

Calvary Chapel Bible College

1100 Caprice Drive • Castle Rock • Colorado • 80109
Tel: 303.663.2514 • Email: cbbc@calvarychapelcastlerock.com



Grace CL305

Spring 2012

12-May 31, 33 Works of Grace: Numbers 22-27

#22. In the Fellowship of the Saints. A Christian citizenship pertains to a relationship to heaven, and as the household pertains to God, so the fellowship of the saints pertains to the relationship of one to the other. The fact of this kinship and the obligation it engenders is stressed in the New Testament. The fact of kinship reaches out to incomparable realities. Through the baptism of the Spirit—by which believers are, at the time they are saved, joined to the Lord as members in His Body—an affinity is created which answers the prayer of Christ when He petitioned the Father that the believers might all be one.

Being begotten of the same Father, the family tie is of no small import, but to be fellow members in the Body of Christ surpasses all other such membership conceptions. To be begotten of God results in sonship; but to be in Christ results in a standing as exalted as the standing of God's Son. To be partners in this standing added to regeneration's brotherhood, constitutes that vital relationship for which Christ prayed when He asked "that they all may be one; as you, Father, are in me, and I in you" (John 17:21).

A repetition of any statement as it occurs in the Bible is for emphasis. It would seem, however, that, when speaking to His Father, there would be little occasion for reiteration or repetition; yet in that one priestly prayer Christ prays four times directly and separately that believers may be **one**, and He prayed once that they may be **one** in their relation to the Father and to Himself (John 17:11, 21-23).

With all this in view, it must be conceded that few, if any, truths are so emphasized in the Word of God as the unity of believers. This prayer of Christ's began to be answered on the Day of Pentecost when those then saved were fused into one corporate Body, and it has been answered continuously as, at the moment of believing, those saved are also joined to Christ's Body by the same operation of the Holy Spirit.

An unknowable, *but revealed as fact* unity exists between the Father and the Son. It is the mystery of the Trinity itself; yet it is on this very level that Christ has requested that believers may stand in relation to each other—"that they all may be one; as you, Father, are in me, and I in you ... that they may be made perfect in one" (John 17:21-23). This prayer, as all that Christ ever prays, is answered, and the fact of oneness between the saints of God is a present truth whether anyone ever comprehends it in this world or not.

This marvelous unity between believers becomes the logical ground for all Christian action towards one another. Such action should be consistent with the unity which already exists in the Spirit. Never are Christians exhorted to *make* a unity by organization or combines or policies or committees; they are rather commanded to *keep or maintain* the unity which God by His Spirit has created (Eph. 4:1-3). This can be done in but one way, namely, by recognizing and receiving, as well as loving and honoring, every other child of God.

The spirit of separation from, and of exclusion of, other believers is a sin that can be measured only in the light of that unfathomable union which separation and exclusion disregard.

To be in the fellowship of the saints is a position in grace too exalted and too dignified for mere human understanding.

Class Discussion: What are the practical applications of this work of Grace?

#23. A Heavenly Association. What is termed “in the heavenly places” is a phrase which is peculiar to the Ephesian Letter and has no reference to heaven as a place (literally in the ‘Heavenlies’, “place” is implied by the translators) or to specific places of spiritual privilege here on earth; but it does refer to the present realm of association with Christ, which association is the inherent right of all those who are in Christ Jesus, who is seated at the right hand of God the Father in Heaven.

Note: all of the usages of the phrase “in the Heavenly places” are found exclusively in the letter to the Ephesians: **see** 1:3, 1:20, 2:6, 3:10, and 6:12

The association is a partnership with Christ which incorporates at least **seven** spheres of common interest and undertaking.

1. PARTNERS WITH CHRIST IN LIFE. The New Testament declares not only that the believer has partaken of a new life, but asserts that life to be the indwelling Christ. In Colossians 1:27 a mystery is revealed which is “Christ in you, the hope of glory”; and in Colossians 3:4 it is also said that “Christ ... is our life.” Likewise in 1 John 5:11–12 it is written: “And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.”

Upwards of eighty times in the New Testament the truth appears, that among the major features which characterize a Christian is the impartation of a new life from God. Thus a unique partnership in life is established between Christ and all who believe which is both a position and a possession.

