



8/6/25

I listened to a message from a podcast, and the pastor said several times in the message, "We don't serve a record keeping God, we serve a covenant keeping God." I just love that!!! It aligns so much with what I've been learning through this study on Romans... God does not view us for our failures, but He celebrates our faith... And it's because Jesus was the Lamb of God who served as the sacrifice for the covenant of peace that we have received from God. So much hope!!!

*Blessings,
Jonna*

John 1:9-18 ~

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word WAS God." That's Jesus. He is the Word become flesh... who came into the world to restore what man had broken in the Garden of Eden... relationship with God, righteousness before God, holiness like God. He came to do what I could not do, and what would not have been needed if Adam and Eve had not listened to the serpent. (Though to be fair, if it had not been them, someone would have eaten that fruit eventually.) Jesus came to give His life so that I could be acquitted of my guilt and restored to relationship with God. What do I learn about His purpose from John 1:9-18?

Vs. 9-13 ~ I read in vs. 4-5, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." Just like His grace trumps sin and death, His light overcomes the darkness. While the devil masquerades as an angel of light, Jesus "is the TRUE light." He came to the world He created, but they didn't know Him. They didn't understand who He was. They just knew He had incredible power to heal the sick and provide food for thousands with just a few morsels of bread and fish. They knew ABOUT Him, but they didn't know HIM.

Jesus came to His own people (the Jews), starting with the people from His own town of Nazareth (Luke 4). Not only did they not accept that He was the Messiah all the prophecies had pointed to for thousands of years, but they tried to kill Him! Eventually, they did.

If it were me, I would have shown up and expected my words and miracles to be enough. I would have probably said, "Forget it! I'm done. It's not worth it. You're not worth it." But that's not what Jesus did! He didn't focus on the rejection. Our need for Him was too great for His love to ignore. He continued to cry out to ALL who would come... "But to ALL who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God." CHILDREN OF GOD!!! Adopted. Chosen. Forgiven.

In order to be saved, I don't have to do a bunch of works to earn His approval. I have to believe and receive. That's what genuine faith does. It's not just a flip of the hand saying, "Sure, I believe in God." It's staking my whole life in who He is, what He's done... and receiving His free gift that He's offered to me. To believe Him is to be convinced that no other way to salvation exists. To receive Him is to reject all things that stand against Him. The beautiful thing about God is, He understands how hard this is, how weak I am to do this. As I surrender to Him, He gives me the strength to cling to Him and let go of everything else... one degree to the next. "For He knows our frame. He remembers that we are dust" (Psalm 103:14). "He sympathizes with our weaknesses" (Hebrews 4:15). O Lord, thank You! I couldn't survive if this were not true!

It's so important that I understand HOW I came to be His... He GAVE me the right to become a child of God. I was born again... given new life in Him... the old has passed away. My new life in Christ is not about physical birth, but spiritual birth... not blood, not the will of the flesh, not the will of man... but the will of God. He loved me so much that it was HIS will to do for me what I could not do for myself. Because I did nothing to earn my salvation, I can do nothing to lose it. Jesus poured out His blood to be the final sacrifice, so that no other sacrifice would be necessary. I'm His forever.

Vs. 14-18 ~ The Word who was life and light and creator stepped down from His throne in heaven, emptied Himself of His glory, and lived among us. I write that as being a part of mankind, but obviously not literally living with Jesus when He walked the earth. The disciple, John, wrote this literally. He spent three years with Jesus, experiencing His quiet glory, not the fullness of His glory that we'll someday see in heaven. In fact, the last and biggest recorded prayer we have between Jesus and the Father is in John 17, right before He was arrested and killed. In John 17:4-5, He prayed to the Father, "I glorified You on earth, having accomplished the work that You gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me in Your own presence with the glory that I had with You before the world existed." I don't think I can grasp how humble and loving Jesus is to lay down His life for me the way He did.

Even the glimpse of the glory of Jesus that the people of the day saw was enough for John to conclude that He had to be the only begotten, unique Son from the Father. His grace and truth were just too different than other men. He was filled to overflowing with grace. Grace... charity... kindness... blessing poured out on the weak, ungodly, unholy, enemies of His. And He was filled to overflowing with truth because He IS the truth. He never used illusions or deception in any way to prove the good news of the gospel. He was completely honest because

He can't be anything else.

God sent another guy named John to go before Jesus to prepare the way of His coming. He was called, "John the Baptist (or Baptizer)". John's role was prophesied throughout the Old Testament. It was the role of a forerunner to prepare the way for a king, giving the message that the king was coming. John was that prophesied forerunner for Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

John cried out to all who would listen, "He who comes after me ranks before me because He WAS before me." What did he mean by that. John was 6 months older than Jesus. In the Jewish culture, seniority was HUGE. The older always outranked the younger with very few exceptions. For example, Jacob (who God called "Israel") was blessed instead of his older brother, Esau. David, the youngest of his brothers was anointed to be the king of Israel. I think God did this as a shadow of what would come with Jesus. But also... though Jesus was physically younger than His cousin, John, He also came before John because He came from heaven. Jesus is NOT a created being as man is. He created man. I would say His ranking is exponentially higher than John's!

From the overflowing fullness of Jesus' grace and truth, all of us who believe in Him RECEIVE His absolute fullness. He is so generous! What do we receive His fullness for? Grace upon grace. Everything He builds with us starts with His grace, adds to His grace, and allows us to receive more of His grace.

The opposite of grace is cruelty, unkindness, hatred. I think of 2 Corinthians 12:9, when God said He would not remove Paul's thorn in order to protect him from arrogance, but instead His grace would be all that Paul would need. "But He said to me, 'My grace satisfies you. My grace is perfected in weakness.'" This is a huge application for me. Jesus is my word, my life, my light, my grace, my truth. He lavishes me with His grace. I stand in His grace. O Lord, please help me to fix my eyes on You... on Your grace, Your truth, and Your glory. Thank You for making me a child of God! Amen!