

Standing in Grace part 2

I. God came personally in Christ to rescue the lost. Luke 15. Sheep, Coins, People.

- A. His affirmation that all humans are lost.
- B. His desire for the lost to come to him.
- C. His joy at the restoration of the lost. 7, 10, 22-24, 32
- D. *Paul knew personally what it felt like to be rescued from his lost state (and he was religious! He was the Older Brother in the prodigal story. So He lives in the Gospel...*

II. He explains the Good news in Romans 1-4

- A. We're all under sin. 1:18-3:20.
- B. But God has provided a cure. Singlehandedly! 3:21-4:25
- C. It comes by simple faith. Christ. 3:28

III. He explains the new life of hope in chapters 5-8.

A. Look what God has done for us prodigals in Christ. 5:1-11

- 1. Declared us righteous: Justification. 1-4
 - a) And so now in the realm of grace rather than Law. 1-2
 - b) Which means our suffering must be interpreted differently. 3-4 (Jas.1:2-4)
- 2. Given us new life: Regeneration. 5
 - a) God's love poured into us by the Holy Spirit
 - b) First mention of Holy Spirit and Love in Romans
 - c) *The Spirit's ministry in regeneration is to convey God's personal love to his people. Not generic, but specific and personal.*
- 3. Proven that He loves us supernaturally: Propitiation. 5-9
 - a) He loves us more than we love him. 1 Jn.4:9-10
 - b) To die for people who hate us? Not likely.
 - c) This love must not be based on anything in us (potential, innate goodness, beauty). Is this good news? Yes, because it means that our failures do not mean he loves us less (though he will discipline us. Heb.12)
- 4. Drawn us into his life personally: Reconciliation. 10-11
 - a) He wants reconciliation with us and has provided it singlehandedly.
 - b) Reconciliation is setting the relational joint back after dislocation. 2 Cor.5:19-21
 - c) *It's amazing what you can endure when you know you are loved by Someone more powerful than you are.*
 - (1) This is what we were created for.

IV. He focuses on a specific future reality: The Hope is God's own Glory. 2

- A. Hope = confident expectation of future blessing based on God's promise.
- B. Glory = is the honor, splendor, perfection, radiance of God.
 - 1. Sharing the glory of God means being drawn into the holiness and honor of the Trinity. (Eph.2:7; Matt.17:1-8)
- C. It is the opposite of shame.
 - 1. Shame is as bad as guilt and we need deliverance from it in order to live freely.
 - 2. Guilt is legal and internal. Shame is social and interpersonal.
 - a) "a feeling of humiliation or distress cause by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior." A mix of regret, self-hate, dishonor.
 - b) *When people lie and hide, it is often shame, not guilt, that they are running from.*
 - c) *When people "can't forgive themselves" it is often shame rather than guilt that they are feeling.*
 - 3. Jesus took both our guilt and our shame. Heb.12:2
 - a) *He replaces guilt with righteousness*
 - b) *He replaces shame with honor. Prodigal.*

D. In Christ, Glory awaits.

1. Physical perfection. **Phil. 3:20-21**
 - a) Resurrection body.; 1Cor. 15; 2Cor. 4:16-5:10
 - b) Suited to a resurrected creation. Rom. 8:21-22
2. Perfect Unity (Trinitarian). **Jn. 17:22-23**
 - a) We long for it, but never quite attain
3. Clear knowledge. **I Cor. 13:9-10**
 - a) Perfect clarity in Ultimate truth
 - b) Not omniscience, but perfect clarity about reality.
4. Moral excellence. **Col. 1:21-23**
 - a) Holy, blameless, beyond reproach (like Jesus)
 - b) He presents us, we don't present ourselves.

V. Pastoral advice:

- A. Shamed Christians: Stop trying to "forgive yourself" and dare to believe the Lord.
 1. He touches regret and shame and turns them into wisdom and humility.
- B. Pre-Christians: Stop struggling against the grace and be reconciled. 2 Cor.5:18-6:2.