

“Called into Fellowship”

1 Corinthians 1:4-9

Celebrating the Centrality of Christ in the Local Assembly

Paul thanks God for the lavish dispensing of His grace on His church in Corinth. Paul never tired of acknowledging God’s activity in and through His people. In verse four he strikes the keynote for the paragraph. There is no question as to his main point and it is the grace of God. God is not miserly in any of His dealings with His people. God will never give us what we deserve only what His Son has secured. He is always gracious to a people who stand as beggars.

I. The grace of God is divinely sourced (v. 4)

A. Grace cannot coexist with guilt

“What greater consolation could a believer have than to know that in Christ all sins – past, present, and future – are forgiven forever? In Christ all guilt and all penalty is permanently removed. In Him we will stand totally guiltless and holy for the rest of eternity.”

B. Grace cannot coexist with human obligation

“We are not to say, ‘Well, God was gracious to me and He saved me, and now I have to pay Him back.’ Grace is a free gift, not a loan. Grace makes us totally indebted to God, but because the cost is so great we cannot repay it. Because His grace is so great we need not repay it.”

C. Grace cannot coexist with human merit

“Grace is not offered simply to "good" people. In relation to each other, some people obviously are morally better than others. But in relation to God’s righteousness, our very best is "like a filthy garment" (Isa 64:4). Merit, like guilt and obligation, has no part in grace.”

II. The grace of God is abundantly sufficient (vv. 5-7a)

The word, “enriched” means, “to make wealthy.” It is a word of lavish abundance. This enrichment is rooted in Christ. The lavish nature of this endowment expressed itself in their speech and in their knowledge. There was no deficiency to speak of.

III. The grace of God stimulates expectancy (vv. 7b, 8)

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The word “awaiting eagerly” is a double compound word made up of two prefixes and a primary word. It means, “to expect fully.” The double compound implies a degree of earnestness and intensity of expectation.

At the coming of Christ at least these two things will be true for the people of God.

- A. There will be no more tears, sorrow, death, and destruction – a time of unimaginable release
- B. There will be unadulterated, undiluted, and undistracted worship of Jesus Christ – a time of unprecedented joy

“The word “blameless” does not mean that the believers were without sin or blame in their practice. The epistle clearly shows their faults. Rather, it is a legal term. No charge of condemnation or sentencing to eternal death would ever be brought against them in the court of divine justice.”

IV. The grace of God establishes an unbreakable union with Jesus Christ (v. 9)

My fellowship with Christ is established on the faithfulness of God. In the face of the Corinthian unfaithfulness, God was proving Himself faithful. Can there be any surer foundation? Why do I have fellowship with His Son? I have fellowship with His Son because God is faithful. Notice what our text does not say. It does not say you have fellowship with His Son, because you are faithful. Your faithfulness has nothing to do with it. The only thing that matters is God.