LIFE CHANGING STORIES FROM THE BIBLE

"GROW IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE"

We are saved by grace, that is, God's undeserved and unmerited favour. Now we are to grow in grace.

The Apostle Peter writing to those who had accepted Christ as saviour, said, "Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2Peter3:18.

They had been saved by grace and knowledge. First they had to receive knowledge before they could receive grace. They had to receive the knowledge of the Gospel or "Good News" which tells us of our need of grace and tells us how to receive it.

So what is this knowledge? 1) They need to know they are without excuse if they don't believe in God, because God made it plain to them by the things he has made or created. 2) They need to know that they are sinners because they have left God out of their lives and gone their own way of self pleasing, consequently they have broken God's law and face his judgment. 3) They need to know that despite all this, God still loves them and gave his son Jesus to die for them. Jesus took the punishment for all their disobedience and for everyone else in the world, including you and me.

4) They needed to know God accepted what Jesus had done and raised him from the dead. He then went back to heaven and is alive today to help us. 5) They need to know that because of what Jesus has done for us God can now offer us the free gift of Salvation through his grace. This Salvation consists of, Forgiveness of sins, Everlasting Life, the Holy Spirit living in our hearts, a future resurrection body and much more.

6) The free gift of Salvation is offered to us and it only becomes ours if we accept it. You can explain all this to someone but they still will not understand it. This knowledge only comes to someone as the Holy Spirit causes them to see it. Many years ago a Christian worker was counselling a boy who had waited behind after a gospel message had been preached. The boy was in tears because he felt he had committed many sins so the worker showed him from the bible that Christ had died for his sins. But the boy kept saying over and over, "But I cannot see it, I cannot see it." So the worker said, "Go home and pray about it, then come again tomorrow and I will talk with you." The next day the boy came back and he looked so different. "You look very happy now", said the worker. "Well sir, I went home and prayed and said, 'Lord please show me,' then suddenly I saw it." "What did you see?" "I saw that Christ died for me." "But I told you that at least 12 times." "Yes but I did not see it."

The worker did right to share the message but it was only when the Holy Spirit shone light on it, did the boy see it and understand it.

Once we see it then we must either accept it, God's gift of salvation, or reject it. You can't take a gift from someone who is offering it with your back towards them. So it is with God, you have to turn from your old life to face him and accept his free gift. Can you see how much we need to depend on the Holy Spirit to illuminate the gospel we share with others. The Holy Spirit works in answer to prayer. So we need to do much praying for the Holy Spirit to work in all our seeking to reach others for God.

Once we have been saved by grace we are called upon to grow in grace and knowledge. We have found favour with God by receiving his gift of Salvation now we need to grow in that favour. There is so much more knowledge we need to learn about God. Remember the knowledge must be what he illumines to our heart and mind.

In Colossians 2:6. We read, "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him." I see two ways of looking at this verse. 1) Because you have received Christ Jesus as Lord so you ought to continue to follow him. 2) Just as you received the Lord, by grace through faith, the gift of God, so in the same way you continue to live in him.

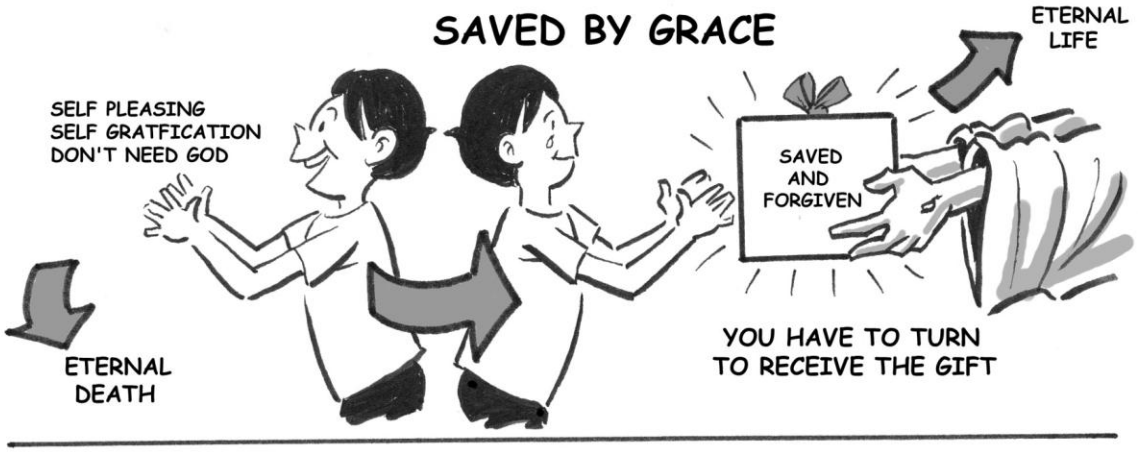
In other words, just as we could not save ourselves for salvation, so we cannot save ourselves for daily living the Christian life. We continually need God's gift of grace to get victory over sin and failure as Christians. To grow in grace means to grow more and more like God, more like Jesus and more like the Holy Spirit. The problem is that we are very good at growing in knowledge but not so good at growing in grace. This results in us being deformed Christians. We should be aiming at a proper balance between grace and knowledge.

