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W. O. Vaught

Ouachita Baptist University

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THE AMAZING GRACE OF GOD

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 139
HEBREWS 13:9

Dr. W. O. Vaught
Immanuel Baptist Church
Little Rock, Arkansas

Let us get a corrected translation of this chapter thus far--

Verse 1

"Royal Family, love must keep enduring."

Verse 2

"Stop neglecting hospitality, for through it, some without knowing it, have entertained angels."

Verse 3

"Be concerned about the prisoners as fellow prisoners; be concerned about those who are being maltreated as being yourself as also in the body."

Verse 4

"Let the divine institution of marriage be held in honor by all the human race, and the sexual relationship of marriage unsoiled by infidelity; For the God will judge fornicators (sex before marriage) and adulterers (sex after marriage)."

Verse 5

"Let your life-style be free from the love of money. Keep on being content with what you possess, for he himself hath said in the past with the result that it stands spoken forever (quote) 'I will not ever abandon you neither will I ever forsake you.'"

Verse 6

"So that being confident, with maximum doctrine resident in the soul, we say (quote from Psalm 118:6) 'The Lord is my helper and I will not be afraid of what man will do unto me.'"

Verse 7

"Be concentrating on them, Pastor-teachers, who are ruling over you, pastors (male type) who have communicated the Word of God, pastors whose doctrine emulate. Be carefully considering the issue of their way of life."

Verse 8

"Jesus Christ, the same one yesterday, today, also forever."

HEBREWS 13:9 "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."

There are several principles to be noted as we begin this verse.

1. The stability of Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, overflows into the life of the believer. Believers have stability, not because they are great, but because they have received this stability in an overflow from Jesus Christ. Christ in you is the sum total of what you are as a Christian.

2. Positive volition toward Bible Doctrine leads one to spiritual maturity. This is God's great grace way to equip the believer to live with stability and consistency.
3. Maximum doctrine resident in the soul is the only raw material that will produce priestly maturity.
4. Super grace status always leads to maximum love for Jesus Christ.
5. The exception to this is reversionism which is characterized by negative volition in the soul toward Bible teaching.
6. Therefore, the warning in this verse about being seduced by false doctrine. This is what brings instability. There is nothing worse or more frustrating than an unstable believer.

Verse 9 begins with the words, "Be not carried about" and this is a present, passive, imperative of paraphero. Here it means to be seduced and it has the negative me with it. This is a retroactive present, and it means this being carried away began in the past and is continuing into the present. This blackout of the soul had been going on for quite some time and as a result in had been sucked all kinds of false doctrine.

Next we have the words "divers and strange doctrine." "Divers" is the adjective poikilos and it means various categories of doctrine. "Strange" is the adjective xzenos and it means foreign or alien. These two words describe the false doctrine that always leads the believer into reversionism. Thus far this verse says, "Do not be carried away or seduced by means of diversified and alien doctrine." False doctrine always pushes into the vacuum which is created by failure to take in true doctrine.

This comes in five ways--

- a. Indifference or apathy to Bible teaching.
- b. Indifference or apathy to the one teaching.
- c. Antagonism toward someone else in the congregation.
- d. Too busy or too bored for face to face teaching.
- e. Poor manners--lack of poise--lack of concentration.

Shocked At Dogmatic Teaching

The church of our time has gotten so far away from true doctrine that when someone comes along and teaches true doctrine dogmatically, people are actually shocked. They can't actually believe what they are hearing.

Next we have the word "For" from gar and this gives the reason for this previous statement. The words "it is" are added to make the translation clear. The words "a good thing" are not correctly translated. It means "a noble thing." The word "thing" is thrown in because the word noble is neuter gender and we know it is not talking about a person but rather true doctrine based on grace. Next we have "that the heart be established." "The heart" from kardia is referring

to the thinking part of the mind. You think with words so this means you have to develop a vocabulary. "Be established" is the present, passive, infinitive of bebaioo. This is an infinitive of purpose and it means that it is God's purpose for you to be stabilized with dogmatic doctrine.

Next we have the word "grace" from the instrumental singular of karis and it means by means of grace.

So verse 9 thus far says, "Be not carried away into reversionism by means of diversified and alien doctrine. For it is a noble thing that the thinking part of the mind be stabilized by means of grace." Christ is God's perfect illustration of stability.

THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE

1. DEFINITION.

Grace is a one word description of God's plan. Grace is all that God is able to do for us because of the cross. Because of the perfect work of Christ on the cross, God is free to give us salvation. God is not free to give us salvation apart from the cross. God's righteousness and justice stand there and will never allow a man to get by with sin. When we believe in Christ, we pass the point of propitiation (satisfaction) and God is set free to love us and save us and not compromise his character. Therefore, let us put it in these points.

- a. Grace is a one word description of God's plan.
- b. Grace is all that God is able to do for us because of the cross.
- c. Grace is God's policy in dealing with every member of the human race.
- d. In grace God does all of the planning and all of the providing and all man does is receive what God has done.

THE CONCEPT OF GRACE

Grace depends on the character of God.

Grace depends on who and what God is.

Grace is the total of all that God can do for a man and still be consistent with his own character.

Grace is God's relationship with a believer as well as his way of salvation.

Grace is the sum total of all that God can do for a man from the moment of his salvation until he has him in eternity. This is all totally apart from man's merit, man's ability, man's talent, and man's planning.

THE ISSUE

The great enemy to legalism is man's ego, man's old sin nature, man's dependence on what he is and what he does. Therefore, legalism is man's intrusion upon the plan of God with his own works, his own ability, his own talent, his own schemes. Instead man uses his ability and work to gain the approbation of God.

Legalism Has Many Forms

One form is religion. Religion is man by man's efforts seeking to gain the approbation of God. Christianity is not religion. Grace excludes religion. Religion runs right over grace and mashes it into the ground. Religion seeks to substitute man's work for the work of God. Grace rejects everything that religion does. Legalism and grace cannot coexist. Great portions of Romans and Galatians are devoted to this theme.

2. GRACE AND THE NEW CONTRACT FOR THE CHURCH.

a. How The Strategic Victory In The Angelic Conflict Was Won.

God promised in Genesis 3:15 that Christ would win the Angelic Conflict.

The signs of this victory was the resurrection, ascension and session of Jesus Christ. In other words, when Christ arose, ascended and sat down at God's right hand, the conflict was no longer in doubt. Hebrews 1 paints him in this exalted position. He sits there as the God-Man in hypostatic union forever. At that moment all the human world and all the angelic world was subjected to him forever.

(This is why he rejected the offer of Satan in Matthew 4. Sitting at God's right hand he has attained legitimately what the Devil offered to give him in an illegitimate way.) Christ had been breaking the back of Satan all along, but this is the final sign that his hold on the human race and the future outcome was finally decided.

The moment he sat down, the Jewish Age was interrupted.

The moment he sat down, the Church Age began.

This is the moment when the baptism of members of the Royal Family began. (Baptism of the Holy Spirit is God's sign of this victory and his guarantee that the conflict will be won. This new relationship is something new and distinct for the Church Age.

No one ever before had shared everything that Christ has, but it began at this moment.

b. This explains Sanctification.

(1) Positional sanctification is the greatest thing God can do for any believer. "I'll make you just like my Son."

(2) This positional sanctification took place at the moment of salvation. So it is not some emotion, or some great ecstatic experience we have, but rather it is something magnificent and unbelievable that God does for us.

(3) The Old Testament believers were saved exactly the same way we are, but positional sanctification, the indwelling Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit was left for us. They were family of God, but we are Royal Family of God.

c. Our New Contract

We are in a new grace contract. We enter this Royal Family by a grace act from God. He puts a badge on us (THE HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLS HERE). God says of us "This believer is in my Social Security program and that Social Security is the sealing of the Holy Spirit.

d. Experiential Sanctification

- (1) God is going to keep me alive in the Devil's world. The Devil is working every day to destroy us just like he has been working to destroy the Jews. The reason he wants to get rid of the Jew is because God has made promises to the Jews and the Devil wants to keep God from carrying out those promises. He has also made promises to the Church Age saints and the Devil is fighting to see that God doesn't keep those promises.
- (2) God is going to provide such things as--
The completed Canon of Scripture.
The classroom and the pastor-teacher.
Health and physical strength and your ability to think.
God takes ordinary minds and lets them take in great grace truth.

e. Ultimate Sanctification.

