

The Good News

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: 1 Peter 5:10-11

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The title of my message today is “The Good News. The Good News.” And my text will be taken from the book of 1 Peter chapter five verse 10 and 11, the Good News.

Now the apostle Peter closes his first general epistle—and the reason it is called a general epistle is because it is addressed to all believers, not just to a certain church like the church at Ephesus or Galatia or Corinth, but this general epistle, 1 Peter, is addressed to all believers.

And he begins this first chapter with some good counsel, this fifth chapter with some good counsel. He tells us in verse six, “Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God and he will exalt you in good time.” This is to all believers. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God for God resisteth the proud and he gives grace to the humble.

My friends, pride and faith are incompatible. Pride and grace cannot exist together in the same heart.

The wise man Solomon writing in Proverbs chapter six says this. There are six things that the Lord God hates. And do you know what the first thing is? It is a proud look. Six things doth the Lord God hate, a proud look and the rest of them, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, an evil heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that are swift to run to mischief, a false witness and he that soweth discord among the brethren.

But the chief thing the Lord God doth hate is a proud look, a proud heart.

Humble yourselves—that’s good counsel—under the mighty hand of God and he will exalt you in due time.

Well, let me ask you this. What do we have to be proud of? Whatever we have God gave us. The Scripture says, “Who maketh thee to differ? What do you have you didn’t receive? A man can receive nothing except it be given him from above.”

So, really, we have nothing of which to be proud. If we are going to glory in anything, let us glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And then verse seven. Peter says, “Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you.”

All your care. That's all of it. All fretting and fears and all cares and concerns and all family matters and future decisions, all worry and anxiety, just cast it on him.

And here is the reason: because he cares for you. And that care is a two fold meaning. He cares for you. That means he loves you. When we say we care for somebody that is we love them. But also it means this. He takes care of you. Cast all your cares, frets and fears and worries and anxiety, cast them on him. He cares for you. He loves you and he also provides for you.

Paul wrote in Philippians four, "My God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory through Christ Jesus."

As a little child trusts and depends upon a loving parent, let us trust our Father and depend upon him. Humble yourselves. Cast all your care upon him.

And then in verse eight. Be sober. Be serious.

My friends, life and death and eternity is not a game. I never understood why many believers feel like they have to be funny all the time. They have to say something silly or something funny or something foolish to entertain people.

Peter tells us here to be serious. Be serious. Be dedicated to one thing knowing God. In fact, Paul summed it up with three desires. He was serious about this and so dedicated and so separated to the gospel. He said, "I have a three fold desire. One is to win Christ and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faithfulness of Christ. I want to win Christ and be found in him."

And his second desire is this. "I want to know him." Paul knew the Lord. He wanted to know him better. He wanted to know his...the power of his resurrected life. I want to know Christ and the power of his life, the power of his Spirit, walking with him like Enoch of old.

And the third thing he says, "I want to attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

Humble yourself. Cast your care upon him. And let's get serious about this matter of our relationship with God.

And then he said, "Be vigilant, vigilant."

What does the word "vigilant" mean? It means watchful. Be alert. Be dedicated. We have enemies. That's right we have enemies. He says in that next verse, "The devil as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour."

And Paul said in Ephesians, "Our enemies are not just flesh and blood. Our enemies are principalities and powers and rulers of the darkness and spiritual wickedness in high places."

Believers have enemies. We have trials. We have troubles. We have tribulations. We have afflictions that are common to all believers. They are common to and experienced by all of God's people. So humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. In due time he will exalt you. And just care your care upon him. And be sober and serious and dedicated and vigilant and watchful, watchful.

And then here is the good news in verse 10. Here is where I want to camp for a little while. This is what I have been coming to in this introduction. I want to camp here for a little while and think about these next two verses. "But the God of all grace, the God of all grace who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ after you have suffered a while, a while, make you perfect and establish you and strengthen you and settle you. To him be the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Let's look at those verses. The God of all grace. Who is our God? He is the God of all grace. Our God is holy. That is his chief attribute. If you were to ask me to give one word to define God or to sum up the attributes of God I would say, "Holy. God is holy. Holy and reverent is his name."

And then, secondly, our God is just. The Scripture says, "Just and righteous are his precepts and verity and truth is the scepter of his kingdom." Our God is holy. Our God is just and righteous and our God is truth. He cannot lie. God is not a man that he should lie.

But he is also the God of grace, the God of all grace. It is like God is gracious. God is love. There is no love except in God. He is love. God is love. And God is grace. And he is the God of all grace, all grace, all grace shown, all grace experienced, all grace given, all grace in this life, all grace in eternal glory. God is the God of all grace.

I know his throne is a throne of majesty. Talked about the seraphims, about the throne of God. And they covered their faces and covered their feet and with the other wings they did fly and cried, "Holy, holy, holy."

