

THE GRACE OF GOD IS NOT A PERMIT TO SIN

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Paul warned, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life” (Gal. 6:7-8). He also cautioned about the sinful lifestyle of non-believers, “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:19-21).

With such plain admonitions, not only to those in Galatia, but also to us, why do so many people ignore God? A vast majority of the world, and many in the Lord’s church, walk through life as if everything they do is endorsed by God. Because He chose to extend His favor to all of mankind, most live as if they can never fall from the grace of God, no matter what they do! He also told those in Galatia, “You have become estranged from Christ, you who *attempt to* be justified by law; you have fallen from grace” (Gal. 5:4).

So that his readers would be very clear on the matter, Paul gave some very important answers to some very timely questions. To the Romans, he asked, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:1-4).

God’s grace gives each one that accepts it a freedom that cannot be enjoyed outside of Christ, but it is not a freedom to participate in the sins of the world. It is the freedom from the bondage of sin that otherwise would destroy each of us (Mt. 11:28). Peter warned against the same thing when he warned, “For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God” (1 Pet. 2:16). Many Christians have left the faith because of the world’s beckon. Peter put it this way, “For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A DOG RETURNS TO HIS OWN VOMIT,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire” (2 Pet. 2:20-22).

Too many things that God has blessed us with have been abused by this world, and His grace is one of them. Grace alone has never saved any person that has ever lived. It was said of Noah that he “found grace in the eyes of the LORD” (Gen. 6:8), but it is also written that he “did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did” (Gen. 6:22). It is of eternal consequence that each of us understands that God’s grace must be combined with a working faith if we are going to gain the salvation that has been promised to each of us who endures to the end (Mt. 10:22).

The fact that God has chosen to extend to us the opportunity to be saved, which is grace, does not mean that we have a license to sin. If we decide to sin because we feel we can repent and be forgiven later, then God's grace will not cover us while we are living in sin. God's grace will save us, but only through our obedient faith (Eph. 2:8-9).