

Radicalness of God's Grace

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Romans 3:9-12.

B. Many of us live the Christian life bankrupt without knowing it.

C. When you became a Christian, did you declare temporary bankruptcy or permanent bankruptcy?

1. Most Christians declare temporary bankruptcy- they cast everything on Christ for their salvation, but then end up living every day life by performance instead of by grace.

2. Grace is often defined as God's unmerited favor, which is true but not all encompassing.

II. Grace is God's riches at Christ's expense.

A. We tend to believe that our good works or behavior are what earns us God's favor- His answers to prayer, His intervention, etc.

1. God's favor is given to us based only on what Christ earned for us.

2. Jesus Christ paid for every answered prayer and blessing that we ever receive.

B. We live in a state of permanent bankruptcy as Christians.

1. If we feel that God's help is dependent on our actions, then we are living by performance and not by grace.

2. God's grace is radical and there are no merit points to earn more or less of His grace.

3. We still live by God's gospel as Christians.

4. Grace assumes that we are bankrupt, which is why it is difficult for Christians to accept. It must acknowledge that we are completely dependent on God. (Romans 5:1-2)

5. We are born with a performance orientation, but grace and works cannot coexist. We cannot improve on Jesus' works. (Romans 11:6)

6. God looks at Jesus' merit instead of at us when deciding how to bless us.

7. Grace does not mean that God is permissive. God will discipline those He loves, but because He loves them too much to leave them in sin.

Application questions:

1. When you examine your attitude toward spiritual growth, is there guilt involved? Is there a sense of fear that if you don't perform well, you no longer have God's favor? How does this message influence your perspective on spiritual growth?

2. What does Jerry mean when he says that we as Christians need the gospel to live every day?

3. Why is grace difficult for us to continue to accept as Christians?
