

"WHICH CHURCH SHOULD I ATTEND?"

One Where His Name Is Glorified

Acts 4:12 - No other name whereby we might be saved.
Acts 11:26 - God gave the name Christian
1 Peter 4:16 - We can glorify God in this name.

One Where His Teachings On Salvation Are Followed

John 14:6 - Only He is the way to heaven.
Hebrews 5:9 - All must obey Him to be saved.
John 8:24 - He said we must believe on Him.
Luke 13:3 - He said we must repent.
Matthew 10:32-33 - He said we must confess Him.
Mark 16:16 - He said we must be baptized to be saved.

One Where His Will Is Followed In Worship

John 4:24 - Worship must be sincere and proper actions.
Acts 20:7 - Lord's Supper on the first day of the week.
Colossians 3:16 - Singing praises to God.
Acts 2:42 - Prayer and teaching.
1 Corinthians 16:1-2 - Giving of our means on the first day of the week.

YOU SHOULD ATTEND THE CHURCH OF CHRIST "The churches of Christ salute you." (Romans 16:16) ♦

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3
Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24
Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30
Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21
Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27
Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew

How to Contact Us

Telephone: (920)499-5677
E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com



Our Address

1621 Hillcrest Drive
Green Bay, WI 54313

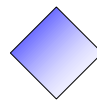


Schedule of Assembly

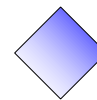
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com



The Voice of Truth



November 27, 2011

"Law of Grace"

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Paul said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: It is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). Grace is usually defined as "unmerited favor." God didn't owe it to us. Out of love he extended grace. The grace of God is truly one of the main topics of the entire Bible. No one could say, "we could have just as easily have been saved without grace." We depend on God to save us. God did this through His grace.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and Godly, in this present world" (Tit. 2:11-12). The relationship between law and grace is of the major theme of Paul's writings. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). "But not as the offense, so also is the free gift. For if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification. For if by one mans' offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:15-17). We should never be guilty of minimizing the importance of grace in our salvation. Without Gods' grace we could not be saved! His grace we are shown in the greatest gift: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jno. 3:16).

As the song "Amazing Grace" goes; God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8). Grace provided for our pardon while we were yet sinners. But our gift of pardon is conditional. How about when God offered Abraham land, but to receive it he was to leave his country. By faith Abra-

ham obeyed. How do we receive Gods amazing grace in the forgiveness of our sins? Jesus said that when men hear the gospel of God's grace, they must believe it and be baptized in order to be saved by Gods Grace. (Mk. 16:15-16). Grace throws a rope to man drowning in sin. Man must believe and obey in order to be saved by grace. He does not deserve that grace and can never earn it.

The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ, (Jno. 1:17). God supplied mans' greatest need when He sent His Son to die for man. Without this, we would be utterly hopeless. He could provide no means of forgiveness of sins. God's grace is seen in the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Grace comes to all.

The grace of God is what we all need, and can only be obtained through Christ, through faith in Him. Paul said, "But by the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10). God's grace made Paul what he was. Grace is God's part in our salvation, Grace is that which God gives, and which man cannot do for himself. "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (1 Pet. 5:10). Faith is man's part in his salvation, and is something man can do for himself, and God does not force upon man. God's grace is from above, and descends from Him.

It is by the death, burial and resurrection that God reached down to man: this is Grace. Grace is shown most clearly by the Son of God. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jno. 15:13). "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor" (Eph. 5:2). We have done nothing to earn this. Salvation is the free gift of God; but it takes two, "Grace and Faith".

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God wants all men to hear of His amazing grace. It is broad enough to take in everyone, if only men will receive it. *"The Lord is patient, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"* (2 Pet. 3:9). During the time of Gods patience, we have the wonderful privi-

“Learning From A Destroyed City”

By Jarrod Jacobs

Joshua 2-6 records the spying, the planning, and the destruction of Jericho by God through the nation of Israel. This is a fascinating account, and one which ought to be read again if you have not read it in some time. At the destruction of Jericho, God spared Rahab and her family, and allowed the Israelites to gather the gold, silver, brass, and iron from Jericho and give it to the Lord’s treasury (6:19, 21-22, 24). Everything else God commanded to be utterly destroyed. Furthermore, Joshua cursed this city saying that anyone attempting to rebuild the city would *“lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it”* (6:26).

Not long after this event, the Israelites learned that Achan had troubled Israel by stealing things from Jericho, and hiding them under his tent (7:21). Because of his sin: Israel lost the battle to Ai (thirty-six men died in that battle), the nation as a whole was dismayed at their loss, and Achan and his family were put to death because of his sin (7:4-5, 24-26).

What has this to do with men and women today? I would suggest that many times, our lives parallel what happened at Jericho and Ai. How could this be? It happens because of sin, and because we selfishly prefer to satisfy our physical whims rather than selflessly serving the God of Heaven. Let us study Joshua 6-7 further and see other points that parallel our lives today.

God Has Promised Us Victory

Just as God had given the people Jericho (Josh. 6:2), so also has God promised us spiritual victory in Christ. The apostle Paul taught us this truth when he told the Corinthians, *“thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (I Cor. 15:57). By apostolic authority, John wrote to the Christians and reminded them, *“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith”* (I Jn. 5:4).

God has not promised us earthly or physical victory

lege of telling men about His Grace. We must show people that they need God, this mercy, gift of love, the conditions for receiving it, the joy of sharing Gods grace. For God who is rich in mercy for His great love where with He loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together in Christ, by Grace we are saved. ♦

over earthly nations. Rather, He has promised spiritual victory in Christ! I am afraid that we often forget that *“the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.”* Instead, they are, *“mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”* (II Cor. 10:4-5).

