

GRACE THROUGH FAITH MADE SIMPLE

Eph 2:1-10

INTRODUCTION:

- A. From the beginning God has required the same thing of his people and that is obedience.
- B. The ways of obedience (showing faith in God) have changed at times, but God has always required faith and obedience.
- C. And since the beginning of time God's grace has supplied the means through which man can obey and be pleasing to God.
- D. Let's examine briefly the different dispensations of time and then look at some examples from each that will help to illustrate the principle of grace thru faith.

DISCUSSION:

I. THREE DISTINCT DISPENSATIONS OF TIME

- A. The first period of time is the PATRIARCHAL
 1. Had a family type worship with father as head
 2. God spoke to the fathers Heb 1:1
 3. Offered animal sacrifices on family altar
- B. Second period was the MOSAICAL or JEWISH
 1. A national religion, Moses the lawgiver, written in tables of stone Jhn 1:17
 2. Animal sacrifice in tabernacle or temple
 3. Special days: Sabbath, passover, pentecost, etc.
 4. Levi, the tribe of the priest, performed religious ceremonies
 5. Judah the kingly tribe
- C. Third period is the CHRISTIAN, our own age or period
 1. A universal religion Matt 28:19,20
 2. Christ the lawgiver Heb 1:1,2; Jhn 1:17
 3. Written in our hearts Jer.31:33
 4. Gospel is God's power to save Rom 1:16; 1Cor 15:1,2

II. EXAMPLES FROM PATRIARCHAL DISPENSATION

- A. Adam Gen 2:15-17
 1. God's grace placed them in garden
 2. Their faith in God's word not sufficient
 3. Obedience required; thru lack of faith they failed
- B. Noah Gen 6:8
 1. God's grace provided the way for salvation
 2. Noah had sufficient faith in God's word Heb 11:7
 3. Through obedience to word he was saved
- C. Abraham Heb 11:8; Gen 12:1-4
 1. God's grace provided a blessing
 2. Abraham had faith in God

III. EXAMPLES FROM MOSAIC DISPENSATION

- A. Israelites in wilderness Num 21:6-9
 1. God's grace provided cure for snakebite
 2. Faith sufficient to cause one to look required
 3. Those whose faith sufficient to obey are saved
- B. Taking the city of Jericho Josh 6:1,2
 1. Given the city by grace of God
 2. The taking required faith sufficient to cause them to follow God's plan and the walls fell down Josh 6:20
- C. Naaman's leprosy cured 2Ki. 5:10,14
 1. God's grace provided a plan for cure
 2. Obedient faith resulted in cure

IV. EXAMPLES FROM THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION

- A. Jews on day of Pentecost Acts 2:37-41
 1. God extended his grace thru the gospel
 2. Their faith caused them to respond in obedience
 3. They were saved and added to church by the Lord
- B. Ethiopian Eunuch Acts 8:26
 1. God's grace extended by Philip's preaching
 2. Faith and obedience produced rejoicing
- C. Saul of Tarsus Acts 9: 3-18
 1. God's grace provided preacher who told him what to do
 2. Faith caused him to "arise and be baptized" thereby washing away his sins
- D. God extends his grace to us today
 1. His grace caused him to give his Son Jhn 3:16
 2. He requires faith on our part Heb 11:6; however not faith alone Jas 2:24
 3. Must be an obedient faith just as all the other examples looked at
 4. Must be a faith that prompts continued obedience Jas 1:25

CONCLUSION:

- A. Men throughout the ages have tried to make the principle of grace thru faith something very difficult to understand.
- B. Hopefully, these very simple, basic examples will help to more clearly understand that salvation is by the grace of God, but in order to receive this grace one must submit to and obey God's will.
- C. Certainly, it is obvious that in none of the examples cited did the individual or individuals merit the blessing which God provided, but in order to receive it they were required to do God's will and not their own.