Articles by M. B. McJannet

M. B. McJannet

First published in Food for the Flock (Food for the Flock, Inc., Ontario, Canada).

KEE Ministry Library · Faithful Men
kee-ministry-library.netlify.app

The Grace of God (Nov 1964)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 10 No. 11, Nov 1964.

Grace is a New Covenant word, not that we do not find it in the Old Testament, for we do, but rarely. O yes, God is revealed as the Gracious One in that portion of the Bible, nevertheless, the word is found there only a few times as for instance in Ezra 9:8 and Psalm 84:11.

It is told of the great soul winner, Dwight L. Moody, that upon rising from the study of this word, he rushed into the street, and stopped the first person he met with the question, “Do you know grace?” The reply, as one might expect, was, “Grace who?” To this Mr. Moody promptly responded, “The grace of God,” and followed this with an explanation of this grand subject.

The poet has attempted to describe grace:

“Favour to the undeserving, That is grace!

Love, when from Him we have turned,

Yearning, when we have not yearned,

Mercy, when His love is spurned, That is grace!

“Life, when death alone we merit, That is grace!

Taking sin that we confess,

Giving us His righteousness,

Longing ever but to bless, That is grace!”

Grace is God’s attitude toward sinners, and much more, it is His action for them. Furthermore, it is the basis of His movements in the world (Acts 11:25) and in the

hearts of His own children (1 Pet. 2:20, margin). It is also the motivation in the life of the believer.

Let us notice three aspects of the grace of God.

The Revelation

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth … For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by (subsisted in) Jesus Christ” (John 1:14 and 17). Here we have grace residing in a person, and that person the Lord Jesus. Through Him it was revealed in all its fulness. In this word is comprehended the ideas of reception, repletion, and subsistance. Christ received grace in all its fulness for “it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell” (Col. 1:19). It subsisted, found its being in Him, for “the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11). In Christ grace has become incarnate. As in a prism all the colours of the rainbow are seen, so all the rays of divine glory converge upon the only begotten of the Father. During the days of His flesh here, the Lord Jesus manifested in all their fulness the cognate attributes of God: love, grace mercy, compassion, kindness, pity, and benevolence.

The Beauty

“And the grace of God was upon Him … And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:40 and 52). Here grace is seen as resting upon a person, the same Glorious One. Ancient painters portrayed the Lord with a halo upon His head. We criticise them, but in the light of these and other

Scriptures we may be wrong. There was about Jesus an aurora, a beauty, a graciousness which was appreciated by the Father and was seen by man as well. Concerning Him the Psalmist wrote, “Grace is poured into Thy lips” (Psa. 45:2). We know that in His time men “wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth” (Luke 4:22).

While our study of grace circles around the Lord Jesus, we should realize that the beauty of the Head should adorn each member of the Body of Christ. The prayer of the man of God, Moses, was, “let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us” (Psa. 90:7). In regard to the Virgin Mary we read, “Hail thou that art highly favoured (graced) among women” (Luke 1:28). Mary was graced for a special purpose, a beauty, an enduement rested upon her for its fulfilment. In regard to all saints we read of “the glory of His grace wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved” (Eph. 1:6). This beauty as applied to us is illustrated in the story of the cripple who laboured diligently on a model of the temple placing the silver and the gold in the proper places. When it was finished it did not appear as lovely as he had expected. A friend, however, focused an electric spot-light on it and made it glow in excellent splendour.

When the light of the divine presence shines upon the believer, he too ought to glow with the beauty of the Lord. We might well pray:

“Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me!

All His wonderful passion and purity.

O, Thou Spirit Divine, all my nature refine,

Till the beauty of Jesus is seen in me.”

The Communication

“Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace” (John 1:16). In this passage we read about grace flowing from a person, and again that person our blessed Lord Jesus. He is its repository and resource. Our first consideration is to apprehend more and more of that fulness, and then to appropriate what we need from Him. “Waters to swim in” (Ezek. 47:5) is a vivid picture of His fulness of grace, energy, and strength which abound toward His people. This imparted grace increases; it is grace for grace; as one supply is used another flows in. Israel could not store manna for the morrow, nor can we store up grace for some future occasion. Nevertheless, “God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work” (2 Cor. 9:8). The Lord said to the Apostle Paul, “My grace is sufficient for thee” (2 Cor. 12:9). That is, not merely enough but abundance to meet every exigency.

We may notice here three exhortations as to our responsibility in view of the generous supply of grace at our disposal. “Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God” (Heb. 12:15). The New Translation renders the word “fail” as “lacks.” How possible it is for those who have been saved by the grace of God to be now deficient in this quality! The falling short of grace may be a coming short in God’s gracious plan for our lives. Through stinting ourselves of His grace, we fail because of weakness. There is another exhortation that is very pointed: “We entreat also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain” (2 Cor. 6:1). How can that be? The subject in this portion is service not salvation, and it

presses upon us the acceptable time, today, for receiving out of His fulness. One receives the grace of God in vain who does not appropriate fully but sparingly.

Notice one more strong word, “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Heb. 12:28). “Let us have grace!” Is it as easy as all that? Yes, simply accept it, take what is stored up for you in Christ. There is always sufficient in Him. He says, “My grace is sufficient for thee.”