God gives us grace for salvation, grace for living, and grace for eternity. All of this is his great grace provision.

When it is all completed, we are his finished product.

(1 Thess. 4:16-17) Immediately the Age of Israel is picked up again.

Every believer is evaluated and given an efficiency rating. (This is at the Judgment Seat of Christ.)

3. THE FIVE GREAT STAGES OF GRACE.

a. Saving Grace.

You have tasted grace at least once. (Heb. 6:4, 1 Peter 2:3) In these passages salvation is called "the tasting of the grace of God."

b. Living Grace.

These are the things God does to keep us alive. Air, food, protection, gravity holding us on the earth. It has never really entered your mind how great this living provision is.

c. Super Grace.

This is growth beyond salvation. This is what we call the abundant life. (1 Tim. 1:14) This is "greater grace" in James 4:6. Ephesians 3:19, "Filled up with all the fullness of God."

d. Dying Grace.

This is life's highest decoration. This is the golden draw-bridge and it is wonderful. That's why we have songs like "I Won't Have To Cross Jordan Alone."

(Psalm 33:18-19, 116:15, Phil. 1:20-21)

Dying is either the worst or the best experience in life.

How you die depends on how you have lived.

For the reversionist, death is a terrible experience.

For the super grace believer, it is a great experience.

e. Surpassing Grace.

This is the grace that lasts forever. Heaven and God and perfection and a resurrection body. I am actually going to live in the house with God.

4. THE INATE POWER OF GRACE.
 - a. Grace has within it the power to make you grow. All growth is by grace. (2 Peter 3:18)
 - b. Grace is the means of stability. (Heb. 13:8) 1 Peter 5:12 says, "Stand fast in it."
 - c. Grace is the basis for production. This is the story of Paul in 1 Cor. 15:10.

5. THE FAILURE TO UTILIZE GRACE.

This is what reversionism really is.
Galatians 5:4 says, "You have drifted off course from grace."
Hebrews 12:15, "See that no one falls back from the grace of God."

6. GRACE IS ADEQUATE IN TIME OF SUFFERING

One illustration will be sufficient here.
Paul's experience in 2 Cor. 12:7-10.

7. AXIOMS OF GRACE.
 - a. God is perfect, therefore, his plan is perfect.
 - b. A perfect plan can only originate and function from the source of a perfect God.
 - c. If man can do anything meritorious in the plan of God, it is no longer perfect. Man is imperfect and he cannot contribute to a perfect plan. Man can only contribute imperfection.
 - d. A plan is no stronger than its weakest link. There is no weak links in the plan of God.
 - e. Grace excludes all human merit and all human ability.
 - f. Legalism and human works are the enemy of grace. No place for human achievement in the plan of God.
 - g. All human good is eventually associated with the worst sin which is pride. Arrogance and pride has no place in the plan of God.

8. FOUR AREAS WHERE PRIDE REJECTS GOD'S GRACE.
 - a. The pride of the believer who believes that he can lose his salvation. He actually believes his sin is so great that it can make void the salvation grace of God.
 - b. The pride of the believer who assumes circumstances and adversity are greater than the grace of God.
 - c. The pride of reversionism where the believer assumes that his emotions, ecstasies and his own spiritual experience is greater than Bible Doctrine.
 - d. The pride of pseudo-spirituality. The system of spirituality which he has worked up is greater than the work of the Holy Spirit in him.

Let us go back and finish verse 9.

Thus far we have "Be not carried away into reversionism by means of diversified and alien doctrines. For it is a noble thing that the thinking part of the mind be stabilized by means of grace."

That is the positive side of the verse. Now let's look at the negative side.

"Not with meats" comes from the strong negative ouk plus the instrumental of the noun broma and should be translated "not by means of foods."

Next we have en plus the relative pronoun hos and we will translate it "in which." Next we have the aorist, passive, indicative of apheleo and it means "they have not been profited." Next we have the present, active participle of peripateo and it means to walk in a certain pattern of life. They were using food taboos as a matter of spirituality but they were not being benefitted by it.

So the verse correctly translated says, "Do not be carried away into reversionism by means of diversified or alien doctrine, for it is a noble thing that the thinking part of the mind be stabilized by grace; not by foods for those who keep walking therein were not benefitted."