

Principles Of The Faith - 13

From Sinner To Saint
- Grace, Conversion, Adoption, Justification, Sanctification

The Process

- ▶ God works in our hearts (by grace) to prepare us for salvation
- ▶ We respond to the gospel in faith (we are called)
- ▶ We are saved by grace through faith for a life of good works
- ▶ We are adopted into God's heavenly family
- ▶ We are justified (made right with God)
- ▶ We receive a new nature & the indwelling Holy Spirit
- ▶ We start on a journey of becoming what we truly are (holy)
- ▶ The Spirit helps us to overcome the flesh
- ▶ We put on the new nature that we already have
- ▶ We use spiritual gifts to edify each other & overcome the enemy, and speaking the truth in love we grow up in all aspects into Him who is the Head

Grace

- ▶ Grace is God's unmerited favor (Lk 1:28; 2:40; Rom 5:2, 2 Thess 2:16;)
- ▶ Grace is also the power and blessing that is the natural outcome of God's grace and favor. (Acts 4:33, 11:23; 14:3, 26; 15:40; 2 Cor 12:9)
- ▶ The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of grace (Heb 10:29)
- ▶ God's disposition and attitude results in His decisions and actions. (Eph. 2:4-10)
- ▶ Grace is free and is not a "wage" for law-keeping (Rom 3:24, 4:3-8, 5:15-21, 11:5,6; 2 Tim 1:9;)
- ▶ Grace can be responded to: that is accepted or rejected, received and built upon or despised, set aside and neglected, fallen from etc. (2 Cor 6:1, Jn 1:16; Rom 1:5, Heb 10:29; 12:15, Gal 2:21; 5:4; Acts 7:51, 18:6)
- ▶ We are to be "good stewards of the grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10)
- ▶ Grace imparts spiritual gifts (Rom 12:3,6; 15:15; 1 Cor 3:10, Eph 3:7-8; 4:7;)
- ▶ Our response is not a "work" as the grace was given freely. Our response is what we do with the free gift. (1 Cor 15:10)
- ▶ Our response to grace determines the outcome of our faith. (2 Peter 3:18)

Believing Through Grace

- ▶ Acts 18:27, Romans 12:3; Ephesians 2:8, Romans 4:16;
- ▶ God, in His grace planned salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, and this plan was from "before the foundation of the world"
- ▶ God gives each person a "measure of faith" through which he or she can receive God's grace
- ▶ The person can choose to exercise this God-given faith or not, we are all born trusting "as a little child" but what we do with our natural faith is a choice.
- ▶ Grace is all around us from our Creator but we can only receive it through faith (not by works, intellect, magic, idols etc)
- ▶ Children can be "stumbled" (Matthew 18:1-11)

The Two Trains

- ▶ Heaven-Bound Train – narrow gauge, predestined for Heaven, get on board by faith alone, price is free, in Christ, God's plan for justification, sanctification and glorification, all on board are under grace.
- ▶ Hell-Bound Train – the broad way, many on board, perishing, can exit and choose Heaven-bound train, eventually departs from God's presence and into the Lake of Fire, Death and Hades run this train through the Law.
- ▶ You can choose your train but the train is eternally predestined (to a certain destination)

Romans 9

- ▶ The question at the start of Romans 9 is the salvation of the Gentiles and the hardening of the Jews
- ▶ The vessels are nations
- ▶ God's mercy on the Gentiles is His gracious work
- ▶ God's hardening of the stubborn Jews is also His work
- ▶ Has sometimes been applied to individuals because of the references to Jacob, Esau, Pharaoh etc
- ▶ Hardening, elsewhere in Scripture is an individual or collective decision (Mk 6:52, 8:17, Acts 19:9, Heb 3:8, 3:15, 4:7)
- ▶ God hardens hearts as a part of His judgment on wicked people and systems (Jn 12:40; Exodus 7:3-7,22; 11:10; 13:15; 14:4,8; Deut 2:30; Joshua 11:20; Isa 63:17;)
- ▶ But we can also harden our hearts (1 Sam 6:6, Deut 15:7) 2 Kings 7:13-15, 2 Chr 36:13, Neh 9:16,17,29; Ps. 95:8; Prov 28:14; 29:1;

Elect

- ▶ Christ is elect (1 Peter 2:4-6)
- ▶ Angels are elect (1 Tim 5:21)
- ▶ The Church is "the elect lady" (2 Jn 1:1,13)
- ▶ Those returning with Christ are elect (Rev 17;14)
- ▶ End-Time Christians are elect (Matt 24:22,24,31; Lk 18:7)
- ▶ Born-again Christians are elect (Rom 8:33, Col 3:12, 2 Tim 2:10; Titus 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1, 5:13)
- ▶ Election = made part of God's plan – Rom 9:11, 11:5,7,28 | Thess 1:4 (e.g. the elect Jews are not saved??? Romans 11:28)
- ▶ Election needs to be made sure (2 Peter 1:10)
- ▶ So election is different from salvation (Christ and the angels are elect but did not need to be saved) rather it is a status, it means special, chosen by God

