

## THE TEACHING OF GOD'S GRACE

To the Ephesian church, Paul wrote, "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). Many have taken these two verses and used them to try to prove that salvation comes by grace alone, without any "obedience" on the part of man. Nothing could be further from the truth of God's word. There are many passages that could be cited to show that God's grace does not annul nor alleviate the necessity of obedience. However, there is just one argument that we wish to discuss here.

In Paul's epistle to Titus, he states, "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). Now notice first of all that the grace of God **teaches us**. This is one of the ways in which the grace of God is manifest to man. The passage also points out that the grace of God **brings salvation**. Paul told the Roman brethren that the gospel of Christ was the power of God unto salvation. That gospel was taught to every creature (Col. 1:23) and has therefore **appeared to all men**.

So what does the grace of God teach us? It teaches us that one must hear the gospel of Christ in order to believe it and be saved (Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 10:13-14, 17). It teaches us that we must repent of our past sins (Acts 2:38; 3:19; Luke 13:3, 5). It teaches us that we must confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God (Rom. 10:10; Matt. 10:32-33; Acts 8:37). And, it teaches us that one must be baptized into Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27). It teaches us that when we have done this, the Lord adds us to the church, His body (Acts 2:47; I Cor. 12:18; Eph. 1:22-23). It teaches us that there is only one body that is acceptable in the sight of God (Eph. 4:4; Matt. 15:13). It teaches us that one must continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel (Col. 1:23; II Pet. 2:20-22).

Not only does the grace of God teach us all of this, but it teaches us that if we have been baptized into Christ and are faithfully abiding in Him, we shall receive an inheritance received of the Lord (Col. 3:24), eternal (Heb. 9:15), incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away and is reserved in heaven (I Pet. 1:4). Listen to God's grace! *Tilis*

## A LOVE FOR THE TRUTH

It is a simple fact that most people do not like to be lied to. They expect people to tell them the truth. In fact, it could probably be said that most people love the truth, at least about most things. So why is it that so many people do not want to know the truth when it comes to what God would have us to hear, believe and practice in order to have eternal life in heaven?

When it comes to matters of God's will, it is the word of God that is truth. Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth". Paul told the Thessalonians, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (I Thess. 2:13). In order for one to be saved, they must develop a **love for the truth**. Paul speaking of some who would be false teachers said, "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (II Thess. 2:10). No love for the truth will result in no salvation!

Yet, far too many have no love for the truth, and this is certainly not anything that is new. Isaiah wrote, "Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits" (Isa. 30:10). The prophet Jeremiah stated, "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; **and my people love to have it so**" (Jer. 5:31, emphasis mine, RCO). Many years later, the apostle Paul would write to Timothy saying, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:2-4).

The world is full of false teachers. Jesus said to "beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15). They are out there, and often even within the body of believers. It is therefore our responsibility to love the truth, study the truth, obey the truth and mark those who are teaching contrary to the truth. Our soul depends upon it. **RCO**