grace reigns over sin. Grace reigns forever over sin. Because Christ reigns forever over sin, over Satan, over His works!
- c. This means no matter what you have done or how far Satan has taken you, of for how long or in what way. This means no matter how many laws you have broken or how shamefully you have defamed God's name .... JESUS is greater. The gift is still free and it is still for you and you can be saved today and forever. GRACE!

#### 5) It is Forever Linked to Living Faith

- a. Balance demands that we see there are 20 occurrences of Faith in these chapters.
- b. **Romans 3:22-28** – Justified by God's Grace yes. But also "through faith." It is not by perfect law keeping – no one does that – but justification is for the Faithful Only.
- c. **Romans 4:16-21** – What kind of faith? Abraham's faith! A full trust in the assurances of God, believing entirely in Him and His will.
- d. **James 2:17-24** – Not perfect law keeping or entitlement. Romans letter debunks that. Not by being good enough. Every person can debunk that – but by trusting in God so completely that you do the things He has established and commanded you to do.
- e. **Romans 5:1-2** – When we live like that, He covers us with blessings, the glory of His Son, and infuses us with hope and joy. Grace THROUGH FAITH.
- f. This is why salvation, even the most wonderful redemptive grace of God, can be lost. Because people stop trusting and obeying Him. Grace Through Faith. Without faith it is impossible to please Him, to access the majesty. It is like opening a door to enter a glorious house.

#### 6) It is Forever Unlinked to Sinful Conduct (Romans 6:1-11)

- a. Repenting and the need to keep turning from sin to remain in the grace of God is such a difficult concept for so many. But this chapter, having built upon Grace and Faith is so simple. Yes, Jesus, our Great Grace, is greater than all sin and can wipe it all away. BUT... joining to Him is an incredible commitment – TO DIE TO SIN.
- b. **Rom. 6:1-2** – We are choosing to live dead to sin (separated from)
- c. **Rom. 6:3-4** – This is why baptism is necessary: the moment of separation. (Jubilee)
- d. **Rom. 6:6-7,11** – Choosing freedom means fleeing the captor – SIN!
- e. So, this is why baptism is essential. And this is why righteous living will always be a condition of God's grace – we are free (jubilee) and must live as free men (from sin).

Conclusion: **Romans 3:23-26** – There it is. The Age of Jubilee. The era, the life time of blessings. A relationship with Jesus. Cleaned from all debt and loss to our souls. Living in hope of a free mansion of unsurpassed glory. And all we must do is... have faith. Abraham faith. Faith that is in awe of God. Faith that completely trusts in His grace and power. That does as He says because we love Him. That flees what He hates because we appreciate Him.

For those who live in Jubilee – live in it. Live it. Be about the enjoyment of the Holy God in Holiness. For those who have no true joy – live in it. Live it. Be buried with Him, atoned, and live joy in Christ.