

Rev. 22:21. the Free Love of Christ

by Horatius Bonar

The sermon emphasizes the free love of Christ, which is divine favor, unbought, unsolicited, and undeserved, and how it is available to us through faith in Christ.

Scripture: Ephesians 2:8, Revelation 22:21

Topics: "Grace", "The Love of Christ"

Description

Horatius Bonar emphasizes the boundless and free love of Christ as encapsulated in the closing blessing of Revelation 22:21. He explains that this grace is unearned and available to all, highlighting its significance from the beginning to the end of the Bible. Bonar illustrates how grace is primarily revealed through the cross, where God's love and righteousness converge, making salvation accessible to sinners. He encourages believers to receive this grace simply and without pretense, assuring them of its transformative power in their lives. Ultimately, Bonar reassures that Christ's grace is eternal, sustaining believers through all circumstances and into eternity.

Transcript

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." --Revelation 22:21.

Thus the Bible closes with blessing. In this prayer we have the summing up of all the blessings which the word of God has uttered.

In the prospect of the Lord's coming, and with His voice proclaiming, 'Surely I come quickly!' the apostle breathes out the prayer, 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.' It was sent to the seven Churches of Asia--it is sent to us in these last days. Nor do we need it less. It suited well the Church in the beginning of her history--it suits her as well at its close. The love which passes knowledge is contained in it--and in that love all that a sinner needs at first, as well as all that a saint needs to the last.

Grace abounding, grace reigning, grace conquering, grace justifying, grace comforting, grace purifying--such is the key to the history of the Church of God. It is the history of Christ's free love, and of 'salvation to the uttermost,' through that free love flowing down to earth. For everything pertaining to the sinner's deliverance and eternal life comes down to us from God. Man is simply the receiver and the enjoyer of a love as boundless as it is unbought!

I. What is this grace of the Lord Jesus Christ? Free love! Divine favor, unbought, unsolicited, and undeserved! With this the Bible begins, and with this it ends. The free love of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! This is the 'good news' which the messengers of God have brought to us; the 'good news' which the cross of Christ has made available and accessible; the 'good news' which remains 'good' to the last, unchanged and unweakened by the lapse of time. The gospel has not become a dried-up well or broken cistern. The free love of God, coming to us through His Son, has not been exhausted or made less free. In these last days, we can take up the old message of grace to the sinner, and sound it abroad as loudly and as freshly as at the first.

No delight in the death of the wicked! Delight in his turning from his ways and living! Yearning over the impenitent, tears for Jerusalem sinners, stretching out of the hand to the rebellious, invitation upon invitation to the weary; the open door, the universal call, the beseeching to be reconciled, the pressing of the cup of life to the lips of a thirsty world--all this, continued to the last, marks the unutterable compassion of God to the sinner, the riches of the divine grace, the boundless fullness of God's heart, as it pours out its longings, and proclaims its long suffering to the chief of sinners. Return to your Father's house, and be blessed! Come, and be forgiven! Look, and be saved! Touch, and be healed! Ask, and it shall be given!

II. How this grace has been shown. In many ways, but chiefly in the Cross. The words of Christ were grace--the doings of Christ were grace--but at the cross it came forth most fully. Grace all concentrates there--grace shines out there in its fullness. The cross is the place and pledge of grace. The cross did not make or originate the grace; but it made it a righteous thing that grace should flow out to us. It threw wide the gates of the storehouse; it unsealed the heavenly well. From the cross comes forth the voice of love, the message of grace, the embassy of peace and reconciliation. This grace flows everywhere throughout a guilty earth; but its center is the cross; and only in connection with the cross is it available for and accessible to us. The 'it is finished' of Golgotha was the throwing down of the barriers that stood between the sinner and the grace.

The grace itself was uncreated and eternal; it did not originate in the purpose--but in the nature of God. Still its outflow to sinners was hemmed in by God's righteousness; and until this was satisfied at the cross, the grace was like forbidden fruit to man. Divine displeasure against sin, and divine love of holiness, found their complete satisfaction at the altar of the cross--where the 'consuming fire' devoured the great burnt-offering, and gave full vent to the pent-up stores of grace. The love of the Father, giving His son, was there. The love of the Holy Spirit, by whom a body was prepared for Him, and by whom 'He offered Himself without spot,' was there. The cross is the great exhibition of the grace!

III. How we get this grace. Simply by taking it as it is, and as we are; by letting it flow into us; by believing God's testimony concerning it. Grace supposes no preparation whatever in him who receives it, but that of worthlessness and guilt, whether these be felt or unfelt. The dryness of the ground is that which fits it for the rain; the poverty of the beggar is that which fits him for the alms; so the sin of the sinner is that which fits him for the grace of Christ. If anything else were needed, grace would be no more grace, but would become work or merit. Where sin abounds, there it is that grace much more abound. How many are shutting out the grace by trying to prepare themselves for it! Open your mouth wide and I will fill it, is all that God asks. Our thirst may be but the thirst for happiness; our hunger may be but the hunger of earth; our feelings may be altogether unspiritual; our sense of sin nothing--yet all this does not make us less qualified for Christ's free love, or that free love less immediate or less bounteous in its flow. In the belief of God's testimony to the grace of His Son, we let in the grace, and become partakers of the pardon and the joy.

IV. What grace does for us. It does so many things, that we find it not easy to reply to this question, any more than to such--What does the light do for us? What does the air do for us? It does for us exceeding abundantly, above all we ask or think.

(1.) It pardons--Forgiveness through the grace and work of Christ is the beginning of the good news. He who believes God's record of the grace of Christ is forgiven.

(2.) It pacifies--It brings peace to the conscience. Not the grace without the blood--but still the grace that comes to us through the blood, pacifies.

(3.) It liberates--Dread of God's anger kept us in bondage; the knowledge of the grace of Christ reaching us through the finished propitiation of the cross sets us free, by removing this dread.

(4.) It enlightens--With the grace there pours in light from Him who is the Light of the world. The grace dispels the darkness.

(5.) It strengthens--The sight of the free love brought to us by the blood invigorates the soul. Until we see it, our hands hang down, and our knees fail us.

(6.) It purifies--It is holy grace, holy love; and it carries its purifying power into the soul that receives it. The cross is the wondrous revelation of divine holiness--and the love which comes to us through the cross, is purifying love.

(7.) It comforts--Only such free love can sustain the soul in sorrow, or speak consolation, or bind up the wounds of the broken-hearted!

V. How long grace lasts. Forever! It has not end. Christ loves forever. His grace is unchangeable like Himself. Its fullness is inexhaustible. It will be a perpetual fountain throughout eternity. It does for the evil days here--and for the glorious days hereafter. It suits us on earth--it will suit us in the kingdom. There is grace that is to be brought to us, at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and in the ages to come God will show us the exceeding riches of His grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus our Lord!

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