

FREE GRACE THEOLOGY  
by Dr. Paul Benware

In my experience, coming to see the truth that salvation is absolutely free and that discipleship is demanding has been fundamental in my understanding of much of scripture.

I am convinced that this understanding surfaces when the interpreter of scripture allows language to be dealt with normally. Grace means grace (unmerited favor) and salvation as a free gift means free with no additions. When the Bible views the reception of eternal life as a completely free gift based solely on trusting in Jesus Christ, it means that any and every form of works-righteousness is excluded.

This understanding of free grace obviously impacts my approach to evangelism. It truly is “good news” that eternal life is received from God by trusting in Jesus. I do not need to try and list that which must be committed to Christ to get this eternal life. It is, in fact, free.

Not only does the concept of “free grace” affect my view of the gospel but it determines many things in the realm of sanctification. God has given guidelines, commands and principles which are essential to a believer becoming more like Christ in his/her character. To apply these guidelines, commands and principles as requirements in being justified brings confusion as well as impossible standards into the matter of being born again.

In my own thinking, “free grace” has been foundational in coming to see the important of the coming Judgment Seat of Christ where rewards will be received (or not). But “free grace” theology not only impacts this issue but ripples through so much of my theology including the very character of God Himself.