

Post Tenebras Lux- The meaning of grace.

Sermon Notes

November 19, 2017

Review: With access to the Word Luther outlined the foundation of the Christian faith in his writings: Repentance is evidence of true faith, justification is by faith alone, we have direct access to God because the Cross ushered in the priesthood of the believer.

Theses #36 *“Any truly repentant Christian has a right to full remission of penalty and guilt, even without indulgence letters.”*

Theses #37 *“Any true Christian, whether living or dead, participates in all the blessings of Christ and the church; and this is granted him by God, even without indulgence letters.”*

Theses #36 and #37 ramifications.

- Repentance again is the evidence of a true Christian’s faith. **James 2:14-19**
- A true Christian’s “right’s” to absolute absolution of “penalty and guilt” is completed by faith in Christ’s work alone and not by payment of the Christian. **Galatians 2:16**
- A true Christian is granted the full rights and blessings of God without any payment or attainment to a supposed “heavenly caste system.” **1 John 3:1**
- Salvation is a work of God’s grace on our behalf!

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

Theses #66-68 *“The treasures of indulgences are nets with which one now fishes for the wealth of men. The indulgences which the demagogues acclaim as the greatest graces are actually understood to be such only insofar as they promote gain. They are nevertheless in truth the most insignificant graces when compared with the grace of God and the piety of the cross.”*

Luther’s concerns.

- Indulgences had become an act of greed on the part of the church.

- Indulgences were being promoted as a means of grace, which is a gross misunderstanding of the term and concept of grace.
- If grace was somewhat found in indulgences that grace was “insignificant” when compared to the saving grace of God found in the work of Christ on the cross.

Biblical teaching of grace.

Grace (def.)- “unmerited favor” Grudem
 “undeserved acceptance and love” Holman

Need for grace of God. Romans 3:20-24

- Through the law we become aware of our sin, thus the law condemns us but cannot save us. (20)
- We are made right in God’s eyes by faith in his work—a laying down of our belief that our efforts merit something and trusting in the merits of Christ alone. (22)
- Our efforts will always fall short. (23)
- Justification comes freely through his grace! (24)

Faith in the grace of God. Romans 4:13-16a

- God promises that he sees us as righteous (completely clean and holy) by faith in Christ’s work alone thus eliminating guilt and need for us to pay a penalty. (13)
- Believing that adherence to law will save us will only condemn us as if we will never succeed. (14)
- The promise of one being seen as righteous is by faith in the complete work of God’s grace. (16a)

The Grace of God. Hebrews 9:11-15

- Jesus became the new tabernacle of entrance into the presence of God. (11-12)

- The temporal and minimally effective sacrifices are no longer needed. (12-13)
- His blood became the perfect and permanent sacrifice to cover sin thus obtaining eternal life for the redeemed. (14)

Three truths about Grace.

1. The work of Jesus on the Cross to cover sins once for all was an act of amazing grace.
2. Faith in and of itself that we have in the work of Christ is a gift of grace that creates wonder.
3. The full rights as a child of God without merit to inherit eternal life is a promise of grace that cannot be fathomed!

“This work of grace was done for you and for me without any merit or payment on our part. Do you believe that Christ’s work on the cross was sufficient? Do you trust this work enough to simply have faith that this is true? Then repent and walk in the freedom given according to his promise.”