

North Christian Church -

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10/23/16 - The "Difficult" Passages - Grace and Works -

Part 11

Humility

"I want to, but I know that I am unable." This is what true humility looks like in its rawest form. "The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith" (Lk 17:5)!

"Your will be done"

This is the sign of a truly humble heart that has been given faith. It is evidenced when two hearts agree/confess the same thing. Since God is immutable (never changes), it is man whose faith is reconciled to God. (ref: Mt 26:42; 6:10)

"Your will be done"

It's this reconciliation to God's will that describes the essence of authority-orientation.

"Your will be done"

The Word tells us that we believers are predestined, "called for this purpose" (1Pe 2:21), to orient to the Sovereign God of the universe. We are born DISoriented, therefore, we must seek orientation.

Authority-Orientation

Orientation to the Sovereign God of the Universe implies authority-orientation. The very relationship demands a Master-slave paradigm - it's an intrinsic fact.

1Pe 2:24

and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

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"Grace and Works"

Grace is foundational to authority-orientation since authority-orientation is a good work of faith!

"Grace and Works"

Receiving God's grace is a 'respect for authority issue'. Authority-orientation, itself, is a grace gift! Obedience results in receiving more grace. This is a key element of the doctrine of "grace upon grace" that commences with salvation (Jn 1:16; Mt 13:12, etc.).

Sovereignty

Sovereignty comes down to "who has the rights". Unless God has given you rights, you have none. For example, no man has ever been given the right to put God on trial, or challenge His authority. This is why we say something is "unrighteous" (un-right) - it's because the perpetrator does not have the right to do what they are doing!

UNrighteousness (not right)

The last thing we need to do is encourage the flesh in others, especially regarding salvation. A dead man that thinks he can do something good is gravely mistaken. They are truly deceived. "Life", itself, has been counterfeited! The Bible describes unbelievers as "unrighteous" because their works are not right - they are not alive, they are dead!

Born Un-right (in unrighteousness)

The Bible describes an unbeliever as being "dead in their sins" (Eph 2:1).

Two Gospel Perversions

People talk about "adding to salvation" (faith + works = salvation), pointing to legalism. But, how often does anyone talk about the other Gospel perversion, "subtracting from salvation" (faith - [God's] works = salvation), pointing to religions that actually SUBTRACT some of God's grace in saving man? (Deu 4:2)

The "other" Gospel Perversion

This theology, "subtracting from salvation", supposes that God actually does LESS than He does when He saves a person.

Perversion Means Unrighteousness

Anytime we misappropriate Holy Scripture, it is no longer holy. In fact, we have taken something perfect and perverted it. Since God's Word is perfect, the perversion is not. Any derivative of such a perversion is also no longer righteous.

Gospel Perversions

God will NEVER pervert His own Word! There's only ONE way that verbal plenary scripture "fits", and that is HIS way. Any rearrangement of scripture immediately leaves the effort up to man, hence it is a "work" of man. This work often begins with subtracting from the Gospel and completes with the consummation of a perverted theology.

Two Gospel Perversions

The only difference between the "adding to salvation" perversion and the

"subtracting from salvation" one is the timing of the flesh's own "works". The prior injects human works at the point of salvation, the latter injects them later. Both perversions are UNrighteous because man NEVER has the right to supplant God's grace in any good work, before or after salvation.

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"for good works"

When God saves a person, He "creates" them "in Christ Jesus" for the purpose of "good works" (Eph 2:10). Believers are "born again" (Jn 3:3), created as "new creatures" (2Co 5:17) that are forevermore inclined to abide in righteousness (having eternal life, itself).

The Flesh Merely "on hold"

By subtracting from God's plan for salvation, Satan has managed to propagate a perverted gospel, where "believers" are saved from the penalty of sin, but nothing practical. It supposes that man later decides, for himself (as if he has the right), on the issue of the sovereignty of sin. If this were true, God didn't really "save" them from sin, itself.

Eph 2:10

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.