Paul, by inspiration, calls upon Christians to wear *“the whole armor of God”* (Eph. 6:11, 13). He calls it *“the armor of light”* (Rom. 13:11) or spiritual armor which protects us against our spiritual foe, Satan. Pleasing Him who has called us to be soldiers is how we can gain the victory over this world (II Tim. 2:4). We must recognize who rules us and live according to His will. When the Israelites did this, they gained victory over their enemies in Canaan (Deut. 28:1-7). When we do this, we’ll gain the ultimate victory over Satan and death itself (I Cor. 15:54-57)!

Trouble In Our Lives

So long as we live in this world, we will encounter problems. Satan will try every trick he can to get us to become disgusted, discouraged, and downtrodden. Problems will come from without, and from within. A prime example of this is seen when Paul lists some of the things he suffered as a Christian and preacher of the gospel. He said he suffered some things which came upon him from wicked people, or hard circumstances (II Cor. 11:24-25, 27); but he also said that there were things he suffered from the brethren (II Cor. 11:26, 28). Likewise, James wrote the scattered brethren, encouraging them to stand and to be strong in spite of the troubles they would face on every side (Jas. 1:2-3, 14-15).

Just as in the days of Jericho, we will face problems as others let us down, disappoint us, and are drawn away of their own lusts and enticed. Just like Achan’s sin, the sins of others effect us, too. No man can say that what he does effects no one but himself. This was impossible when

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Adam and Eve sinned (Gen. 3:16-19; Rom. 5:12), it was impossible when Achan sinned (Josh. 7:4-5, 24-26), and it is impossible today! Though sin promises great things, and many are enticed by its temporary pleasures (Heb. 11:25), in truth, sin brings about nothing but trouble.

Consequences We Must Face

There are many consequences men must face when sin comes into our lives. Of course, sin’s consequences can be both physical and spiritual in nature. In our text, we see the physical consequences. These include: Israel lost the battle at Ai, thirty-six men are killed, and Achan and his family and livestock were executed when his sin was discovered (Josh. 7:24-26; Num. 32:23). This text does not specifically mention spiritual consequences of Achan’s sin, but there is no question that they are there. The wages of sin is spiritual death (Rom. 6:23; Jas. 1:14-15).

When men sin today, there are oftentimes physical consequences which result. Perhaps one is killed, or the sin results in the death of another. Sometimes, sin’s consequences are not fatal, but nonetheless harmful where one might have to go to jail, or loses the trust of loved ones, etc., when he sins.

Seeing that this is true, it ought to give us greater incentive for loving each other, and trying to help one another go to Heaven. The alternative is that our influence encourages others to sin and to live in that sin. Achan’s selfishness led to many consequences he might not have considered when he stole those items. When we sin today, the results are the same.

There are physical consequences we face as a result of sin, but greater than these are the spiritual consequences we face because of sin. Long ago, God through the prophet Isaiah said, *“your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear”* (Isa. 59:1-2). The apostle Paul stated in no uncertain terms that *“the wages of sin is death ...”* (Rom. 6:23). James taught this when he told the

Christians that *“sin, when it is finished bringeth forth death”* (Jas. 1:15). Yes friends, there are dread and dire consequences for sin. Knowing this is true, is it any wonder why there is such urgency in Scripture to save lost souls outside of Christ, as well as the urgency to restore erring Christians before it is too late (Lk. 19:10; Mk. 16:15-16; Rom. 1:16; Gal. 6:1; I Tim. 1:15; Jas. 5:19-20)?

God’s Longsuffering Allows Repentance.

Perhaps some compare their lives to folks like Achan, Ananias and Sapphira, Herod, and others and decide that since God didn’t strike them dead after sinning, then their sin was not “that bad” after all. Not so! Just because some were like Uzzah, and were struck down for sin that very second, please keep in mind that there were others like Abraham (Gen. 12:13, 20:2), Isaac (Gen. 26:7), Peter (Matt. 26:69-75), and Barnabas (Gal. 2:13), who were not struck dead when they sinned. That is a lesson to us. The apostle Peter said, *“account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation ...”* (II Pet. 3:15).

What Will You Do?

If you consider your life and some of the sins which you have committed, the fact you’re living today means God is giving you another opportunity to repent and turn to Him before it is too late. Be thankful to God that he hasn’t treated you like Achan, Uzzah, Ananias, Sapphira, and others, but is giving you this day as another opportunity to repent. May this article prod and provoke you to do what is right and live for God the rest of your life.

Don’t wait until you’re so steeped in sin that you, like the citizens of Jericho, are beyond help. Similarly, don’t be like Achan and trouble the church because of your selfishness and sin. Let us have a renewed zeal and fervor for the Lord and His work, and let us act selflessly as God’s *“peculiar people,”* being *“zealous of good works”* (Titus 2:14). Let us labor for Him, knowing *“your labour is not in vain in the Lord”* (I Cor. 15:58). Then, we can look forward to true victory in Christ! *Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com* ♦

THINK ABOUT IT!

When a farmer stops plowing his land, stops planting seed, and stops harvesting his crops, he has stopped doing those things that identify him as being a farmer. When a Christian stops attending worship services regularly, stops studying, stops giving as he has been prospered, and has stopped working for the Lord, he has stopped being a Christian because he has stopped doing those things that identify him as a Christian. *"By their fruits ye shall know them,"* (Matthew 7:20). ♦