

The Effects of God's Grace
(Acts 11:19-23)

Introduction:

1. These verses help us see how the Lord's plan for evangelizing the world was being carried out (Acts 1:8).
 - a. The Gospel was first preached in Jerusalem (Acts 2-7).
 - b. Persecution caused many to leave Jerusalem, but they preached the Gospel wherever they went (Acts 8:1, 4).
 - c. According to Acts 11:19-21, the Gospel was preached in Antioch, and many people were converted to the Lord.
2. We learn from Acts 11:22 that the church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch.
3. Vs.23 says that Barnabas saw something in Antioch that made him "glad."
4. He saw "*the grace of God.*"
 - a. God's grace cannot literally be seen because it is invisible.
 - b. However, the effects of God's grace can be seen.
 - c. This is the sense in which Barnabas saw the grace of God in Antioch.
 - d. He saw many people who had turned to the Lord.
5. Barnabas exhorted the people in Antioch to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart.
6. In our lesson we are examining 3 effects of God's grace.
7. This information will help us understand how God's grace can be seen.

Discussion:

- I. FIRST, GOD'S GRACE SAVES (Ephesians 2:1-9)
 - A. In vs.1-3 the spiritual condition of those who are outside of Christ is revealed.
 - B. We learn from vs.4-9 that God's grace saves us when we are raised with Christ.
 - C. Being raised with Christ is explained in:
 1. Colossians 2:12-13
 2. Romans 6:3-4.
- II. SECOND, GOD'S GRACE TEACHES (Titus 2:11-14)
 - A. In addition to bringing salvation (vs.11), God's grace teaches us how to live (vs.12-14).
 - B. Negatively, God's grace teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts (vs.12a).
 1. God's people are to be holy (1 Peter 1:15-16).
 2. God's grace does not give Christians a license to sin (Romans 6:1-2).
 - C. Positively, God's grace teaches us to "*live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world,*" looking for the Lord's return (vs.12b-14).
- III. THIRD, GOD'S GRACE SUSTAINS (2 Corinthians 12:1-10)
 - A. In vs.1-6 Paul discussed an experience that could have filled him with pride.
 - B. He stated in vs.7 that he was given "*a thorn in the flesh*" to prevent this from occurring.
 - C. He asked the Lord to remove this thorn (vs.8).
 - D. The Lord responded in vs.9a by stating that His grace was sufficient to sustain Paul.
 - E. Paul showed in vs.9b-10 that he had learned to trust in God's grace for strength.

Conclusion:

1. As the song says, God's grace is amazing -- it will save us, it will teach us, and it will sustain us.
2. However, the Bible warns us in 2 Corinthians 6:1 not to receive it in vain.
3. Let us receive it as the people in Antioch did -- others will be able to see it.