



GRACE

Great Good News!

September 2001

This newsletter is the result of my seeking God's heart as I think about the precious lives lost on September 11, the precious lives on the line in our armed forces, and my desire to minister true hope to people. Gregg

How can we make sense out of September 11, 2001? There have been many explanations about God's purposes for this tragedy. I have asked God, "Is GRACE still the great good news? Can this ministry of GRACE practically apply to this tragedy?" I believe 2 Timothy 2:1 is God's answer: "You, therefore, my son, be strong in the GRACE that is IN Christ Jesus."

We can be tempted to see God through the tragedy, instead of seeing God through Christ. **Christ IS the hope...and having your identity IN Him!** This is the safest place in earth or heaven! Any explanation of the tragedy apart from Christ is hopeless.

On September 14th, Billy Graham reminded us of the source of this true hope: "Here in this majestic National Cathedral we see all around us symbols of the cross. The cross tells us that God understands our sin and suffering, for He took upon Himself in the Person of Jesus Christ our sins and suffering. And from the cross, God declares, 'I love you.'" Mr. Graham continued: "The story does not end with the cross, for Easter points us beyond the tragedy of the cross to the empty tomb. It tells us that there is hope for eternal life."

In the Foreward to Stephen Olford's book Not I, But Christ, Billy Graham further notes: "The cross of Christ is also the foundation of our lives as believers, for God's plan was that through the cross our old nature would be crucified, and the power of the Holy Spirit [Christ's life] would be unleashed to change our hearts and lives." This message of the cross is THE basis for ministering true hope! I don't understand much about the "why" of this tragedy, but this I do know: **God is love, and He makes a person brand new in order to give him the life of His Son...and Christ's life is sufficient for any situation!**

During this national distress, we will be tempted to do something to appease God's wrath and to reclaim His favor. **But the truth is that Jesus Christ has already borne all of the Father's contempt for sin and all of His divine judgment on the cross...for us!** God loves and adores each of His children by His amazing grace, not by what we do. This national tragedy is another opportunity for Christians to be nurtured by the life of Christ in us, enabling us to share this message of grace and true hope with others, while moving us forward in true worship of Him (John 4:24).

This month at Christ Life Ministries, I was privileged to disciple four people, fellowship with men in a prison, and help teach a Grace Life Conference to 18 people. The transformation in these people is the most beautiful thing I have ever witnessed...all because of the beauty of Christ revealed in them through God's grace.

Reminder: *Grace Life Celebration!!!*

*Simpsonville, SC library conference room - Thursday evening, October 11th, from 7 to 9 (casual dress)
I hope you can come, and feel free to bring others with you, including older children and teens.*

GRACE NOTE

(from www.EternityNow.org)

We can worship God freely "in spirit," motivated by genuine love and affection, not as rebels beaten into submission by an angry God.
We can worship God "in truth," relating to God as He truly is and with no shame of who we truly are in His sight.