



And this gospel of the **kingdom**
will be *preached* in all the **world**.
MATTHEW 24:14

Understanding Grace

Pastor Terry Krahn

October 20, 2013

Summary

We cannot produce our own righteousness. Do we think that we have to obtain a certain level before God is willing to help us? There is nothing we can do in our own strength that makes us righteous. It is only by God's grace that we are made righteous. Our relationship with God is not based on a contract; it is based on a covenant. A "contract mentality" is based on conditions. A "covenant mentality" is based on unconditional love. How hard do we try and work to obtain faith? We know that faith without works is dead. Faith is not complete without works. We do not need to work to obtain something from God. Jesus said that His yoke is easy and His burden is light. All we have to do is believe. Jesus has already paid the price for everything that we could ever need. When we walk in God's grace, it empowers us to do everything that we are called to do!

A. Can We Produce Our Own Righteousness?

- a. We cannot produce our own righteousness.
- b. How many of us try?
 - i. The Jews are still trying today to produce their own righteousness. They believe that if they follow all of the Levitical laws, then they've achieved their own righteousness.
 - ii. God gave Ten Commandments for the Israelites to follow. How many people think that if they can follow and obey those commandments, then they will be righteous?
 - iii. Jesus, cut it down to only two commandments: Love God and Love your neighbour. If we obey those, does that make us righteous?
- c. There is nothing that we can do in our own strength that makes us righteous.
- d. Do we believe that we have to obtain a certain level in our lives before God is willing to help us?

B. What Makes Us Righteous?

- a. Grace
- b. What is grace?
 - i. Definition: *unmerited divine assistance given humans for their regeneration or sanctification; a state of sanctification enjoyed through divine grace*

C. Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-32)

- a. Contract Mentality vs. Covenant Mentality

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- i. The son who had stayed at home with his father seemed as though he had a contract set up in his mind; if I serve my father for this long, then I am entitled to this. He says to his father, "I have served you for many years! Your other son took all his money and spent it! So how come he got anything at all?" It was like he was feeling like he had held up his part of the bargain, so why was his father not holding up his end of the bargain? How come he didn't receive anything?
- ii. The contract mentality is very prevalent in society today.
- iii. What does a Contract Mindset look like?
 - A contract is full of conditions.
 - A Contract Mindset says:
 1. If you do this, I will do this.
 2. I feel this is valued at this, so you owe me for this.
 3. Because I did this, you should have done this.
 - This kind of mindset is destructive.
 - Definition: *a binding agreement between two or more persons or parties*
- iv. What does a Covenant Mindset look like?
 - This is what God teaches us.
 - A covenant mindset is unconditional. It doesn't get broken.
 - A Covenant Mindset says:
 1. I will do this for you, even if you don't fulfil your end of the bargain.
 2. I will do this for you no matter what until the day I die.
 - Definition: *a usually formal, solemn, and binding agreement; a written agreement or promise usually under seal between two or more parties especially for the performance of some action*
 - Interesting to note that marriage is actually defined in Webster's Dictionary under the Contract definition. When we start to think like that in any kind of relationship, it's destructive.

D. Abraham was Justified by Faith

- a. Romans 4:1-6
- b. Genesis 15:1-7
- c. God says to Abram, "Do not be afraid. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." Abram asks God what He will give him and tells Him that he has no heir. God shows Abram how He has taken care of him in the past.

E. Faith and Works

- a. How hard do we work to try and obtain faith?
- b. The Word says that faith without works is dead. You have to have both to get it to work. A two-sided coin. (Faith & Works)
- c. How hard do we try to obtain something from God?
- d. It's like that contract; we can say, but I've done this, this, this. What do I have to do to obtain something from God?
- e. Do we believe do we have to get to a certain level before we can receive from Him?

- f. Jesus says, "My yoke is easy, my burden is light."
- F. Value
 - a. What do we put our value in?
 - b. Where do we get our value from?
 - c. We look to God for our increase, not the world. We look to His promises.
- G. Abraham's Great Faith (Genesis 17)
 - a. When God initially told Abram that He would have a child, Abram chuckled and Sarai laughed, yet later on in the bible there are references to Abraham's great faith. So what happened?
 - b. What happened in the Old Testament was now filtered through Jesus. Jesus is in heaven interceding on our behalf so that we can come boldly into the Throne Room to receive the desires of our heart!
 - c. Do we come to Jesus with a guilty conscience thinking about how bad we are? Or do we try and strive so hard so that Jesus will meet us at a certain level?
 - d. He says, "I am right here!" He will meet you where you are at. He is not saying, "Work a little harder and that will prove to me that you have faith."
- H. Jesus Has Already Paid the Price
 - a. Jesus took all of our sin, sickness, poverty and lack and even death 2000 years ago. His victory was our victory. Abram believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.
 - b. Just BELIEVE. No longer try to justify things. As long as we have a contract mentality we try to look for something incomplete on God's side. We say, "I tried hard, worked hard and was a good boy. Where's my reward God? It wasn't my fault!"
 - c. Working hard is great, but when our hard work is directed toward the wrong thing, it still won't work.
 - d. Quote – *"Even a good thing that's not the right thing is still the wrong thing."*
 - e. Jesus said, "It is finished." It's done. He has done everything that He's doing to do. When we walk in God's grace, it empowers us to do what we are called to do.
 - f. Let God be God and know that He only has good plans and abundant plans for us.
 - g. We are not going to do it on our own! We are not going to create our own righteousness! It is not a contract, it is a covenant! Just believe! Allow God's grace to empower you!

Scripture References:

- Luke 15:11-32
- Romans 4:1-6
- Genesis 15:1-7
- Romans 4:13-25
- Genesis 17