

Message Four

Living by the Grace of God for the Reality of the Body of Christ

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 13:14; 12:9; Gal. 6:18; Rev. 22:21

I. The grace of God is God Himself in Christ as everything to us for our enjoyment—John 1:17; 1 Cor. 15:10; cf. Gal. 2:20:

- A. Christ as the grace of God is the good land for us to enter into, enjoy, experience, partake of, and possess—2 Cor. 1:12; 4:15; 6:1; 8:1, 9; 9:8, 14; 12:9; 13:14; Col. 1:12:
 - 1. The grace given to us in Christ was bestowed on us before the world began—2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 2:11.
 - 2. God, who was in the beginning, became flesh in time as grace for man to receive, possess, and enjoy—John 1:1, 14, 16-17.
 - 3. The processed Triune God, who has been consummated as the all-inclusive, life-giving, and indwelling Spirit, has become the Spirit of grace with our spirit—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17; Heb. 10:29; Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23:
 - a. The Lord being with us in our spirit is grace being enjoyed by us in our spirit—2 Tim. 4:22.
 - b. We need to exercise our spirit to enjoy the riches of Christ as the sufficient grace to live Him as our godliness for the building up of the church as His testimony—1 Tim. 4:7-8.
- B. First Corinthians is a book on the enjoyment of the all-inclusive Christ:
 - 1. The enjoyment of Christ solves all the problems in the church through the work of the cross—1:13a, 18, 23-24; 2:2.
 - 2. The enjoyment of Christ issues in the growth in life to produce us as the precious materials for the building up of the church—3:6, 9-14.
 - 3. The enjoyment of Christ develops our gifts by the growth in life—12:1-11.
- C. The practical life and building up of the Body of Christ comes forth out of the inward enjoyment of Christ as the grace of God—1:9; 2 Cor. 13:14:
 - 1. The consummation of the believers' experience of the grace of God in His economy is the church as the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:6-8, 22-23.
 - 2. The product of the grace of God in God's economy is a poem—2:10a:
 - a. To exhibit the surpassing riches of the grace in God's economy—v. 7.
 - b. To carry out the good works that God prepared beforehand that the believers may walk in—v. 10b.

II. The Christian living must be the living of grace, the experience of grace—2 Cor. 12:9; 2 Tim. 4:22:

- A. We have faith and love through the Lord's superabounding grace—1 Tim. 1:14.
- B. By grace we receive the salvation in life through Christ's resurrection and ascension—Eph. 2:5-8.
- C. We have obtained access into and stand in God's abounding grace—Rom. 5:2.
- D. In this grace we can enjoy God's eternal comfort and good hope—2 Thes. 2:16.
- E. We can come forward with boldness to the throne of grace to find grace for timely help—Heb. 4:16; cf. Eph. 2:22.

- F. We can receive God's abounding supply of grace—2 Cor. 9:8.
- G. We can constantly enjoy God's multiplying grace—1 Pet. 1:2b; 2 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 22:21.
- H. We can enjoy God's greater grace through humility—James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5.
 - I. In our experience of the grace in God's economy, we enjoy the Lord's presence in our spirit—2 Tim. 4:22; cf. Luke 1:28, 30.
- J. We need to live out Christ as God's righteousness by the grace of God—Gal. 2:20-21.
- K. We need to experience the perfecting of the Lord's sufficient grace, Christ's overshadowing power, in our weakness—2 Cor. 12:9.
- L. By grace we can overcome the usurpation of temporal and uncertain riches and become generous in ministering to the needy saints—8:1-2.
- M. The God of all grace perfects, establishes, strengthens, and grounds us through our sufferings—1 Pet. 5:10.
- N. We need to be good stewards of the varied grace of God—4:10; Eph. 3:2.
- O. Our word should convey Christ as grace to others—4:29-30.
- P. We need to experience Christ as grace to be a surpassing one and to labor abundantly for the Lord—1 Cor. 15:10.
- Q. We need to receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness to reign in life—Rom. 5:17, 21.

III. We enjoy Christ as grace in the church life on the genuine ground of oneness, typified by the dew of Hermon descending on the mountains of Zion—Psa. 133:

- A. The dew signifies the descending, refreshing, watering, and saturating grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7), the Triune God as our life supply for our enjoyment (2 Cor. 13:14):
 - 1. In typology Hermon signifies the heavens, the highest place in the universe—cf. Eph. 1:3; Matt. 17:1-2.
 - 2. The mountains of Zion typify the local churches; there is one Zion, one church as one Body, but many mountains, many local churches—Rev. 1:11.
 - 3. By the grace we receive on the mountains of Zion, we can live a life that is impossible for people in the world to live—Acts 20:32; 2 Cor. 12:7-9:
 - a. In the church life, all the believers can receive great grace—Acts 4:33.
 - b. In such an organic church life the grace received by the believers is visible—11:23.
- B. The anointing of the Spirit and the supply of grace make it possible for us to live in oneness—Psa. 133:2-3; Eph. 4:3.

IV. The grace given to the local churches in the dark age of the church's degradation is for the believers who seek to answer the Lord's calling to be His overcomers—Rev. 1:4.

V. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ dispensed to His believers throughout the New Testament age consummates in the New Jerusalem as the consummation of God's good pleasure in joining and mingling Himself with man for His enlargement and eternal expression—22:21.