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Grace CL305

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13-June 7, 33 Works of Grace: Numbers 28-33

#28. Light in the Lord. As presented in the Scriptures with its symbolic meaning, an extensive body of truth is related to the general theme of light. Above all and supreme is the revelation that “God is light” (1 John 1:5). The meaning of this term as thus applied to God is that He is transparently holy and in Him is no moral darkness at all. That holy light which God is, has its manifestation on the face of Christ (2 Cor. 4:6). The believer has, by divine grace, become light (Eph. 5:8)—not merely that divine light shines upon him, but is light in the Lord.

This great reality *or standing* does not dismiss the truth that the believer is commanded to “walk in the light” (1 John 1:7), the light which God is. Both truths obtain and each engenders its own obligation. To walk in the light is not to become the light; it is rather to be wholly subject to the mind and will of God and adjusted to the holy character of God. In this respect, the Bible is a lamp to the feet and a light upon the path (Ps. 119:105).

However, with regard to the light which the believer is, it may be observed that to have received the light into one’s being is a possession and to be light in the Lord is a position *or standing*.

No person becomes the light by attempting to shine; rather, having become light in the Lord and that as a divine achievement, he is appointed to shine as a light in a dark world. It is reasonable to conclude that the light which the believer is may be identified as the indwelling divine nature, and that that light is veiled in this world, but will have its manifestation in glory. *As an example see the Transfiguration of our Lord, Matt. 17:1-8*

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

#29. Vitality United to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. As perplexing as it may be to the human mind, the Scriptures advance six distinct revelations regarding relationships between the Godhead and the believer, and these relationships represent realities which find no comparisons in the sphere of human intercourse. It is said:

With respect to the Father

- (1) that the believer is in God the Father (1 Thess. 1:1),
- (2) that God the Father is in the believer (Eph. 4:6),

With respect to the Son

- (3) that the believer is in the Son (Rom. 8:1),
- (4) that the Son is in the believer (John 14:20),

With respect to the Holy Spirit

- (5) that the believer is in the Spirit (Rom. 8:9), and
(6) that the Spirit is in the believer (1 Cor. 2:12).

The force of these stupendous declarations is centered in the intensity of meaning which must be assigned to the word **in** as used in each of these six declarations. It is evident that to be in the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit is a **position**; and for the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit to be in the believer constitutes a **possession**.

A corresponding truth grows out of all this which is a result of it, namely, that the believers are one in each other as the Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father (John 17:21). Since the believer's physical body is a corporate entity (*body, soul and Spirit, 1 Thes. 5:23*), it is not as difficult to think of that body as an abode; and the body is termed a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19).

On the other hand, it is exceedingly difficult to understand the truth asserted that the believer is in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This peculiar relationship to the Son is amplified by a sevenfold declaration or under seven figures:

- (1) the believer is a member in Christ's Body (1 Cor. 12:13),
- (2) the believer is to Christ as a branch to the vine (John 15:5),
- (3) the believer is to Christ as a stone in the building of which Christ is the Chief Cornerstone (Eph. 2:19–22),
- (4) the believer is to Christ as a sheep in His flock (John 10:27–29),
- (5) the believer is a part of that company who forms the Bride of Christ (Eph. 5:25–27),
- (6) the believer is a priest in a kingdom of priests over which Christ is High Priest forever (1 Pet. 2:5, 9),
and
- (7) the believer is a part of the New Creation over which Christ as the Last Adam is the Head (2 Cor. 5:17).

In John 14:20: "At that day you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you," three great truths are declared as those which the believer is to know specifically in this age, namely, (1) Christ is in the Father, (2) the believer is in Christ, and (3) Christ is in the believer.

Similarly, there is much in the New Testament respecting the relationship which obtains between the Holy Spirit and the believer.

The truths declared and distinguished under this heading represent not only the most vital positions and possessions which infinite grace can create, but are the very heart of Christianity, never being intimated in the Old Testament.

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

#30. Blessed with the Earnest or First-Fruits of the Spirit. As before intimated, the immeasurable blessings which come to the child of God because of his relation to the Holy Spirit are as a comparatively small down-payment which binds with certainty the larger gifts of Heaven's glory.

These present ministries of the Spirit are said to be an "earnest" (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:14) and "firstfruits" (Rom. 8:23) of the Spirit.

There are five of these present riches:

(1) The believer is *born* of the Spirit (John 3:6), by which operation Christ is begotten in the one who exercises saving faith.

(2) The believer is *baptized* by the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13), which is a work of the Holy Spirit by which the believer is joined to Christ's Body and comes to be in Christ, and therefore a partaker of all that Christ is.

