

“THE BOUNDARIES OF GOD,” #2

INTRODUCTION

In a previous lesson, we observed that God has boundaries in our relationship with Him. We noted that God has set the boundary for SIN, in that He tells us what we can do in life to please Him, and if we cross over the line He has set, we have transgressed. We transgress by **doing** what God has forbidden. 1 John 3:4. Then, we transgress by **failing to do** what He has commanded. Jas. 4:17. God has also giving us His boundary for salvation.

The ONLY way one can enjoy salvation is by **obeying God’s law of pardon**, as given by Christ His Son, through the gospel. Rom. 1:16; Mar. 16:15-16. NOW, let’s consider some other boundaries God has set for us relative to God’s grace and our worship to Him.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, there is the BOUNDARY OF GOD’S GRACE.

A. God’s “grace” is simply His **favor** that is always available to us through the gospel.

1. His grace is associated with the **blood** of Jesus His Son. Eph. 1:7
2. His grace is associated with the **faith** of the gospel. Eph. 2:8-9
3. His grace is associated with what is **right** and cannot be separated from God’s word. Acts 20:32

- a. God’s favor is not extended to those who walk in their own way. Gen. 6:1-5
- b. God’s favor is extended to those who walk in His righteousness. Gen. 6:8-9

B. There are many misconceptions of God’s grace.

1. Some have the idea that grace is something mysterious that God bestows on someone either just before or just after the enjoyment of salvation.
2. Others think it something like liquid, that God pours out upon His children to excuse them from His condemnation.
 - a. It is said by some that if people get married when very **young** and it doesn’t work out, that God’s “grace” will take care of them and they can marry again and still be okay with God.
 - b. If this is true, **older** folks who divorce can argue that they were too young when they first married, and God’s grace can take care of them too.
3. Then, some have the idea that God’s grace is **so abundant** that it gives them the right to sin, and still be approved of God.
 - a. True, God’s grace does “abound”, and is available when salvation from sin is granted. Rom. 4:19-21 (Explain)
 - b. The abundance of God’s grace does **not excuse sin**. Rom. 6:1-4 (Explain)

C. God’s grace or favor is only obtained by obeying His will and walking in the light of righteousness. 1 John 1:7-9

II. 2nd, there is the BOUNDARY OF WORSHIP.

A. We are “bound” to God as the **only object** of worship. Exo. 20:3; Mat. 4:8-10; John 4:24

1. Being “bound” to worshiping God excludes worshiping idols, whether they be creatures of man’s imaginations, or of lower forms of animal life. Rom. 1:21-23
2. Being bound to worshiping God excludes worshiping idols of people who have ever lived, such as Mary (the mother of Jesus), the apostles, or great religious leaders of the past, or even angels. Rev. 19:10

- B. Then, we are “bound” to God as to the **only way** to worship God, as His ways are not man’s ways. Isa. 55:8-9
1. Cain’s way of worshiping God was a violation of His will. Gen. 4:3-5; Heb. 11:4
 2. The Levitical priests violated the principle of acceptable worship by doing things their way. Lev. 10:1-2 (Explain)
- C. We must worship God “in spirit and in truth.” John 4:24
1. “In spirit” suggests worship from the heart, with full devotion to God in doing the things He desires.
 2. “In truth” means according to God’s WILL, or REVELATION, or DIRECTION, as seen through His direct statements or the apostolic example in the first century. John 17:17
 - a. Our worship first involves the preaching or edification through the **word** of the apostles, as found recorded in the New Testament. Acts 2:42; 20:32
 - b. Our worship involves the communion of the body and blood of Jesus in the weekly observance of the Lord’s Supper. Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-26
 - c. Our worship involves a giving of our income as prospered. 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:7
 - d. Our worship also involves offering of our prayers to God. Acts 2:42; 12:5
 - e. Our worship also involves the singing of praises to the Lord. Col. 3:16-17
- D. Being “bound” to worship God **His way**, excludes our changing it to suit ourselves.
1. This is the reason why the “counting of beads” in our prayers is not acceptable.
 2. This is the reason why we do not add a common or fellowship meal to the elements of the bread and fruit of the vine in the Lord’s Supper. Cf 1 Cor. 11:18-22
 3. Being bound is also the reason why we do not teach something other than the apostles’ doctrine for edification. Matt. 15:9; Acts 2:42; 2 John 9
 4. Being bound to God’s word in worship is why we do not have tithing, church raffles or other fund raising gimmicks instead of the Lord’s way of free-will offerings in our worship. 1 Cor. 16:1-2
 5. Being bound to God’s word is why we do not add instrumental or any other kind of music to our worship of singing. Eph. 5:19; Heb. 13:15
 6. Being bound to God’s word is why we avoid the use of western songs, patriotic songs, or any other kind of music in our worship assemblies. Eph. 5:19

CONCLUSION

- I. Since GOD has determined the “bounds” of our spiritual habitation, some things need to be considered.
- A. 1st, God is all-wise as our Creator, and certainly knows what He wants, and what is best for our lives today,.
 - B. 2nd, to fail to walk in these bounds is to fail to walk with God and have His approval.
 - C. 3rd, a failure to have His approval is to be deserving of His wrath, and leave us in a state of condemnation.
- II. To be a true worshiper of God, you need to be a Christian.

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