**Finding Grace**

**Partakers of Grace in a Darkening Culture**

**Matthew 4:16 -** *The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, and those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a light has dawned.*

**John 3:19-21 -** *This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.*

**2 Corinthians 4:6 -** *For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

**4 principles to guide our ministry of the gospel**

**I. Work out the Practical Aspects of Your Salvation**

**2 Timothy 2:15 -** *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.*

A. Salvation begins by making a decision to trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord

**Ephesians 2:8-9 -** *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

**Titus 3:5 -** *He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit…*

**John 3:16 -** *For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*

**Acts 16:29-31 -** *And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and after he brought them out, he said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”*

B. Salvation is also a process of changing and growing and serving Christ that is life-long

**Ephesians 2:10 -** *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

kataepgazesthe – to accomplish, to continually work to bring something to completion or fulfillment

**v. 12 -** *..with fear and trembling.*

C. Both aspects of salvation are grounded in the power and enablement of God

**Philippians 2:13 - …***for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*

**Philippians 4:13 -** *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

**II. Avoid Two Sins Which Will Easily Mar Your Impact for Christ**

**Philippians 2:14 -** *Do all things without grumbling or disputing…*

A. Grumbling

Goggusmos – complaint

**Acts 6:1 -** *Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food.*

B. Disputing

**III. Seek to Be a Light in the World in Which We Live**

**Philippians 2:15-16 -** *…so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life...*

A. Admittedly our culture is crooked and perverse, because that is what sin does

Avah – bent, or twisted

Ra – broken up, ruined

Pasha – rebellion against a rightful authority

Rasha – confusion, tossing

Aven – vanity, unprofitable behavior

Amal – sorrow

Hamartia – missing the mark

Parabosis – crossing the boundary line

B. But remember, if we are any different, it is first and foremost because of God’s grace

**Romans 5:20 -** *The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more…*

**Philippians 4:23 -** *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.*

C. It is always better to light a candle than to shout at the darkness, especially the candle of God’s Word

**Philippians 2:15-16 -** *...children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life...*

**IV. Be Prepared to Rejoice in Whatever Sacrifice Might Be Involved in Impacting Our Culture in This Way**

**Philippians 2:17 -** *But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all.*