

GRACE NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2001

Much continues to be on my mind regarding ministering the gospel of Christ. As time goes by, I am growing to see the Father's loving hand in it all, and I am experiencing more of His peace – a fruit of Christ's life in me.

“He who has begun a good work in you will complete it, “ (Philippians 1:6)

“He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it,” (1 Thessalonians 5:24)

As I grow in resting in God, I meet people with whom God leads me to share the gospel of growing in grace: family, friends, a young couple, an elderly man who is a baby Christian, three pastors, a chaplain, groups of people from several different denominations in discipleship training conferences, and a special group of young men and boys at church.

But most of all, God has graced me with my wife, Joy. Joy is truly a “fruit” of Christ's life in me. I remember praying for her after I first met her. I see now that Christ in me gave me His desire and ability to pray for her. And God has given me His desire to bestow grace (Christ's life through me) to Joy, who lives with physical challenges not many people have and understand.

With all of these opportunities to share the gospel, I believe God has led me this month to see more clearly the foundation of the gospel message. I have found that it is tempting for me to teach other “good” things apart from this foundation.

So, I have attempted to summarize from my heart the one foundation of the gospel message for initial salvation and for daily living. This summary is becoming my personal mission statement – my anchor. It is the message of freedom and hope to anyone who will humbly hear. **It is the message of the cross.**

Grace to you! Gregg

THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS



**In 1 Corinthians 2:2, Paul described his desire to teach only one thing:
CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED.**

When Christ cried, “It is finished!” He was calling an end to our self-efforts for entering and living the Christian life. We can now rest in Him and His completed work of the cross.

So the message of the cross is not just the death of Christ, it includes His resurrection and ascension. And it includes the crucifixion with Christ of a person's old identity and the resurrection to a new identity in Christ. Without knowing and relying on Christ's completed work, a Christian can try doing better apart from Christ.

**In Galatians 6:14, Paul said there was only one thing he delighted in:
THE CROSS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

Paul goes on in this verse to describe the cross as the way a person is freed from this world's ways of self-effort.

**In Galatians 6:15, Paul said that because of the cross, there is only one thing that matters:
not just forgiveness, but A NEW CREATION.**

**In Philippians 3:8-10, Paul summarized his one passion:
TO KNOW CHRIST AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION.**

The foundation is Christ Himself, a new identity in Him, and His indwelling life – all because of the cross. The message of the cross is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18)!

GRACE NOTE

Godly sorrow is not repentance, it produces repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10).
Repentance is a change of mind about how righteousness is obtained from God and maintained with God.
Repentance is seeing that righteousness is a grace gift, not by any works, but only through faith in Christ and His completed work of the cross.