

February 23, 2020

Gospel Confrontation (2)

Free Grace Presbyterian Church

SOME THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION:

Freedom is peace with God, the cleansing of our guilty conscience through faith in Christ crucified, the unutterable joy of forgiveness, acceptance, access and sonship, the experience of mercy without merit.

John Stott

British Reformed Anglican theologian and pastor

The gospel breaks down all conceivable barriers to spiritual unity and fellowship in the church. We do not cease being Jews or Gentiles, men or women, of course. We do, however, share the same Saviour, receive the same Spirit and the same baptism, and stand as members in God's church on precisely the same foundation.

Guy Prentiss Waters

Presbyterian NT scholar

"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

Isaiah 49:6

Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:11-13

"Hear me, all of you, and understand: There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him...Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.) And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him."

Mark 7:14-20

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations.

Psalms 22:27-28

The essence of the Holy Spirit's ministry is...to mediate the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ.

J.I. Packer

Reformed Anglican theologian

In other words, the Spirit is sent to make Christ real to people and to show us who Christ really is in his glory, so that we come to love him, trust him, obey him, and show him to the world.

Derek Thomas

Welsh Presbyterian pastor

GOD SUMMONS US BY HIS GRACE

Leader: Oh sing to the LORD, all the earth! Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!

Psalms 96

People: **For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods.**

Leader: For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

People: **Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.**

Leader: Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength! Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts!

People: **Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!**

We sing to the Lord, declaring his glory

"Now unto Jehovah"



Now un - to Je - ho - vah, ye sons of the migh - ty, all
glo - ry and strength and do - min - ion ac - cord; as - cribe to him glo -
ry, and ren - der him hon - or. In beau - ty of ho - li - ness wor - ship the Lord!
1. The voice of Je - ho - vah comes down on the wa - ters; in thun - der the God
2. The voice of Je - ho - vah is migh - ty, is migh - ty; the voice of Je - ho -
3. Each one in his tem - ple his glo - ry pro - claim - eth. He sat on the flood;
of the glo - ry draws nigh. Lo, o - ver the waves of the wide - flow - ing
vah in maj - es - ty speaks: the voice of Je - ho - vah the ce - dars is
he is King on his throne. Je - ho - vah all strength to his peo - ple im -
wa - ters Je - ho - vah as King is en - thron - ed on high!
break - ing; Je - ho - vah the ce - dars of Leb - a - non breaks.
part - eth; Je - ho - vah with peace ev - er bless - eth his own.

In worship we are part of "the large congregation" where all the writers of Scripture address us, where hymn writers use music to express truths that touch us not only in our heads but in our hearts, where the preacher who has just lived through six days of doubt, hurt, faith and blessing with the worshippers speaks the truth of Scripture in the language of the congregation's present experience.
Eugene Peterson

GOD SANCTIFIES US BY HIS GRACE

Isaiah 59

When we hear what God requires of us we are faced with the fact that we have not done and can not do what he requires. So for our worship to be honest it must acknowledge our failure. This leaves us no other hope but his grace and mercy.

God declares that our sin separates us from him

Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear... But the Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins, declares the Lord.

We repent of our sin, confessing it and turning from it to God

Leader: Gracious and merciful God, you have said that:

You bless those who are poor in spirit, acknowledging their need of you, giving them the kingdom of heaven.

People: **But we have been proud in spirit, inflated with pride in our own strength; we have forgotten how much we need you.**

Leader: You have said that you bless those who mourn for their sin, for you will comfort them.

People: **But we have not mourned over our sins, instead we have hardened ourselves so that we are unaware of the sin in our own lives and the grief it causes you.**

Leader: You have said that you bless those who are gentle and lowly, for you will give them the whole earth.

People: **But we have valued toughness over gentleness. We have too often chosen to be concerned with ourselves rather than with our brothers and sisters and neighbors. Like the prodigal son, we want to satisfy ourselves rather than you, our Father in heaven.**

Leader: You have said that you bless those who hunger and thirst for you, for you will satisfy them.

