

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE

In order to receive the salvation that God offers to us, there are three concepts that we need to understand: God's grace, our faith, and the need for commitment.

GOD'S GRACE

In Ephesians 2:1, as a result of our transgressions and sin, what is our spiritual condition described as?

In verse 4, what two words describe what God is like?

_____ and _____

According to verse 5, it is by _____ that we have been saved.

Grace is receiving what we need rather than what we deserve.

OUR FAITH

Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith, it is _____ to please God.

That same scripture says that we must believe that God _____ and _____ those who seek Him.

Entering into a new relationship with God begins with faith. Actually, faith does not relate only to our relationship with God. We live by faith everyday. Can you think of some ways we demonstrate faith in our daily lives?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Faith is the channel by which we receive the gift of God's grace.

OUR COMMITMENT

The faith by which we receive God's grace is more than a knowledge and belief of the facts. It involves a commitment on our part.

James 2:17 describes intellectual faith as being _____.

In verse 19, James says that even the _____ believe that there is a God.

We know that the demons are not saved, and therefore, we know that intellectual belief is not enough to have a right relationship with God.

In the 1860's there was a famous tightrope walker by the name of Henry Blondin. He toured the entire country, putting on exhibitions of his extraordinary skill. One time he announced that he was going to stretch a rope across the Niagara River, right above the famous falls. Hundreds of people came to watch the amazing feat of walking a rope above the falls. They all knew that no one had gone over the falls and survived, and so a mistake meant certain death. After several demonstrations of his skill, he told the crowd that he was going to walk across the rope blindfolded and pushing a wheelbarrow. He walked among the people asking if they believed he could do it. Because they had seen his amazing ability, the people all believed that he could walk the rope. When he was ready to begin his walk, he asked, "Now, who will come up and get in the wheelbarrow?" Obviously, no one had that much belief. Blondin had demonstrated the difference between "intellectual" belief and "commitment" belief.

THE FAITH BY WHICH WE RECEIVE THE GIFT OF GOD'S GRACE IS A "COMMITMENT" FAITH THAT SAYS, "I TRUST YOU WITH MY LIFE."

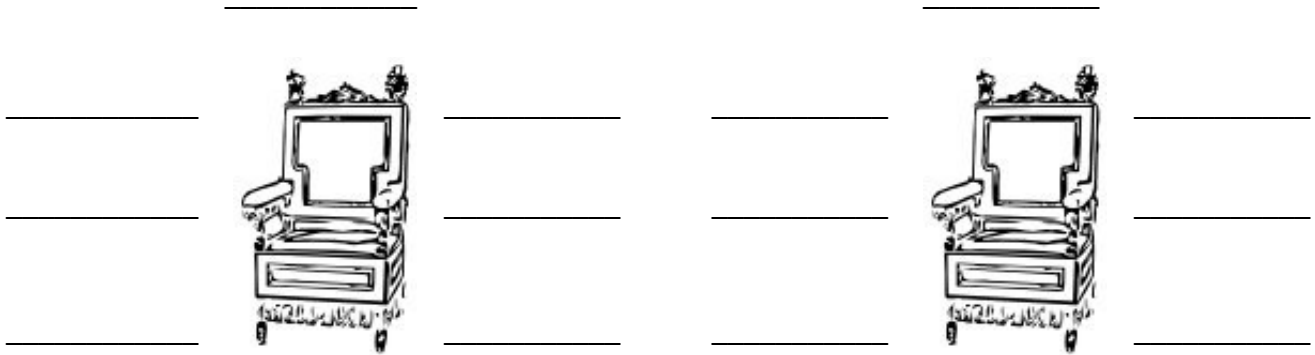
The question behind the issue of commitment is, "Am I so convinced that Jesus is God's Son that I am willing to give Him control of my life?"

Throughout God's Word, we see that the channel by which we receive the grace of God is a complete "faith commitment" of our lives.

Romans 10:9-10 says if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is _____ and believe in your heart that God _____, you will be saved.

Philippians 2:9-11 says, "Therefore God exalted Him to the _____ and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should _____ in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is _____."

To confess that Jesus is Lord means that we acknowledge that He is king and has the right to rule in our lives.



When a man and woman love each other so much that they decide they want to spend the rest of their lives together, there comes a time when there is a "marriage proposal." That proposal is a testimony to the man, to the woman, to their friends, and to their community that they are committed to spend the rest of their lives together as husband and wife. We refer to the time of commitment as their "wedding." It is important for them to be able to look back at a point in time when their relationship with each other changed.

God understands that for our sake and His sake, when we are ready to commit our lives to Him, there needs to be a point in time we can look at and say, "That's when I gave my life to God."

In John 3:5, Jesus told a man by the name of Nicodemus that, "Unless a man is born of the _____ and of the _____, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

In I Peter 3:21, Peter says that baptism is the pledge of a _____ toward God. Through baptism, we identify with the _____ of Jesus Christ.



SLAVES TO SIN

BURIED

RAIED WITH CHRIST

In Romans 6:1-7, we are able to see how through baptism, we identify with the death and resurrection of Jesus.

In verse 3, Paul says that when we were baptized into Christ Jesus, we were baptized into His _____.

Verse 4 says that we were buried with Jesus. How does that happen?

_____.

According to verse 5, if we have been united with Him in His _____, we can also be united with Him in his _____.

Verse 7 says that if we have died with Jesus, we have been freed from _____.