God's throne is a throne of majesty and his is a throne of justice. Shall not the judge of the earth do right? He always will. It is right because he does it. But he calls his throne, thank God, a throne of grace, a throne of grace.

It says in Hebrews four. "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find help in time of need."

Our God is a God of all grace, grace.

When God's wrath was unleashed against this world in the days of Noah the Scripture says, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." That's the first time the word "grace" appears in the Bible. And when God's wrath and anger was against the whole world and the evil of men's hearts dominated and controlled and God said, "I will destroy the world...But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."

And when Moses asked the Lord to show...he said, "Show me." Moses said, "Lord, show me your glory. Show me your chief glory. That's what I want to see. I want to see your greatest glory."

Now Moses had seen miracle after miracle and judgment after judgment and power and the diving of the sea and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and all these things. They had seen these things. But he said, "I want to see your glory, your glory."

And God spoke to him. And God said, "Moses..." The Lord replied in answer to this question, "Show me your glory." He said, "Moses, I will make my goodness pass before you. That's my glory, my goodness." And will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee and I will be gracious. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy." That's his name. That's his name. "I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious." The God of all grace.

Well, what is grace? What is grace? We talk a lot about grace, but what is it? Well, the standard definition of grace is unmerited favor. And that is a good one. It is God giving us freely what we don't deserve. That's grace.

Romans three says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But we are justified freely, freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Ephesians two says, "For by grace, God's grace, are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast."

So grace is God forgiving the unfaithful, no strings attached. Grace is God receiving the wayward son, the prodigal, no strings attached. Grace is God forgetting the offense, no strings attached. Grace is God canceling the debt. It is paid. It is paid. No strings attached. Grace is God forgiving all our sins, putting them away, separating them from us as far as the east is from the west, no strings attached.

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Our Lord said when they had nothing to pay he frankly and freely forgave them both. The God of all grace, that is what grace is.

Now let me ask you three questions. I want you to think for a moment, now. I want you to think. Now this...I have laid this truth down. Salvation is the gift of God. No question about that. Eternal life is the gift of God. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Free gift. He freely, frankly forgave them both.

Secondly, salvation is based wholly, completely on the merits of our Savior. It is unmerited favor. We don't merit it. We don't earn it. We don't deserve it. It is free. Salvation is by grace. Free.

Thirdly, salvation is all of grace, not of works. There is no works included or involved it is all of grace.

Now that being so here is my three questions. Number one, question number one, If salvation is the gift of God and salvation is all of grace, not of works, is there anybody listening to my voice who is ineligible for salvation? Is there anybody? If it is a free gift, if it is all of grace, is anybody ineligible?

I'll tell you who is. Only those who are unwilling to receive it as a gift. Only those who are unwilling to be saved by grace. That is what Christ said to the Pharisees, these religious men. He said, "You search the Scriptures. You search the Scriptures. In them you think you have life. But they are they which testify of me. And you will not come to me that you might have life." That is what stands between many people and Christ. They will not come to him. They will not receive it as a gift, receive it by grace. They want to contribute something to it.

So I am telling you. If salvation is a gift, all of grace, there is nobody, nobody ineligible except those who are unwilling to receive it as a gift.

Second question. If salvation is a gift and all of grace, is any person out there listening to my voice, any person, too great a sinner to be saved? I have heard folks say, "Well, salvation is not for me. You don't know how wicked I have been. You don't know what I have done. You don't know what a terrible person I am and what a terrible road I have walked and I have mistreated people..."

Listen, my friend. Saul of Tarsus killed Christians. He murdered the people of God. There is nobody who ever lived with a more wicked heart than Saul of Tarsus. The woman at the well was married five times. How many times have you been married? She was married five times and was living with a man who wasn't her husband?

You see, I could go on and on and on through the Scripture, but let me tell you this. If salvation is all of grace, there is nobody too great a sinner to be saved. In fact, the greater the sinner, the greater the glory to God's grace and God's goodness. Is anything too hard for God? Scripture says he is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him. I don't care who you are or what you have done or how you have lived. My God and his grace is sufficient to redeem you. That's right. And let not conscience, let not your conscience make you linger, nor of fitness fondly dream. Don't just fondly dream of being fit to come to Christ. There is nobody fit to come to him. He came to save sinners, not righteous folks. He came to seek and to save the lost. All the fitness he requires is for you to feel your need of him.

It is by grace. It is a gift. And you will receive it that way or you won't receive it at all.

And the third question is this. If salvation is a gift and all of grace—listen now—if it is a gift, if it is all of grace, can any future failure on my part or any future fall on my part rob

me of that which God has already given me, the gift of life? He gave me life. Is he going to take it back?

He gave me his grace. Is he going to take it back? If God's grace depends in any way upon anything that I do in the past, present or future it is not grace. It is not a gift. If it depends upon anything that I do or don't do then it is not grace.

