

GRACE, FAITH, AND REDEMPTION

- A. Introduction: We have been studying the subject of redemption. Let's review some key points.
1. Mankind, apart from Christ, is in bondage to sin and its consequence, which is death in all its forms -- poverty (spiritual and material), sickness (spiritual and physical), and spiritual death (separation from God). Rom 6:23; Deut 28:15-68
    - a. Through redemption, through the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, God has set us free from this bondage.
      1. To redeem means to loose or set free by paying a price.
      2. Through redemption, Jesus paid the price we owed for our sins. He satisfied Divine Justice for our sins.
      3. Once the price for our sin was paid and Divine Justice was satisfied, God could legally remove our sins. With our sins removed, we are no longer guilty before God. Sin, Satan, and the curse of sin (death in all its forms) have lost the right to dominate us. Rom 3:24; Eph 1:7; Gal 3:13
    - b. Redemption was a means to an end. Once our sins were legally removed, God could put His life in us and make us literal sons by birth. John 1:12; I John 5:1,11,12
    - c. With sonship comes an inheritance. Our inheritance includes everything that was given back to Jesus in the Resurrection. Rom 8:17
    - d. The legal work of the Cross became our vital, actual, possession when we made Jesus Lord of our life and were born again.
  2. From God's point of view, we are free and we are the possessors of all that we need to live this life and the life to come. Eph 1:3; II Pet 1:3
    - a. That brings up a question. If we are free because of redemption, then why are many of us still bound in areas of our lives?
    - b. And, if we are fully provided for because of redemption, why do we lack things in our lives?
  3. The answer is, we must learn to walk in the reality of redemption. In order to do that, there are some things we must understand.
    - a. The provisions of redemption are spiritual realities. Spiritual means invisible. Invisible does not mean not real or less real. It simply means you cannot see it.
    - b. However, the invisible, spiritual provision of redemption can become visible, can produce visible, tangible results through faith.
  4. In this lesson we want to talk about the connection between grace, faith, and redemption.
- B. To walk in the reality of redemption we must understand how God most often works in our lives. He works by grace through faith.
1. In interactions between God and man, God has a part to play and man has a part to play. God's part is grace. Man's part is faith.
    - a. God's grace gives us what we do not deserve and cannot earn.
    - b. Faith believes what God says about what His grace has provided and receives the provisions of God's grace.
  2. Eph 2:8,9--We are saved by grace through faith. God's grace provided us with salvation from our sins.
    - a. When the gospel is preached to us faith comes to us (Rom 10:17), and when we act on that faith and believe in our hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead, and confess with our mouths Jesus as Lord, God's grace in the form of salvation, comes to us. Rom 10:9,10
    - b. Faith receives what God's grace provided -- salvation from our sins.

3. Salvation is an inclusive word. The meaning is broader than just salvation from our sins.
    - a. The Greek word translated salvation is SOZO, and its meaning includes wholeness, deliverance, preservation, safety, and healing.
    - b. Redemption has made possible a salvation which meets all of our needs providing wholeness, deliverance, preservation, safety, and healing.
  4. But, we must understand that the provisions of salvation are spiritual or invisible.
    - a. The spiritual (God's provision through grace) can and will change the physical and material.
    - b. That happens through faith. Faith activates God's power to bring to pass physical results of the provisions of His grace.
    - c. Mark 5:25-34--This woman's faith activated God's power to bring to pass the physical results of His healing grace.
- C. II Cor 5:7--By definition, faith involves believing some you cannot see, something which you do not yet possess physically. Faith is believing something you cannot see because someone reliable has told you about it.
1. How can you believe something is so when you cannot see it, when you have no physical evidence?
    - a. You can do it if you understand that things exist in two forms, if you understand there are two kinds of things -- visible things and invisible things. II Cor 4:18
    - b. You can do it if you know that your information about what you cannot see comes from God.
  2. Faith is confidence in a person and it rests on that person's truthfulness.
    - a. Faith is confidence in God Almighty, and it rests on the fact that He cannot lie, He cannot mislead, He cannot be wrong.
    - b. If God says something is so, it is so. If God says something will become, it will become.
  3. The Bible is God's word about what is and what will become. The Bible shows us unseen realities.
    - a. Faith is treating God like He is an honest being. Faith in God is faith in His word.
    - b. We understand what faith is when it comes to the word of a banker or a lawyer or a doctor. God is more reliable than the best lawyer, doctor, or banker.
  4. When we believe what God says in His Book about the unseen provisions of redemption, God's power, by His grace, brings those things to pass, makes them become visible.
    - a. Receiving the visible results of redemption is very simple. You must believe you have it before you see it, then, you'll see it.
    - b. Receiving the visible results of redemption is simple, but it's not easy.
      1. There are physical, visible challenges which rise up to try to contradict God's word. We must be able to answer those challenges.
      2. And, we must become fully persuaded of things we cannot see. That take much effort.
- D. Let us consider the challenges which rise up to contradict God's word.
1. Matt 14:22-33--Jesus spoke a word to Peter which he acted on (he got out of the boat), and the invisible power of God enabled Peter to walk on water.
    - a. Initially, Peter's attention was focused on Jesus. He acted on the word of the Lord and he began to walk on the water toward Jesus.
    - b. While Peter's attention was fixed on Jesus, the power of God to enable him to walk on water was operative.
    - c. But, when Peter took his attention off the word of the Lord (off of Jesus) and turned his attention to what he could see and feel, He began to sink.
    - d. God did not withdraw His power to Peter. Peter doubted and that cut off God's power to him.

