

# GRACE

## I. Biblical usage of the word "grace"

- A. Hebrew word *hen* - "favor, mercy, kindness, graciousness"
  - 1. Derived from *hanan* - "to favor, to grant mercy"
  - 2. Biblical examples
    - a. Gen. 6:8; 19:19; 32:5; 47:29
    - b. Exod. 33:12,13
    - c. Ruth 2:10
- B. Hebrew word *hesed* - "loving-kindness, mercy, pity"
  - A. Derived from *hasad* - "to be good, kind"
  - B. Biblical examples
    - a. Ps. 25:6; 107:43
    - b. Isa. 63:7
- C. Greek word *charis* - "grace"
  - A. Derived from *char* - "well-being, pleasant, delightful"
  - B. This word is invested with new meaning in the new covenant.
    - 1. Conveys idea of personal relationship of love and generosity
    - 2. Unique activity of God in Jesus Christ - Christocentric
      - a. John 1:17 - "grace realized through Jesus Christ"
      - b. Acts 15:11 - "grace of the Lord Jesus Christ"
      - c. II Tim. 2:1 - "grace that is in Christ Jesus"
    - 3. Common definitions too general
      - a. "undeserved favor of God"
      - b. "God's activity consistent with His character"

## II. Contrasting Law and Grace

- A. Law served as instrument to reveal character of God, whereas grace is essential dynamic of God's revealing Himself in Jesus Christ.
- B. Law was a legal instrument demanding performance, works, and obedience (Rom. 2:14,25; Gal. 3:10; 5:3), whereas grace is God's activity in Jesus Christ responded to only by the receptivity of faith (Rom. 9:32; 11:6).
- C. Law could not impart life (Jn. 5:39,40; Gal. 3:21) or righteousness (Rom. 3:20,28; 10:4; Gal. 2:16,21; 3:11), whereas grace imparts the life (Jn. 1:4; 11:25; 14:6; Rom. 5:21; Col. 3:4; I Peter 3:7; I Jn. 5:12) and righteousness (I Cor. 1:30; II Cor. 5:12; I Jn. 2:1) of Jesus Christ.
- D. Law had no provisional dynamic of divine enabling, whereas grace is the divine dynamic of God's enabling power in Jesus Christ.
- E. Law was a means to an end, whereas grace is the objective that God had for man's restoration in Jesus Christ.
- F. Law had a termination (Rom. 10:4), whereas there is no end to God's grace in Jesus Christ.

## III. Content of Grace.

- A. Grace should not be conceived as a separate entity, substance, process, force, principle or process.
- B. Grace is the dynamic of God's activity in Jesus Christ.
  - 1. Grace is personal.
  - 2. Grace is not quantitative, but is qualitative.

3. Grace is embodied in Jesus Christ.
4. Grace is the dynamic of the resurrection-life of Jesus - Rom. 1:4; 4:25; 5:2; Phil. 3:10).
5. Grace is the activity of the Holy Spirit - Heb. 10:29

IV. Condition of Grace.

- A. Grace is unconditioned and unconditional. The activity of God is not contingent on man's action.
- B. Faith is the human condition of response to God's grace in Jesus Christ.
  1. Faith is not the act of God - Eph. 2:8; Gal. 2:20
  2. Faith is not a "work" of man.
  3. Faith is man's receptivity of God's grace - Rom. 4:16; Eph. 2:8,9
- C. God's grace can be resisted - I Cor. 15:10; II Cor. 6:1; Gal. 5:4; Heb. 12:15
- D. Grace grates against man's selfish propensity of self-confidence.

V. Complements of Grace.

- A. God's grace is always complete and not partitive; no "measure of grace"
- B. All that is Christian is enacted by the grace of God in Jesus Christ.
  1. Saving grace - Acts 15:11; Eph. 2:5,8; II Tim. 1:9
  2. Justifying grace - Rom. 3:24; Titus 3:7
  3. Sanctifying grace - Acts 13:43; II Cor. 1:12; 9:8; 12:9; Titus 2:11,12; I Peter 5:10; II Peter 3:18
  4. Future grace - I Peter 1:13
- C. Grace is what distinguishes Christianity from all man-made religion.