(3) The believer is *indwelt* or *anointed* by the Spirit (John 7:39; Rom. 5:5; 8:9; 2 Cor. 1:21; Gal. 4:6; 1 John 2:27; 3:24), by which Presence the believer is equipped for every conflict and service.

(4) The believer is *sealed* by the Spirit (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 4:30), which is the work of God the Holy Spirit by which the children of God are made secure unto the day of redemption.

(5) The believer may be *filled* with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18), which ministry of the Spirit releases His power and effectiveness in the heart in which He dwells.

The Spirit's work in and through the Christian results in both positions and possessions that are themselves marvelous realities of the riches of divine grace, and all of these together form but a foretaste of the glory which is assured in heaven.

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

#31. Glorified. What God has determined, though it be yet future, is properly looked upon as sufficiently certain to be considered a present achievement. He is the One "who ... calls those things which be not as though they were" (Rom. 4:17).

Awaiting the child of God is a surpassing heavenly glory—even partaking of the infinite glory which belongs to the Godhead. Of this fact it is written: "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); "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:4). **See** also 2Cor. 4:17-18

It is **not** to be concluded that there is a present and a future glory which are unrelated. The present glory is the divine reckoning of the future glory to be even a present reality. No passage more clearly asserts this fact than Romans 8:30, which states: "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."

To be a glorified saint is a position in divine grace of immeasurable riches and, in the certainty of the divine purpose, it becomes a possession.

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

#32. Complete in Him. This, with the theme which follows, serves as a conclusion of that which has gone before in this attempt to record the riches of divine grace; yet these are specific disclosures of all that enters into the exceeding grace of God. What may be included in the word *complete* when the Apostle says, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power" (Col. 2:9-10), is beyond the range of human understanding. No careless use of terms will be discovered in any Scripture, and this passage presents the voice of the Holy Spirit declaring that, to the degree by which God values things and according to those standards which God employs, the child of God is complete; but so great a transformation is due to the all-

determining fact that he is in Christ. The truth is thus once more presented that, because of his vital union with Christ, the believer partakes of all that Christ is.

The Father finds infinite delight in the Son, nor can He find delight in that which is less than the perfection of the Son. While men may ever be before the Father as the creatures of His hand, those who are saved are, even now, perfected in His sight by and through their vital relation to the Son. Thus a principle is introduced which is far removed from human custom or practice and, naturally, beyond human understanding, but not beyond the range of human acceptance or belief, since it is declared in the Word of God. To be complete in Christ is a glorious reality and is a portion of that grace which is extended to all who believe.

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

#33. Possessing Every Spiritual Blessing. No text of Scripture more perfectly accounts for *all* the riches of grace than Ephesians 1:3, which reads: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” All the riches of grace tabulated in the thirty-two points made before are to be included in this sweeping term—“all spiritual blessings.” These are again and finally declared to be realized on the basis of the believer’s relation to Christ. Thus all positions and possessions which together measure the riches of divine grace are traced to the believer’s place in Christ. These are accorded the one who believes on Christ to the saving of his soul.

CONCLUSION

It would hardly be amiss to restate the truth that salvation is a work of God for man and not a work of man for God.

It is what God’s love prompts Him to do and not a mere act of pity which rescues creatures from their misery. To realize the satisfaction of His love God has been willing to remove by an infinite sacrifice the otherwise insuperable hindrance which sin has imposed;

He is, likewise, overcoming the wicked opposition to His grace which the fallen human will presents by inclining His elect ones to exercise saving faith in Christ. When the way is thus clear, God is free to do all that infinite love dictates.

Nothing short of transformations which are infinite will satisfy infinite love. An inadequate record of these riches of grace which together represent the infinity of saving grace has been submitted; but it still remains true that “the half has never been told.” The student who is ambitious to be accurate in gospel preaching will not only observe but ever contend for the truth that all these riches are purely a work of God, and that to secure them the individual could do no more than to receive at the hand of God what He is free to give in and through Christ Jesus. Those who believe on Christ in the sense that they receive Him (John 1:12) as their Savior enter instantly into all that divine love provides. These thirty-three positions and possessions are not bestowed in succession, but simultaneously. They do not require a period of time for their execution; but are wrought instantaneously. They measure the present difference which obtains between one who is saved and one who is not saved.

“Oh to grace how great a debtor
Daily I’m constrained to be!
Let thy goodness, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to Thee.”¹

¹Chafer, L. S. (1993). Systematic theology (3:225-266). Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications.