

Keynotes from Pastor Tim's am Sermon on 23/02/2020

Following Jesus into obedience – sanctification

Titus 2: 11-12 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, When God's grace increases in our lives it always leads to our transformation.

- 1) God's grace is him giving himself to us – he isn't just the giver of the gift, he is the gift.
- 2) God's grace is saving grace – in the person of his Son Jesus who died on our behalf.
- 3) God's grace is transforming grace – enabling us to live self-controlled lives through Jesus' presence with us and in us.

There are four steps we can take to experience the grace of Christ's presence.

- 1) **We need God to search our heart to show us the sin that lurks there** – sinful motives, attitudes and passions. If these are not dealt with, they will lead to sinful actions.

Our prayer must echo **Psalm 139: 23-4** Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! ²⁴ And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

- 2) **We need to repent of our sin** – **1 John 1:8** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

In repentance, we agree with God that our sin is offensive to him and that we deserve his eternal wrath. However, we have such a limited view of God and his holiness, and such a high view of ourselves that

we fail to see how much our sin has grieved God. When God works in our lives, we see that our sin is primarily against him. **Psalm 51:4** Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgement.

When we do acknowledge our guilt before God, we often don't make progress because we fail to take the next step.

3) We need to believe that we are forgiven – 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The stunning truth about God's grace is that he is willing to forgive us all our sin but many of us never really grasp this. The Christian life is one of repentance and faith – faith lays hold of Jesus who died so that we might be forgiven for **all** our sin. We sin because it's pleasurable – the only way to destroy the pleasure of sin is to replace it with a greater pleasure – that of delighting in Christ and the great grace of God to forgive us through his Son.

4) We need to ask for transforming grace: Hebrews 4:16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

We are to come to God in prayer in our time of need with confidence, and ask for grace to help us when we are assailed by temptation to sin, crying out to God with the words of **Psalm 19:13** Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me!

We need to believe the promise of grace to help us in the form of Jesus coming alongside us to fight for us.

Jesus lived a life of perfect obedience to his Father and he says to us: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (**Matthew 16:24**)

We can only follow him into obedience as we experience the grace of his presence.