

For countless centuries past and I surmise until Jesus comes back to earth, there will be discussion and debate as to how to harmonize the Grace of God and the Works of Men in the Plan of Salvation.

Due to the apparent challenge of the task, some (Calvinists) have supersized Grace and minimized works. Still others, perhaps in response, have minimized Grace and put all of the emphasis on man's works. These two schools of thought, though very different, have one thing in common: they are both wrong.

God has revealed His perfect plan and it includes a perfect balance between His grace and our works. Not to oversimplify this grand design, but I submit that if you can understand one single word, then you and I will have the proper understanding of God's great Plan of Salvation.

This word is found in **I Peter 1:3-5** – "**Inheritance.**" This is a term used a handful of times in the NT as a name for the gift God has offered but also as an explanation for how it is given and received.

And we all understand the elements that surround an INHERITANCE. Consider this example:
A man offers an inheritance to his sons. The inheritance is...

- 1) Ten million dollars. Far more than his boys could ever earn or deserve.
- 2) Controlled by the father. That is, the father decides every element of its distribution. How much? To whom? How? When? In What way? He earned it and owns it.
- 3) Provided only to his heirs. He could have given it to anyone, any way. But He chose his sons. If you or I showed up to claim it, we would be denied, since only heirs are eligible.
- 4) Subject to the father's conditions. He requires a list of 100 things be completed in 10 years. The amount and recipients are non-negotiable. So too is the list of conditions: fixed. Some are easy, like "buy your mother flowers monthly." Some may be much harder. But no matter what the boys might say about it, the conditions are firm and absolute. However, even if they complete them, they have not earned or deserve the \$10M.
- 5) Secured by honoring the father's will. They would daily consult the last will and testament. Those pages would be well worn from being read over and over, since the boys understand it not only describes the inheritance, but every one of the 100 conditions to access it.

Can you understand how this inheritance works? The gracious gift? The authority over it? The specific recipients? The included conditions. The will that laid it all out?

Then you have all the understanding and knowledge you need to comprehend salvation from God and how His Grace and our Works work in unison.

The Inheritance is...

I. The Eternal Salvation of Your Soul

- a. **I Peter 1:4,9** – "*imperishable*" "*undefiled*" "*will not fade away*" "*reserved in heaven for you*" "*salvation of your souls.*" This is a gift greater than anything we could earn or deserve.
 - i. **Revelation 22:1-5** – Unimaginable beauty. None of us are worthy, nor ever will be.

II. Owned and Controlled by the Father

- a. **I Peter 1:3,5** – "*according to His great mercy*" "*protected by the power of God*" "*a salvation ready to be revealed.*" He is the benefactor. All power and control belong to Him alone.
 - i. **Hebrews 9:15** – God did all of this. God has control over every element therein.
 - ii. We did not pay the price. We do not build the covenant or decide who enjoys it.

III. Provided to Heirs, and Heirs Only

- a. **I Peter 1:3-4** – *“born again to a living hope” “inheritance”* – The word inheritance is connected to the word “heirship.” We’re born into His family, where blessings are possible.
 - i. **Galatians 4:4-7; 3:28-29** – God has offered His heirship to every one of us!
 - ii. **Galatians 4:26-27** – THIS is why faith in God and baptism is so important!

IV. Subject to the Father’s Conditions

- a. **I Peter 1:7-8** – *“proof of your faith” “you love Him” “believe in Him” “outcome of your faith.”*
This is where our faithfulness and works come in, not to purchase, but to access the gift.
 - i. Nothing God could ask us to do, 100 things over 10 years, 1,000 things over a lifetime would ever make us worthy of salvation. It cannot be earned by any.
 - ii. However, without meeting the conditions God has added, we cannot access grace.
 - iii. And this goes beyond the initial faith and baptism we read a moment ago.
 - iv. **Romans 8:12-17** – Deny the flesh, choose the Spirit, and fight for it.
 - v. **Colossians 3:17-24** – We live for Him, in every relationship, and He rewards us.
 - vi. These are His conditions, not as payment, but to honor Him and access His gift.

V. Secured by Honoring the Pages of His Will

- a. **I Peter 1:10-12** – *“As to this salvation...” “preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit.”*
We hold in our hands the last will and testament of God, given to us to secure the promise.
 - i. **Ephesians 3:3-6** – The whole plan: God’s grace, man’s works, the whole picture, right here in this book! What an amazing thing to have within our hands.
 - ii. **Ephesians 2:8-10** – It explains how grace is not earned by works, but we are created to be great workers for God, and this was His eternal purpose!
 - iii. **Acts 20:32** – And so we love this book. We live on it, for it, by it. It will give you all that you need to certainly and absolutely become and always be an heir of God.

Conclusion: Oh how quickly those 10 years would fly by. And how effortlessly the list of requirements would be met. How affectionately would the will be read daily. If one was fortunate enough to be a son of the wealthy man who had left a fortune for you. We’d talk about it every day. We would live for it. And when we received it, the enjoyment of this great gift would be all we imagined and more.

The Inheritance, the true inheritance, is for YOU

- 1) Purity from your sins and a place with God in heaven forever.
- 2) But it can only be received from God only and by God’s way only.
- 3) And that means faith and baptism, for only through such can you become an heir.
- 4) And a life devoted to meeting the daily conditions that please Him, lest we lose our heirship.
- 5) So, read the will. Love the book. Let the Bible paint the picture of reward and lead you to it.

Who wants what God has to offer? There is no gift but His gift. There is no way but His way.