

#6
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A THRONE OF GRACE

Charles C. Ryrie

Did you ever play that word-association game? You remember. Someone says a word like "color," and you're supposed to say the first thing that pops into your mind, like "blue."

If we were playing the game, and I said "throne," what would you say? "King." "Rule." "Pomp." "Regal." Possibly one of these responses. But not likely the word "grace." Throne and grace don't seem to go together.

But they do in the Bible, for the Christian has a throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16).

What is grace? "Unmerited divine assistance" says the dictionary. Whether or not the compilers of the dictionary know it, this good definition reflects the impact Christianity had on the word.

You see, to the Greek, grace was not unmerited. They used the word to describe the beauty of a person or work of art, or of graciousness of speech, or of the glory of victory, or of favors which the gods bestowed. But they considered man to be virtuous, so grace was not entirely unmerited.

But with the coming of Jesus Christ came a new revelation of grace. The apostle John declared that "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Likewise, the apostle Paul said that the grace of God which brings salvation appeared when Christ came (Titus 2:11). That first Christmas revealed grace to the world with a meaning the word had not had before. Jesus displayed grace because He offered the world something completely undeserved--the gift of eternal life. His grace was in the truest sense unmerited.

But now He is risen, ascended into heaven, and reigning on a throne of grace. Not a throne of judgment, nor a throne of wrath, but a throne of unmerited divine assistance. Assistance in meetings man's greatest need of

forgiveness of sins, and assistance to help with lesser needs that arise for all of us daily.

Indeed, in that verse in Hebrews, the writer urges us to approach that throne of grace "to find grace to ehlp in time of need." Whatever difficulties the Christian is called on to bear, he can be assured that they originate from a throne of grace, and that while experiencing them he can be sustained by grace from that throne.

But we must do something. We must come to that throne of grace. We must ask God in prayer for specific help for each need. If we do experience God's grace, it may be because we do not ask for it. "We have not because we ask not" (James 4:2). God could not encourage us in any better way than to reveal His throne as a throne of grace.

Did you meet your Lord this morning

Before you saw a human face?

Did you look upon His beauty

Through His all-abounding grace?

Did you bow in prayer before Him

Ere you went on your way?

Did you ask for strength to carry

All the burdens of your day?

How He waits to give His blessing

On our lives every day;

Christian, never start without Him,

Let Him speak, and then, obey.

--Unknown