

Grace Notes: Faith to Access Grace

Ephesians 2:8 “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:”

“Once my hands were always trying,
Trying hard to do my best;
Now my heart is sweetly trusting,
And my soul is all at rest.” - A. B. Simpson

Are you “trying” to live Christ's life/the Christian life? Or are you “trusting” in Christ's life? Even in the Christian life, it comes down to good works versus faith. Doing your best which produces the “works of the flesh” or resting in Christ which produces “the fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:19-23). Pleasing God through your efforts to do right or pleasing God by faith (Heb.11:6) in Christ to do right.

In my last article (“Grace Notes: The Gift of Grace”), we discussed God's enabling grace. “By grace” the lost is saved, a preacher can preach and build a church, a believer can win souls, raise kids, and live the Christian life. “By grace”. But how does one gain access to this empowering grace? “Through faith”. Now, most preachers and believers realize the importance of faith for salvation, but many stop there. **After salvation, many believers go back to trying to please God through their own vain works, efforts, and good deeds.** However, the grace “wherein we stand” as a believer in Jesus Christ can be and must be accessed by faith in every area of your Christian life.

Romans 5:2 “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand...”

If this act of faith to access grace seems confusing just go back to the moment you were saved. How were you saved? “I placed faith in Jesus to save me.” What is meant by “faith in Jesus”? Well, two other words for faith are used in Scripture to help us more fully understand the concept of faith: **believe and trust**.

Believe or belief - Luke 22:67 “Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe.” Believing is being persuaded something to be true and accepting it (see Webster's 1828 Dictionary), for instance, with the Jews believing/accepting Jesus as the promised Messiah in this verse.

When Rear Admiral Samuel Francis Du Pont explained to his superior officer, Admiral David Farragut, the reason why he had failed to take his ships into Charleston Harbor in 1863, Farragut heard him through to the end and then said, “Admiral, there is one explanation which you have not given.”

“What is that?” asked Du Pont.

“It's this. You did not believe that you could do it.”

What a thought! Many do not get saved because they do not believe/accept that Jesus

can save them or is the only way to heaven. Many believers do not go soulwinning, attend every church service, live a life of high and holy standards, or produce godly children because they do not believe/accept it can be and should be done. Like the Admiral, most excuses of “You can't build a church here.”, “Souls aren't saved around here.”, “You can't know for sure if you're going to heaven or that kids will turn out right, etc....” are because “You did not believe that you could do it.” **God's grace is allowed to work in the life of one who has believing/accepting faith.**

Trust - Proverbs 3:5 “**Trust** in the LORD with all thine heart; and **lean** not unto thine own understanding.” Trusting is reliance and resting upon something or someone (see Webster's 1828 Dictionary); it is leaning and depending. **To fully access God's enabling grace, a person must trust/depend fully upon Jesus.**

Charles Blondin became famous in 1859 for being the first person to cross a tightrope over Niagara Falls. After that, he often walked across doing various feats like walking in a sack, on stilts, or in the dark! On one occasion though, he asked for the participation of a volunteer. Blondin had carefully walked across blindfolded and pushing a wheelbarrow holding a sack of potatoes. Upon reaching the other side, the crowd's applause was louder than the falls! Blondin asked, “Do you believe I can carry a person across in this wheelbarrow?” The crowd enthusiastically shouted, “Yes, yes, yes! You are the greatest tightrope walker in the world. You can do anything! We believe!” “Okay,” said Blondin, “Someone get in the wheelbarrow.” No one volunteered, so Blondin made his manager get in!

Miracles are performed in the lives of those who walk “by grace”. The miracle of salvation is performed in the life of one who believes/accepts Jesus to be the Son of God crucified and risen for their sins, and trusts/depends on Jesus alone to save them from an eternity in hell. Miracles are performed in the lives of believers who believe/accept that the God of the impossible will do great and mighty works through us, and trust/depend upon God, not themselves, to do those great and mighty works through us. **It is one thing to say you have faith for grace; it is quite another thing to actually get in the wheelbarrow trusting God!**

So, how do you open the gift of grace and access God's enabling grace? Faith. Faith to **believe/accept** God's commands, exhortations, and encouragements in Scripture. Faith to **trust/depend** upon God, not you, to display His greatness through you.