

APPLICATION

Rom. 5:17 gives us two applications:

1. “receive” the abundance of His grace and the gift of His righteousness. I can’t encourage you strongly enough if you haven’t already trusted in Jesus’ death on the cross for your salvation to do so today! If you have, tell God ‘thank you’ for His indescribable gift! (II Cor. 9:15)

2. Give grace. Paul describes it as ‘reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ.’ This implies our resurrection and participation in God’s Kingdom work here on earth (cf. Rev. 1:6). God has a role for you to play in His Kingdom...do you know what it is? How will you get involved? What is God calling you to do? Pray about how you might be used to “give grace” in 2012.

We hope you have enjoyed the “Season of Giving” as much as we have. We have seen our church body become engaged in our community in some fantastic ways.

We have heard stories from you about things you are doing for your neighbors. We have heard how many of you are approaching Christmas in a new way because of the time we have spent together in the “Season of Giving”.

Please make sure to share with us the things you have tried: what worked, what didn’t. Your creativity and energy will help our church family continue to improve and be more effective in “giving grace” to our neighbors, our community, and to our world.

SEASON
OF GIVING

giving
GRACE

GIVING GRACE

Romans 5:12-18

In the passage that Scot preached on last week (II Cor. 8-9), the word “grace” is used 10 times! It has various meanings as well: from a financial gift, to God’s generosity, to our modern-day version of ‘Thank you’, they all are communicated by the word “grace”. Today we will look at grace in 2 forms: God’s gift to us for our eternal salvation, and God’s grace flowing through our lives to impact others.

Our understanding of Grace is directly linked to our understanding of our position before God. Until we realize *our totally hopeless standing as sinners* before a Holy God, we will not appreciate God’s incredible gift to us! (Luke 7:36-50)

Not understanding our need for God’s grace will lead us to think we have something to do with our salvation and will water-down Jesus’ sacrifice for us. H. Richard Niebuhr critiqued Old Liberalism as preaching “A God without wrath bringing men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross.”

“Thus, while His death my sin displays
In all its blackest hue,
Such is the mystery of grace,
It seals my pardon too.”
-John Newton, “In Evil Long I Took Delight”

We believe that “salvation is a free gift of God’s grace that comes only through faith in Christ.” (Faith Bible Church Full Doctrinal Statement) But why do we need it? Paul tells us in Romans 5:12-17. We need God’s grace because we have a terminal problem that the Bible calls “sin”.

The Biblical story of Gen. 1-3 is clear about where this leaves us: separated from God, and destined to come before His judgment. But yet, Genesis 3:15 also promises that a Redeemer will come to rescue us from our sin. Fast-forward to John 1-3 and here enters Jesus. In Romans 5, Paul is connecting the dots from Adam in Genesis 1-3 to Jesus. (see also I Cor. 15:21-22; 45-49)

5:12-14 Paul is clear here that all of us are guilty of sin (Rom. 3 also makes this case). The result of our sin is also clearly laid out: death. We will also see judgment and condemnation in v. 16.

5:15- “But...” The beauty of God’s grace is that *it is always stronger* than what is deserved by the sinner. Notice too it is a “free gift”. There is absolutely nothing we can do to earn God’s grace or add to it.

5:16- Notice how different God’s grace is in Jesus when compared to the offense committed by Adam! The offense brings death, judgment, and condemnation. The gift brings justification. “Justification” means that now a sinner is declared righteous.

5:17- It is those who “receive” the gift who are justified (v. 16) and who also ‘will reign in life’ through the One. Once we realize our sinful condition and the results of our sin, the *only* appropriate response for us is to humbly receive God’s gift to us, which is the completed work of Jesus on the cross as our payment for our sin. (II Cor. 5:21; I Peter 1:18-20, 2:24; Rom. 5:8; I Cor. 15:3)

John 1:12 gives us insight into what “receive” means, as he expands to say, “those who believe in His name.”

5:18- Paul comes back to his argument from 5:12, contrasting the two acts: Adam vs. Jesus; death vs. life! 5:19-21 complete his thought.