

Grace is a wonderful thing. To think that God can look at us, and instead of holding us responsible for all the mistakes we have made in our life, he wipes the slate clean, and gives us a new heart, well, it's more than most of us can fathom! Yet, that is what happens when we come to faith in him, and obediently repent of our sins, and submit to God in baptism. That's when our new life begins. And what's more, in a truly wonderful ongoing miracle of God, the Bible says that he no longer continues to count our sins against us; those new ones that we undoubtedly will still commit.

If we say that we have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin. 1 Jn 1:6-7.

What a wonderful thought! We don't have to walk around any more continually feeling bad about ourselves for our weaknesses and failures. Though we will continue to sin against God, we are in a state of perpetual grace. God is not holding those things against us any more.

Now, does that mean we keep doing those things which are against God? No, we may get off track, but we keep striving to "walk in the light." To do those things Jesus would have us do.

There are members of the body of Christ, which, unfortunately, don't believe in this unmerited favor. They are happiest when they are dwelling on every little failure, and holding others failures against them. This is the worst form of legalism; when we use other's sins to degrade them, and make us feel better about ourselves. This should never happen in the church of Christ! Yet, we see it again and again.

I was part of a group which operated in this way, and it was a miserable existence. Those who were in leadership had the most 'dirt' on those under them, and they used it against them every chance they got. People were supposedly kept 'humble' when they continually feasted on the sorrow of their sin.

How wonderful it was to get away from that group, and to be given a new appreciation for the grace of our Lord. When we come to learn the real character of Christ, we start to see God's true attitude toward us:

*"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, **it keeps no record of wrongs.**" 1 Cor 13:4-5*

*The one who does not love does not know God, for **God is love.** 1 John 4:8*

If we come to understand the love of God, the continual cleansing power of the blood of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit to seal us for the day of our redemption, we can rejoice every day in the State of Grace! Furthermore, we can have true, peaceful fellowship with one another based on love and compassion.