

3> I can leave no room for “gray areas” in the Christian walk and thus _____ many

⇒ Judgmental

⇒ Everything is either right or wrong

4> I can cultivate a _____ attitude toward those who may not agree or co-operate with my plan or way of living as a Christian

BENEFITS TO LIVING BY GRACE IN SPITE OF RISKS

1> No longer hard on yourself bringing judgement and guilt because the rules don't exist

2) Free to make your own choices and suffer consequences or reap benefits

3) Learn to hear God for yourself in the grey areas and thus express your walk with Jesus in your own unique way

4) No longer compare yourself to others and so become someone you are not

5) No longer need to control others, fitting them into your moulds

6) Able to grow more rapidly towards greater maturity

7> Much more flexible

8> Much more open and transparent and vulnerable

9> Much more loving, accepting and forgiving

Prayer Requests for this week...

Scheduling and planning of 2012 apostolic trips into Eastern Europe, Europe, Central Asia and the United States

The founding of ministry schools in Moscow, Russia and Ararat, Armenia

The translation of Global Discipleship School material (30 courses) into Russian as the ministry opens an on-line correspondence school of ministry - students are registered and waiting

For Ralph and his staff as they work to keep up



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Ralph Howe Ministries

"Loving God, Equipping People, Mentoring Leaders, Reaching Nations

NEW RESOURCES THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

These are free downloads available for you on-line

Daily articles on the Christian understanding of GRACE and how to live a Christian lifestyle balancing grace and truth

A daily blog on topics that touch the heart of your faith and how to walk out your faith in daily life

All Sunday sermons - audio and text as well as printouts are posted on Mondays

A variety of articles about ministry - including training material in how to evangelize and touch others with the love of God as found only in Jesus

News impacting Christians and the Church from nations around the world

Always something new posted each day - practical resources to help you know God's plans and the season we are now in as disciples...

GRACE IS RISKY

We are saved by grace - But once saved we tend to forget that grace is important and available

Ephesians 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast.

Galatians 3:3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

Last week: 4 **definitions**:

1> “Blessing upon blessing, heaped upon us”

2> The focused, undeserved power and presence of God towards you

3> God's transforming power doing in us what we cannot do for ourselves

4> **God's Radical And Complete Embrace**

Today: a fifth definition

_____, _____, and _____

⇒ The LAF Principle

The Gospel of Grace...

Ephesians 2:8-9 For it is by **grace** you have been saved, through **faith** - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Grace)

Romans 12:3 For through **the grace given to me** I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgement, **as God has allotted to each a measure of faith**.

He poured out His love and gave us His Son and because He first loved us—we can now love Him

GRACE: *God's transforming power doing in us what we cannot do for ourselves.*

↳ We become a "new creature in Christ"

He blesses us immediately again ... "Blessing upon blessing heaped upon us..."

We receive the gift of _____

Romans 6:23b "...the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

John 17:3 "Eternal life is..."

All because Jesus was born "full of grace and truth..."

Remember: Grace is risky

⇒ The risk was there for Jesus...

John 1:10-12 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name

If we live by grace we too live life risking...

Galatians 3:3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit (by grace), are you now being perfected by the flesh?

⇒ We are called to walk by grace daily

This will often mean we are rejected

Most Christians live at one of either two extremes

1> They live by LICENSE ⇒ _____

2> They live in LEGALISM ⇒ _____

To live by grace means to live in liberty and because you have freedom others who live by license or legalism will reject you a shun you

Example of living by grace - the risk involved

⇒ Vengeance - Justice - Grace

This is what God did - and it is risky (rejection)

His risk with us...

Justification ⇒ Just-as-if-we-never-sinned

We are justified by grace

Titus 3:7 So that, having been **justified by his grace**, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Justification: "It is the sovereign act of God whereby He declares righteous the believing sinner while still in his sinning state"

⇒ A risk because we might not respond later and so not clean up our act with His help (sanctification).

Justification is an act of Grace

He DECLARES us righteous "**while still in the sinning state**" ⇒ He took a risk on us

We are free to accept or reject His offer...

John 1:11-12 He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name

Justification - The sinner is **declared righteous**

"God sovereignly bestows the gift of eternal life on the sinner at the moment he believes (by grace) and thereby declares him righteous while the sinner still lives a life marked by periodic sinfulness. He hasn't joined a church. He hasn't started paying tithes. He hasn't given up all to follow Christ. He hasn't been baptized. He hasn't promised to live a sacrificial, spotlessly pure life. He has simply taken the gift of eternal life ... apart from works ... by grace."

Justification...

"Even though I sin periodically and have found myself unable to stop sinning on a permanent basis, God declared me righteous when I believed. And because I will continue to sin from time to time, I find all the more reason to be grateful for grace.

As a sinner I deserve vengeance. As a sinner I'm afraid of justice. And so, as a sinner, my only hope for survival is grace."

We are called, as disciples, to live by grace every day... In freedom and liberty and not license or legalism

In the "Religious" world the risks are great:

1> RISK of being accused of not _____

⇒ Grey areas

2> RISK of being _____ as a Christian

3> RISK of seeing others continue to use their freedom to sin (ignoring the call the holiness)

4> RISK of being used by others as you love, accept, and forgive by grace

Alternatives to this risky lifestyle:

1> I can emphasis works over grace and become _____

MARTIN LUTHER... "No one can be good and do good unless God's grace first makes him good; and no one becomes good by works, but good works are done by him who is good. Just so the fruits do not make the tree, but the tree bears the fruit... Therefore all works, no matter how good they are and how pretty they look, are in vain if they do not flow from grace..."

2> I can opt for giving out a list of do's and don'ts and become a _____