

The Keeping Grace Of God

Perhaps you are familiar with the expression, “saved by grace.” As Christians we understand that our salvation comes through faith in the atoning work of Christ on the cross and not through any merit of our own. That we are “saved by faith and not by works.” Therefore we are saved by the grace of God.

But we are not so familiar with the expression, “kept by grace.” Many never understand that the grace that “*saves*” them, also has the power to “*keep*” them. As surely as grace is the one method through which God can save a wretched sinner, it is also the one method through which God keeps us saved. Human ability can no more *maintain* a relationship with God than it can *attain* such a relationship.

To fully understand and grasp the concept of God’s saving and keeping grace is way beyond the ability of this writer in this limited space. But I would like to point out three important principles important to understanding how God’s grace works in and through us.

The first principle is “**No Condemnation**.” In considering the keeping power of grace we are faced with this crucial question, “Are the sins of the saved dealt with by the cross equally with the sins of the unsaved?” The answer is clear in scripture. “And He is the propitiation for our (Christians) sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” Sin can *only* be cured by the blood of Jesus, and sin is sin in every case, whether it is committed by the saved or un-saved. When Jesus died, He died for ALL sin! We cannot seriously consider that the sins of Christian’s were excluded. Every sin that humanity, saved or un-saved, had committed or would ever commit, was paid for completely at the cross.

We must therefore conclude then that just as grace is offered to the un-saved, grace must be offered to the saved on the grounds that the cross paid for ALL sin!

The un-saved are not condemned because of their sin, but because they do not believe. “He that believes not is condemned already; because he has not believed in the name of the Son of God.” John 3:18 It is equally true that the Christian is not condemned because of his sin, and he cannot be condemned because of unbelief, because he already believes! “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” What a wonderful promise!

Our second principle is, “**No Obligation**”. We have all heard the phrase, “Free! With no obligation!” And we tend to be skeptical when we hear it and with good reason. You know what they say, “Nothing is free”. But God’s plan of salvation is truly offered to each of us freely! No obligation! No strings! No fine print! No hidden charges! Praise be to His name forever and ever! And after you get saved there is no payment plan that kicks in. There could be no peace from such an arrangement. Who could ever assure himself that he had paid all that was due, or had met all of the demands of a Holy God? Our good works and faithfulness, as important as they are, could never repay God for the riches of His grace. No! He will keep us by grace alone!

And our third principle is, “**No Merit**”. The word of God has declared that all men are “under sin.” That there is “none righteous, not one.” That man is totally without merit. The gift of grace is motivated by the love of God and not by any goodness found in humanity. If our salvation is secured in any way by human merit there can only be two possible positions in which the Christian must stand: He must at any given time be completely without sin and perfect, or a lost soul. There is no middle ground. If I were in a room full of Christians right at this moment and asked, “How many of you are saved?”, every hand would be raised. But if I asked, “How many of you are perfect in all your ways?”, no hands would be raised. But still the fact remains that all in the room still declare, even though they are not perfect, that they have been born again. Their spirits bear witness that they are sons of God. Even in such an evil hour as this, there are believers who are standing in the faith. And in no sense can it be reasonably supposed that they are standing because of any merit of their own. But they are standing! And the fact that they standing as Christians, while not sinless, is proof they will still be Christians should they stumble and fall. The blood overcomes all sin, but sin can never overcome the blood!

To each of us has been given not only the saving grace of God, but also the keeping grace of God. All that is asked of us is that we believe. “He that *believes* on the Son, has everlasting life.” John 3:36 “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation for everyone who *believes*.” Romans 1:16 “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who *believes*.” Romans 10:4

And if we *believe* He has promised to keep us! He will keep us by His power. God is “*able* to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” Eph. 3:20 “For I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is *able* to keep that which I have committed unto him.” 2 Tim. 1:12 “Wherefore He is *able* also to save them to the uttermost.” Heb. 7:25 “And being fully persuaded, that what He has promised He is *able* to perform!” Rom. 4:21 God is *able* to keep you!

And He will keep you by His love. “But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved...” If God could extend His love to us while we were vile wretched sinners, surely now that we are His precious children, justified by His blood, His love will keep us!

And we are kept by the prayer of God’s son. While on the earth, Christ prayed this prayer to the Father, “I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them you have given me, for they belong to you. And all that are mine belong to you, and all that belongs to you are mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I will no longer be in the world, but these will be in the world, and I come to you. Holy Father, *keep* through your name, those you have given unto me. That they are one as we are one. While I was with them in the world, I *kept* them in your name.: those you gave to me I have *kept*, and none of them are lost, save the son of perdition. And neither do I pray for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” It is impossible for any prayer that Christ prayed to be unanswered! The Son of God could say of those who had been saved, “none of them is lost.” When He prayed for those “who shall believe on me through their word”, He prayed for all believers. He prayed at that moment for you and me! And He says, “none of them is lost!” And as He prayed for us while here on earth. He continues to pray for us. “He ever lives to make intercession for us.” How can we fail when we are the objects of the ceaseless intercession of God’s Son, whose prayer can never be denied?

“Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling; and to make you stand in his presence, blameless and with great joy. To the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Be the Glory, and the Majesty, Dominion and Authority. Both now and ever, Amen.” Jude 24