

# The HEARING OF Faith

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY RADIO NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 15, JULY 1999

"He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit . . . does He do it out of the works of the law or out of the hearing of faith?" Galatians 3:5

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### Life-Study of the Bible

#### W E L C O M E S

BEAUMONT, TX  
KOLE 1340 AM  
8:00 A.M. SAT-SUN

#### CHANGE OF TIME:

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL  
105.1 FM, 945 AM, 6.280 SHORTWAVE  
9:00 P.M. MON-FRI

LOS ANGELES, CA  
KSGF 96.3 FM  
10:30 P.M. MON-FRI  
7:30 A.M. SUNDAY  
9:00 P.M. SUNDAY

Dear Listeners,

This month brings us to the satisfying conclusion of *Life-study of Galatians*. As promised, *Life-study of Galatians* has been a fitting insert between the two halves of Exodus. By the Lord's faithful shining through this ministry of His Word, He has drawn us into a nourishing and intimate enjoyment of our dear Lord Jesus. We, just like the Galatians, are so quickly deceived into leaving the grace in Christ in exchange for the bondage of living by ethics and religious tradition. How we all need to see Christ as the absolute replacement of the law with its slavery and bondage!

The Lord has granted to His Body a marvelous treasure in this ministry of the divine life in Christ through two faithful servants, Watchman Nee and Witness Lee. This is a ministry that has been unknown to many people for most of this century. We derive much joy and satisfaction from your calls and letters as so many of you are discovering the sweet enjoyment and fresh revelation of Christ day by day in these incomparable life-study messages.

On July 26 we will return to *Life-study of Exodus* at the point where the Lord continues His revelation to Moses on the mountain of God. The tabernacle, a most wonderful Old Testament type of Christ, will be the focus of the remaining messages in Exodus. As a help to get into the unparalleled view of Christ seen in the type of the tabernacle, we are planning a free offer for all our listeners. Listen for details in the final programs from Galatians. We will also tell you about it in next month's *Hearing of Faith*. Until then, "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen" (Gal. 6:18).

Living Stream Ministry Radio

## WHAT IS GRACE?

The word *grace* is used more than one hundred times in the New Testament, indicating it is one of the most important words in the Scriptures. According to Ephesians 2:8, grace is the agent by which God saves us, "for by grace you have been saved." We cannot save ourselves; only God's grace can save us. But what is this grace that saves us? Some Christian teachers define grace as God's unmerited favor. According to this definition, in saving us God bestows favor on us that we do not deserve. Although God does favor us in His salvation, in the revelation of the New Testament, grace is much more than undeserved favor from God.

In the Bible grace is referred to as the grace of God (1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 1:12; 8:1; 9:14) and the grace of Christ (2 Cor. 8:9; 12:9; 13:14), and the Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:29). Thus, grace is related to God, to Christ, and to the Spirit—to the person of the Triune God. In the New Testament a phrase such as *the love of God* often means not merely that love is something that belongs to God but that God Himself is love (1 John 4:8). Similarly, the phrase *the*

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## GRACE

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*word of God* means that the word is God (John 1:1). Thus, *the grace of God* means that grace is God, *the grace of Christ* means that grace is Christ, and *the Spirit of grace* means that the Spirit is grace. Based on this, we can conclude that grace is God, Christ, and the Spirit—the Triune God Himself.

Furthermore, John 1:14 says, “And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us . . . full of grace,” and verse 17 says, “For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.” The law was something given—the law and its giver were separate. But grace *came* with Jesus Christ, the incarnated God—grace and Christ are inseparable. Thus, grace is a living person, Jesus Christ Himself, who is the embodiment of the Triune God (Col. 2:9). First Corinthians 15:10 and Galatians 2:20, considered together, are further proof that grace is Christ Himself. In the former Paul wrote, “not I but the grace of God which is with me,” and in the latter he said, “no longer I . . . but . . . Christ who lives in me,” indicating that the grace that was with the apostle was the very Christ who lived in him. Moreover, 2 Timothy 4:22 says, “The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.” This again identifies grace with Christ, the Lord. Thus, the very grace given to us by God is the very Lord who is with our spirit. Galatians 6:18, Philippians 4:23, and Philemon 25 all confirm that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, is with our spirit, that is, in the deepest part of our being.

