

“...walk worthily...” from the Book of Philippians

Scripture Block: Pp 1:1-11

Theme: GOD’S EXPECTATION OF FRUITFUL SERVICE

Life verse: Pp 1:9-11

Today’s passage: Pp 1:2

Notes

Application

Verse 2 of the first chapter of Philippians declares the amazing truth that God’s “points of contact” with his people are grace and peace. To better understand the concept of grace, we have been investigating the illustration of the believing thief on the cross in Lk 23:39-f. We have seen the thief perfectly illustrates the lost spiritual condition of every member of the human race—a helpless and hopeless condition in which the individual is powerless to “save” himself; and instead is saved by accepting, by faith, the work of Jesus Christ on his or her behalf. This is what we mean when we say God’s plan of salvation is a grace-plan.

But what about the believer in Jesus Christ? Does the illustration of grace associated with the thief still apply? It most certainly does, and for many, the grace basis of the Christian Way of Life is a much harder lesson to learn than its association with our salvation. Let me explain. With respect to the Christian Way of Life:

- We tend to think in terms of the “resources” we bring to the table.
- We think in terms of the abilities and skills we possess.
- We tend to think in terms of doing “our share.” After all, Christ died for us, the least we can do is live a good life.

Listen, this might be a good way to present yourself at a job interview, but it is not God’s plan for the Christian Way of Life. For his plan is a grace-based plan from start to finish.

1. We tend to think in terms of the resources we bring to the table:

We bring nothing of consequence! In and of ourselves, we are not inherently spiritual, we do not have the power to follow thru on the things we decide to do, and we do not have the ability to “reason” our way to God’s will. On the other hand, if we take a grace approach, we realize we are needy and look to the provision of God. If we do, we will find that he has given his children a new life (Rm 6:4), the enablement and empowerment of the Holy Spirit (Zech 4:6), and guidance via the enduring Word of Truth (2Tm 3:16-17).

2. We think in terms of the abilities and skills we possess.

Any skill or ability can be used for either spiritual or carnal purposes. So first, we are to present our bodies to God as “living sacrifices”(Rm12:1-2).

Then as we abide in the vine that is Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit will produce fruit through us (Jn 15:4-9, Gal 5:23-f). Fruit is a natural result of abiding in the vine, i.e. occupation with Christ so that the new life can work in and through us.

3. We tend to think in terms of doing “our share.” After all, Christ died for us, the least we can do is live a good life.

The Christian Way of Life is not a division of labor. Rather it is about a needy servant coming to his or her gracious Lord (2Cr 12:9-f). Our God can then do great things through those who come to him (Pp 4:13). Study the above Scriptures—when we are weak and powerless, God has us right where he wants us! That is the place where we are forced to turn from our own abilities and depend upon him. When we do so, his power will be manifest right in the midst of, and despite, our weaknesses. This is what grace is all about. This is what gives testimony to the greatness and love of our God and therefore brings glory to him.