



# Blackfoot

## Church of Christ

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### The Offer of Grace

By Doy Moyer

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men...” (Titus 2:11)

If God’s grace has appeared to bring salvation to all, then why aren’t all saved? Because grace is something that still needs to be understood and received in truth (cf. Col 1:6; 2 Cor 6:1). Grace is “on the table” for everyone, but not everyone will partake of it.

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36).

“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life” (John 5:39-40).

Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said,

“It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles” (Acts 13:46).

This is not God withholding His grace. This is people shunning the grace that God offers. May we all receive God’s grace willingly and thereby partake of the salvation for which Christ shed His blood for all.

## The Dispensation of the Grace of God

By Joe R. Price

The word translated “dispensation” in our English Bibles (oikinomia) means the management of a stewardship (Strong’s Greek Dictionary, #3622, BDAG, 697). Vine’s Dictionary says the word oikinomia “primarily signifies ‘the management of a household or of household affairs’ (oikos, ‘a house,’ nomos, ‘a law’); then the management or administration of the property of others, and so ‘a stewardship,’ Luke 16:2–4” (Vine, II:174). So, a dispensation is a stewardship, the management and dispensing of the goods of the householder.

Dispensation is frequently (yet incorrectly) used to mean an age or a period time. W. E. Vine notes: “A ‘dispensation’ is not a period or epoch (a common, but erroneous, use of the word), but a mode of dealing, an arrangement or administration of affairs” (Ibid). As brother Raymond Harris observed, “The words dispensation and age have very different meanings” (“The Patriarchal Age,” Truth Magazine, XLVIII:11:1, June 3, 2004). Let us be careful not to confuse the two (1 Pet. 4:11).

Paul had a dispensation or stewardship given to him, namely his work of preaching (and thus dispensing the blessings of) the gospel (1 Cor. 9:17, 16-18). He amplified the nature of this dispensation in Ephesians 3:1-2: “For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you...” Paul’s charge as a “chosen vessel” of Christ (an apostle) was to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15; 26:17-20). The apostolic gospel is how God dispenses His grace to the lost (Acts 22:14-15). Any attempt to separate God’s grace from the new covenant that came through the apostles is false, futile and doomed to fail (Gal. 1:6-9).

In Ephesians 3:3-7, Paul explained the dispensation of the grace of God he had been given. Since we require God’s grace to be saved, it is essential that we understand how God dispenses His grace. Christians are the beneficiaries of this dispensation (Eph. 2:5, 8-9).

The dispensation of the grace of God was given by God to the apostles through divine revelation: “How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery” (Eph. 3:3). The gospel they preached provides grace and is from God, not men (Gal. 1:11-12). Any message that fails to conform to God’s revelation given them, is not the gospel they preached (Gal. 1:6-7).

The dispensation of the grace of God involved apostolic preaching (1 Cor. 2:10-13; Heb. 2:3-4). From Pentecost, when they were baptized with the Holy Spirit, the apostles spoke “all the words of this life” (Acts 2:1-4, 14, 22, 40; 5:20).

The dispensation of the grace of God preserved the inspired writings of the apostles: “as I have briefly written already” (Eph. 3:3). The writings of Paul in Ephesians 1 and 2, along with the writings of Christ’s apostles and prophets, are the word of God and constitute “the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3; 1 Cor. 14:37; 2 Pet. 3:16; 2 Thess. 2:15; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Without their inspired writings, God’s grace would not be available today.

The benefit of dispensing the grace of God through a written revelation (inspired Scripture) is explained: “by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ” (Eph. 3:4). The Scriptures are to be read, understood and followed for our growth “in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 3:16-18). Only by the Scriptures do we learn of God’s grace that saves sinners. Only by the Scriptures are we instructed by God’s grace in holy living (Titus 2:11-15). Only by knowing the Scriptures do we understand the apostles’ knowledge in the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3:4).

The dispensation of the grace of God explains the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3:5-6). The “mystery of Christ” is God’s plan to redeem sinners according to “His promise in Christ through the gospel” (Eph. 3:5-6). More to Paul’s point, it contains God’s plan to save Gentiles by the grace that is in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:10-11; 3:5-6; Rom. 1:15-17).

As ministers of the gospel, the apostles fulfilled their dispensation of the grace of God. Their dispensation was to preach the gospel of God’s grace (Eph. 3:8; Acts 20:24). Through their gospel, the powerful work of God saves the lost (Eph. 3:6-7; Rom. 1:16-17).

And so, the apostles were given the dispensation of the grace of God to preach the gospel to the world (Mk. 16:15; Acts 1:8). Their stewardship, to reveal the mystery of Christ to the world, has been fulfilled (Col. 1:25). Through the gospel, the apostles faithfully administered the distribution of God’s grace to the world. In this gospel age, the dispensation of God’s grace is provided through their teachings, the New Testament. As we believe and follow the apostles’ teachings, we receive Christ, and stand in the grace of God (Jno. 13:20; Rom. 5:1-2).

## Prayer Requests & Announcements

- David and Catherine have been sick this week
- Sherry Clay, an evangelism contact has surgery on a cancer, and they discovered further surgery is necessary
- Scott Boucher (Sparks NV) cancer treatments have had mixed results
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- The Christians in the Philippines

## Worship Assignments

### Today

**Song Leader** – Ray Mitchell

**Lord's Table** – Chad Mitchell

### Wednesday

**Song Leader** – Ray Mitchell

**Invitation** – Chad Mitchell

Blackfoot Church of Christ  
370 North Shilling Ave.  
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

### Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM  
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM  
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



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