

Preface

This book of teachings is primarily on subjects related to the love and grace of God and our wonderful relationship with God through Jesus Christ. (The HIV/AIDS lesson is a major exception.) The grace of God has been far too little understood. Martin Luther was one of the first in recent centuries to comprehend the immense importance of this grace. He rightly understood that man could do nothing to save himself. Indeed, all man could do was to cooperate with God by exercising the faith which God provided. Faith was the key that unlocked God's grace. And everything was by grace.

Many believed that Martin Luther went too far with his grace message. Actually, he did not go far enough. Not only does our salvation come through His grace, our sanctification is also a work of His grace. One great problem man has in understanding God's grace and many other facets of the Lord is man's looking at things from a man perspective. Man looks at everything as if man were the center of the universe. He is not! When man begins to look at spiritual things from God's perspective (as much as possible in man's humanness!), then what is seen is decidedly different.

From the very beginning of time God wanted a family. Further, He wanted a family in the image of His Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. When man looks at things from God's perspective, he begins to realize that he has been viewing many things in an entirely selfish way. The Father is determined that man should be conformed to the image of His dear Son. He has made those who believe a solemn promise in Romans 8:28 (NNAS) "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

In God's great grace, He is determined to conform man to His image. He knows that is best for man, and nothing will thwart His plan. He uses the good and the bad and the ugly to conform man. Nowhere does the bible teach that man can totally avoid pain and painful situations. In fact Jesus promised that in this life we would have tribulation.

Back to grace for a moment. When one puts on his "grace glasses" and reads the bible, an entirely new bible appears. One sees the New Covenant is entirely separate from the Old. The Old Covenant was entirely replaced by the New Covenant. One must not and indeed cannot relate to God under both Covenants at the same time. If one chooses the New Covenant which is entirely based on grace, one must let go, release, the Old Covenant. External laws no longer are our guide to relating to God and pleasing Him. Only things we do by and with and through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, will satisfy the Father. His New Covenant is simply this: Heb 8:13 (NNAS) "When He said, 'A new covenant,'" He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear." Heb 10:16 (NNAS) "THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND ON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM," He then says, Heb 10:17 (NNAS) "AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."

As you study these lessons, try out a pair of grace glasses and get ready for the most joyous ride of your life. Do not hold on to doctrines of men but take hold of the Lord who loves you.

Rene Brown