

GRACE MAKES ONE GRACIOUS

Acts 20:17-38

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: All who know the love of God in one way or another (perhaps many ways), love others. All who have experienced God's forgiveness forgive others. All believers in Jesus Christ have been given a new nature by the Holy Spirit and are indwelt as well by the Holy Spirit. No believer is perfect yet and still sins but true, sincere believers in Jesus Christ walk not after the old sin nature, but after the new nature given them by the Holy Spirit and such a walk of imitating the Lord Jesus Christ results in several spiritual qualities or graces.

I. THERE IS HUMILITY (v19)

1. No person can serve God without having the God-given attitude of humbleness of mind.
 - Anything done for the Lord must be done with humility and that is not some timid, weak, cowardly spirit but of an attitude of the heart.
 - Humility is not some kind of act, fake, put on, it is an attitude of one's brokenness of heart before God because of God's mercy and forgiveness.
2. Humility is one realizing his/her own personal unworthiness before God.
 - It is not a show of words sound humble, wanting to gain praise from others.
 - It is a heartfelt unworthiness before almighty God.
3. Humility is renouncing all merit and personal righteousness in the sight of God.
 - No one is humble as long as he/she thinks that he/she deserves God's favor.
4. Humility is gratitude of one's heart to God which is beyond words.
 - It makes a person want to live his/her life in obligation and indebtedness to God.
5. Humility is one willing submitting and devoting his/her heart to the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - It is total devotion, submission to whatever the Lord Jesus wants.
6. Humility totally declares the work of salvation to be entirely of God and free because of the Lord Jesus Christ's sacrifice.
7. Humility is in a sense the mind of the Lord Jesus in a person causing that person to love others and lift them up higher than him/herself, giving him/herself gladly to help others.

II. THERE IS REPENTANCE (v21)

1. There must be both "repentance and faith" in order to obtain salvation and both are gifts.
 - True repentance is toward God, not some kind of sense of guilt, a dread of God's wrath or a fear of hell.
 - True repentance comes from a change of heart toward God, an honest admission of and confession of sin to God.
 - It is an acknowledgement that one has offended God by his/her sin and that God is right to punish one for sin.
 - It is sitting in judgment with God against one's own self and abhorring oneself by reason of one's own sin.
 - Only God can cause a person to truly repent.

III. THERE IS FAITH (v21)

1. Faith is the gift, work and operation of the Holy Spirit with believers.
 - It is the believer's confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
 - It involves knowledge of the person and work of the Lord Jesus as one cannot trust or have faith in a Savior one does not know.
 - It comes by hearing the Word of God under the influence of the Holy Spirit.
 - It is an agreement in one's heart with the Gospel that causes him/her to trust the blood and righteousness of Jesus alone as the grounds of being accepted by God.
2. The believer continually looks to God with repentance and continually looks to God through Jesus Christ in faith, trusting what Jesus has done and is doing and will do.

IV. THERE IS COMMITMENT (v24)

1. Believers are people who are consecrated to the Lord Jesus and His Gospel.
 - They are committed to Him.
 - They love one another and commit themselves to each other as in a marriage.
 - Every believer has been saved by the grace of God and are to be committed to following the Lord Jesus' example.
2. Experiencing God's mercy, love, and grace in Jesus Christ demands the commitment of the believers to live for the Lord Jesus Christ.

V. THERE IS GENEROSITY (v35)

1. God's children (saints, believers in Jesus) are generous, giving people.
 - Grace makes people generous.
 - Any person who has experienced God's grace serves God's cause and his/her brothers and sisters in the Lord with open hearts and open hands.
2. Any person who is "tight-fisted" with his/her money, who is a miser with his/her possessions and always wanting "more" is a person who does not know the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Grace and generosity go together in God's family.

CONCLUSION:

1. Any person who has experienced (received) God's grace of Salvation is aware of what it cost God and His Son Jesus Christ in order to be able to offer such a relationship with God.
2. Those who have received God's Grace cannot help but to be gracious themselves to their fellow brothers and sisters in the Lord.
3. Christians are different people from the rest of the world, for they are indwelt with the presence of God (Holy Spirit) and therefore live their lives as best they can following the example of the Lord Jesus Christ.