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THE REIGN OF GRACE

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INTRODUCTION: Grace is God's disposition of favor towards the sinner; His work of favor for the sinner, and His product of favor in the sinner. It will help us to understand grace if we see that it is contrasted with law in its origin and nature; with sin in its issue, with works in the plan of salvation, and with debt or obligation as the moving cause of salvation.

Every aspect of salvation is of grace, it is always God for those who were against him.

Paul here personifies sin and grace and speaks of them as two royal figures, two queens on their thrones. He then shows what each gives to her subjects. Sin has death in her painted hand; grace has eternal life in her white and charming hand. Our text suggests several thoughts:

1. Grace is more powerful than sin. Here is the sinner's only hope although he does not know it until quickened by the Spirit of grace. No man can rescue himself from the tyranny of sin. Men may reform, but they cannot regenerate themselves. They may give up their crimes and vices, but cannot give up their sins. Jer. 13:23 **Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.**

2. Grace reigns lawfully. It reigns through righteousness. Grace is not against law and justice. God in grace honored His law by giving His Son to satisfy the law

through suretyship engagements.

3. Grace reigns by Jesus Christ Christ not the source but medium of grace. Grace has its source in the sovereign will of God. The word reign suggests a king or queen on a throne. And a throne speaks of power and resources. Power and resources of nations are being thrown into this war. The power of grace is the power of God. This makes it fitting to speak of irresistible grace. Surely we can speak of an irresistible God! God is irresistible in salvation as well as in judgment. Jas. 1:12 **There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?**

4. Grace reigns in every phase and step of salvation. "T'was grace the brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home." Salvation is a comprehensive all inclusive word including all the aspects and stages of deliverance from sin. Sin is an awful thing and salvation is a glorious work. It takes many words to fully set forth the whole of salvation. In its full sense, salvation began back in eternity, in the purpose of God and is completed when the sinner is raised from the dead with a body fashioned like unto the body of Christ. Last enemy to be destroyed is death.

a. Grace reigns in election. What was the first thing God ever did for His people? It was to choose them for Himself and to Himself with the purpose of saving them.

Election is of grace. Rom. 11:5 **Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.** II Thes. 2:10-13 **And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. Two things in this text: first, why men are saved; and second, how they are saved. Saved because God chose them to salvation, therefore, God is to be thanked for their salvation. And they are saved by being sanctified by the Spirit and by believing the truth, Gospel truth. Now why did God choose us? Was the ground of His choice something forseen in us, or was it grace in Himself. Rom. 11:5 **Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.****

b. Grace reigns in conversion. In conversion a change is wrought in the sinner. Change from darkness to light and from death to life, and from the power of Satan unto God. Change of opinion so he believes what he once rejected; a change of affections so he loves what he once hated. What explains such a change? Does the sinner convert himself? Does darkness create light? Does death beget life? Now if God converts the sinner, does he do it as a matter of obligation or of grace? Eph. 2:8-9 **For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.** Paul said in I Cor. 15:10 **But by the grace of God I am what I am.**

c. Grace reigns in our calling. Gal. 1:14-16 **And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. II. Tim. 1:9 **Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Rom. 8:31 **What shall we******

then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

d. Grace reigns in justification. Rom. 3:24 **Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.**

e. Grace reigns in glorification. Rom. 8:30 **Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.** Glorification is the completion of salvation. God puts the finishing touch on the product of His grace. Crowning act of salvation when we shall be made personally glorious in a glorious environment. It is the redemption of the body for which we groan and wait. Rom. 8:23 **And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.** Let time put wrinkles upon the brow, let sorrows scalding tears wet the cheeks, let sickness and pain twist and torture it into a shapeless mass, let it lie on foreign soil the victim of Hitler's rage, let death turn it into a veritable dust-heap, still grace shall win for us and fashion this body into a glorious body. I Peter 1:13 **Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