People: **But we have hungered after the pleasures, prestige, and possessions of this world. We have turned from you by choosing to satisfy our desires instead of seeking you.**

Leader: Lord, you have said that the wages of sin is death, but your gift is eternal life in Christ Jesus.

People: **And so we rejoice that it is not what our hands have done, but your grace and power displayed in Jesus' death that saves us, that brings us sweet and permanent peace with you. May we stand in your grace in Jesus Christ and rejoice in the hope of your glory. Amen.**

God declares that we have peace with him through the Redeemer who came

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him.

Colossians 1

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God

Romans 5

We rest in the sweet and permanent peace that is ours in Christ Jesus

"Poor Sinner, Dejected with Fear"

1. Poor sin - ner de - ject - ed with fear, un - bos - om thy mind to the
2. Come just as you are with thy woe; fall down at the feet of the
3. The soul that on Je - sus re - lies, he'll nev - er, no nev - er de -

4. Lamb; no wrath on his brow he does wear, nor
Lamb; he will not, he can - not say, "Go," but
ceive; he free - ly and faith - ful - ly gives more

7. will he poor mourn - ers con - demn. His arm of om - ni - po - tent
sure - ly will take out thy stain. A foun - tain is o - pened for
bless - ings than we can con - ceive. Yea, down to old age he will

10. grace is a - ble and will - ing to save; a
sin, and thou - sands its vir - tues have proved; he'll
keep, nor will he for - sake us at last; he

13. sweet and a per - ma - nent peace he'll free - ly and
take thee and plunge thee there - in, wash - ly thee and
knows and is known by his sheep; they're his and he will

16. faith - ful - ly give.
filth in his blood.
hold them fast.

The Bible says that all people are sinners, fleeing from God. But in Jesus Christ we find peace and healing. In his death on the cross, he took our sin and paid the price for it. And so we come to him in faith, confessing our sin and need for him, trusting in his death alone to bring us life.

For from his
fullness we have all
received, grace
upon grace.
John 1

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

1. Come, thou fount of ev-'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy
2. Here I raise my Eb-en - e - zer; hi-ther by thy help I'm
3. O to grace how great a debt - or dail - y I'm con - strained to

grace; streams of mer - cy, ne - ver ceas-ing, call for songs of loud - est
come; and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at
be; let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan - d'ring heart to

praise. Teach me some me - lo - dious son - net, sung by
home. Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan - dering
thee. Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to

flam - ing tongues a - bove; praise the mount! I'm fixed up -
from the fold of God: he, to res - cue me from
leave the God I love: here's my heart, O take and

on it, mount of God's un - chang - ing love.
dang - er, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
seal it, seal it for thy courts a - bove.

GOD SPEAKS WITH US BY HIS GRACE

Acts 10

¹At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, ²a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God. ³About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, "Cornelius." ⁴And he stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. ⁵And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter. ⁶He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea." ⁷When the angel who spoke to him had departed, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among those who attended him, ⁸and having related everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

⁹The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. ¹⁰And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance ¹¹and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. ¹²In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. ¹³And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." ¹⁴But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." ¹⁵And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common." ¹⁶This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

¹⁷Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood at the gate ¹⁸and called out to ask whether Simon who was called Peter was lodging there. ¹⁹And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. ²⁰Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them." ²¹And Peter went down to the men and said, "I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason for your coming?" ²²And they said, "Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say." ²³So he invited them in to be his guests.

The next day he rose and went away with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. ²⁴And on the following day they entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. ²⁶But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am a man." ²⁷And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered. ²⁸And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for

Scripture is the ongoing rapport between heaven and earth, between Christ and his church, between God and his children. It does not just tie us to the past; it binds us to the living Lord in the heavens. It is the living voice God.
Herman Bavinck

a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean. ²⁹So when I was sent for, I came without objection. I ask then why you sent for me.”

³⁰And Cornelius said, “Four days ago, about this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing ³¹and said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. ³²Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon who is called Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.’ ³³So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord.”

