

The Reminder

The weekly newsletter of the church of Christ in Bellaire, TX

“Grace”

Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

Salvation is a gift of God. Many have trouble reading this verse as God wrote it. They feel inclined to put qualifiers and an asterisk or footnote on it and then spend pages and pages explaining that we are not saved by Grace alone or only and that we must be baptized to be saved. It seems to me that God, who is smarter than we are, and a much better writer than anyone of us will ever be, would have done that. He didn't. Maybe God knew that this verse is to be taken with the rest of what He said. Maybe He knew that a careful study of the Bible would show that not everyone is saved. Maybe He knew that when people got to Hebrews 11 and the many "by faith" passages, they would conclude that faith is action and faith moves a person closer to God. Maybe God just knew better than we do.

Grace is hard to understand. It doesn't make a lot of sense. We are accustomed to the paycheck lifestyle of our society. You go to work, you earn and you benefit. Many are extremely bothered by the number of folks today who do nothing but get government help. Even that isn't grace, because they have been qualified and approved and it's not considered a "gift." We don't do gifts unless there is a reason. Birthdays, weddings, holidays-and we expect gifts. Even more difficult is to see gifts given to someone who is not deserving. To give a gift to someone who hasn't done something nice for us, just doesn't make sense.

In fact, we talk ourselves out of that. We do not want to honor bad behavior. Romans 5:8 states, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." God didn't wait until we cleaned up our act to send Jesus. God didn't hold Jesus back until we promised to never do wrong again. At the worst time, the Best came. While we were sinners.

When the prodigal came home, He came dirty, smelly, broke and hopeless. He was a mess. He was out of options. He was wanting to be back home. He had nothing to show his father that would please him. He had wasted a lifetime of money. He had ruined the family name. He had been irresponsible. He had broken dozens of commands. He did what his father never would have. All he had left, was himself and that was pitiful. He came. He came knowing that he was still loved. He came willing to feed his obnoxious brother, sleep in the barn and forever be a servant. That was good enough for him. His story is our story.

God extends His grace because He chose to love us, even messy as we are. The prodigal did absolutely nothing to earn the family ring back. Common sense would say no to that. I could understand putting sandals on those dirty and worn feet. That's a nice thing to do. This was more than being nice, it was symbolic. However, the ring, not just jewelry, was "The ring." The signet ring. This was used to make official documents. With this ring, deals could be made. Things could be purchased. It was like giving him dad's credit card.

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SUNDAY
MARCH 8, 2015

BELLAIRE

church of Christ

8001 South Rice Ave

P.O. Box 1029

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www.bellairechurchofchrist.org

Schedule of Services

SUNDAY:

9:30 AM Worship

11:00 AM Bible Study

5:00 PM Worship

WEDNESDAY:

7:30 PM Bible Study



“Grace (con’t)”

Morning Lesson

“Spirit of Truth”
Steve Garrett

Evening Lesson

“Things I Want To Teach My
Children”
Jack Smith

News and Notes:

Continue praying for those of our number who have on-going health issues. Deb Haley, Janice Kimbrough, Jan Cooper, Curby Stech, Laura Claburn and Don Hurd.

Please, in your prayers, continue to remember all our Christian friends who are undergoing treatment at MD Anderson. Seems we always have some in our worship services who come here for help. Don't leave God out of these treatments. Also we have several expectant moms (and dads). Keep them in your prayers. Lauren Perkins has surgery last Tuesday. She's doing well, but won't be out for a couple of days. Her mom is here helping her. The Knapp's grandson in Dallas is to have surgery in the near future.

Anita should be home tonight late. Don't know about Muffy. She was snowed in in Louisville. I think the Pharris family is in Dallas this weekend.

Keep working for our meeting that begins next Friday, March 13-15.

He hasn't even reached the house yet, and the father is calling for the ring. He hasn't proven himself yet. Is he trustworthy? Has he learned any lessons? Will he stay home? The father gave him a gift. It was based upon grace and driven by love. Most of us wouldn't do that. We'd tend to think it wasn't wise. Give it some time and we'll see. We'll talk about it in a few weeks. Not this father. No waiting. No later. Bring the ring and bring it now.

Grace. We are saved by grace. We are saved by grace through faith. Faith is the coming home. Faith is the broken and contrite heart. Faith is willing to be placed in whatever position or status that the father decides. Faith is hoping. Grace is giving.

We are saved by grace, that ought to make us love more and judge less. We are saved by grace, that ought to open our arms to God more and worry less about perfection. We are to obey, no question. But obedience is not what saves us, it's the grace.

We are saved by grace through faith. Simply amazing!

- Roger - Jump Starts Daily

"The eyes are useless when the mind is blind."

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else."
— C.S. Lewis

ASSIGNMENTS

MORNING SERVICE

Announcements - M. Mann
Hymn Director - R. McDonald
Scripture Reader - Z. Kelsey
Luke 24:26-27
Luke 24:44-46
Opening Prayer - B. Haley
Closing Prayer - M. Mann

EVENING SERVICE

Hymn Director - P. Selgas
Opening Prayer - J. Moon
Closing Prayer - M. Mann

EVANGELIST

Jack Smith
Steve Garrett

ELDERS

Mark Mann
Matt Miles
Mike Pharris
Jack Smith

DEACONS

Scott Clanton
David Davila
Dan Kimbrough
Jesse Knapp
Alex Morolez
Gregory Williams

BIBLE CLASSES

- World Religions
- John and Romans
- Graded Classes for Children