

# North Christian Church -

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[www.nccdighton.org](http://www.nccdighton.org)

11/13/16 - The "Difficult" Passages - Grace and Works -  
Part 20

### **Blog: The 2016 Presidential Election**

*The real tragedy (I speak as a man) isn't who is or isn't elected president of the United States. The real tragedy is that many "voters" aren't voting for Jesus Christ. In fact, they continue to vote against Him.*

### **An Unfair Fight**

Satan is a super genius. You are not. If you think you can defeat him in your flesh, you are sadly mistaken. He will crush your spirit before you even realize what happened. The ONLY way to defeat ("resist") him is through the power of God (the Word and the Spirit).

### **Eph 6:16**

*in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.*

### **Perspective Requires Clarity**

If your vision is clouded by anxiety, the details of life, or the wrong priorities, you won't be able to see things for what they truly are. If you are handicapped this way, it's easy for your enemies to lead you astray. (Ps 119:105)

### **John 10:10**

*"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."*

### **Perspective Requires Clarity**

Your enemies aren't interested in stealing your personal belongings, or even something as temporal as the presidency of the United States. They are interested in stealing your peace so that you are too debilitated to spread the Gospel!

### **Jas 4:7**

*Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

### **"that you may see"**

The Spirit's been trying to open your eyes to the whole truth about your life. He's telling you to drop any vestiges of the self-life you might be clinging to, to stop

fellowshipping with the world, and to quit playing games.

### **The Little Things (Lk 16, 19)**

It's often easier to walk in the general direction of goodness and be unkempt, spiritually. It's analogous to a person who is able to keep a job, but shows up consistently hung over, filthy, etc.

### **The Little Things**

You might ask, "Why does the Lord care about all the 'little things'?"

### **The Little Things**

Simple...it's because he understands the erosive nature of our enemies. They tempt us to leave this or that small detail for later, to give into worldly pressure, to intoxicate ourselves to numb the convicting ministry of the Spirit while doing so...

### **The Little Things (cont.)**

...and before we know it, all the little things, and all the micro-adjustments away from God's will for us, and all the steps we've taken in a perverted direction, add up to our being way off course!

### **And BTW, Quit Whining**

Some will argue for their flesh with, "But, life's not fair!" This is fruit of asking bad questions. The better question to ask is, "Is God righteous in what He does with each of us as individuals?" - YES!

### **Perspective**

Is there ever really only ONE variable in a life equation? Does God willingly crush one of His own for one reason, or multiple (many of which man has no idea about?) Sometimes it's obvious, sometimes it's not, but every time, there are things we don't know. (e.g.: Deu 8)

### **Deu 8:3**

*"He humbled [ana (Hebrew) - to oppress, humiliate] you and let you be hungry...that He might make you understand."* God uses whatever means necessary to impress His will/purpose upon man's heart, whether it is accommodating to man's sensibilities, or not - this is TRUE GRACE!

### **Grace**

God will humble us if we aren't already humbled. This is grace that is designed to produce something (humility) that opens us up to even more grace, and so on. (ala Mt 13:12; Jas 4:6)

### **Grace Isn't Always "nice"**

Man has pigeonholed grace into a one-sided thing, where it is defined as all things that accommodate man's predisposition about God's benevolence towards His creatures. These are the inventions of man's flesh.

### **The Gospel Is Offensive**

There's only one Gospel that the flesh will ever be wholly offended by, The Gospel of Jesus Christ. False gospels will always have something appealing to the flesh baked into them, always be based on perversions of God's grace in salvation.

### **On Life and Death**

Man seeks to impose His will over God's. He wants God to accommodate him, and then call it "grace". But you see, that's not God's grace at all, it's a perversion! God's grace accommodates His perfect righteousness, to His glory.

### **Grace and Works**

Man is born egocentric...so much so that he supposes his own definition of salvation is the one that needs satisfying. The only way to construct such a salvation is to suppose his own definition for grace. As grace goes, so goes his definition for what grace produces, namely works. The whole system is a perversion.

### **Grace and Works**

Any confusion about works is preceded by confusion about grace!

### **Grace and Works**

If your version of "grace" doesn't include all facets of God's plan for salvation, then your Gospel is surely suspect. By grace, God reveals fallen man's darkness/sin to the unbeliever, for that man cannot see out of darkness. Only the Light from God can illumine/quicken man's perspective, by grace. This is the beginning of God's plan for salvation.

### **Jesus' Gracious Words**

Jesus was perfectly gracious when He said, *"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men"* (Mt 4:19). Likewise, *"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me"* (Mk 8:34). Both statements are equally gracious! Jesus could never say anything inconsistent with His own nature.

### **Jesus' Gracious Words**

By grace, at salvation, YOU have been given a new nature. Like Jesus' perfect nature, your new nature cannot say/do anything inconsistent with grace! Your old nature is just the opposite, hence Paul's own admission of his struggle between the two in Ro 7.

### **The New Creature**

A true believer, a person who has been saved by grace through faith, has been made "new". This new nature is a partaker of the divine nature of Jesus Christ. This is a grace gift given at salvation, or not at all. It is not something a person chooses after being saved; for that supposition implies a person has not been truly saved from sin (Ro 6:2).