

WHEN GRACE WAS GIVEN

GRACE THEN AND NOW

"If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward..."

~ Ephesians 3:2

1. The Gospel of Grace

- a. Men are saved by grace, and there is no other way! Rom 3:23-24, 5:8, Eph 2:8-9
- b. "Paul was first to know grace" sounds backward. (*Wasn't everything before Paul*)
- c. The expected objection: "*Grace is not unique with Paul*" "*Grace is found before Paul*"
- d. Some things can be found throughout the Bible (church, gospel, grace, cross, faith)
- e. Some things found only in Paul (Body of Christ, glory in the cross, mystery of Christ)
- f. Paul preached the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24), we must discern what is new and what has always been true.

2. Israel and the God of Grace (OT)

- a. It is true that grace is found before Paul. Proof: Noah found grace - Gen 6:8
 - i. OT: grace 39x, gracious 35x, lovingkindness 29x, mercy 200+, favour 84x
- b. Grace was found by some men (Lot, Jacob, Joseph, Gideon) - Gen 19:19, 33:11, 39:4
- c. God looked upon men, grace was a look of blessing not all were given - Gen 43:29
- d. God's grace and glory shown to Moses - Ex 33:12-13, 18-19, 34:6-9
- e. A gracious blessing upon Israel, God was gracious/merciful - Num 6:23-27, Neh 9:31
- f. God gave grace to those who walked uprightly - Ps 84:11, 86:15, 111:4, Prov 3:34
- g. Grace was given "for a little space" to the remnant for their revival - Ezra 9:8

3. A Covenant of Grace (NT)

- a. Men speak of a 'covenant of grace', but Biblically this is not with Adam, but Israel's 2nd.
- b. God knew Israel would fail the law, he promised grace - Isa 30:18-19, Jer 31:2-4, 34
- c. Grace and mercy for Israel go back to the promises - Luke 1:72, Rom 4:1-4
- d. The mercyseat was reserved for the blood of the Lamb of God - Heb 4:14-15
- e. In the new covenant, there is access to the place of grace for men to find it - Heb 4:16
- f. New covenant grace was prophesied, men could fail it - Heb 10:28-29, 12:15, 1Pe 1:10
- g. This grace would come to them completely at the return of Christ - 1 Pet 1:13

4. A Dispensation of Grace (Mystery)

- a. Grace had been given, men tried to get grace, grace was covenanted to Israel, but now
- b. Grace as a dispensation given to all (+Gentiles) is now revealed - Eph 3:1-2, 5
- c. By this revelation, grace stands alone without the law, Israel, covenants.
- d. Grace now reigns through faith unto eternal life by Jesus Christ - Rom 5:20-21
- e. Unspeakable, unsearchable, exceeding, abundant, powerful 2Co 4:15, 9:8, 1Tim 1:14
- f. So much grace, that we are now called to be ministers of it - Eph 3:7-9, 4:7, 2Cor 5:19
- g. Grace was something to be seen, but now grace is to be believed (not seen) - 2Co 4:18

5. The Grace of God Revealed

- a. The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men – Titus 2:11
- b. We now know and understand what was mystery concerning the grace of God.
- c. God has always been gracious. Grace always what man needed. Grace now revealed.
- d. More than the God of grace, or a promised covenant of grace, is the preaching of a pattern of grace to all revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ to the apostle Paul.
- e. Was grace given first to Paul? No. Was the dispensation of grace given to him? Yes.