



Grace Defined

- Unmerited favor of God – typically thought of in terms of common grace and special grace
 - Common grace – God’s benevolent concern for his creation and humanity in general
 - Special grace – the saving grace found in Jesus Christ

Old Testament Grace

- The Lord proclaims to Moses that he has chosen to be merciful and gracious
- The Israelites were regularly reminded of their need for God’s grace in the priestly blessing of Numbers 6:24-26
- The Psalms are full of expressions of God’s graciousness and calls for him to be gracious
- In the Prophets we see God’s grace in their calling the people to repentance, but God’s grace really shines forth in the Prophets when the prophets proclaim that God will do what the people cannot do

New Testament Grace

- The New Testament gives us the fullest manifestation of God’s grace, the Lord Jesus Christ
- Because of Jesus, the throne of our majestic, awesome, powerful God is a throne of grace
- In Romans 5:2 Paul tells us we have access to grace through Christ
- We are chosen, predestined, and adopted in Christ to the praise of his glorious grace (Ephesians 1:3-6)
- We have redemption and forgiveness according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us (Ephesians 1:7-8)
- The elect are elected unto salvation because of grace
- The inability of man to come to Christ or do anything pleasing to God is clearly taught by Jesus and Paul
- Regeneration is a gracious work of God by the Holy Spirit
- Regeneration is presented as being raised with Christ
- Our Christian life and sanctification both personally and corporately is all of grace



- The New Testament, even the whole Bible, presents salvation from election to glorification as God's work

The Grace Controversy

- The Roman Catholic Church emphasized the need for grace, but grace could not be received apart from the sacraments of the church
- Infused grace – a quality of the soul
- What we do and how we live as a Christian is not in addition to God's grace but because of God's grace

Martin Luther

- *Pactum* – a pact, between God and man
- 1515-1516 – Luther lectured through Romans
- The *pactum's* condition for receiving grace is fulfilled when the person realizes they are dead in sin and can do nothing to merit God's grace

Augustine

- Augustine realized from Scripture that his conversion was the work of God
- Conflict with Pelagius – a conflict over the necessity of grace and grace alone
- Controversy caused Augustine to sharpen his thinking regarding original sin
- Same conflict exists today
- Pelagianism – Grace is not necessary. We have the ability in ourselves to live righteously
- Semi-Pelagianism – Grace is helpful. We take the first step towards God from our free will and then he adds his grace to help us along
- Semi-Augustinianism – Grace is necessary but not sufficient. God initiates our salvation by his through prevenient grace – a grace given to all men. Prevenient grace is the grace of God given to individuals that releases them from their bondage to sin and enables them to come to Christ in faith but does not guarantee that the sinner will actually do so



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- Augustinianism – Grace is necessary and sufficient. God grants grace to his elect that results in salvation, sanctification, and glorification

The Means of Grace

Preaching

- The emphasis on preaching goes back to Sola Scriptura
- Preaching of the Word is the principle means of grace

Sacraments

- Agreement regarding the importance of the sacraments
- To understand the sacraments as a means of grace, we must see the sacraments as something God does for us