

St. Bartholomew's, Ducklington

Lent 2017, Sermon Series: Principles of the Reformation

19 March 2017 - Study Notes: 3. "By Grace alone"

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God" [Ephesians 2:8]

- Second tool in work box on path from Sin to Salvation
 - Eph. 2:1: "dead" in our old nature, through wrong actions and thoughts.
 - Eph. 2:10: "alive" in our transformed lives,
 - God has made us new creations in Christ
 - Transformed from spiritual corpses in the chaotic power of Satan to being seated with Christ
- Faith: Our only needful action
 - IN redeeming work of Jesus , AS Lord and Saviour
- Grace: God's initiating action,
 - Un-earned and un-merited favour of God toward humankind
 - Begun in OT
 - "Covenant Relationship" between God and mankind
 - Affirmed throughout history
 - God shows his loving faithfulness and his favour
 - Forgiveness conferred
 - Tax-collector – God, be merciful to me THE sinner [Luke 18:13]
 - Grace + Faith = Salvation + Good works
 - God's action + our response = changed lives
 - Demonstration of God's favour: all-enveloping nature of Grace: v7 "immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."
- God's Character expressed:

- Grace means we *do* get the salvation we *do not* deserve.
- Mercy means we *do not* get the punishment we *do* deserve.
- Grace is unbounded
 - ***Sufficient Overflowing Fulfilling Abundant*** grace:
 - gift of righteousness. God's generosity

- Grace costs us nothing but cost Christ everything
 - "Gifts Received At Christ's Expense"
 - Subsequent responsibility: Discipline, repentance
 - Bringing us into sanctification, to be more like Jesus and our Father
 - The continuous means of knowing his compassion and mercy:
 - Dietrich Bonhoeffer: grace becomes cheap if we don't move from salvation to sanctification

References to explore:

Look up these references which describe the SOFA of grace: *2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Tim. 1:14; Jn.1:16-17; Rom. 5:17-19*

Other references: *Rom 9:15-16; Eph 1:7-8; Rom. 3:23-24*

Questions

1. What has been your experience of God's grace?
2. Since I have been justified (put right with God) by his grace as a gift, should I feel unworthy of this gift?
3. The Roman Catholic view of justification is that we need to add to God's grace through some merit of our own. Do you hold to some sense that we must work at our salvation – even a little bit?
4. If the tax-collector went home justified, in Jesus' judgement, why did not the Pharisee? Check out Luke 18:9 for a cue to the answer.
5. Do I value God's grace, or do I forget how much it cost?