

Devotional Thoughts :: The Ongoing Grace of God by Bob Hoekstra

The Ongoing Grace of God by Bob Hoekstra - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/1/27 13:40

"I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts"Â...it is good that the heart be established by grace. (Jeremiah 31:33 and Hebrews 13:9)

Our initial encounter with the grace of God involved forgiveness and justification. "In Him we have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7). Rich measures of God's grace washed away our sins and gave us new life in Christ. Of course, that initial justifying work of God could not exhaust His grace. Rather, it was "according to the riches of His grace." There are unlimited riches yet available for our daily sanctification, our ongoing growth in Christ.

Hebrews 13:9 is one of the many places in Scripture that indicate progressive sanctification (that is, growth in godliness) is by grace. "It is good that the heart be established by grace." This truth clearly pertains to sanctification and growth, not justification and new birth. At regeneration, we are given a new heart. "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26). Then, after receiving a new, soft, responsive heart, the spiritual stabilization of that new heart must follow.

It is from within the heart that the development of applied righteousness must proceed. What is eventually seen and heard in our daily Christian lives sources from within the core of our inner being. "Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). The Lord wants to work from deep within us. "I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts."

If an unstable, inconsistent life is being expressed outwardly, an unestablished heart within is the cause. Jesus taught that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12:34). Whatever is developing and filling up our inner man will eventually come out to be seen and heard.

In order to develop in us an increasingly mature, Christlike walk, our heart must be established. The law of God is not designed to change men's hearts. God's grace is the essential and sufficient cause to bring about this desired work of godliness. "It is good that the heart be established by grace."

Once more we have powerful biblical insight showing us that grace is not only God's provision to forgive and birth us into His family, but grace is also His resource for the ongoing work of maturing us as His children.

O Lord, my strength, would You do a powerful work of Your grace deep within my heart? I do not want to displease You or dishonor You by an immature and unstable life. Lord, forgive any futile attempts to change my heart by striving before the law. Your gracious work in me is my only hope!

Re: The Ongoing Grace of God by Bob Hoekstra - posted by Joyful_Heart, on: 2011/1/27 13:44

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