



Sunday February 17, 2019

Faith

Part-2 : God's Sovereignty, Grace and Faith

Quick review-Last Sunday:

Faith Connects Us To God

Faith Is Required To Please God

Faith Is In The Person of Jesus Christ

Faith Is Based On Relationship

Faith Is Of The Heart

God Calls Us To Live By Faith

What Faith Is

How Faith is Conceived And Nurtured

Faith in the Word is Faith in God

Faith Is Like A Muscle - It Grows As It Is Exercised

Several Factors Influence Faith

Faith Causes the Power of God and His Word to be Released

Today: Part-2 : God's Sovereignty, Grace and Faith

God's Sovereignty

God is King and He is Sovereign. He is 'Adonai', sovereign Lord, Ruler and Master. He is all powerful, above all others and independent of all others. We see several Scriptures that reveal His sovereignty.

Job 42:2

"I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.

Psalm 115:3

But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.

Daniel 4:34-35

34 And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

35 All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?"

As Sovereign God what He plans, purposes and wills is established. He can do as He pleases and no one can stop Him.



God's Grace

God is also a gracious God or a God of grace. This is who He was and is across the Old and New Testaments. He has not changed. To be gracious means to be kind, considerate, generous and to show favor, especially when it is not expected or deserved. God in His grace gives to us His abundant blessings even when we do not deserve it.

Psalm 86:15

But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.

Psalm 103:8

The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.

There is the aspect of the sovereign grace of God, that is, God extends His grace in His own sovereign way and will, to whomever He chooses.

Exodus 33:19

Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

We see God's sovereign grace as He blesses people who may not know Him yet, bestows gifts and callings on peoples lives, and in many cases we "think" that they were the most unlikely to get blessed, touched or called by God. God still does it any way!

Faith

We then see this aspect of faith in God from our part.

In His working in our lives God speaks and declares His will, His plan and purpose, and then invites us to walk by faith with Him to see His will, plan and purpose fulfilled. Similarly, God declares His Word revealing what He offers us freely by grace, and He invites us to receive from Him by faith. We see numerous examples in both the Old and New Testaments. Consider a few:

God declared that Abraham and Sarah would have a child and that Abraham and his descendants would possess a land that God had assigned for them. The sovereign God had declared His Word. Yet from



man's side, Abraham and Sarah had to journey by faith, and through faith inherit these promises (Hebrews 6:12, Hebrews 11:8-12).

Hebrews 11:8-12

11 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise;

10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

11 By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

God spoke to Joshua giving him the plan to capture the city of Jericho. God said that the walls would fall down. Yet the people had to exercise faith in God to see this actually happen. They didn't just sit back in their tents to watch the show!

Hebrews 11:30

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.

Similarly in the matter of salvation. God sovereignly provided for the salvation of every person. This was entirely His doing. He offers the free gift of salvation to every one through grace. Yet He requires that each one receive this free gifts of grace, by faith.

Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

We also see this in the ministry of Jesus. He was anointed and out of His abundant grace healed, delivered and worked miracles. He healed all who came to Him in faith. And then in His own home town of Nazareth, where people hesitated to believe Him, the Scripture states that He could not do great miracles.

Matthew 13:57-58

57 So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house."

58 Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.



Mark 6:1-6

1 Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him.

2 And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands!

3 Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" So they were offended at Him.

4 But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house."

5 Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them.

6 And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.

So we see that in the workings of God in our lives there is the interplay of God's sovereignty, God's grace and our faith. While God may do things sovereignly by grace, the norm is that He requires us to receive by faith, what He freely offers us through grace. A lack of faith can actually prevent us from receiving what He offers to us.

Some Questions

If God is sovereign and no one can stop Him, why does He still require His people to exercise personal faith if they are to experience His mighty workings in their lives?

If everything is a free gift of grace, then how is it that we can receive them only through faith?

It may seem conflicting, our God is almighty and sovereign and yet God may be limited by our unbelief and cannot work if there is no faith. For as we understand it, grace is an expression of God's character that is independent of any thing we have done, while faith is an expression on **our part** of confidence and trust in God.

Here are some points to consider:

1. God in His wisdom has deemed it fit that these two apparently conflicting attributes coexist. There is the realm of God's indisputable sovereignty and there surely is the integral and necessary element of personal faith with its dynamic results.



2. There are certain things that depend solely on the sovereignty of God such as God's eternal purpose and His plan for the ages. These will be accomplished *independent* of the exercise of human faith. And then there are individual purposes that God has, whose fulfillment depends on the individual's cooperation with God.

3. In extending all of His gifts freely to us out of His grace and yet making it necessary for each one to receive them by faith, God is giving every person "equal opportunity" to receive from Him. Regardless of race, color, social or economic standing, and past experiences, every person has the same opportunity to receive what God has extended to us freely by His grace.

Romans 4:16

Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

Romans 4:16 (Good News Bible)

And so the promise was based on faith, in order that the promise should be guaranteed as God's free gift to all...

So it is absolutely necessary for every believer to learn how to live by faith. We walk by faith in His written Word, which reveals His will, plans and purposes. We also walk by faith in the word He speaks to us by His Spirit which are His personal directives to us, also revealing His will, plans and purposes.

4. The realm of faith has its perimeters set by the will and purpose of God. We cannot by faith change God's sovereign will as He has revealed to us. Attempting this is to "knock against" the sovereign will of God, and no one can be successful doing so.

5. There is the realm of mystery, where as we stated earlier, God will sovereignly extend His grace and mercy, independent of a person having faith. And we watch in awe and wonder as God does such things and He reminds us that His is sovereign.

MINISTRY TIME
SALVATION CALL



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Sunday February 17, 2019
Faith

Part-2 : God's Sovereignty, Grace and Faith

This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at apcwo.org/sermons. Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture passages: *Hebrews 11:1,6; Romans 1:17; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Romans 10:10*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

- 1) What would things look like if God just sovereignly (randomly, unpredictably) blessed people out of grace, and did not give us all an opportunity to receive by faith?*
- 2) Discuss the importance of having faith to receive from God, even though God is sovereign and gracious.*
- 3) Why is there a "mystery" to God's workings, even though we walk by faith in His revealed Word and faith in what He speaks to us in the present by His Spirit?*



If time permits, each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

- 1, families to be protected and strengthened*
- 2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.*
- 3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.*

Close by thanking God together.