TITLE: The Biblical world-view of Grace

TEXT: Ephe. 2:8-9; Ro. 10:9-10; Ephe. 3:2;

1st Pet. 4:10-11; Mt. 25:37-40; 2nd Co. 5:14-20

INTRODUCTION: This morning we are going to talk about coming to a biblical world-view of grace. To see what Gods Word has to say about the subject of grace.

 Grace is essential to us as a Christian. Grace is central in our faith in Christ and it is the key element in our salvation, in that Grace, Gods grace, is what makes our salvation possible.

**Eph. 2:8 -9 (NIV)
8For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—9not by works, so that no one can boast.**

**For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God!**

Grace is a free gift from God and it is through this gift of Gods grace that we are saved.

 Some have understood this to mean that our salvation is all Gods doing and that we don’t have any responsibility in it.

 Even though God’s grace is essential for our salvation and we are saved through His grace and His grace alone, we all do have a role to play in this grace of salvation.

 There is a condition that we all must meet in order to be saved and that is by our accepting this grace that God has so graciously and freely given.

 Grace here is described as a gift…

**For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God!**

Grace here is described as a gift.

 A gift has to first be received before it is going to do us any good doesn’t it?

EXAMPLE: Say, you are dying and in need of a heart transplant and obviously there is no way that you can provide one for yourself. Without it you will die!

 You have a friend who is terminally ill and they have told their doctor that when they die they want you to receive their heart, and one day you get that call that says that this person has died and left you their heart.

 Now you have a gift that has been given to you that will give you a chance for new life, but just the gift being offered or given isn’t what will save you is it? What will save you is accepting the gift that has been given.

 You can have the gift of a new heart but unless and until you accept the gift by having it implanted within you it will not do you any good.

 The same is true with God’s Grace of salvation. It is a gift, there is nothing that we can do to earn it and it is freely offered to us, however, in order for the gift of God’s grace of salvation to do us any good we need to accept the gift.

 Scripture tells us how we accept God’s gift of grace…

**Rom. 10:9-10 (NIV)
9That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.**

 As we talked about a couple weeks ago the Greek word used for confess here, hom-o-leg-eho, means to come into agreement with God.

 What we need to come into agreement with God about in order to be saved is to come into agreement with God about the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

 The only way to truly confess that Jesus is Lord is by the action of allowing Jesus lordship.

 That means giving Him control of our life. Allowing Him to lead and we follow His leading. Asking ourselves WWJD and then doing as we know Jesus would do.

 Grace is still free and is still a gift that only God can give, but in order to be enjoyed, it, like any gift, must first be accepted and received.

 In this respect the promise of our salvation is conditional.

 The promise of Gods salvation through His grace that is freely given is conditional upon our response to the gift being provided.

 In order to receive the promise we need to meet the condition of accepting the gift of God’s grace.

 But what I want to focus on this morning is once we have received this gift of God’s grace, what are we supposed to then do with it?

 Scripture tells us that once we receive God’s grace of Salvation we are expected to become administrators of that grace we have been given..

 The Apostle Paul says this in:

**Eph. 3:2 (NIV)
2Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you…**

Once we receive God’s grace we are to become administrators of that Grace to others..

 The word for grace in Greek is:

***khar'-ece***

In regards to Gods grace of salvation….

2a) of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues

**3a) the spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace .**

 In more general terms…

**1a) that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness…**

**2) good will, loving-kindness, favor**

This is the grace that we are given and expected to administer to others.

**That which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness, good will, loving-kindness and favor.**

 The kind of grace that will help turn others to Christ, keep, strengthen, increase them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindle them to the exercise of Christian virtues in their own life so they also become recipients and administrators of this same grace to others who they come into contact with.

Peter, possibly more than any of the rest of the disciples, understood what this grace was all about and that we are all called to be administrators of it..

It was Peter who denied even knowing who Jesus was three times after Jesus had been arrested in the Garden. And then after Jesus was raised from the dead it was Peter who experienced such a mighty outpouring of grace from Jesus when Jesus gave Peter three opportunities to pronounce his love for Him after Peter had denounced him those three times…

 It is Peter who says this is:

**1 Pet. 4:10-11 (NIV)
10Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. 11If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.**

**10Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.**

Once we have received God’s grace upon our lives we are then called to administer that gift of grace to others…

 So just how do we do that? How do we administrate the grace God has given to us? The grace that we have accepted and received from God?

 Example: Book then movie called: “A man called Norman”

 Mike Adkins shares about moving into a new house and having a very strange and kind of scary neighbor named Norman who lived across the street.

 The neighborhood kids looked at Norman as kind of a Frankenstein type character.

 Norman was a large older man who lived alone in a scary old house and was the brunt of a lot of mischief and teasing from the kids of the town, and shunned by most adults.

 Norman was very strange to those who would see him around town. He was dirty, wore old worn-out clothes and walked around talking to himself. He was just plain weird.

 And Mike Adkins found himself moving in next door to him.

 One day in the barber shop there were a couple of men talking about Norman when Mike was in there waiting to get a haircut and one man said that he heard that Norman was hit by a truck when he was a young boy and that is why he is like he is today….The other man said that he had heard that Norman was once a genius and that he was so smart that one day his mind just exploded.

 Mike Adkins first personal encounter with Norman was one day when Norman was out trying to mow his yard and couldn’t get his old lawn mower started.

 Mike said Norman looked like a madman ranting and raving to himself and kicking his mower.. Often throwing his long arms up into the air and letting out a yell.