Towards a Solution

- ▶ God chooses who He will work out His purposes through and this is His gracious choice
- ▶ Yet God is "searching to and fro" (2 Chr 16:9) for people to support and strengthen e.g Noah (Genesis 6)
- ▶ God cooperates with faith to release grace
- ▶ Faith is not a work, it is an attitude of humble dependence on God, God gives grace to the humble (James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5)
- ▶ Proud, wicked people end up with hardened hearts
- ▶ Meek, humble people enter the Kingdom of God (the poor in spirit – Matthew 5)

Adoption / Sons of God

- ▶ Rom 8:15,23; Gal 4:5, Eph 1:5
- ▶ Those who believe are adopted into God's family
- ▶ Children of God – Matt 5:9,45; Lk 20:36; Jn 1:12; Jn 12:36; Rom 8:14ff, 9:8, 26; 2 Cor 6:18; 1 Jn 3:1-2, 10; 5:2, Php 2:15; 1 Thess 5:5; Heb 12:7
- ▶ Through faith: Gal 3:7,26; 4:5,6,7
- ▶ Brought to glory: Heb 2:10
- ▶ Jesus Christ is the Son of God
- ▶ We are "sons" of God and brothers of Christ (Heb 2:11)

Justification

- ▶ Justified = a good verdict, the result of a court hearing, a legal standing before God, without blame, case upheld, in the right
- ▶ Our words indicate our faith and justify us (Matt 12:37)
- ▶ Justification comes to the humble (Lk 18:14)
- ▶ Justified from all things by faith (Acts 13:39)
- ▶ Not justified by doctrine alone (Rom 2:13, James 2:14-26)
- ▶ Not justified by works of the Law (Rom 3:20, Gal 2:16, 3:11; 5:4;)
- ▶ Justified by grace (Rom 3:24; Titus 3:7)
- ▶ Justified by faith (Rom 3:28-30, 4:5, 5:1; Gal 3:8; 11,24) which must be real living faith, not just a doctrinal notion (James 2:14-26)
- ▶ Justified by His blood (Rom 5:9)
- ▶ Justification is a free gift (Rom 5:16-18)
- ▶ Involves death to sin (Rom 6:7)
- ▶ It is God's gracious act in Christ (Rom 8:30,33; 1 Cor 6:11)

Sanctification

- ▶ Becoming what we already are...
- ▶ 1. Set apart for God (Lk 2:23; 1 Pe 2:9, 2 Cor 6:14-18;
- ▶ 2. Holy in nature and conduct (2 Cor 7:1; 1 Pe 1:15,16; 1 Th 4:1-8, 2 Tim 2:21; Heb 12:10,14)
- ▶ We are already holy in our new nature (Eph 4:24) and in our eternal destiny (Eph 1:4, 5:27), we are 'saints' (hagioi – holy ones) (1 Cor 1:2, Col 3:12, 1 Th 5:27)
- ▶ We need to become holy in all our conduct while here on earth
- ▶ We need to aim to be like Jesus and to "walk as He walked" obeying His commandments. (1 Th 4:1-8)
- ▶ Sanctified by the Word (John 17:17-19, Acts 20:32; Eph 5:26; 1 Tim 4:5)
- ▶ Sanctified by faith (Acts 26:18)
- ▶ Sanctified by the Holy Spirit (Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 6:11; 2 Th 2:13; 1 Pe 1:2)
- ▶ Christ is our sanctification (1 Cor 1:30; Heb 2:11; 10:10,14; 13:12)
- ▶ Holy angels, holy prophets, holy places, holy temples, Holy Spirit,

Conclusion

- ▶ God calls us out of this wicked and perverse generation (Acts 2:40)
- ▶ When we respond to this call we receive grace through faith (Rom 10:9-13; Eph 2:8,9)
- ▶ We are adopted in God's family and justified
- ▶ We receive the Holy Spirit and are sanctified
- ▶ We become holy in all our conduct (1 Peter 1:15)
- ▶ And are conformed into the image of God's beloved Son (Rom 8:29)
- ▶ Becoming partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4)
- ▶ And progressively adding spiritual qualities (2 Peter 1:5-8)
- ▶ If we do this we make our election sure (2 Peter 1:10)
- ▶ We are not to harden our hearts but to respond when God speaks to us (Heb 3:8,15) and to live life in the Spirit (Gal 5:16-23)