I tell you all of the people of God they delight in God's law. And his commandments are not grievous. The only thing they grieve about is when they break one of his laws or when they sin or when they fail to do his will. But not one of us, not one of us are without sin.

We don't live a day without sin. We have sin. We have failures. We have flesh. Our prayers, every day, always include what our Lord taught us to pray. "And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." You will never close a prayer in honesty without saying, "Lord, forgive me of my sins." That's right.

So I am telling you this. If it is by grace, if it is a gift of God, salvation, then there is nobody ineligible except that person who won't receive it as a gift.

And there is no one too wicked. Our Lord is able to save the most wicked people in this world if they believe him, if they believe him. And if he saves you, he gives you the gift of life you are alive, you live, you are in...you are God's son. You are his child.

The God of all grace, what hath he done? He has called us. Do you see that word? He hath called us unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ our Lord.

The apostle Paul talked about this calling and Peter talked about it at Pentecost. At Pentecost Peter said this in Acts 2:39. He said, "The promise is to you and your children and to all that are afar off. Even as many as the Lord our God shall call." The God of all grace has called us unto his eternal glory. God's choosing and God's calling are inseparable. They always go together.

You read 1 Corinthians chapter one verse 26 which says, "You see your calling brethren, not many mighty, not many noble, not many wise are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, the things that are not, the things that are base to bring to naught the things that are. God is calling and God's choosing go together, always together."

"When it pleased God," Paul said. This is what Paul said, "When it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb..." God separated me from my mother's womb. He chose me. He elected me. He chose me to salvation. And he called me by his grace. And he revealed his Son in me. He chose me. He called me. And he revealed his Son to me.

And Peter said in 2 Peter one verse 10, "Wherefore the rather brethren make your calling and election sure. They go together." Whom the Lord foreknew he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. Whom he predestinated, he called and whom he called, he glorified. That's right. They go together. They go together.

And here in 2 Thessalonians two, listen to the apostle Paul. "I am bound to give thanks always to God for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth whereunto he called you by our gospel. He called you. I thank God for you. God chose you to salvation from the beginning and he called you by our gospel."

And 2 Timothy one says, "God has saved us and God has called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which is give to us in Christ before the world began."

God calls men. He calls them by the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit and belief of the truth. They will hear a preacher. They will hear the gospel. He said, "In whom you trusted after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation."

Now Moses was out there on the hillside and that bush, that burning bush, that got his attention, attracted Moses, but God called him. God is the one that called him.

Philip was sent to the eunuch and the eunuch sat and listened to Philip preach the gospel. But it was God who called him.

Paul preached to Lydia, but who opened her heart? God opened her heart. Oh, my friends, the God of all grace hath called us, called us to what? To eternal glory.

Whom he called he justified, whom he justified he glorified. Now listen to me. As I wind this message down. What is this glory? Who is this God? He is a God of all grace. What is this grace? It is the free gift of God. It is the free gift of God. It is unmerited favor.

Now he has called us to eternal glory. Now I am going to show you what this glory is. Number one... I am going to show you from the prayer of our Lord in John 17. These are the words of Christ speaking to his Father in John 17. He says, "Father, the glory which you gave me, I have given them that they may be one as we are one, even in us. It is the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

God almighty has called us to what kind of glory? The very glory of Jesus Christ. The glory that is his is ours.

Secondly, verse 23. Listen. "I in them and thou in me that they may be made perfect in one."

This eternal glory is not only the glory of Christ, but it is perfection. We are going to be perfect in mind, in soul, in body. Perfect. That they may be perfect in one.

“I will be satisfied,” David said, “When I wake with his likeness.”

And then, thirdly, he says, “Fahter,” this is verse 23. “Father, you have loved them as you love me. You have loved them as you love me.” What is this glory that he has called us unto? It is the very glory of Christ. It is the very Sonship of Christ. We are sons of God. We are heirs of with Christ. We are joint heirs with Jesus Christ. That is the glory. Perfect, eternal glory, eternal glory never ends, never ends.

1 Corinthians 15 Paul said, “Behold, I show you a mystery. We’ll not all sleep, but we will be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet. But the trumpet will sound. The dead in Christ shall be raised perfect, incorruptible and we will all be changed. And this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal immortality so when this corruption shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality then shall be brought to pass the saying, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory and called us to eternal glory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’”

“Oh, my. The glory you gave me. I have given them and the perfection that can only be attached to his name will be ours.”

And the love, that eternal love of the Father for the Son is the same love he has for us. What a prospect. What a prospect. The God of all grace who has called us unto eternal glory.

Now if you want this tape, this message, it is called, “The Good News.” And it is good news. It is the good news. You write for it. Send two dollars and we will mail it to you. And until next time we meet may the Lord bless you everyone.