2. PARTNERSHIP IN POSITION. As an incomparable position, the Christian is raised with Christ (Col. 3:1), and seated with Christ in the heavenly association. This truth is clearly revealed in Ephesians 2:6, which declares, “And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” To be raised with Christ and to be seated with Christ is a partnership in position which is real and abiding. Its contribution to the entire fact of the believer’s association with Christ is enough to characterize the whole. The honor and glory of it are knowledge-surpassing.

3. PARTNERS WITH CHRIST IN SERVICE. A number of passages unite in a testimony that the service of the Christian is one of co-partnership with Christ. Of these, none is more direct and convincing than 1 Corinthians 1:9, which reads: “God is faithful, by whom you were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.”

So how does this speak of co-partnership in service?

In the A.V. the word *κοινωνία* is rendered *fellowship*. As the word is at times rendered *communion* (2 Cor. 6:14) with the thought of agreement or partnership, and to be in harmony with the message of Christian service, which theme characterizes this Epistle, the idea of joint undertaking may be read into this passage.

Some, as Meyer and Alford, see a sharing here in Christ's coming glory; but as this Epistle is almost wholly one parenthesis which begins with the verse following this notable text and ends with 15:57, it is important to observe the next verse in the direct course of the message, namely, 15:58. With the rendering of *κοινωνία* by *partnership*, the two dominant and connecting verses would read: "God is faithful, by whom you were called unto the partnership of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord (1Cor. 1:9) ... Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord (1Cor. 15:58)."

The same Epistle states, "For we are laborers together with God" (3:9); and 2 Corinthians 6:1 designates the believers as "workers together with him"—in the same context they are said to be "ministers of God" (6:4) and "ministers of the new testament *or covenant*" (3:6). To be thus in partnership with Christ is a position of limitless responsibility as well as exalted honor.

4. PARTNERS WITH CHRIST IN SUFFERING. Of the entire field of the doctrine of human suffering, a well-defined feature of that experience is *suffering with Christ*. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. 2:12). Likewise, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Phil. 1:29); and, again, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pet. 4:12-13).

The Apostle testified of himself, "who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church" (Col. 1:24), and, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18); similarly, "That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto" (1 Thess. 3:3).

While the child of God may suffer the reproaches of Christ, which is a definite form of co-partnership suffering with Christ, the form of fellowship suffering which is closest to the heart of the Savior is to share with Him His burden for lost souls—those for whom He died. Such longings are not natural to any human nature, but are generated in the heart by the Holy Spirit who causes the yielded believer to experience the compassion of God.

It is written, "The fruit of the Spirit is love" (Gal. 5:22), and, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:5). As an illustration of this ability of the believer to experience the compassion of Christ, the Apostle testifies of himself thus, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:1-3).

Partnership with Christ in suffering is real and reflects the fact that the Christian occupies a position of untold distinction.

5. PARTNERS WITH CHRIST IN PRAYER. The very act of praying in the name of Christ is in itself an assumption that He also makes petition to the Father for those things that are in the will of God and for which the Christian prays.

The central passage bearing on this aspect of partnership is John 14:12-14: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes on me, the works that I do he shall do also; and greater works than these shall he do;

because I go unto my Father. And whatever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, *in order* that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.”

“Greater works” are to be done by the Son of God in answer to the believer’s prayer in His name. The partnership in this responsibility is defined thus, **“If you shall ask ... I will do.”**

6. PARTNERS WITH CHRIST IN BETROTHAL. To be betrothed to a person is a position which is both definite and demanding. It is also a partnership. The Church is espoused as a bride to Christ. The marriage day is that of His return to receive her unto Himself. It was the Apostle’s desire that he might present believers a chaste virgin (not *as* a chaste virgin) to Christ (2 Cor. 11:2); and from Ephesians 5:25–27 it is to be understood that Christ loves the Church as a bridegroom might love a bride and that He gave Himself for His Bride.

7. PARTNERS IN EXPECTATION. The “blessed hope” (Titus 2:13) is ever the expectation of the instructed Christian; for the coming of Christ will be the moment of release from these limitations into the fullness of glory, and the moment of seeing Him who is the center of all reality for the believer. But Christ, too, is now “expecting” (Heb. 10:13), and His longings to claim His bride are as great as ever His willingness to die for her.

