

The Struggle of Preaching Grace

There are people in this world who oppose the message of the grace of God. When we meet people who oppose God's grace, we can become discouraged.

God's Word, however, encourages us not to give up, but rather, to rise up.

**WHEN SHARING THE GRACE OF GOD,
EXPECT OPPOSITION, REMEMBER GOD'S
OPINION, AND KEEP PRESSING ON.**

That sentence has four parts to it, and it will become the outline of our study this morning.

**Part #1 - WHEN SHARING THE GRACE OF GOD.
13:2-6a**

Grace = unmerited favor.

Romans 11:6 - ⁶ But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

In Acts 13, the message was the grace of God.

2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. 4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. 5 When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them. 6 When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos,

Acts 13:37-39 - but he whom God raised up did not see corruption. 38 Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, 39 and by him everyone who everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.

Acts 13:48 - and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed.

Acts 14:3 - they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace,

Acts 14:7 - ⁷ and there they continued to preach the gospel.

What is the gospel? It's the good news message of the grace of God - that whoever believes in Jesus is forgiven of all sins, and is given by God the free gift of eternal life.

That is exactly the message that was proclaimed by Paul and Barnabas throughout the ancient world. It is the very message of grace that brings opposition.

Part #2 - WHEN SHARING THE GRACE OF GOD, EXPECT OPPOSITION. 13:6-8

⁶ When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus. ⁷ He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. ⁸ But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

From the religious world to the non-religious world, there are all kinds of people today who are actively trying to stand against the message of the grace of God. The exact thing that happened then still happens today.

Part #3 - WHEN SHARING GOD'S GRACE, EXPECT OPPOSITION, REMEMBER GOD'S OPINION. 13:9-11

⁹ But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him ¹⁰ and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? ¹¹ And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time." Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand.

God describes those who oppose His grace with 7 character traits.

1. Promoters of Falsehood. John 18:7
2. Satanic. John 8:41, 44
3. Enemies of Righteousness. Romans 1:16-17; 4:5
4. Deceitful. 2 Timothy 3:13

5. Villains/Frauds.
6. Crooked. Colossians 2:8
7. Blind. Matthew 15:14

Part #4 - WHEN SHARING THE GRACE OF GOD, EXPECT OPPOSITION, REMEMBER GOD'S OPINION, AND KEEP PRESSING ON. 13:12

12 Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

Why should we keep at it? Because God is still in the business of saving people.