Based on the full revelation concerning grace in the New Testament, we may define grace in this way: grace is God in Christ as the Spirit dwelling in our spirit to be everything to us for our enjoyment. On the day of our salvation, when we believed in the Lord Jesus, we received Him into our spirit as grace (John 1:12). This grace, which is the living person of Christ, is what saves us. Day by day, and even moment by moment, we can experience and enjoy this wonderful, saving grace.

*For further reading on this subject, please see The Law and Grace of God in His Economy; Life-study of Genesis, Message 63; and Life-study of Galatians, Message 11, published by Living Stream Ministry.*

## Highlights

### FROM THE LIFE-STUDY OF GALATIANS

*“But I say, Walk by the Spirit and you shall by no means fulfill the lust of the flesh.” Gal. 5:16*

*“If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.” Gal. 5:25*

*“For neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation is what matters.*

*And as many as walk by this rule, peace be upon them and mercy, even upon the Israel of God.” Gal. 6:16-17*

#### TWO KINDS OF WALK BY THE SPIRIT

. . . In our daily living as Christians, we need to have two kinds of walk by the Spirit [Gal. 5:16 and 25]. The first is a general walk, whereas the second is the walk according to a certain rule or principle for the fulfillment of God’s eternal purpose. In the first kind of walk, we need to display the fruit of the Spirit, the virtues listed in 5:22 and 23. However, we are not here simply to exhibit such virtues as love, joy, and peace. We are here for the fulfillment of God’s purpose. Thus, we need to walk according to certain rules or principles for the fulfillment of this purpose. For God’s purpose, we need to have a walk that is orderly, a walk that is according to certain elementary rules or basic principles. Loving and being joyful are not basic rules or principles. These are simply different aspects of our daily life as Christians, not the characteristics of the walk which leads to the fulfillment of God’s purpose. This walk, the second kind of walk by the Spirit, requires that we walk according to basic principles and elementary rules.

We may use the daily life of a young sister who is a student to illustrate the two kinds of walk by the Spirit. On the one hand, this sister lives with her family at home. If she truly lives Christ, she will show forth the virtues of Christ to the members of her family. On the other hand, she needs to be a proper student at school and fulfill all the requirements leading to graduation. At home she needs to walk as a daughter and sister, but at school she needs to walk as a proper student. She needs to have both the general walk at home with her family and the more specific walk at school according to basic rules and elementary principles.

. . . As God’s sons, we need a walk by the Spirit to express Christ in all His virtues. We also need another kind of walk by the Spirit, the walk according to certain rules or principles, leading toward the goal for the fulfillment of God’s purpose. If we have the second kind of walk by the Spirit, we shall be not only sons of God, but also a new creation and the Israel of God. We need to live the new creation and as the new Israel of God. In order to live a new creation and live as the Israel of God, we need the second kind of walk. We need to walk orderly according to the elementary principles of God’s economy. . . .

#### THE PRINCIPLE OF THE NEW CREATION

According to 6:15 and 16, the second kind of walk by the Spirit is intimately related to the new creation. Verse 15 declares, “For neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.” Verse 16 goes on to speak of walking by “this rule.” The rule here is that of being a new creation. This new creation is equal to the Israel of God, also mentioned in verse 16. . . .

The difference between the old creation and the new creation is that in the old creation God was not added to man, but in the new creation He is dispensed into His chosen people. No matter how good Adam might have been before the fall, God had not been added to Adam. Adam was good, but he did not have the divine element within him. He was simply the old creation, the creation without the element of God. . . .

The new Israel of God must be a new creation. For this we need God Himself to be wrought into us, to saturate us, and to make us one with Him. Then we need to live such a mingled life. By living the mingled life of the new creation, we shall be the Israel of God on earth today, His princes and victors executing His authority and representing His government. Today’s Israel of God is a miniature of the coming New Jerusalem, which will be the ultimate consummation of the new creation and of the Israel of God. May we all see this and walk according to it!

*Life-study of Galatians, Message 42, pp. 375-380*