

HEARING AND KNOWING THE GRACE OF GOD IN TRUTH

"We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, having heard of your **faith** in Christ Jesus, and of the **love** which ye have toward all the saints, because of the **hope** which is laid up for you in the heavens, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of **the gospel**, which is come unto you; even as it is also in all the world bearing fruit and increasing, as *it doth* in you also, since the day ye **heard and knew the grace of God in truth**" (Colossians 1:3-6). Surely most of us who read this article are aware of what the apostle Paul wrote regarding "faith, hope, and love" (I Corinthians 13:13). You will note that I emphasized those words above. But note also the close relationship these vitally important words have with "the gospel" and "the grace of God in truth." Having fallen all together in one complete context, we cannot help but see that these terms and all they imply are forever linked together.

We know that our faith comes from the Gospel (Romans 10:17), as does our hope (Romans 15:4). We thus love God because of the love which He has expressed to us in His word (1 John 4:19). But few seem to appreciate the fact that all we know about God's grace has been given to us in the Gospel as well. Far too many today seem to think that faithful preachers/teachers of the Word of God have little if any knowledge of God's grace. "The church of Christ needs to learn about grace from the Baptists" comes the slander of false and liberal brethren. Such is totally false. Some of the best preaching on grace and what it is and what it demands (yes, that's right--*demands*) has come and continues to come from faithful, sound gospel preachers.

If one is to preach of God's grace, he is going to preach the Gospel; if he

preaches the Gospel, he is preaching of grace. Notice how they are connected in what Paul said to the Ephesian elders, "But I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify **the gospel of the grace of God**" (Acts 20:24).

Also, we see the benefits of all these related doctrines are given only to those who hear and know. Those who have never heard the gospel know nothing of God's grace. Those who have heard but choose not to learn will suffer the same end as those who have never heard. These two ingredients *must* go together. Here is the blessing for those who allow what they hear to become a part of what they know and do: "No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me" (John 6:44,45). But, for those who will not act upon what they hear and know is right, Paul says "them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: shall suffer punishment, *even* eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (2 Thessalonians 1:8,9).

It has been said that the grace of God is "more gift than command; more privilege than task; more joy than guilt." Nevertheless, the guilty must meet the task of the command in or to have the joy and the privilege of the gift! How urgent it is that we take the Gospel to the lost world all about us. Let us always remember and never forget, that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves" (II Corinthians 4:7). We are those earthen vessels. **TO THE WORK!**

Sermon Notes:
“Thought Control”

Jesus taught us about things we are to do and not do; about things we ought to think and not think. We must learn to take our thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ.

- Thought pollution is more deadly than _____ or _____.
- Your _____ is connected to your _____.
- Thought pollution comes from _____.
- Three categories of greed:
- Lust of _____, _____, _____.
- You may need to reevaluate your _____.
- We need a proper _____-_____.
- We may need to replace the _____.
- We may need to change:
- _____...
- _____...
- _____.

(ii)

Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study: 9:30 a.m.
Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Evening: 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.

Preachers:

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Wednesday’s Wisdom:

“Not all fights are worth fighting. But contending for the faith is vital! Take a stand and stand for things that are worthwhile.” James Grayson

I have been meaning to ask: *What Do You Think Of The New Bulletin Format?*

Fellowship meal and business meeting is next week. Please make the appropriate plans.

Sermon Preview:

- As a follow up to what we studied in the past two sermons on the kingdom, we consider a more concentrated study on thought control.
- Our actions and speech typically come from what we think.
- What we think many times is the result of what we have taken in (what we watch, listen to, hear, and by which we are entertained).
- We may need to reevaluate our interests.
- We may need to make some changes.
- We may need to replace some things: out with the old...in with the new.