 Mike went over and asked if he could be of any help and Norman grunted something that Mike couldn’t understand so he bent down and messed with the mower a little bit not knowing what he was doing but when he went to pull the rope the mower started…. Norman again grunted some words and just started mowing….

 I think it was at this moment that Mike said that the Lord laid a burden upon his heart for this man..

 And he goes on to share a lot about the developing relationship that he and his family developed with this man called Norman…

 Mike asked Norman to come over to their house one night to watch a special TV program and Norman showed up and had not cleaned up one bit. He was filthy. Mike felt the Lord say give him your chair to sit in. In Mikes mind he said to the Lord—Lord do I have to? He is really dirty and smelly and my chair will smell for weeks…..Mike gave Norman his chair.

 Once Mike felt the Lord impressing upon him to invite Norman to a professional baseball game—

 When Norman went to get into Mikes car it was 100 degrees outside and Norman wore a full length wool coat. When they arrived at the Ballgame Mike insisted that Norman take off the coat as he didn’t want to be embarrassed by walking into the stadium in 100 degree heat with Norman wearing a full length wool coat. After finally telling Norman that if he wanted to go into the game he would have to remove his coat. Norman reluctantly did so only to reveal that that back of his pants was totally torn out from top to bottom. Mike said: Norman, put your coat back on.

 Once the Lord impressed upon Mike to go over and fix Normans toilet seat that was broken. Mike said the fixture had probably never been cleaned before and was really disgusting.

 Mike said the only way to change a toilet seat that’s bolts are rusted is that you have to get down there and hug it. Mike hugged that toilet!

 Mike had asked Norman to go to Church with his family.

 He took Norman out and bought him a new suit so he would have something nice to wear and told Norman that he would have to get cleaned up before he could put the new suit on.

 He went over to check on Norman and Norman had streak marks where he had just wiped himself off.

 Mike said I felt the Lord telling me to help him take a bath. Mike did so with the help of a scrub brush.

 Mike and his family started taking Norman to Church with them regularly.

 Then one day Mike asked Norman if he wanted to ask Jesus into His heart and Norman said yes he would……

 What an example of what it means to be an administrator of the Grace that God has given us.

 Norman received God’s grace of salvation but there was a lot of God’s grace administrated to a man called Norman by a man called Mike that first needed to be applied…

 I believe that God will bring someone like Norman into all of our lives at one time or another so that we can learn and experience what it means to be an administrator of His grace to others…

 For me it was a man called Clifford..

 (share)

 For Pam there was a woman called Betsy…

 (Share)

 The Scripture that comes to mind or should come to mind when we encounter the Norman’s of this world is:

**Matt. 25:37-40 (NIV)
37“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’**

**40“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’**

 This is what administering Gods amazing grace is all about!

Jesus said: Whatever you do for one of the least of these ---you do for me!

As I was looking at this word “administering” on paper in my notes I noticed something that really struck me… If you take away the AD from the beginning of the word and take away the ING from the end of it what you have left is MINISTER!

 If we are a Christian, we all are a minister of God’s grace…

We put our calling into action when we (ad)minister His grace to others…

And not just administer the grace that we have been given to those we may like in this world or those who are most like us, but be willing to administer this grace to those whom we may not like and those who are the most un-like us…

**2 Cor. 5:14-20 (NIV)
14For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.**

**16So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.**

**20We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.**

**16So from now on regard no one from a worldly point of view.**

**18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:**

**20We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.**

 As a Christian we are an ambassador of Jesus Christ.

 We are His representatives in and to the world in which we live.

In this world we are to represent Him not ourselves.

In this world we are to no longer view anyone from a worldly point of view but we are to view everyone through the eyes of Christ.

 View everyone from the vantage-point of Jesus..

 We are to look at the world in which we live and the people in this world through the filter of the cross and the precious blood that was shed there for all of our sins.

 When we look upon what seems to be the UN-lovable or UN-likable of this world, we need to look at them through the eyes of Christ Jesus.

 We need to see them as Jesus sees them.

We need to see them as someone that Christ loved so much that He came and gave His life for them.

 With a heart of compassion, we need to go to them with the grace that we have been given and administer that grace, God’s grace to them…

 Or more correctly, allow God to use us to administer His grace to them through our lives.

 Scripture says:

**18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:**

**20We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.**

 Being an ambassador of Jesus Christ is to be a co-laborer with Christ.

Co- Laborer**= Companion in labor, (fellow-) helper, laborer together with.**

The labor of Christ is a labor of love…

The love of administering Grace, His Grace, to a world that is literally dying to receive it..

 I would like to close with two questions of challenge this morning……

#1. Have you personally received and accepted the gift of grace that God has for you?

 Have you accepted the grace of Jesus for your life? Have you come to Him for the forgiveness of your sin and allowed Him to become the Lord and savior of your life?

#2. And if you have, have you become a CO-laborer with Him in the administrating of His Grace to others?

 Are you allowing Him to use you to reach the Norman’s of this world by showing them the love that Christ has for them by the life that you are allowing Christ to live within you?

 Are we being the ambassadors for Jesus Christ that He has called and commissioned us to be? Representing, not ourselves, but representing Him to whom we belong in the world in which we live….

 This is Missions Sunday….and it offers us another way by which we can be an ambassador of Christ and be used to administer His grace to those who we may not personally be able to go to..

 We can give so that others can go to administer Gods saving grace where we can’t….

 When taking a missions offering in his day the Apostle Paul’s had these words to say to those who were about to give that offering….

**2 Cor. 8:7. 7But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.**

**12For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.**

Prayer…