

Amazing Grace

- *Titus 2:11-14*

- There was a young man back in the 1700's who grew up with a godly mother, but he had a very wicked father. His mother died when he was six. His father was a sailor who sailed in the Mediterranean. And, when he was 11 years of age, he went to sea to be a sailor. His father was a wicked man, and unfortunately this young man followed right in his steps. He lived in the depth of sin and debauchery. After a while, he got involved in slave trading. He began to buy & sell human beings, and he continued to sink deeper into sin. He got so low that he became a slave of slaves. For two years, he ate table scraps on the floor that his owner would toss to him on the floor. That's how low this man got, living in vileness—living in wickedness.
- There were some sailors aboard a ship that had a concern for the young man, and they gave him a book to read called *The Imitation of Christ*. He began to read it, partly out of interest, and partly as a jest, but it began to work on his heart. While they were at sea, there came a violent storm. He thought the ship was going to sink. He feared for his life. And then, a great wave came, and washed him overboard. He thought the end had come. He cried out, "O Lord, help!" And, another wave came, and washed him back on board. That's all it took for John Newton. And, John Newton got saved—I mean really *saved*. And John began writing a song about his salvation experience, a song that we know all too well, *Amazing Grace*. You see, that's what being saved is all about, it's about God's amazing grace.
 - "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me."
 - When John wrote those words, to him it wasn't just lyrics ... he meant it: "That saved a wretch like me. I once was blind. Now, by the grace of God, I can see."
- Throughout the history of time, many people have asked questions in regards to Christianity.
 - "What sets Christianity apart from other religions?"
 - "Why is Christianity right and others are wrong?"
 - The answer to both of these . . . the Amazing Grace that God extends towards us as sinners.
 - Grace: The favor of God showered upon men who did not deserve his favor.
 - Warren Weirsbe defined grace as – "God's lavish favor on undeserving sinners."
 - Ephesians 2:8 – "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"
 - No other word describes the depth and richness of the heart and mind of God than the word grace.
- **READ SCRIPTURE**
- Paul and Titus have been planting churches for some time now and they have come to Crete where Christianity will be introduced for the first time.
- Cretians were a very untrustworthy people and because of this type of culture it would be difficult to find any reliability in Christianity among the people.
- However, Paul goes out of his way in this passage to make clear to all who hear his voice of some remarkable facts pertaining to the grace of God in our lives.
 - I. **Grace Redeems Us (v. 11, 14a)**
 - a. **We Needed Redemption**
 - i. Lets face it, because of the awful plight that sin left in our lives, we all have a need to be rescued spiritually.

1. Because of Adam & Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden, sin was introduced into this world and the Bible tells us that we were all born into sin.
 - a. Romans 5:12 – "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"
 - b. If you're without the Lord Jesus Christ, you're dead. You say, "Well, how could I be dead? I'm still existing." Well, friend, death is not the separation of the soul from the body; death is the separation of the soul from God.
 2. The unfortunate realization is that because we were born into sin, there was NO WAY on our own we could have a relationship with God, much less deserve His love.
 3. From that moment on, the sins of mankind required a sacrifice to be brought before a Holy God. Why? Because we needed to be redeemed.
 4. That eternal sacrifice came in the form of His Own Son coming to this earth and dying on a cross for our sins, being buried and rising from the dead victorious that 3rd and glorious day.
 - a. I Peter 2:24 – "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."
 - ii. God in His grace sent His Son to redeem men and women from their bondage of sin.
- b. Only God Could Bring Grace**
- i. Only God could do this. Man could never save themselves from the punishment of his sins.
 - ii. Christ gave His life for us that through His death we might be redeemed.
 1. Redeemed: to set free by paying a price.
 - iii. By His death, He met the just demands of God's holy law, so that God in His grace could forgive and free those who place their trust in Christ.
 1. Folks, it has to be through the death of Christ & Him alone. None other would ever fill the void or satisfy the cost of our sin before God.
 2. Some 5 times in the book of Titus, he relates to Christ as our Savior, our Rescuer.

II. Grace Transforms Us (V. 12,14b)

a. Spiritual Cleaning

- i. Obviously a large part of grace and its remarkable work in us is the miraculous change in taking our old sinful hearts and making it clean and pure and acceptable before God.
- ii. The spiritual cleaning that grace accomplishes in our lives is a very rewarding transformation:
 1. The sins that we once committed and found ourselves engulfed in are cast away from the presence of God never to be remembered by Him again.
 2. The old heart that had been tarnished by the blackness of sins for years is made pure and clean through the power and grace of God.

3. The condemnation that we once set under as a sinner because of our disobedience unto God has now been traded for a seat at the King's table, an heir to throne of Christ and a child of the King.

b. Internal/External Reconditioning

- i. Not only is there a great cleansing of our heart, but there should also be a transformation in our lives as well.
- ii. When we accept God's Amazing Grace & He begins to do a work in our lives, our attitude about sin changes.
 1. Just because we're saved by grace, that doesn't mean we continue to live in sin.
 2. Paul put it this way in Romans 6:1-2 – "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"
- iii. God's grace begins to reform our lives to make us more like Christ and teaches us to deny any ungodliness that we may have come into contact with.
- iv. Ungodliness: anything that is not like God.
 1. Anything that is not holy, righteous or pure.
 2. Anything that does not honor / worship God.
 3. Anything that does not obey God or violates His commandments or goes against His will.
- v. God saved us all from some terrible sins in our lives.
 1. It would be enough for God just to save us from our sins.
 2. He gave us more than we deserved when He promised us eternal life.
 3. He has forgiven us.
 4. He continues to love us.
 5. But He chooses not to let us stay the way that we were. He desires for there to be a change in our heart and in our lives. That is the work of God's grace!
 6. The grace of God teaches us to turn away from ungodliness and instead turn to that which honors and exalts God.
- vi. John Newton also wrote this - He said, "I am not what I might be. I'm not what I ought to be. I am not what I wish to be. I am not what I hope to be. But, thank God, I am not what I once was. And, I can say, with the great apostle, by the grace of God, I am what I am."
- vii. God is still working on us, and we are growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

III. Grace Rewards Us (v. 13)

a. Certainty of Christ's Return

- i. Because of the Amazing Grace of God, we have the security in knowing that our Lord will return to claim us, His children.
 1. John 14:3 – "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."
 2. On that glorious day when we are united with our Savior and we see His face for the first time, all of our struggles on this earth at that very moment will all be worthwhile.

- ii. This will also be a joyous reunion with not only with our Lord, but also with our friends and family who have gone on before us and have likewise placed their trust in God.
 - 1. I Thessalonians 4:17 – “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”
- iii. During this time we will also be rewarded with a new body, a glorified body, our incorruptible and eternal body.
 - 1. I Corinthians 15:53 – “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”
- iv. We will receive our rewards.
 - 1. II Timothy 4:8 – “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

b. As We Await Christ’s Return

- i. Until that glorious day when our Lord returns, I think we are responsible to do 3 things as we await His return:
 - 1. Spread the Gospel
 - 2. Exhort (encourage) one another in the grace of God.
 - 3. Be prepared.
 - a. Live today as if He might return today.
 - b. Make the most of every opportunity for Christ.
- **God’s free offer of grace remains on the table for us today. Our sin has separated us from God, but He offers a way of escape today. We must rely on His grace and the finished work at Calvary.**