

UNDERSTANDING GRACE * UNDERSTANDING LEGALISM

An Introduction to Galatians By Example T.B.C. 7/5/09

(MAIN TEXT: Rich Young Ruler/ Luke 18:18-23)

GRACE : Define

1. The free and eternal love and favor of God, which is the spring and source of all the benefits which we receive from Him.
2. Grace is the free imputation of Christ' righteousness to our account, which makes us righteous in the sight of God.
3. The Spirit working in the believer, renewing the soul into the image of Christ and continually strengthens the believer to obey His will.
4. The excellent and blessed state of reconciliation, friendship, and favor with God.

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1. Ephesians 2: 1-10

2. Romans 5:1-10

Grace is something God alone offers, it cannot be activated by self- righteous works, only by believing what has been offered.

Romans 11:6 (also John 6:26-29)

Israel's failure to believe what Christ had done **for them**. If they were going to be saved they were determined to do it on their own. This is a misunderstanding of how holy and pure God is, and how helpless and sinful man is.

Romans 9:30-33

**** C.S. Lewis "Trying Harder"

Jesus did not accept his flattery because it would strengthen the misconception and limited view of "goodness" the man was believing.

The man is only looking at goodness as it looks in comparison to other people. The real standard of goodness is to look at God alone.

"Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone." Luke 18:19

The point of Jesus' reply is not to deny His own deity or His sinlessness. (This man was not aware of the full identity of Christ at this time.) Jesus said this to rebuke his casual use of the word "goodness."

"All these have I observed from my youth" Luke 18:21

In this man beat the heart of a through going humanist! The heart of a legalist! He actually believed he had kept the moral law of God throughout his life! Obviously he was not present at the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1- 7:29), where the broader implications of moral law and goodness were expounded.

Example: Lust = equals adultery

Example: Hatred = equals murder

He had adjusted the demands of the law downward!

*** Jesus did not argue. His response was subtle and indirect. Luke 18: 22-23**

Jesus started with the first command, "Thou shall have no other Gods before Me!" (Exodus 20:3) (Deuteronomy 5:7)

The young man could not pass the test, even on the first commandment!

Point: He did not want to come, hat-in-hand, and depend on something out of his control. He did not want to depend on "Grace" to have eternal life.

Key:

1. Realize you are not good.
2. Then accept what Christ is offering because of the work that He did for you on the cross. (cf. LUKE 18: 9-17, "trusted in themselves." Pharisee and Sinner)

Why does this generation have trouble with "Grace?"

The conflict between Christianity and humanism (and its bedfellow ; legalism.)

HUMANISM : the view that man is the measure of all things. Man sets his own destiny and is his own god, and can change reality into anything he wants; no need to look to God. It is a conflict of ultimate standards. Christianity evaluates the performance of mankind not by national averages or a low common denominator of human behavior.

"Goodness" is not defined by statistical normalcy. Christianity asserts that normal man is fallen man. The standard of goodness is found in the holiness of God. Christianity takes seriously the divine mandate, "Be holy, for I am holy" (Leviticus 14:44; I Peter 1:16; Matthew 5:48)

Man's role as the image-bearer of God carries with it an awesome moral responsibility that cannot be neutralized by a relative standard of goodness; (i.e., "I am as good as the next guy!")

II Corinthians 8:9 " For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ , that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through his poverty might become rich."

Take the test! After taking the test, go back and see how grace could apply to each of the questions. (From "The Lies We Tell Ourselves" Chris Thurman)