

“True Stability”

By Mrs. Sojourner



Listening to many a conversation in today’s American society, one can hear that opinions seem to be held almost sacred. Many people have been taught to question not just the concept of truth, but also the relevance of it. Some people even seem to think they can make their own truth based on their opinion or the opinions of people they admire.

A challenge with a society or life based on opinion is that there are no absolutes—nothing concrete on which to base decisions. It would be like anchoring a post in a bucket of concrete instead of digging a hole, putting the post in, and pouring the concrete around it.

Yes the bucket of concrete is heavy and would keep the post stable, but gradually wind, rain, storms, and the possible person or wheelbarrow bumping into it, would move the bucket thereby not keeping the post in the exact location you put it. The concrete in the hole keeps the post straight in one place.

Our Heavenly Father has

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[a]

given us truth to base our decisions upon—the Bible. Jesus, as he prayed for us, in John 17, confirmed to us that God’s Word is truth: 15My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth... John 17:17 (NIV)

Basing our heart attitudes and decisions on the truth in the scriptures assures that God will be pleased with us and that our lives will not “float in the wind” with every change in societal doctrine. Please understand that basing one’s life on the scriptural way of doing things may not always be popular with those around you, but over the course of time those people will see that you have the stability and peace that only comes from God.

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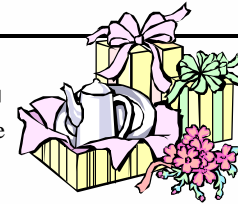
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...with The Sojourner

“Grace And Gifts”

(Teaching Sketch)

Ephesians & 2 Timothy



When God blesses mankind it is an act of grace.^[1] Grace, when applied to the Believer, reaches far beyond the common grace experienced by all people.

The common grace we would readily identify as life and the environment in which all live out their “natural” lives. All and any grace is a gift, an unearned gift.

Receiving Gifts

Many times when the Apostle Paul greeted Believers in his letters, and probably in person, he would speak, “Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Paul was not only speaking a blessing to and over them but was reiterating what is actually made clear in Ephesians 2 when Paul says what has been translated “in the ages to come.” The Greek word used there is *aion*^(G165) This word speaks of a space or period of time, in this case until the end of time, i.e. perpetuity. Remember, in the last session it was pointed out, time is in itself a gift of and form of grace. It is revealed in scripture that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The gift of grace, then, to

Notes:
[1] *charis* khar'-eece ; graciousness (as gratifying), of manner or act; especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; including gratitude):—acceptable, benefit, favour, gift, grace (-ious), joy liberality, pleasure, thank (-s, -worthy). **G#’s are Strong’s**

the Believer, is perpetual. Now, the word used for gift is *doron*,^(G1435) which describes a present but more specifically a sacrifice or offering in the giving of the present. This makes it very clear the gift of grace, (God desires for us to accept) is a sacrificial gift, that gift being his only begotten Son. The gift then brings about the return of mankind to the original relation design and relationship with the Maker. A gift does not come through our own striving but through the desire of the giver to bless and benefit the person to whom the gift is given. If that which comes, comes via the efforts or work of the receiver it is no longer a gift but a wage earned. If the benefit is earned then the earner would be free to brag about the success of effort expended for the benefit received.

When a person enjoys a gift bestowed, the ability to employ the gift remains with the receiver but the power of the gift is still derived from the giver. Let’s say a car was given to a person, that person would be able to drive the car but only because of the sacrificial gift of

Please note: This is a teaching sketch only and not the complete teaching.

Scripture:

Passages From Ephesians & 2 Timothy

Ephesians 2:7-9 (AMP)

⁷He did this that He might clearly demonstrate through the ages to come the immeasurable (limitless, surpassing) riches of His free grace (His unmerited favor) in [His] kindness and goodness of heart toward us in Christ Jesus.

⁸For it is by free grace (God's unmerited favor) that you are saved (delivered from judgment and made partakers of Christ's salvation) through [your] faith. And this [salvation] is not of yourselves [of your own doing, it came not through your own striving], but it is the gift of God;

⁹Not because of works [not the fulfillment of the Law's demands], lest any man should boast. [It is not the result of what anyone can possibly do, so no one can pride himself in it or take glory to himself.]

Ephesians 3:7 (AMP)

⁷Of this [Gospel] I was made a minister according to the gift of God's free grace (undeserved favor) which was bestowed on me by the exercise (the working in all its effectiveness) of His power.

Ephesians 3:13-14 (AMP)

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¹³And also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor—it is the gift of God.

¹⁴I know that whatever God does, it endures forever; nothing can be added to it nor anything taken from it. And God does it so that men will [reverently] fear Him [revere and worship Him, knowing that He is].

Ephesians 4:7 (AMP)

⁷Yet grace (God's unmerited favor) was given to each of us individually [not indiscriminately, but in different ways] in proportion to the measure of Christ's [rich and bounteous] gift.

2 Timothy 1:6-7 (AMP)

⁶That is why I would remind you to stir up (rekindle the embers of, fan the flame of, and keep burning) the [gracious] gift of God, [the inner fire] that is in you by means of the laying on of my hands with those of the elders at your ordination].

⁷For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control.

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the giver.

Giving Gifts

The giving of gifts to God by the Believer is done not to receive eternal life, salvation, or anything else but as a thank offering to God for the matchless gift of grace, not to earn what has already been given.

Giving to God and obeying him is a thank offering for all he has given the Believer!

Stir Up The Gifts!

The Apostle Paul makes it clear to Timothy it is his responsibility to stir up—rekindle the embers of the gifts he has been given by God. People often simply wait for God to move on them to “feel the power or unction” to use their gifts. No! The gifts are theirs. Gifts are there to be used. It is the responsibility of the Believer to keep the gifts stirred into flames themselves. Back to the gift of the car. What would it be like if the person who received the car as a gift expected the giver of the car to drive the car for them? Well God expects people to use the gifts he has given. Yes, God wants to provide for his people the fuel, maintenance, insurance, safety, and guidance but he expects us to take part and drive within his provision. God did not give us timidity, cowardice, or fear. The gifts are to be used!

Just so you'll know:

Our service is informal. We look to the Holy Spirit of God to guide us corporately and individually.

Our service usually follows this general pattern:

- **Informal sharing** of what we have seen the Lord do in, through, and around us since we last met.
 - Testimonies are often a part of the conversation.
- **Opening Prayer**
- **Praise & Worship**
- **Words of Prophecy or Knowledge** if they have been given during “Praise & Worship” (other times as the Spirit moves).
- **The Pastoral Message**
- **Prayer Requests**
 - Ministry to those present & intercession.
- **The Blessing**