2. James 1:5-8 tells us something important about faith and receiving tangible results from God.
    - a. You cannot waver, because if you do, the wind and waves will knock you down and you will not receive what God has for you.
    - b. A double minded man wavers. A double minded man is a man of two minds. He is influenced by what God says, but he is also influenced by what he sees.
  3. What did Peter do? He took his attention off of Jesus and put it on to what he could see and feel.
    - a. Sight and feeling rose up to challenge God's word. Why? That's life in a sin cursed earth.
    - b. Sight and feeling influenced what Peter believed about his situation. Peter could feel the strong wind and see the waves stirred up by the wind.
    - c. Then, he drew conclusions about his situation based on what he could see -- I'm in great danger. We know he did that because the Bible tells us he became afraid.
  4. But, what Peter could see and feel was an irrelevant detail. Would it have been any easier for him to walk on water if the sea had been calm?
    - a. Nothing that we see or feel has the power to stop God's power. God's power can change what we see and feel.
    - b. Why should we doubt God's word because we see or feel a physical contradiction to it?
      1. The Bible says that Jesus is coming again. If you had a cold and a fever, would you turn around and say, "I hurt. I guess Jesus isn't coming back after all."? Of course not.
      2. What we see and feel is no reason to doubt any word from God.
  5. Receiving visible help from God to produce visible change is simple, but it's not easy. Why?
    - a. We naturally gravitate to what we see and feel. All of the information in our minds has come to us through our five physical senses. We have to work to overcome that tendency.
    - b. Before we were saved, we had no access to the unseen, invisible kingdom of God and His provision (John 3:3). We have to learn the ways of this unseen kingdom as we unlearn things of this world.
    - c. Man is so technologically advanced, natural help is available for most of the issues of life, and we trust in that help. When we finally come up against something for which there is no natural help, for which we must have supernatural help, we have no confidence in the unseen realm, having never had to seriously depend on it.
    - d. There really is a devil and he really does oppose us to try to keep the blessings of God from coming to us.
- E. The faith that does not waver, the faith that receives the visible provisions of God's grace in redemption, is fully persuaded of things it cannot see so much so that it is not moved by what it can see.
1. Rom 4:19-21--Abraham was fully persuaded that God would do what He said He'd do.
    - a. He did not consider what he could see (the fact that everyday, he and Sarah got older) as a reason to doubt God's faithfulness to keep his promise.
    - b. What he could see was an irrelevant detail. If Sarah had been young and infertile instead of old, would it have been any easier for them to have a baby?
    - c. The key factor in Abraham receiving invisible help which produced visible results was that he was so fully persuaded of what God said that he was not moved by what he could see or feel.
  2. If we are going to walk in the reality of redemption and experience the visible results of redemption, we, too, must become fully persuaded that:
    - a. We have things we cannot see.
    - b. God will keep His word and make the invisible visible.
  3. There is only one way to become fully persuaded of what you cannot yet see.

- a. That is by looking unto Jesus, the Author (Originator) and Finisher (Perfecter) of our faith.  
Heb 12:2
  - b. You look unto Jesus the Living Word, by looking to the written word, the Bible.
  - c. That means we must take time to read God's word and meditate on it -- think about it, say it over and over to ourselves until the reality of it begins to dawn on us.
  - 4. We don't have to generate or grunt out faith. We can't do it. We cannot will ourselves to faith. Faith comes from God. It is a gift. Eph 2:8
    - a. This gift comes to us through the word of God. Rom 10:17
    - b. When the gospel is preached to you, faith is given to you or comes to you, through the word preached to you. God gives you faith through His word. Rom 12:3
  - 5. That faith must now be developed and perfected.
    - a. Faith is developed by feeding it and exercising it.
    - b. Faith is fed by the word of God and it is exercised as you begin to say what God says about yourself and your situation and not what you see and feel. Heb 10:23
  - 6. Most of us are like Peter. We believe God's word until what we see and feel challenges to it. Then we doubt. Then we sink.
- F. Conclusion: If you are going to walk in the reality of redemption -- experience visible, tangible results -- you must understand that God works in our lives by grace through faith.
- 1. God's grace through redemption has provided everything we need to live this life and the life to come.
    - a. Faith believes what God's grace has provided and receives it.
    - b. That includes our initial salvation from sin and every other blessing as well.
  - 2. Faith to receive the visible, tangible results of redemption comes from God's word.
    - a. If you are born again, you have faith. You are a believer.
    - b. However, your faith must be developed and perfected. That will happen only as you feed and exercise your faith.
  - 3. You need to take time to find out what God says you are and have as a result of redemption, because you are redeemed.
    - a. You need to begin to think on and meditate on those facts.
    - b. You need to begin to say about yourself and your situation what God says, despite what you see or feel.
    - c. Just as Peter's faith activated God's power to produce visible results, just as the woman with the issue of blood activated the power of God to produce visible results, your faith will activate the power of God to produce the visible results of the redemption which God's grace has provided.