



Lights and Perfection, Inc.

Go and make disciples!

E-votional 34

Grace

Galatians 1:13-16 (ESV),

For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles.

I have been learning a lot about the Apostle Paul and his conversion lately. In this study, a thought was rendered about the fact that Paul when still Saul did not necessarily fall under conviction for the persecution he was doing before his conversion.

The reason why I share this is that in context with our modern culture we can look at Paul when he was still Saul and think, wow that man was in direct opposition to God how did he not know this?

In light of our modern culture we can also often take this same stance and say in our hearts of those we see and interact with every day in the world, how do these people not see that what they are doing is wrong? Of course, what, among many other issues today that I am referring to is that of abortion and homosexuality. We say, how do these people not see that what they are doing is wrong? Obviously, these things are an abomination to God and He detests them very much.

Now, the Apostle Paul when still Saul violently tried to destroy the church of God (Acts 8:3) and was in fact in direct opposition to God Himself and still did not know that what he was doing was wrong as we see in the text. In other words, we have no evidence that Saul had any prior thought that he was doing wrong by dragging men and women off to prison for their faith in Christ. Saul did this right after consenting to Stephens death by stoning simply because he proclaimed that Jesus was the Christ. As a matter of fact, as he was doing these things he firmly

believed that he was offering service to God.

In fact, it was not until his Damascus road experience where Jesus met him in Acts 9. But even the whole idea of Saul being on the road to Damascus was that he was going to further threaten the church of God in other regions, not being satisfied with the level of destruction previously made by him.

I kind of think of this example and compare it to what has been going on in this nation today. We as Christians have indeed been experiencing a lot of tension from those that support abortion and the homosexual lifestyle because we desire to stand upon and declare the Word of God. They want and are in fact attempting to take our rights away in this nation as Christians to stand against these lifestyle choices.

As I look at this and experience this I see another theme forming about the grace of God that we should try our best to focus on these days. What I am going to illustrate is that of a man named Ananias in Acts 9:10-12 (ESV),

Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight."

This seems to me, as I am sure to many of you reading this as counterproductive behavior. But the Lord had chosen Saul as a chosen vessel to bear His name before the Gentiles, and kings and the children of Israel (Acts 9:15). For this very reason, the Lord called a man named Ananias who at first of hearing these instructions from the Lord actually made a defense saying in Acts 9:13-14 (ESV)

But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name."

After this, the Lord told him in verse 15 that Saul is a chosen vessel. From this point, Ananias simply obeyed the Lord and traveled to Saul to be able to pray over him. This message touches right to the core of what the grace of God is all about. I say this because not only did God choose Saul before he was born, He also called him while he was persecuting the church and on top of this, He used a disciple named Ananias to be a part of that and also to be a conduit of the grace that was afforded to him. From the Damascus road experience to Ananias being sent by the Lord to pray over Saul I cannot help but think that God knew all along

how He was going to shower Saul with grace and turn his eyes to Jesus.

Now, the conclusion is this, to believe with us that God can and will take the most hardened advocates for abortion and homosexuality and pour His grace and favor on them in such a way as to turn their hearts fully to Jesus. Along with this, I also wonder if we have any followers of Jesus today that have a similar call like unto the one that Ananias had. Basically, to just go in the love and grace of God to those that are in opposition and be the light.

As in all things, we humbly pray that as you read and digest this teaching that the Lord might call some into intercession in the way of boldness and confidence that God not only can but desires to take the most hardened and impenitent sinners and make from them a people to glorify Him on this earth.

Lord Jesus, we thank You desperately for the grace that was afforded to us. Let us not simply get fat on this grace but stay lean and active in Your ways to show the world that You are God and can make the impossible a thing to be grasped. We sincerely pray that You would make us willing to go at Your call whenever You call and to go in a similar way as maybe Ananias would when he was sent to Saul to pray over him. We want to see people turn to You Lord. Hear our prayers Lord, In Jesus name. Amen.

In Christ's Love,
Chris and Jeanne
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