

# Living by Grace

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## I. Introduction.

A. Text: Galatians 2:15ff.

B. We live our lives now through faith in Christ.

1. This could be understood to mean that we live by God's power. (Philippians 4:13)

2. This could also be understood to mean that our righteous standing before God is based on Christ. This is the way Paul uses it in this context.

1. Justification is point-in-time experience.

2. Justification has a long term effect on our lives. It is a present experience and needs to be applied to our consciences every day. (Romans 8)

C. This message will focus on how to deal with a guilty conscience in light of the fact that we live by grace- that is, faith in Jesus Christ.

II. Living by faith in Jesus Christ means that I look to Christ for my day-to-day standing before God. I do not depend on my perception of my performance.

A. We readily accept that we are saved by faith, but we often believe that we must relate to God on a day-to-day basis through our performance. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

1. Our perception of our performance is usually based on avoiding certain sins and performing certain spiritual disciplines.

2. No matter what sins I avoid or spiritual disciplines I practice, I can never love God with all my heart, soul, and mind and love my neighbor as myself. This is God's standard and we will always come up short.

B. We are accepted for Christ's sake and merit, not our own, not just at the time of our salvation but in an ongoing daily sense. (Romans 7)

1. As we grow in Christ, we are more conscious of our own sin and failure and also are more appreciative of what Christ has done for us. These must grow together.

2. The Bible states that we can come confidently to God through faith in Jesus and through His righteousness. (Ephesians 3:12ff; 1 Peter 2:5)

a) Even our good deeds are stained with impure and mixed motives.

b) If we have accepted Christ, God will not count our bad days against us. He may discipline you, but He will not count your sin against you. (Romans 4:7-8)

C. We will never be able to deal with the power of a sin over our lives if we do not first deal with the guilt of that sin.

1. If you would be holy, you have to realize that God dealt with the guilt of your sin at the cross.

2. This frees to look to God by faith for the power to deal with that sin.

III. Living by faith in the righteousness and death of Jesus Christ does not mean that you will become careless in the Christian life. It means that you will become motivated to pursue holiness more diligently. (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

A. Christ's love compels us to live no longer for ourselves, but for Him.

B. God is performance oriented, but the good news is that Christ already performed in your place.

**Application questions:**

1. Why does Christ's love and grace produce motivation toward holiness instead of spiritual lethargy?

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2. Why must we deal with the guilt of sin in order to conquer it?

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3. Is your pursuit of holiness motivated by performance or grace?

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