

GRACE?

Grace! Something I have always struggled with! People say “Grace” before they eat a meal, preachers preach about “Grace” and we sing amazing “Grace”. What is it really?

Luke 2v40; John 1v14; John 1v16; John 1v17 all mention the word Grace. Here are 4 verses that mention Grace, but what does it mean, why do we say Grace? Have you ever wondered why?? I wonder why we do a lot of things as Christians, I wonder where the saying of grace before a meal comes from, I can't find it anywhere in scripture. If we look at the above scriptures and apply it as we know it, praying and giving thanks before a meal, then Jesus only prayed before a meal! The translation of the word “Grace” is gracefulness, loveliness, joy and it is used over 170 times in the new testament as a Greek word, apparently according to the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia there is no one word which can describe grace in English.

So why do we say Grace before a meal ask yourself this question. Then answer it if you can, I can't! My wife says grace before every tea time without fail. Me, I am already eating, I have done it once or twice but my heart was not in it, so why do something that your heart is not in? The best words that any dictionary I have read can come up with for grace is to have gratitude, or favour toward a person, Joy, thankfulness, maybe this is why we say grace? So where did the “tradition” of saying grace come from?

Matthew 15v36; Matthew 26v27; Luke 22v17 maybe? I think this is the main reason we say Grace, but there is a problem here..... Jesus did not give thanks breaking the bread until after the meal, then he had a time of sharing God's word, I think that maybe our tradition of communion at church is a little closer to grace than a prayer before a meal, but then again, we don't have a meal first at church! Why do we do a lot of things in our Christian walk, is it just we have been taught that way? Is it tradition like I said before? Is it right or is it wrong?

2 Cor 4v15; 2 Cor 9v11; Col 4v2; 1Tim 4v4 these also back up the saying of grace at the table. But now we start to see a problem too. How often are we to be thankful? Would you agree with me if I said all the time? Many times people have asked me why I don't say grace, my instant reply is because I am thankful all the time for everything, not only my food, but my clothes, my transport, my health, my country I live in, my home, my work, my very breath, I am thankful that I am alive regardless of my circumstances or surroundings. Like Paul says in **2Cor 11 and also in Col CH 1** and the beginning and ending of most of his books he wrote he always says “thanks and glory be unto God”, it was his “catch cry” if you like.

Phil 4v12 basically tells us that we are to be the same every day, in each circumstance of our life, changing not, we are not to go to church on a Sunday and put on a painted smile, then on Monday yell, scream, swear and get drunk, then on Friday night get drunk again, act like a fool and then go to church on a Sunday and ask God to forgive us, **IF** we are truly saved the fruit of the Spirit found in **Galatians 5v22,23** must be in our lives on a **daily** basis. We must be like Jesus, full of grace, the grace of God, the love of God toward others. People are tired of hearing preaching about God and seeing those same people live a different life, matter of fact I am tired of it too.

The way people see me at most times is exactly what I am like at church on a Sunday, I don't put on a false mask, yes I struggle every day with things but my attitude is one of thanks giving. Why? Because God saved me! Because my name is written in the lambs book of life, like it tells me in **Luke 10:20**. I have had a revelation of this verse. I do not get excited when someone gets healed or set free of drugs or alcohol, but I cry when I see people honestly give their lives to Jesus, that is the most amazing miracle you will ever see is someone getting saved! Maybe that is just me, and you are different and quite frankly don't agree with me one iota! That is OK because you are not me, we have different personalities.

But this I do say to you, are you the same person on a Friday night as you are on Sunday sitting in your church! When the Pastor or friend comes visiting, are you full of grace and love for them and then when they leave instantly start talking about them behind their back when they leave? Or do you have grace and understand maybe they have issues but so do I? There is more to “Grace” than just thanking God at the dinner table! It is by grace that we are saved, so does that mean we have to say grace before every meal to be saved? I look at my life over the past few years and I don't like what I see, I lacked a lot of Grace, and I don't mean the prayer at the dinner table either.

Now, I just shut my mouth! I am asking God and learning on a daily basis how to control my tongue, because basically there has been a lot of crap come out of it! Did you know we will be held accountable for every word we speak? No, read **Matthew 12v30-37**. I think we need to pull up this holy horse and cart, get off and take a walk with Jesus, talk with him, fellowship with the Holy Spirit and really take a close look at a lot of things we say and do out of tradition, religiosity, or habit. I want to be real for Jesus, do you?