

MORNING WORSHIP

20 July 2008

Title: "The Dispensation of the grace of God"

Text: Ephesians 3

(I) THE GRACE OF GOD WITH REFERENCE TO SALVATION

1. God's salvation is offered to all
2. His salvation must be appropriated by humble faith
3. The new life of Christ must be lived out consciously of the grace of God

(II) THE GRACE OF GOD WITH REFERENCE TO MINISTRY

1. Ministry is not something we determine for ourselves

- a) Self-determined ministry will not flourish and succeed
- b) Self-determined ministry will flounder and fail in time

2. Ministry must be understood with reference to the grace of God

"...the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me..." Ephesians 3:2

a) Paul's ministry

- i) As an apostle to the Gentiles (**Ephesians 3:1; 2 Timothy 1:11**)
- ii) As one given special knowledge of Christ (**Ephesians 3:4**)
- iii) As a writer of great doctrines (**Ephesians 3:3-4**)
- iv) As a minister of God (**Ephesians 3:7**)

b) Paul's acknowledgment of God's grace

- i) It was all because of "the grace of God" (**Ephesians 3:2**)
- ii) It was all according to "the gift of the grace of God" **Ephesians 3:7**

(III) GRACE AND POWER

1. Grace does not cancel out the power of God

2. Grace implies power

"...according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power." Ephesians 3:7

(IV) APPRECIATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD IN MINISTRY

1. The least of all saints (Ephesians 3:8)

- a) Because of past sins (Cf. 1 Timothy 1:12-16)
- b) Because of personal weaknesses (Cf. Romans 5-7)

2. Special ministry to the Gentiles

- a) To preach the unsearchable riches of Christ (**Ephesians 3:8**)
- b) To help all appreciate the manifold wisdom of God (**Ephesians 3:10**)
- c) To comprehend God's eternal purpose accomplished in Christ (**Ephesians 3:11**)

(V) OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE GIVEN TO US

- 1. A fresh sense of appreciation of our ministry for the Lord**
- 2. A renewed sense of commitment to serve humbly and well**
- 3. A greater sense of awe as we ponder God's grace outpoured**