

"The Grace of God"

Text: **1 Corinthians 15:10**, ""But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

Introduction:

-What I want us to notice is the Apostle Paul's use of the word "grace" three times in this verse.

-Grace has been defined as God's unmerited favor

- God's
- Riches
- At
- Christ's
- Expense

-Grace is something that God gives us that none of us deserves

-Mercy is God not giving us something that we deserve.

-Paul in this verse attributes God's grace to three things, which we want to examine.

I. POSITION

-v. 10 - "But by the grace of God I am what I am:..."

-What was Paul?

-What was Paul's position because of God's grace?

- **1 Corinthians 15:8** - "...one born out of due time"
-Paul realized that he was a sinner saved by God's grace.
-Paul said in Ephesians 2:8-9 - "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."
- **Paul was an Apostle of Jesus Christ.**
-**Romans 1:1** - tells us that Paul was "...a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God."
- **1 Corinthians 11:1**, tells us that Paul was a follower of Christ.
"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

- **Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles**

-**Romans 11:13** - "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles,....."

-What was Paul's position before he was saved by the grace God?

- **Notice Paul's testimony before Agrippa, Acts 26:9-12** - "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,"

- **Paul's testimony before Timothy, 1 Timothy 1:12-13**, "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."

- **Paul knew what he was talking about when he declared in 2 Corinthians 5:17**,

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

- Paul often reminded fellow believers when they acted prideful of their position before being saved by God's grace.

- **For example Paul reminded the Corinthian believers in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11**,

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. **And such were some of you**: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. "

-So, first in 1 Corinthians 15:10, we see Paul attributes his position to the grace of God.

II. POSSESSION

-Paul talks about his possession, God's grace.

-**1 Corinthians 15:10**, "...his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain..."

-Paul tells us not only by God's grace is he saved, an apostle of Christ, but also this same grace has been given to him or bestowed upon him.

-Paul tells us that God's grace was not wasted on him ("was not in vain").

-Paul used God's grace in a mighty way.

-We know the following about the Apostle Paul.

- He wrote most of the books of the New Testament
- Paul went on three missionary journeys
 - *As result of these missionary journeys
 - Many people were saved by the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God.
 - Many local churches were established.
 - Many men were trained for the ministry.

-So, number 2, we see in 1 Corinthians 15:10, Paul attributes his possession to God's grace.

III. POWER

-**1 Corinthians 15:10**, "...but I laborured more abundantly then they all: yet not I but the **grace of God** which was with me."

-What Paul is telling us is that the power to do all that he did came from the grace of God.

-For Example His Power To Preach

- **1 Corinthians 2:1-5**, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching [was] not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God"

- **2 Timothy 1:7-9, Paul reminds Timothy of this fact**, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,"
- **1 Thessalonians 1:5, Paul tells us how he was to accomplish so much with the gospel**, "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, **but also in power**, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake."
- **2 Timothy 4:16-18, Paul reminds us of the power of God's grace working through him**, "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom [be] glory for ever and ever. Amen."

-V.16 - It took the power of God's grace for Paul to forgive those who so wronged him.

-V.17 - It took the power of God's grace to deliver Paul from the mouth of the lion or Satan.

-V. 18 - It is the power of God's grace to deliver Paul from every evil work and preserve Paul unto the heavenly kingdom.

Conclusion

-1 Corinthians 15:10 - "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

-Paul realized that his Position, his Possession, and his Power were all attributed to God's grace.

-I pray that God will help us realize the same today, that without God's grace we are in relation to God - **Position-less, Possession-less, and Power-less.**