Provisions of Grace. Grace like the good Samaritan not only meets the present emergency, but makes provision for future needs. Grace overlooks nothing. Conversion is grace's first aid station on the field of battle; glorification is our complete recovery in the Father's house. Grace turns nobody away in this day of salvation. In grace Jesus said in John 6:37 **All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.** He gives all a gracious invitation and assures a hearty welcome. Tho vile as Manassah, filthy as Magdalene, guilty as the cross thief, he will turn none of the poor in spirit away. His heart is lined with sweet compassion and his hands hold the richest gifts. He has supplies for all wants, legs for a lame beggar, eyes for a blind beggar, cordial for a faint one, garments for a naked one, a fountain for a filthy one, and a rope for a sham beggar who asks for mercy and talks of merit.

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be.

SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Eph. 2:8

Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. Rom. 4:16

INTRODUCTION: Salvation is always an interesting subject with those who realize their sinfulness. The person who isn't interested in salvation is either blind so that he cannot see any danger or conceited so that he thinks he can, by some hook or crook, he can escape, by his own efforts, whatever danger there might be.

Our first text says that salvation is by grace thru faith; the second text says that it has to be of or thru faith in order that it might be by grace. Let us keep in mind the necessary connection between grace and faith. Some teach salvation by faith without grace; others grace without faith.

1. **THE SOURCE OF DANGER** or the need of salvation.

a. The source of danger is the justice of God. Matt. 10:28 **And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.** Nations preparing to defend themselves from the danger of Hitlerism; however great this danger may be it is nothing to compare to the danger every sinner faces from God.

b. The cause of danger. Why are men in danger from their Creator? Is our God such a cruel, bloodthirsty tyrant that His offspring, his creatures are in danger of being devoured by Him? Perish such a thought! It is not as His creatures-his offspring that we are in danger: our danger is the danger of rebels. Sin has caused the danger. The rebellion must be put down or God is deposed as the Governor of the world. Violated law is the source of our danger. Obedient creatures, such as holy angels, are in no danger of punishment from their Creator.

II. **THE SOURCE OF SALVATION**, or how can we be saved.

a. The source of salvation the grace of God. Isa. 45:22 **Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and beside Me there is none else.** Now

if God saves, He must either save as a matter of desert or a matter of grace. I sin is meritorious; if rebels deserve blessings from their government; if God's enemies deserve His favor, then salvation is of man. But if sin deserves death, if rebels deserve punishment; if God's enemies deserve His wrath, then their salvation is of necessity by grace. The height of human ignorance is to think that salvation of sinners is by their own works, something they merit, a wage they earn.

b. The ground of salvation is satisfied law. Just as the cause of danger is violated law, so the ground of salvation is satisfied law. A violated law brings a curse; a satisfied law delivers from the curse.

c. How is the law to be satisfied? He who violated it cannot satisfy it and be saved. The law is satisfied when its penalty has been executed and the only way a transgressor can satisfy the law is to suffer its penalty, and that would not be salvation. So if the law is to be satisfied and the sinner saved, then somebody else must satisfy it for him by being punished in his place. This brings us to Christ, the Saviour, who bear our sins in His own body on the tree. On Calvary He was being punished for His people, rendering satisfaction to offended justice, receiving the wages for the sins we had committed.

III. **THE MEANS OF SALVATION**, or how the sinner gets the legal benefits of what Christ has done.

a. The means of salvation is faith. The salvation we do not deserve, the salvation grounded on satisfied law, the salvation provided by grace, the salvation wrought out by Christ, comes to the sinner through faith. If it came any other way it would not be by grace. If by works, it is not by grace; if without faith it is not by grace.

b. Our antimission friends divorce grace and faith. Matt. 19:6 **What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.** Here God joins grace and faith and we have no right to separate them. Grace is the fountain of salvation; faith is the channel. Grace is the cause of conversion; faith is the evidence. He called me, that is the converted me by his grace.

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