³⁴So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), ³⁷you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: ³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, ⁴¹not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

⁴⁴While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. ⁴⁵And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, ⁴⁷“Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” ⁴⁸And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

What do the
Scriptures
principally teach?

The scriptures
principally teach
what man is to
believe
concerning God,
and what duty
God requires of
man.

Westminster
Shorter Catechism
Question 3

Sermon

Gospel Confrontation (2)
The Church that God Built

Rev. Per Almquist

It is not the Bible
itself, but the Bible
in the hands of the
Holy Spirit that
manifests the
power of God. The
Holy Spirit displays
the power of God
in his Word
through the
human agency of
Scripture
explained.

We praise God that, though nothing we do can bring us peace with God, Christ's work has brought an end to our alienation from God

"Not What My Hands Have Done"

Slowly



1. Not what my hands have done can save my guilt - y soul;
2. Thy work a - lone, O Christ, can ease this weight of sin;
3. Thy grace a - lone, O God, to me can par - don speak;
4. I praise the God of grace; I trust his truth and might;



not what my toil - ing flesh has borne can make my spir - it whole.
thy blood a - lone, O Lamb of God, can give me peace with - in.
thy pow'r a - lone, O Son of God, can this sore bond - age break.
he calls me his, I call him mine, my God, my joy, my light.



Not what I feel or do can give me peace with God;
Thy love to me, O God, not mine, O Lord, to thee;
No oth - er work, save thine, no oth - er blood will do;
Tis he who sav - eth me, and free - ly par - don gives;



not all my prayers and sighs and tears can bear my aw - ful load.
can rid me of this dark un - rest, and set my spir - it free!
no strength, save that which is di - vine, can bear me safe - ly through.
I love be - cause he lov - eth me, I live be - cause he lives,



I love be-cause he lov-eth me, I live be-cause he lives!

...by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2

GOD STRENGTHENS US BY HIS GRACE

We come to God and experience peace with him through Jesus Christ as we celebrate the Lord's Supper

We invite to the Lord's Table all those who are baptized followers of Jesus Christ, under the authority of Christ and his body, the Church. By eating the bread and drinking the cup, you proclaim that you are in covenant relationship with God, that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. If you have any doubts about your participation, please speak to one of the elders after the service. Wine and bread are the elements of the supper as instituted by Jesus Christ and so we follow his example.

In the Lord's Supper the believer is strengthened and fed. In keeping the sacrament as a sign, we gain from it a strengthened faith; as a seal of God's covenant we gain increased assurance of salvation and communion with God.

"Arise, My Soul, Arise"



1. A - rise, my soul, a - rise, shake off your guilt - y fears;
2. He ev - er lives a - bove, for me to in - ter - cede,
3. Five bleed - ing wounds he bears, re - ceived on Cal - va - ry;
4. My God is re - con - ciled; his pard - 'ning voice I hear;



the bleed - ing sac - ri - fice on my be - half ap - pears:
his all - re - deem - ing love, his prec - ious blood to plead;
they pour ef - fec - tual prayers, they strong - ly plead for me.
he owns me for his child; I can no long - er fear;



be - fore the throne my sure - ty stands, be - fore the throne my sure - ty stands,
his blood a - toned for ev - 'ry race, his blood a - toned for ev - 'ry race,
"For - give him, O for - give," they cry, "for - give him, O for - give," they cry,
with con - fi - dence I now draw nigh, with con - fi - dence I now draw nigh,



my name is writ - ten on his hands.
and sprin - kles now the throne of grace.
"don't let that ran - somed sin - ner die!"
and "Fa - ther, Ab - ba, Fa - ther!" cry.



Men: A-rise, a-rise, a-rise, Unison: a-rise, my soul, a-rise.
Women: A-rise a-rise a-rise



Men: A-rise, a-rise, a-rise, Unison: a-rise, my soul, a-rise,
Women: A-rise a-rise a-rise



shake off your guilt - y fears and rise!

As we give our offerings to God, we respond to his word to us in the reading and preaching of Scripture by offering ourselves to God again with renewed faith, love, gratitude, and commitment.

