

"SOLA GRATIA"
("Amazing grace" Or "Boring Grace?")
(Ephesians 2:8-9)

Series: The Five Solas of the Reformation (Part 3)

...What would you consider to be the greatest gift you ever received? After some thought you might consider your family, your health, food, home, church family, or your freedoms to be your favorite gift.
...Yet, there is one gift that is truly the greatest of all gifts, it is your salvation. It is really the "Forever gift." To have this gift is to have all your sins forgiven, to live now a blessed purposeful life, and to know that the best is yet to come...this is priceless. Jesus gives us life, and does so more abundantly. (John 10:10)
...Sola Gratia is the third of five Latin phrases that emerged from the Reformation summarizing the essentials of the Gospel. Amazing grace really is amazing. It is the most amazing thing in the universe.

THREE QUESTIONS UNFOLDING THE WONDER OF GOD'S GRACE... STIRRING OUR HEARTS TO CONTINUAL AMAZEMENT.

...If you find yourself being bored with grace, it is because you have forgotten "the pit from which you were dug."

I. Why Is "Grace Alone" The Distinguishing Mark Of The Gospel?

...In a word, Grace is the essence of all of God's work on our behalf. All lesser "Gospels" mix grace with human effort or good deeds and thus pave the road to hell. This is "The Narrow Way."

A. "Sola Gratia" is simply acknowledging what the Bible teaches...that our salvation is completely a gift from God. (Ephesians 2:8-9) "For by grace are you saved..." (Charis) "Unmerited favor"

B. It is the acknowledgement that salvation from the wrath of God is based solely upon God's grace and mercy, and not anything good in us. (Titus 3:5-6)

...Today this truth is rejected because of the false belief in the innate goodness of mankind.

...The Bible tells that our human condition is sinful, twisted, and depraved. (Genesis 3)

1. Our hearts by nature are "Deceitful" and "Desperately wicked." (Jeremiah 17:9)

2. Even more, "There are none righteous, no not one, there is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God." (Romans 3:10-11) (Psalms 14, 53)

3. By birth all of us if left to ourselves are completely helpless and hopeless. Yet many believe that if they are saved they at least had something to do with it. (Pride)

...One man wrote: "Western culture is so saturated with the idea we are "Masters of our own destiny" and "Captains of our souls." The idea that we are without hope apart from and based solely on the grace of God, is foreign to our way of thinking.

...The poem "Invictus." Remember John Newton's song, "Amazing Grace."

II. Why Is "Grace Alone" The Only Gospel That Saves?

A. All other isms, schisms, and religions are man-made attempts to stroke our pride and to save one's self. They are a type of self-salvation. Only the Gospel finds God doing everything that needed to be done. All faith systems can be classified as, "Do, or Done."

B. "Sola Gratia" is what makes the Gospel "Good news." It is God seeking after men and women, not vice versa. Jesus, "I came to seek and save the lost." (Luke 19:10)

1. It is God who initiates, He draws the wretched sinner (us) to Himself.

2. Those who reject sola gratia end up with "Another Gospel," where God is seen as bringing the sinner so far along the path of salvation, then leaving it up to the man or woman to save themselves. It is a "Cooperative effort" of sorts. This is grace plus works. This is not the real deal; it is false and will never provide salvation.
...The truth is, the unsaved person on their own can never respond to the Gospel.

III. Why Is Grace Alone The Basis Of Our Assurance?

- A. To deny Grace Alone is at the same time to lose any confidence we have in being saved. If salvation depends upon something you do, then it would be impossible to know for sure that what you do is ever enough. Since salvation is a gift, we merely receive it from God.
- B. This is the reason we can know that Jesus will never lose any that the Father has given to Him. (John 6:39) We are eternally secure forever, held by the Lord Himself.
..."For whom He predestined, he called...and justified...and glorified." (Romans 8:30)

SO WHAT? WHAT DIFFERENCE SHOULD THIS MAKE IN YOUR LIFE?

1. God commands all people everywhere to repent and believe the Gospel. The only question that remains is have you done so? Have you come to the Cross? Have you repented of your sin and received Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord? God commands you to do so if you have not. Today?
2. Blow the dust off your thinking, and remember the great sinner that you are, and that you only deserve God's wrath. Think seriously about this...for when you do, God's grace will be truly amazing to you. If you forget this, don't be surprised by your lack of amazement in the grace of God. You will have forgotten what God has saved you from, and you will be holding onto a kind of "cheap grace." Boring grace!!!
3. Give thanks and glory to God if you have received salvation. You have only done so because God has called you to Himself and saved you. He did it for you because of His grace, His amazing grace.
4. Always embrace God's gift of salvation to you as the greatest gift ever. Nothing even comes close to this treasure.

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Were you too raised thinking that people were good by nature? When did you come to a proper Biblical understanding of this? How would you describe human nature? If we are not born good, or neutral, what are we then?
2. Do you agree that salvation is the greatest gift ever? If so, why do you agree? What is it about your salvation that make this so?
3. How have you seen your own heart to be "Deceitful and desperately wicked"? (Jeremiah 17:9) Can you tell a tale on yourself? Don't be afraid, we are all in the same boat.
4. Someone said, "Pride is the root of all sin." How does attempting to do something to save myself evidence pride? Can you see it?