

WHAT IS GRACE?

Salvation is a gift (Ephesians 2:8-9). God gives the gift to lost man not because of anything man might do in his lost state (Titus 3:4-7). The best lost man can do is profane before God (Romans 3:10-12; Isaiah 64:6).

God extends salvation to lost man while man is not looking for God or salvation. (Romans 3:10-12). The gospel is freely offered to all (Romans 10:13). “God commands all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). Those who do believe and repent will be saved (Acts 16:31, 2:38, Mark 1:15).

When the gospel is preached (and it must be preached; Romans 10:14), men receive the “general call.” This general call will not result in salvation unless it is accompanied by God’s “effectual call,” the call that reaches beyond a man’s ears, to his heart. Those who receive the effectual call are born again of the Spirit of God (John 3:3-8 Acts 13:48).

Once a person is born again, or regenerated, it is as though God has placed a coin in that man’s hand. This coin of grace has two sides. On one side is faith; on the other is repentance (turning from sin and death towards righteousness and life). Both sides are part of the same coin and necessary for the coin to be genuine. Any coin with one side blank is obviously counterfeit and worthless.

Along with the coin, the man is given the desire to spend the coin he has received by grace. Previously, he had no desire to turn to God, but now having received God’s grace (i.e., regeneration, faith, and repentance), he has a desire to "spend" the coin of grace that he has been given. The whole coin, both sides, nets salvation. All who receive this grace will be saved; but apart from this grace, no one is saved.

It is by God’s grace that a man has faith (Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 Timothy 1:14) and by grace that he repents (Acts 11:18). Both faith and repentance (a desire to turn from sin and toward God) are necessary for salvation; and both are gifts from God. Salvation is totally a work of God. Man merely responds (which he is responsible to do) by receiving the grace God lavishes on His people.