We celebrate our peace with God and our bond together as we give him our tithes and offerings

We give our offerings to God as a public demonstration of our faith, putting our money where our mouths are. In this action we show what we claim, that our lives are organized around God and lived for him instead of ourselves.

We come to God in prayer asking that he would be work in us by his Spirit to experience his peace in all of life and proclaim it to others

*During this time we live in faith, trusting in the power of his grace, placing our lives and our church in his hands.
We ask that he would work in us and through us for his glory.*

GOD SENDS US WITH HIS GRACE

We proclaim the means of our peace: Jesus Christ

"Lift High the Name of Jesus"

1. Lift high the name of Je - sus, of Je - sus our King. Make
2. Lift high the name of Je - sus, of Je - sus our Lord. His
3. Lift high the name of Je - sus, of Je - sus our Light. No

5 known the pow - er of his grace, the beau - ty of his peace. Re -
oth - er name on earth can save, can raise a soul to life. To He

9 mem - ber how his mer - cy reached and we cried out to him. He
share the rea - son for our hope, to serve with love and grace, that
o - pens up our eyes to see the har - vest he has grown. We

13 lift - ed us to so - lid ground, to free - dom from our sin. Oh
all who see him shine through us might bring the Fa - ther praise.
la - bor in his fields of grace as he leads sin - ners home.

17 sing my soul and tell all he's done 'till the earth and heavens are filled with his glo - ry.

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28

God promises his peace through Jesus Christ

Leader: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

People: Amen

Please stay and join us for a time of refreshment and enjoying each other's company.

This is a time to share in life together as the gospel calls us

as we reconnect with those we know and as we meet someone new.

Revelation 1



Welcome to Free Grace

We are a broken church full of broken people. We know we need God's free grace. Some of us have accepted this grace, some are exploring what it's all about. All of us are still trying to understand it. We are a church that seeks to proclaim this free grace of God with both our words and our lives. Not satisfied with simply talking about it, we want to live it out. We invite you to come, explore, and live God's free grace with us.

Our Connections



Free Grace is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), a family of churches that seeks to be faithful to the Scriptures, true to the Reformed faith, and obedient to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

Our Leadership

Free Grace is lead by her elders, men called by God and set apart by the church to care and lead her as individual members, families, and as a whole. Our elders are:

Rev. Per Almquist (pastor)
Brian Cosgrove
Paul Martin
Ken Morris
Ben Van Dyke



Credits

Scripture quotations are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*, copyright ©2001 by

Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. All songs are used by permission. All rights are reserved by the copyright holders. All are used according to CCLI license #11100390.

Connor Crawford, voice; Dan Crawford, voice; Beth Almquist, violin, voice; Wagner Sgobbi, piano

"Now Unto Jehovah" music ©2009 Gregory D. Wilbur. Words: Psalm 29, verse 1, The Psalter, 1912, verses 2-4, Book of Psalms, 1871. Music: Gregory D. Wilbur, 2009.

"Poor Sinner, Dejected with Fear" ©2001 MPJ Music/Velveten Songs. Words: William Gadsby, 1838? Music: Katy Bowser and Matthew Perryman Jones, 2001.

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" Public Domain. Words: Robert Robinson, 1758. Music: Asahel Nettleton, 1825.

"Not What My Hands Have Done" ©2001 Kevin Twit Music. Words: Horatius Bonar, 1861, alt. Music: Kevin Twit, 2001.

"Arise, My Soul, Arise" ©1996 Kevin Twit Music. Words: Charles Wesley, 1742, alt. 1961, mod. Music: Kevin Twit, 1996.

"Lift High the Name of Jesus" ©2013 Getty Music Publishing (BMI), Alletrop Music (BMI), and Fionán de Barra. Words and Music: Keith & Kristyn Getty, Ed Cash, and Fionán de Barra, 2013.

God offers peace with him: a relationship in which I am loved by the God of the universe. Why then am I willing to be content merely with a quiet life to do as I please?

broken people
bound together in Christ
for God's glory