**Seeing the Grace of God**

**Introduction:**

Read Acts 11:19-23. When Barnabas comes to Antioch, he “sees the grace of God.” What exactly did he see? But first, what is grace?

* Grace is often translated as “unmerited favor.”
* Grace is an undeserved blessing; a favor or kindness shown without regard to merit or worth of the recipient.
* Vine’s Dictionary includes the idea that grace bestows pleasure and delight; also loving kindness and goodwill.
* Also inherit in the word is the idea of loveliness and agreeableness.

**Text:** Acts 11:19-23

**Body:**

1. **He Saw the Saved** (Verse 21)
* Saints who had been persecuted in Jerusalem came preaching the Lord Jesus. (Verse 20)
* Without the saving message of the gospel, they were lost and without hope. (Ephesians 2:12)
* Because of God’s grace, He offered salvation to them. (Titus 2:11-12) This undeserved favor was made available to everyone. (I Timothy 2:4)
1. **He Saw the Preaching of the Lord Jesus** (Verse 20)
* What they preached is also called the “word of His grace.” (Acts 14:3)
* It is also called “the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts 20:24)
* God’s grace is not given apart from the teaching of that word and obedience to it. (Titus 2:11-12)
* The word of grace teaches us that all spiritual blessings (including forgiveness and redemption) are only found in Christ. (Ephesians 1:3,6,7)
* Also, God’s grace must be received. (II Corinthians 6:1) Even though it is available to everyone, not all will receive it.

Imagine a wealthy man having compassion on a poor, homeless man, in his impoverished and despicable condition, and deciding to do something to save him. The poor man doesn’t deserve the rich man’s help (he’s done nothing to earn it), yet the offer is there. The rich man offers to take the poor man and get him cleaned up and to give him a job and a place to live. If the poor man takes him up on his offer, then (and only then) is he saved (from his plight) by grace. If he does not take up the rich man’s offer, he forfeits grace and cannot benefit from it at all. You see, all because mercy and grace was shown toward the poor man doesn’t mean he was automatically saved from his predicament. He has to be willing to receive it. And if the poor man did accept the offer, but then turned back to his miserable lifestyle, he would no longer receive the rich man’s act of grace. UNKNOWN

1. **He Saw the Love and Kindness of the Saints** (Verses 27-30)
* Those who had received the grace of God showed grace to others.
* The unselfish giving of the Macedonian Christians is called the “grace of God.” (II Corinthians 8:1-5)
* Paul wanted the Corinthians to excel in this grace also. (II Corinthians 8:7)
* God makes grace abound so that Christians may abound in good works. (II Corinthians 9:8-11)

**Conclusion:**

Barnabas was glad when he saw the grace of God. If you have not received the grace of God, I encourage you to do it now.

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