



... Heart to Heart ...

It seems so many have difficulty with the grace of God. We talk about grace and even define it as the “*unmerited favor*” of God. But do we really believe in it? Do we really believe we are saved by God’s grace? Many spend more time trying to explain it away than embracing it with faith.

“But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.” (Rom. 11:6) Many times we are like the Jews, having great difficulty accepting God’s grace without putting our works in the mix. Because of what the denominational world has done to grace, we become afraid of it and defend our salvation as by works. “You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.” (Gal. 5:4) To approach God from a law or works system will sever one from Christ and forfeit His grace.

Grace can *never* enter the heart where human works or merit exists. We sing about it in the song “Amazing Grace.” Do we believe what we sing? We think of grace as something given dependant upon our obedience, our goodness and works! It’s hard to accept grace as a free gift, much less a free gift that saves us! “For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.” (Rom. 5:6) Who did Christ die for? Not the righteous, for there is no one righteous on their own merit (Rom. 3:9-18). Anytime we try to “pay back” God for the gift of His grace, shown through His Son, we lower His love and kindness to a level of human trade-offs. The relationship between our Lord and us should be nothing less than a deep love and gratitude for His *unmerited favor* shown toward us. That love and gratitude is what leads us into good works. Good works are the result of the grace of God and His salvation, **not the cause of it!** Maybe we need to read Ephesians 2:1-10 over and over. If we think in terms of our works that make us righteous, or a right standing before the Lord, then God must deal with us on that level. That means He must reward us according to our deeds, not His grace. If we sin one time, He must give us our due, according to our sins (Rom. 6:23). James talks about faith without works. Many don’t realize James is describing works as the result of salvation, not to be saved!

Let’s not try to establish our own goodness. Our goodness, our best killed our Lord. Salvation is a matter of grace. Don’t be afraid of it, embrace it! Think about it!!!

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