

"Power of God's Grace" – SCN

Reformation Sunday @ SCN

Eph. 2:8-9 – (8) *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—*

(9) *not by works, so that no one can boast.*

I. Grace and Mercy defined:

A. Grace

1. Greek word is: "hesed"
2. means: *God's Unmerited Favor*
3. We Don't (or Can't) Do anything to Deserve it but *God GIVES to us His Unmerited Favor* through the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross.

B. Mercy

1. The meaning behind the word mercy in a negative sense is to hold back what a person rightly deserves.
2. In a positive sense, it's to be understanding, compassionate and loving – to be compassionate by word or deed and specifically by divine grace.
3. *Everyone Please Know the Greatest Example Of both GRACE & MERCY Was the Fact That Jesus Went to Calvary For You and For Me.*

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~~ He took our punishment upon Himself
~~ He asked: "Father, Forgive them..."
~~ Jesus PAID the Price for each of us.

II. Protestant Reformation Explained

A. Jesus PAID it all

John 3:16 – *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life".*

Rom. 6:23 -- *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

2 Cor. 5:21 -- *"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."*

B. In Catholic Church there were two Problems:

- One was the construction of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome & how to PAY FOR IT ?
- 2nd, there was the Problem with Sin, It's Consequences & It's Penalty being PAID in FULL by Christ's death on Calvary
 - a. Doubt was put in people's minds
 - b. Was Christ's death enough to PAY the PENALTY for man's sins ?

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- C. Concept of "Purgatory" was developed to deal with the need to fully make Payment for sin so one can go to their eternal reward.
- a. There (many priests) came up with this **"IN BETWEEN"** holding room... *PURGATORY*
 - i. (between heaven and hell)
 - ii. (Between this life and the next)
 - iii. **It was a WAITING ROOM**
 - b. Those in PURGATORY needed someone to PAY THEIR WAY OUT so they could hopefully go into heaven.
- D. Idea of "Indulgences" was invented.
- a. Indulgences was money paid by the regular folks to "Buy one's way out of purgatory.
 - b. Indulgences, and the marketing of them, became a GREAT WAY to RAISE MONEY for the construction cost of St. Peters.
 - c. "for my mother" "For my father", etc.
- E. In 1517, [Pope Leo X](#) offered indulgences for those who gave alms to rebuild [St. Peter's Basilica](#) in [Rome](#).
- F. If enough indulgences were SOLD it would accomplish two things:

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- a. Folks would have peace of mind that a loved one's soul was NOT stuck in Purgatory
- b. There would be money for the massive St. Peter's construction project

G. Priest John Tetzel was very aggressive in marketing indulgences and raised a LOT OF MONEY for the POPE & his building project

- He played on people's emotions so they would PAY to BUY their loved one's soul out of Purgatory.
- His quote: "As soon as money in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory's fire springs."
- This was PURE GREED

H. The aggressive marketing practices of a monk named, Johann Tetzel, in promoting this cause provoked Martin Luther to write his Ninety-Five Theses,

- condemning what he saw as the purchase and sale of salvation.
- He nailed them to the door in Wittenburg, Germany

I. The Ninety-Five Theses not only denounced such transactions as worldly.

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- a. but denied the Pope's right to grant pardons on God's behalf in the first place:
- b. the only thing indulgences guaranteed, Luther said, was an increase in profit and greed,
- c. because the pardon of the Church was in God's power alone.

J. It was in October 1517 that Luther wrote & then nailed his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenburg, Germany.

- **That was 500 years ago. *That started the Protestant Reformation***
- To Luther; and for us SALVATION IS BY GOD'S GRACE ALONE...
- The scripture he used to support this TRUTH was Eph. 2:8-9

III. We are Saved by "God's Grace"

(Eph. 2:8-9) (8) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—

(9) not by works, so that no one can boast.

A. You are Saved by God's Grace Alone

- a. This is the MAJOR POINT of the passage

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- b. Grace is giving, but it is giving to people who do NOT deserve the gift
- c. God has reached out to us through His Son Jesus
 - i. God, the Father, sent Jesus to die to PAY the PRICE for man's SIN
 - ii. Notice the people for whom Christ died did NOT deserve His sacrificial love. We were ungodly and sinners.
- d. That is God's GRACE:
 - i. The GODLY dying for the ungodly
 - ii. Jesus died to save the World

Rom. 5:8- *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

B. You are Saved through Faith

- a. That means: Jesus died for us
- b. Jesus bore our sins on the cross

C. You are NOT saved of yourselves

- a. God is perfect (Holy)
- b. To live in His presence, one must be HOLY
- c. Man is NOT perfect & can NOT go into God's presence on our own
- d. To do so would be 'certain death' because of OUR SIN
- e. *"For the wages of sin is death"*

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- f. We cannot save ourselves because of our sin
- g. Our SIN separates us from God*

D. You are Saved as a gift of God, not of works

- a. Man cannot make God forgive him
- b. Man cannot heal God's heart
 - i. Our sin broke God's heart and He sees our sin as it separates us from Him
 - ii. Only the shed blood of a sinless sacrifice can cover our sins and bridge the GAP between us and God
 - iii. Jesus PAID IT ALL for us on Calvary to make it possible for us to get BACK to GOD

E. The real Salvation is by grace and NOT by works to prevent men from ever boasting

- a. Because God is the Supreme & Majestic being of the universe
- b. God is the creator; we are the creation
- c. We can NOT earn our salvation
- d. We can NOT buy our salvation
- e. Our Salvation is a free gift of GRACE

CONCLUSION:

- How Small we are & How Glorious God is !!!

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GRACE: God's Unmerited Favor

MERCY: To HOLD BACK from us what we deserve

*Everyone Please Know the Greatest Example
Of both GRACE & MERCY Was the Fact That
Jesus Went to Calvary For You and For Me.*

~~ He took our punishment upon Himself

~~ He asked: "Father, Forgive them..."

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RESPONSE & Closing Song

Prayer