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THE SURE WORD by Jonnie Hutchison

Article Title:

WHAT GRACE TEACHES US

There is a very interesting often overlooked statement found in the book of Titus regarding God's grace. It reads, "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ," (Titus 2:11-13). Grace, as used in the Bible, has often been defined as the "unmerited favor of God." As sinners, none of us deserve the grace or favor God has extended toward us. Yet, God, in His grace, provides the means for our salvation from sin through the blood of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:8-9; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:19)

Since God's grace has "appeared to all" does that mean every person receives the benefits of God's grace? No. While God's grace is made available to all only those who accept it receive its benefits. Grace is called a "free gift" (Romans 5:15-18). For gift giving to be complete there must be the acceptance of the gift that is offered. Titus says God's grace brings salvation. It follows then that when one receives salvation he has accepted God's gift of grace. One receives salvation when one is cleansed of sin by the blood of Jesus (Rev. 2:10). Saul (Paul) is a good example. He was a recipient of God's grace (1 Corinthians 15:10) but not until as a penitent believer he followed the instructions to "arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

Receiving God's grace does not mean one can continue to sin with impunity. Grace does not give one a license to sin (Romans 6:1-2). God's grace teaches us to deny ourselves of ungodliness and worldly lusts. The Bible teaches one can fall from God's grace (Galatians 5:4) and receive God's grace in vain (2 Corinthians 6:1) if one fails to live as God's grace teaches. To continue to receive the benefits of God's grace one must "live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." This allows those who have received God's grace to maintain their "blessed hope" and look forward to the coming of their Lord. May God help us to both accept God's gift of grace and continue in it (Acts 13:43).

You are invited to a special event on Saturday, August 18th at the Green Plain church of Christ beginning at 9:00 am. "Golden Ways for Golden Days" is the title of a day of studies on aging for all ages. For additional information and subjects and speakers, see our webpage at greenplainchurchofchrist.org or email us greenplain@greenplainchurchofchrist.org for a brochure. Please come and enjoy this day with us. Lunch will be provided.