

Grace for All of Life

Prevenient Grace

God offers us a relationship

- ✓ History is full of God pursuing people
 - The covenant with Noah (Ge 9.8-13)
 - The covenant with Abraham (Ge 12.1-3)
 - The covenant with Moses (Ex 19.3-6)
 - The covenant with David (2 Sa 23.5)
 - The New Covenant (Je 31.31-34)
 - The Jesus covenant (Mt 26.26-29)
- ✓ God offers this relationship with grace and love
 - Everlasting love (Ps 136; Je 31.3)
 - Seeking love (Ez 34.11-16)
- ✓ God is the initiator and pursuer
 - He calls us before we are born (Is 49.1)
 - He follows us throughout life (Ps 23.6)
 - His pursuit allows our salvation (Romans 5.6-11)

Definition of Prevenient Grace

- ✓ Grace is the love that God has for us.
 - Grace is from Jesus (John 1.16)
 - It comes as a free gift (Ro 3.24)
 - It is sufficient for our needs (2 Co 12.9)
- ✓ Prevenient Grace is the act of God to woo us into a relationship with him. It prevents us from straying so far from him that we can't come back.
- ✓ We can respond to God's offer of grace
 - Jesus is always seeking (Lu 19.10)
 - God loves everyone (Jn 3.16)
 - Faith is a free response (Ga 5.1-6)

The Experience of Prevenient Grace

- ✓ God pursues us at all times, from the beginning of life (Je 1.5)
- ✓ God speaks to us through family members, friends, the church and events in our lives.
- ✓ The Holy Spirit speaks to us regularly (Jn 16.13-15)

Justifying Grace

Our Acceptance of the Relationship

- ✓ Preventive grace opens our eyes to God's justifying grace.
- ✓ This is another way of talking about conversion, or "being saved."
- ✓ Our acceptance is an act of faith, not our effort, or works.
For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2.8
- ✓ We abandon our own desires as we seek to be empowered by God's grace and strength.
- ✓ Faith in Christ motivates us to do good works.
 - Then the good works increases our faith.
 - But we are justified by faith alone.

God's activity in our acceptance

- ✓ God appeals to our intellect- Faith is reasonable. It makes sense.
- ✓ God appeals to our emotions- Faith feels right.
- ✓ God allows us the freedom to accept his grace.

Continuous Conversion

- ✓ It is grace that allows us to change, to grow in our faith.
- ✓ Spiritual disciplines- Bible study, prayer, meditation, singing, etc.- allow us to submit our will to God's.
- ✓ This leads us closer to the example of Christ.

"As we accept the grace of Christ, he will change us into his image."

"Our job is to lead people to Jesus. He will then use his grace to change them into his image."

Sanctifying Grace

Sanctifying Grace is

- ✓ The work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer between conversion and death (Romans 8.12-17)
- ✓ The work of the Holy Spirit rooting out sin (1 John 4.10)
- ✓ The work of the Holy Spirit in making us holy in our own right (John 14.12)
- ✓ The work that restores us to our original righteousness (John 14.23)

Characteristics of Sanctifying Grace

- ✓ A life-giving relationship with God (vine and branches- John 15)
- ✓ Reminds us we are pardoned and makes us grateful (Romans 5.8-11)
- ✓ Gives us purpose in life (Matthew 6.33)
- ✓ Gives us power for living (Romans 1.8)
- ✓ Gives us peace (Ephesians 2.14-16)

Means of Grace

The Means of Grace include:

- ✓ Sacred moments in which we encounter God.
- ✓ A special visitation of the Holy Spirit in our lives and worship.
- ✓ A worship experience in which Christ is present, and represented.
- ✓ Celebrated in the sacraments that Jesus instituted and ordered us to follow.

The Priestly function in worship:

- ✓ The pastor, or other church leader, represents the congregation and its needs before God.
- ✓ The pastor, or other church leader, represents God to the congregation.

The Priestly function in other places:

- ✓ The Gifts of the Spirit serve as means of grace in the everyday life of the church/ believer
 - 1 Corinthians 12.4-11
 - Romans 12.4-8
 - Ephesians 4.11-12
 - 1 Peter 4.7-11

Baptism

- ✓ Instituted by Jesus- Matthew 28.19
 - Continued by disciples- Acts 2.38
- ✓ An important part of worship and the overall life of the church

Holy Communion

- ✓ Instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper
- ✓ Followed by the apostles
- ✓ A regular part of our worship