



April 23, 2023

**Abounding Grace: Belonging
Extravagant Grace**

Titus 3:3-7

For Discussion and Reflection

1. Review these concepts. What questions do you have? You can also read the Westminster Confession, 7:3-6.
 - a. The Covenant of Redemption is an agreement within the Trinity, enacted before the foundations of creation were laid, to send the Second Person, the Son, to become our Surety, rescuing us from sin and welcoming us into God's family. The full obedience, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ fulfills that covenant agreement within the Godhead.
 - b. The Covenant of Grace is the free offer of salvation with all its benefits through faith in God's chosen One, our Surety, Jesus Christ. It is received by faith alone, by grace alone, in Christ alone, to God's glory alone.
 - c. The one Covenant of Grace is administered differently in the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, it is administered through a national identity with ceremonies, laws, rite of circumcision, a priesthood, etc. All of these point God's people to faith in the coming Messiah. In the New Testament, it is administered by the Church with the rite of baptism, communion, preaching, etc. for all people groups and in all corners of God's creation.
2. Some Christians think that Old Testament people were saved by obedience to the law rather than by faith in the coming Messiah. But notice how the Apostle Paul refers to the faith of Abraham: Galatians 3:7-9. What does this passage teach us about the covenant of grace? What does it tell us about Abraham's faith, specifically, how was Abraham saved? What does it teach us about how we receive the benefits provided for us in Christ?
3. Paul continues, Galatians 3:10-14, explaining, "The righteous shall live by faith." If you look at the footnote, it says, "the one who by faith is righteous will live." Paul gives us an alternative to salvation by faith, v12. What is the problem with trying to be righteous by obedience or your performance of the law (v10-11a)?
4. Continue to read Paul's teaching, Galatians 3:15-18. Paul argues that God's covenant can't be altered once established. The covenant of grace was communicated to Abraham, but it was made with his offspring. Who is that "offspring?" Did the law of Moses alter or change the foundational covenant? How does Paul say the law functions? Gal. 3:19-29.
5. The Covenant of Grace is the free offer of salvation. It is settlement of our debt to God's law and judgment without personal payment. How does Isaiah 55:1-5 speak to that free offer? (cf. Rev. 21:6, 22:17, Matthew 5:6)
6. How do these truths communicate God's intention to give you belonging? Remember the goal of the Covenant of Grace is, as God says, "you shall be my people, and I will be your God" (Ez. 36:28), or as Paul says, "so that we might receive adoption as sons." (Gal. 4:5)
7. What is the Spirit of God saying to you today? What steps can you take to grow in the grace God has provided for you?