

**Galatians 6: 18; “Grace with Your Spirit”, Message # 65 in the series –  
“Christ has Set us Free”, a Bible Study conducted on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017,  
by Pastor Paul Rendall at his home.**

To end this magnificent treatise on grace, Paul gives us a benediction of grace. The word benediction comes from the Latin word “bene” which means “well”, plus the Latin word “dicere” which means “to speak”. To speak well of; to bless, or to consecrate, is the dictionary meaning of this word. In the pronouncing of the benediction at the end of a church service, it is often the apostle Paul’s words of benediction that are used. The intent is to utter a short prayer which conveys the sure hope of the Lord’s blessing upon those gathered for worship. If you will read over these benedictions, you will find that the apostle Paul used them to bring instruction as well as comfort and encouragement to the brethren and the churches that he was writing to. “Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.” What we have here, in these few words of desired blessing, is a wealth of instruction. He is saying that it is more important than anything else, in living the Christian life, that you realize that it will take the imparted grace of Christ to live your life to the glory of God and to be able to manifest the fruit of the Spirit in your walk with Him. Paul has shown us this in every way that he could in this letter that we have studied. And so, this evening, 1<sup>st</sup> of all – I want to talk to you about grace imputed to you by the Lord Jesus Christ. 2<sup>nd</sup> – I want to talk to you about grace imparted to you by the Lord Jesus Christ. And 3<sup>rd</sup> – I want to talk to you a little more about how grace is with your spirit.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – I want to talk to you about grace imputed to you by the Lord Jesus Christ.**

“Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.” What is imputed grace? We are often told that it is unmerited favor. And so it is. It is the favor of God shown to us based upon what Christ has done for us as sinners. That favor is shown to us from the moment that we first believe the gospel. From that moment when we first believe, we are justified in God’s sight. We are declared righteous in His sight and that righteousness will cover us and cause us to be seen as completely righteous and acceptable in God’s sight based upon Christ righteousness being imputed to us. His righteousness which was worked out on our behalf while He walked upon the earth and did all of God’s will perfectly, this is what is charged to our legal account in God’s sight. We certainly do not deserve this because we are guilty sinners in God’s sight. We are guilty because of Adam’s sin which has been imputed to us, and we are guilty because of our own sins which confirm us as sinners being “in Adam”. We richly deserve to be punished because we are guilty in many ways.

Ecclesiastes 7: 20 shows us the truth that all men are unrighteous. “For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin.” But let us also look over at Romans chapter 5, verses 18-21. “Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so, through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.” “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.” Now, we see here that Adam’s sin was “an offense” in the sight of God. God had created Adam righteous and upright, and by his own free will he should have been able to stand in this original righteousness, but he did not. Instead of holding fast to God’s word, he believed his wife’s testimony concerning eating the forbidden fruit. It says in Genesis 3: 17, “Because you heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying ‘You shall not eat of it’, therefore, “cursed is the ground for your sake”.

In other words, the whole creation was affected by the guilt of Adam’s sin. It was because of this one offense, his eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that Adam he fell into transgression, and he was condemned by God for it. The nature of the offense was

disbelieving God's word to Him, and choosing to listen to Eve instead of heeding God's word to him. And because of the guilt of that one offense, condemnation came upon all men born, who were descended from Adam, because he was the Federal Head of our whole race of all mankind. Therefore, there would have to be One who would come, who would perform a righteous act which would consist of perfect obedience to God's word in righteousness, and also paying the just penalty that all those descended from Adam would owe to God by sufferings which would satisfy the justice of God. This righteous act was Christ death on the cross, the culmination of all of His righteous obedience to God's holy law on behalf of all elect people in all times. The person believing in Jesus finished work would receive imputed righteousness. They would be declared righteous by God on the basis of faith in the promise of God in the gospel, that the one believing in Jesus would be forgiven of all of their sins and declared righteous in God's sight based upon God's choosing to look upon Christ at the cross and accept those sufferings, as a substitute for you, the guilty sinner.

God then, being propitiated by Christ's sacrifice, would impute righteousness to the believer in His Son, and cover them, as with a robe, with it. And in this perfect righteousness the believer would stand. They would be seen by God as being "in Christ"; all of their sins atoned for, even all of their sins during the course of their lifetime. They would in this way be constituted as righteous. This is grace imputed. But you will notice that in verse 18, that it also says – "the free gift came to all men, that is to all elect men, resulting in justification of life." Not only justification in the forgiveness of sins and imputation of righteousness. But also justification in relation to the giving of life. Not that justification and sanctification would be blended and confused; they still remain distinct from each other in what is done for the sinner. But they are not to separated from each other. They are linked in the application of redemption. Justification covers all of the work of sanctification from beginning to end.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> – Now I want to talk to you about grace imparted to you by the Lord Jesus Christ.**

"Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." Here we find Paul speaking of grace which is described as being "with your spirit". I have been trying to show you that imputed grace is something that is outside of ourselves. Justification is an act of God declaring the believer in Christ, righteous. It is a once for all act, outside of ourselves. It is a covering for all of our sins, and it is the beautiful spiritual robe of Christ's righteousness which we are wrapped in, so that we will be seen by God as righteous and holy, even though there will be much work yet remaining for the Spirit to do in us, to becoming conformed to the image of Christ; and much work for us to do in relation to becoming more obedient to the commandments of God. For all the rest of our time upon the earth we will need this covering, until our spirit is actually changed to be perfect the moment after we die.

But imparted grace is an act inside ourselves, and it is the work of the Holy Spirit working the precious grace of Christ into to our heart and our mind. It begins to be shown to us as an unworthy sinner, when life and light are given to us by the Holy Spirit's sovereignly working in our heart in connection with the truth of the gospel. Turn with me over to 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1, verses 8-10. "Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings of the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel..." Grace was given before time began, in God's choosing us, and then in time and space, in His own time, calling us to Himself with an effectual call by His Spirit. This effectual call culminates in the New Birth.

The New Birth is the Holy Spirit planting grace in the heart. It begins with the opening of the heart. Look with me over to Acts chapter 16, verses 11-14. “Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the next day came to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony.” “And we were staying in that city for some days.” “And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there.” “Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us.” “She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. “The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.” Here we find imparted grace; the Lord opening her heart. The Lord, the Spirit, has the key to open every elect heart; every person’s heart who is ordained to eternal life. And what happens then, when the heart is opened, is that sanctification begins.

Look at 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2: 13 and 14 with me. “But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The sanctification by the Spirit which is being talked about here is not progressive sanctification, but it is the beginning and the basis of it. It is what Professor John Murray calls Definitive Sanctification. It is our experiencing a spiritual death to sin once for all, and having the seed of righteousness planted permanently in our heart, so that we really will grow up into Christ. In Volume 2 of his Systematic Theology, P. 286, Murray says that Definitive Sanctification takes place, not with reference to justification, “but in connection with deliverance from the power and defilement of sin.” He says on P. 293 – “We see, therefore, that the decisive and definitive breach with sin that occurs at the inception of Christ life is one necessitated by the fact that the death of Christ was decisive and definitive.” “It is just because we cannot allow for any reversal or repetition of Christ’s death on the tree that we cannot allow for any compromise on the doctrine that every believer has died to sin and no longer lives under its dominion.” “Sin no longer lords it over him.” “Likewise the decisive and definitive entrance upon newness of life in the case of every believer is required by the fact that the resurrection of Christ was decisive and definitive.”

Look with me over at Romans chapter 6, verses 1-11. “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

You can see that this is grace with your spirit; the imparted grace of Christ applied by the Holy Spirit to the believer whom He spiritually baptizes into Christ’s death. The believer is buried through this baptism, experiencing a real death to sin; the circumcision of his heart that the body of sin might be done away with. This does not mean that all sin within the believer’s heart is immediately removed. But it means that the power and dominion of sin is broken once for all, and that the work of the Spirit in planting us into Christ’s death and resurrection spiritually, insures that we will have new desires for putting sin to death in our heart, and new desires for obedience and growth in righteousness and truth taking place there, in our hearts.

Therefore, since Christ died to sin once for all on the cross, so we in Definitive Sanctification die to sin once for all. The one who has died with Christ is freed from sin. And since Christ was raised from the dead, and death no longer has dominion over Him, even so, because of the life of Christ within us, we shall walk in newness of spiritual life. This shall take place by the strength of Christ's imparted grace.

**And 3rd – I want to talk to you a little more about how grace is with your spirit.**

“Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.” Having had these great works of Christ applied to our heart in regeneration by the Spirit of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ continues to supply us with wisdom and grace and strength and joy and peace in believing in Him, moment by moment, and day by day. There is, in an on-going basis, grace being given to your spirit, dear believer, by Christ, to uphold, nourish, and strengthen your faith. That is what is being said here. When this is taking place, then the believer does come to know the reality of being able to reckon themselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ. But it is something that we should pray for, for ourselves, and greatly desire that all Christians that we come into contact with every day, would know the reality of, as well.

A good example of Paul's praying in this way is found in Philippians 1: 9-11. “And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.” When the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is with your spirit you will know the reality of love abounding still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment. You will approve the things that are excellent. You will be sincere, and you will be walking before the Lord without offense to him or to any person around you. You will be being filled with the fruit of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ. And this will bring glory and praise to God.