This lecture is more an introduction to the subject of growing in grace and knowledge. Next lecture I hope to develop it further. My main point in this lecture is that you have to be sure you are "In Grace" before you can grow in grace. It is the difference between a plant trying to grow in a barren desert, then withering and dying in the hot sun, without any water to give it life, and a plant, planted in rich fertile, well watered soil where it grows up and bears fruit.

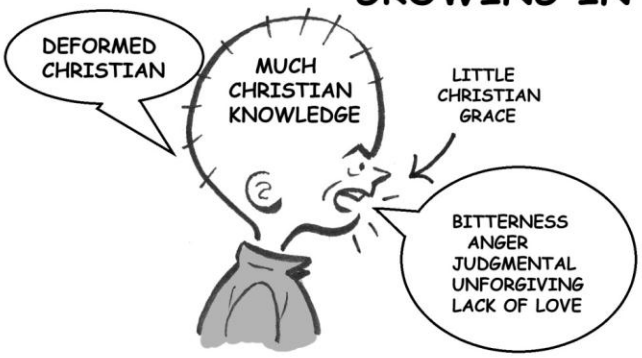
For us the rich fertile soil is the grace or the undeserved favour of God. The water is the Holy Spirit that gives us life and the ability to grow. Our aim is to grow and bear the fruit God intended us to bare. That Fruit is the fruit of the Spirit that we read about in Galatians 5:22,23. "Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control." Then there is the fruit of usefulness to God where he can use us to reach out and touch other lives for him.

Next Lecture we will share more on this.

SAVED BY GRACE



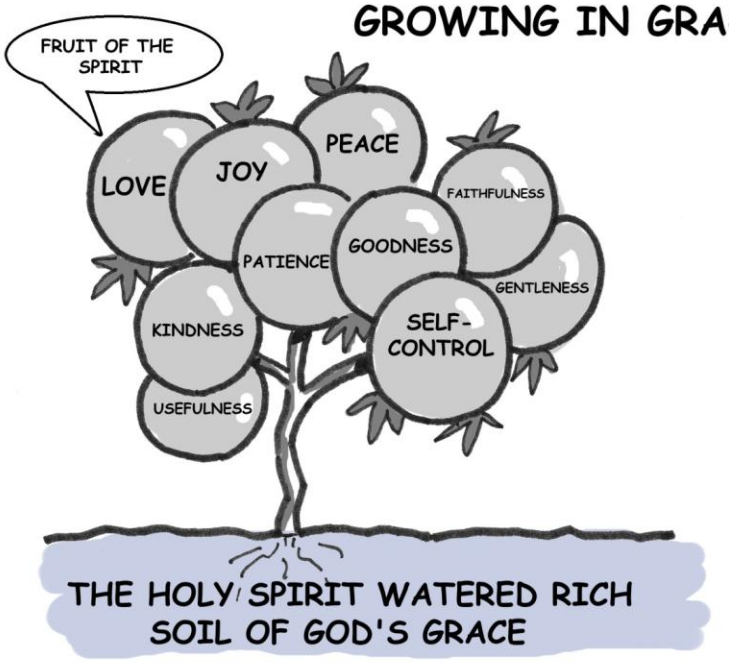
GROWING IN KNOWLEDGE



OUR PROBLEM IS THAT WE GROW IN KNOWLEDGE QUICKER THAN WE GROW IN GRACE

TO GROW IN GRACE IS TO LET CHRIST HAVE FIRST PLACE IN YOUR HEART

GROWING IN GRACE



WE ARE LIKE A PLANT, PLANTED IN THE RICH SOIL OF GOD'S GRACE.

IF OUR MAIN DESIRE IS TO LIVE TO PLEASE JESUS, THEN WE WILL GROW AND START PRODUCING THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

FRANK HUTCHINSON