2020 09 27 The Gracious God v3

Exodus 17:1-7. Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16.

Philippians 2:1-15. Matthew 21:23-32.

The following two discussions highlight the two focuses of the message

**Children’s conversation**

Have blank face hold ups or figures – cut out police, fireman, nurse, traffic direction person, school teacher, parent.

Why can these people tell us what to do, where do they get their authority from = so if the policeperson was not a police person they have no authority and cannot tell us what not do?

Jesus the Christ was ?? healing people, telling the wind and waves to be quiet and everything obeyed him

The rulers at his time wanted to know who was his boss that he could do these things

? who do you think --- God – yes

Why – God loved us so much that He sent His only begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him will live forever – even after thy die.

?Good News -- sing ”Jesus loves me this I know because the bible tells me so.

**Interaction A-B-C triangle**

IF comes to you and starts saying things about someone else - – they said something that upset them – then latter the other person comes and tells you that so and so said something mean about them. How do you feel to be in the middle?

? What are you going to do? Take sides? Try and get them to be friends?

? What if you were one of the people that said something nasty – what would you do?

When Jesus our Lord was in these situations he told people to put these things out of their thoughts and feeling, to know that God would sort it out and to do something nice for the person who was mean?????????

? Do you think that would work – what if it was you that somebody that you had hurt or said something about did something nice for you?

**God calls this love and forgiveness and it comes out of a word to describe God -*the* GRACE *or love or kindness of God.***

**MESSAGE**

**Matthew records** the religious rulers of the day demanding from Jesus the authority behind his actions and words. They had the authority of the church but Jesus was not a trained minister, although he was respected in the Church as shown when he was asked to read and comment on Isiah’s words.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Jesus had said something so ‘out there’ that they maybe, were beginning to wonder about him V21 “if you have faith the mountain will move”. Really stirred them up!

He tells a parable/ a story of a father and two sons to try and wake their minds up and get them thinking beyond their own arrogance and training to the real life meaning of what he was saying. It was a waste of words – they felt no response – no kindling of understanding broke through their self-satisfaction and in the life that they sort protection for themselves and their society to live in.

The two sons – one said yes father and did not – the other said no; and did. Last week’s readings talked about ‘people who came late to God would enter Gods presence before the religious ones, because they recognised who they were and received forgiveness. They came to a place of ‘knowing, knowing that they were completely lost, alone, and had seen in Jesus something that the responded to – a hope of acceptance and cleansing.

Maybe they saw a hope of who they could be, who they were in God. And Jesus accepted them – he never pretended that their actions were ok – they came and were changed by being with Jesus and in his words and actions and his presence and became truly themselves.

In v32 Referring to John and his execution, we see the dead stubbornness of their minds and emotions “you did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him.”

John had preached Jesus as Messiah – Son of God – this they would not admit, even though it was their duty to know. The ramifications would be too great to themselves.

For ourselves we must always ask – “what is Gods truth in this matter” – not what is comfortable to say.

It is the one who believes and lives, graciously and freely follows the will of God who is Gods child. **Who lives in Gods grace.** Remember the promise of God – of Gods grace – when we are “a bruised reed I will not break and a smoking wick I will not snuff out”[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Which son/daughter are we – choose - it is up to us?**

In the letter to the believers at Phillipe we connect with this living life of being part of the family of God, it is in the local church that we live. The people can hurt us, accept us, we can hurt and accept and prise and … each other.

The critical reality is that the Holy Spirit, the Presence of God is in each of us and if we are carless in our interactions and words we interfere with Holy Spirits work of being our companion, teacher, friend. We *can grieve the Holy Spirit and dull His voice in us. Dull the voice not only of our closes friend but the closest friend of the person we hurt or hold a grudge against.* How can we be in unity with God, live in the atmosphere of Christ, and at the same time live in rejection or annoyance of fellow believers – we cannot – *the voice of the Spirit will grow quieter inside us.*

We live in the grace of God and we are told to regard others with Gods’ love *agaopa love*  - self sacrificing love that seeks the best for others.

**Believers** in Jesus have Gods’ Holy Presence in them and if we start being offended by other believers who also have the same Holy Presence in them we are causing a weakening in our closeness and openness to God’s Spirit working in us and bringing Jesus to us.

**“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God”[[3]](#footnote-3)**

“We have the Fruit of the Spirit”[[4]](#footnote-4) in us and we build up our hearing His voice and our response to His guidance by being honest in ourselves and with God, and being ready to ask forgiveness and give forgiveness to the person: No matter how insignificant the incident and by obeying with grateful emotions and attitude.

**This is called ‘grace’**.

Grace is an essential part of God and it shows in God’s love and forgiveness – John3:16

Grace flows out of LOVE – we are gracious when care or love flows from us in care about other people – especially other believers. *We weaken our relationship with Holy Spirit and cause grief to God – it is the same Jesus, the same God. The same Holy Presence in each of us believers.*

Our Lord Jesus said “whatever you do to the *least (in societies judgment) of* these – you do it to ME”.[[5]](#footnote-5)

And to Saul/Paul when he was hunting down believers and agreeing with their torture and murder [[6]](#footnote-6): Jesus said “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me!”.[[7]](#footnote-7)

In the Philippians 2: reading we come back to the intimately personal situation of a group of local believers who are – “not yet perfect”[[8]](#footnote-8) and with some *not* Holy Spirit words are being spoken in the group!

V3”treat others as being more important than yourself”

If we look at ourselves honestly – what is our inner attitude –– our own hurts, don’t we all have needs to be soothed and calmed? Trigger points.

Love seeks the best for the other person even at its own harm – yet it builds greatness in the Kingdom of God.

We are encouraged to “work out our own salvation with fear and trembling because it is God who is in us that gives us the desire and the determination to do what pleases God.” “work out” better maybe to say to “live the salvation that we have been given – to grow in character – in the power of Christs resurrection and the gift of Gods Holy Presence in us.

Where did Jesus authority come from ? Jesus has the authority from God and has proved this in his life, death and resurrection.

Jesus name is probably the most common swear word in the world – imagine how the Grace of God feels a billion times a date when Jesus is disrespected!

Whatever people think or want the truth from the bible is that *“at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, … and every tongue will confess that Jesus the Christ is Lord,” may we be this now and bring glory to our God. And prove ourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, and we will show as lights in the world.*

*GRACE -* **THIS IS YOU AND I.**

1. Luke 4:16-21 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Matthew 12:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ephesians 4:30 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Galatians 5:22-23 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Matthew 25:40 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Acts 7:54 – 8:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Acts 9:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. 1 Corinthians 13:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)