

A FEW WORDS ABOUT GRACE
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I

The Nature of Grace

1. Grace is God acting freely, according to His own nature as Love; with no promises or obligations to fulfill; and acting of course, righteously-in view of the cross.
2. Grace, therefore, is uncaused in the recipient: its cause lies wholly in the GIVER, in GOD.
3. Grace, also is sovereign. Not having debts to pay, or fulfilled conditions on man's part to wait for, it can act toward whom, and how, it pleases. It can, and does, often, place the worst deservers in the highest favors.
4. Grace cannot act where there is either desert or ability: Grace does not help-it is absolute, it does all.
5. There being no cause in the creature why Grace should be shown, the creature must be brought off from trying to give cause to God for His Grace.
6. The discovery by the creature that he is truly the object of Divine grace, works the utmost humility: for the receiver of grace is brought to know his own absolute unworthiness, and his complete inability to attain worthiness: yet he finds himself blessed,-on another principle, outside of himself!
7. Therefore, flesh has no place in the plan of Grace. This is the great reason why Grace is hated by the proud natural mind of man. But for this very reason, the true believer rejoices! For he knows that "in him, that is, in his flesh, is no good thing"; and yet he finds God glad to bless him, just as he is!

II

The Place of Man under Grace

1. He has been accepted in Christ, who is his standing!
2. He is not "on probation."
3. As to his life past, it does not exist before God: he died at the Cross, and Christ is his life.
4. Grace, once bestowed, is not withdrawn: for God knew all the human exigencies beforehand: His action was independent of them, not dependent upon them.
5. The failure of devotion does not cause the withdrawal of bestowed grace (as it would under law). For example: the man in I Cor. 5:1-5; and also those in 11:30-32, who did not "judge" themselves, and so were "judged by the Lord,-that they might not be condemned with the world"!

III

The Proper Attitude of Man under Grace

1. To believe, and to consent to be loved while unworthy, is the great secret.
2. To refuse to make "resolutions" and "vows"; for that is to trust in the flesh.

3. To expect to be blessed, though realizing more and more lack of worth.
4. To testify of God's goodness, at all times.
5. To be certain of God's future favor; yet to be ever more tender in conscience toward Him.
6. To rely on God's chastening hand as a mark of His kindness.

IV

Things Which Gracious Souls Discover

1. To "hope to be better: is to fail to see yourself in Christ only.
2. To be disappointed with yourself, is to have believed in yourself.
3. To be discouraged is unbelief,-as to God's purpose and plan of blessing for you.
4. To be proud, is to be blind! For we have no standing before God, in ourselves.
5. The lack of Divine blessing, therefore, comes from unbelief, and not from failure of devotion.
6. Real devotion to God arises, not from man's will to show it; but from the discovery that blessing has been received from God while we were yet unworthy and undevoted.
7. To preach devotion first, and blessing second, is to reverse God's order, and preach law, not grace. The Law made man's blessing depend on devotion; Grace confers undeserved, unconditional blessing: our devotion may follow, but does not always do so,- in proper measure.