All partnerships in human relations create their corresponding positions and possessions; in like manner the sevenfold partnership which the child of God sustains with Christ creates positions and possessions, and these are riches of divine grace.

Class Discussion: What are the practical applications of this work of Grace?

#24. Having Access to God. Could any human being catch but one brief vision of the glory, majesty, and holiness of God, from that time forth that one would marvel that any human being—even if he were unfallen—could have access to God; yet, through Christ as Mediator, sinners are provided with an open door into the presence of God. In attempting to understand what is granted in that access to God, it would be well to pursue certain revealed truths in a purposeful order.

a. ACCESS INTO HIS GRACE. Divine grace in action is that achievement which God is free to undertake because of the satisfaction respecting sin which Christ provided by His death and resurrection; therefore, access into the grace of God is access into the value of His finished work.

This door is open to all; but only those who have believed have entered in. Of this position which Christ procured, it is written: “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand” (Rom. 5:2). The believer is not only *saved* by grace (Eph. 2:8), but he *stands* in grace. He is ensphered in divine grace. The same grace that saved him sustains him. The same principle upon which he is saved when he believes, is continually applied to him for safekeeping throughout his earthly pilgrimage.

Of the ensphering grace, Peter wrote these words, “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 3:18). The thought seems to be that the Christian, being in grace, is appointed therein to grow in the knowledge of Christ. Certainly no one who has not found entrance into divine grace through faith, will grow. It is not a matter of growing more gracious, but of coming to know Christ, which knowledge is possible since the believer has entered the sphere of grace (2 Cor. 3:18).

b. ACCESS UNTO THE FATHER. Of this specific access it is written: “For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father” (Eph. 2:18). All three Persons of the Godhead appear in this brief

text. It declares that both Jew and Gentile, being saved, have access through Christ and by the Spirit unto the Father. The essential part which Christ has accomplished has been considered at length, but there is also a part which the Holy Spirit undertakes. The Christian's apprehension (1 Cor. 2:10), communion (2 Cor. 13:14), and much of his qualification for the divine presence (1 Cor. 12:13), are directly the work of the Holy Spirit. The all-important truth—marvelous beyond comprehension—is that each believer has perfect and immutable (*will never change*) access unto the Father.

c. ACCESS IS REASSURING. So perfect, indeed, is this admission into the divine presence and favor that the Christian is urged to come *boldly*. In this instance, boldness becomes the believer, since every obstacle has been removed. Two passages, both in the Epistle to the Hebrews, enjoin this boldness: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (4:16); "having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh (*His torn flesh!*)" (10:19–20).

To be one to whom unrestrained access into the presence of God is accorded is to occupy a position of superior privilege and standing, whether it be measured by the standards of heaven or of earth.

Class Discussion: What are the practical applications of this work of Grace?

#25. Within the Much More Care of God. It will be conceded by all who are awake to the divine revelation, that the love of God for the unsaved is as immeasurable as infinity; yet there is clear revelation that the expression of divine love for those who are saved is even "much more."

The argument is that, if God loved sinners and enemies enough to give His Son to die for them, His attitude will be "**much more**" toward them when they are reconciled and justified. The Apostle states: "But God commends his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. **Much more** then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, **much more**, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Rom. 5:8–10). This inconceivable devotion on the part of God for those He has saved leads on to various blessings for them.

a. OBJECTS OF HIS LOVE. The unchangeable love of God underlies all that He undertakes. It was His love that originated the way of salvation through Christ and thus by infinite grace. It is true that God is propitious; that is, He is able through the death of Christ to receive the sinner with unrestrained favor.

The death of Christ did not cause God to love sinners; it was His love which provided that propitiation in and through Christ (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 3:16) *that His Holy, sinless nature demanded*.

The satisfaction which Christ rendered released the love of God from that demand which outraged holiness imposed against the sinner. The love of God knows no variations. It experiences no ups and downs, moods and tenses. It is the love of One who is immutable (*unchanging*) in all His character and ways.

b. OBJECTS OF HIS GRACE. Men are **not** saved into a state of probation, but into the sphere of infinite grace—a sphere in which God deals with them as those for whom Christ has died, and whose sins are already borne by a Substitute.

That grace contemplates:

(1) **Salvation.** Thus it is written: “that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are you **saved** through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:7–9).

(2) **Safekeeping.** As the Scripture declares: “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we **permanently** stand” (Rom. 5:2).

(3) **Service.** Of this it is said: “As you have sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world” (John 17:18); “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ” (Eph. 4:7).

(4) **Instruction.** So, also, it is asserted: “teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and Godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:12–13).

(continuing with the various blessings)

c. OBJECTS OF HIS POWER. A full induction of all passages in which God is said to be *able* to work in behalf of those who trust Him will prove a real help to the student. It will be seen that infinite power is ever actively engaged in the support and defense of the believer. It is written: “And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power” (Eph. 1:19); “For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” (2 Tim. 1:7)

d. OBJECTS OF HIS FAITHFULNESS. Limitless comfort is provided for those who recognize the faithfulness of God. It is said: “I will never leave you, nor forsake you” (Heb. 13:5); “being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6); “Faithful is he that calls you, who also will do it” (1 Thess. 5:24).

e. OBJECTS OF HIS PEACE. Not only is that peace *with* God in view (Rom. 5:1) which is due to the fact that all condemnation is removed, but the imparted, experimental peace is promised also: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27); “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also you are called in one body; and be thankful” (Col. 3:15), and “The fruit of the Spirit is ... peace” (Gal. 5:22).

f. OBJECTS OF HIS CONSOLATION. Respecting divine consolation it is written: “Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and has given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work” (2 Thess. 2:16–17).

g. OBJECTS OF HIS INTERCESSION. While it is revealed that the Holy Spirit “makes intercession” for the saints according to the will of God (Rom. 8:26) and they are enjoined to pray “in the Spirit” (Eph. 6:18; Jude 1:20), it is also indicated that one of the present ministries of Christ in heaven is His unceasing intercession for the saints.

In His Priestly prayer He said that He prayed not for the *cosmos* world, but for those the Father had given Him.

Three passages assert this heavenly intercession: “Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yes rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us” (Rom. 8:34); “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost (*from the guttermost*) that come unto God by him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25); “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the *earthly* figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. 9:24).

To be included thus in the “much more” love and care of God becomes a position in divine grace which is of surpassing value.

Class Discussion: What are the practical applications of this work of Grace?

#26. His Inheritance. Read that again: His, not our inheritance! A partial anticipation of this position in grace has been expressed under the previous heading, which announced that each Christian is a gift of the Father to the Son; however, beyond the treasure which he is to Christ as a gift from the Father, Ephesians 1:18 asserts that the believer is also the inheritance of the Father.

This exalted truth is the subject of the Apostle’s prayer. As though, apart from the supernatural revelation of the Holy Spirit, they could not understand, he prays “the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (Eph. 1:18).

Much is promised the believer respecting his future place in glory. It is written: “And the glory which you gave me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one” (John 17:22); “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” (Rom. 8:30); “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory” (Col. 3:4).

It is only by such changes as He shall have wrought in fallen sinners that God will be glorified. They will reflect the “glory of his grace” (Eph. 1:6). Each child of God will serve as a medium or material by which the Shekinah glory of God will be seen.

All who are Glorified in Christ will be His Inheritance in Glory. How could a God who has everything desire an inheritance like us? Because in Grace we bring Him Glory!

Class Discussion: What are the practical applications of this work of Grace?

#27. The Inheritance of the Saints. Far easier to comprehend than that just considered is the truth that the believer has an inheritance in God. The believer’s inheritance is God Himself and all that God bestows. This is asserted by Peter thus: “An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Pet. 1:4).

The present blessings which the Spirit brings into the Christian’s heart and life are likened to an earnest or comparatively small payment of all that is yet to be bestowed. The Apostle writes: “which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory” (Eph. 1:14); “knowing that of the Lord you shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for you serve the Lord Christ” (Col. 3:24). An eternal inheritance (Heb. 9:15) is a possession under grace; its specifications are unknowable until they are claimed in heaven.