Second Congregational Church of Winsted
(Baptist & Congregational)
Biblical, Traditional, Protestant
Reformation & New Members Sunday
Worship Service: 10:00 AM
October 31, 2021
*But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.* – Romans 11:6

[REMINDER: If you are going to partake in the Lord's Supper please pick up a self-contained Communion Cup from one of the tables in the back before the service begins.]

Welcome & Prelude
Bell & Announcements
Call to Worship – John 1:14-18

Reader: And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us,
People: And we saw His glory,
Reader: Glory as of the only begotten from the Father,
People: Full of grace and truth.
Reader: John testified about Him and cried out, saying,
People: This was He of whom I said,
Reader: He who comes after me has a higher rank than I,
People: For He existed before me.
Reader: For of His fullness we have all received,
People: And grace upon grace.
Reader: For the Law was given through Moses;
People: Grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.
Reader: No one has seen God at any time;
People: The only begotten God
Reader: Who is in the bosom of the Father,
People: He has explained Him.

Prayer of Invocation and Confession
Gospel Absolution Text – Ephesians 1:3-8

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,
4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love
5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,
6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.
7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace
8 which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight

The Prelude is a musical piece that encourages us to quiet our soul to prepare for worship. (Ps 131). Therefore, please no talking.

The Call to Worship, a responsive reading from the Bible, which calls God’s people together to worship Him, centered on His Word. (Ps 99)

The Prayer of Invocation & Confession is asking God to be with us and to accept our worship while we repent of our sins and look unto Him. (Ps 51; 61; James 5:16)

The Gospel Absolution Text is a proclamation that our sins have been forgiven in Christ. (John 20:23)
*Hymn #318 (green hymnal) – “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

Ancient Creedal Reading – Apostles Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

[Offering]

[Because of Covid, after the service please deposit your offering in the collection plates on the tables in the back of the sanctuary. Thank you.]

Welcoming of New Members

Carl (“Chris”) Thomsen

Address to the Congregation & Prayer

Address to New Members

Pastor:  Do you confess the Triune God of the Bible as the only true God?

New Members: I do.

Pastor:  Do you believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man? That He alone, by His sacrifice on the cross, can save you from the Father’s wrath and righteous judgment against the wicked? And that He alone is your Lord?

New Members: I do.

Pastor:  You have made public confession of your faith and have been baptized. Do you accept the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, as the only Word of God and the rule of your faith and conduct?

New Members: I do.

Pastor:  Do you intend to pursue the holiness of God, to live among God’s faithful people, to hear His Word and share in His supper, regularly searching the Scriptures and seeking God’s will through prayer? Do you promise to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

New Members: I do.

Pastor:  Do you agree with this church’s Statement of Faith and its government and organization?
New Members: I do.

*Pastor: Do you also promise to support the people and ministries of this local church, to accept its instruction and be an active member of this assembly?

New Members: I do.

Address to the Congregation

*Pastor: Do you, the members of the Second Congregational Church, receive these believers into our fellowship and promise to help and support them in the faith?

People: We do.

Charge & Welcome of New Members

[The youngest children may depart for children's church.]

**Anthem** – "We Gather Together" -Netherlands folk song; arr. Edward Kremser

**Scripture Reading** – Zechariah 12:8-10

8 In that day the L ORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the L ORD before them.

9 And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

**Prayers of the Church & Lord’s Prayer** (sins)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

**Doxology #515** (red hymnal)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**Reformation Creedal Reading** – (See Sermon Notes)

*Hymn #210* (red hymnal) – “Jesus, Lover of My Soul”
Prayer of Illumination

Sermon Text – Ephesians 2:4-9

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,
5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),
6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindliness toward us in Christ Jesus.
8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;
9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Gloria Patri #513 (red hymnal)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Sermon – “Grace Alone!”
A Reformation Sunday Sermon

Lord’s Supper

Invitation, Warning and Prayer

Scriptural Proclamation – Hebrews 4:14-16

14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.
15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.
16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Partaking of the Bread and then the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Hymn #107 (green hymnal) – “Amazing Grace!”

*Benediction & Offering
(When the service is over, please place your offering in the plates in the back. Thank you for your patience and generosity.)

*Choral Response

*Postlude
Children’s bulletins are available in the Main Street entry hall, located in the brochure holders attached to the wall on your right as you enter.

The two nursery rooms downstairs are clean, sanitized and available should you need a place to change a diaper, feed your baby, or simply need a quiet space to take your child during the service. There is an audio speaker in the room so the service can be heard.

**About the Service:**
Preaching: The Rev. Douglas Aldrich
Monthly Deacon: Gill Bechard

**Last Week:**
Attendance was 66 (65 worship + 1 children’s church).
Offering was $5543.82.
($4381 is needed each week to meet our budgeted expenses.)

**Church Office Hours:** Tues.-Thurs. 8:30 AM-12:00 PM, 1:30-4:00 PM
Fri. — 8:30 AM-12:00 PM

**Church Staff:**
Pastor: The Rev. Douglas Aldrich
Email: douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net
Office Phone: 860-379-4766 Home Phone: 860-379-1147
(Monday is Pastor Doug’s day off and on Thursday afternoon he works at home.)

Associate Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Daniel Cote
Email: danielrcote@gmail.com
Cell Phone: 203-217-7498 Home Phone: 203-729-5257
Office Hours: Tues. 6:00-9:00 PM Sun. 8:00-12:00PM

Administrative Assistant: Carol Tomassetti
Email: info@sccwinsted.org
Phone: 860-379-4766

Organist: Christopher King
Sextons: Tom Doney and Cassie Riberdy

**Discipleship**
- **Sunday Worship at 10 AM** (9:30 July/August) Also live-streamed on YouTube
- **Sunday School for Children** — 9:00-9:45 AM
  Lower level of the church. See Pastor Dan for information.
- **Sunday Morning Women’s Study** — 9:00-9:55 AM in the church parlor
  Led by Verna Aldrich
  *Eve in Exile: The Restoration of Femininity* by Rebecca Merkle
- **Sunday Morning Men’s Discussion Group** — 9:00-9:50 AM
  In Pastor Doug’s office
- **Tuesday Morning Study (10:00-11:30 AM)**
  In the music room
  Reading the Psalms and J. I. Packer’s *Concise Theology*
- **Tuesday Men’s Bible at 7:00 PM** in church parlor
  1st, 3rd, and 5th Tuesdays, led by Pastor Dan
  The New Testament
- **Wednesday Night Study 7:00-8:30 PM** in the music room *
  Study of God’s Law in the Torah
- **Wednesday Diaper Bank 5:00-6:30 PM**
  1st & 3rd Wednesdays

*In person and also on Zoom. If you would like to join in please email Pastor Doug to be put on the Zoom link email list.*
**Sermon Schedule** (subject to change)

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<th>Event</th>
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<td>Nov 07</td>
<td>James 1:22-27</td>
<td>Doers of the Word</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>(Pastor Dan preaching)</td>
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<td>Nov 21</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Missions Sunday</td>
<td>Rev. Mark Turcio speaking</td>
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<td>Nov 28</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>1st Sunday of Advent</td>
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**Covid Policy Update:** All Covid restrictions have been lifted, with the exception that food will not be served in a pot-luck style.

**Announcements**

- **Pledge Reminder:** Many thanks to those who returned to the Lord the first fruits of His generous blessings by pledging your financial support to our church! If you intend to pledge to the Second Congregational Church for 2022 and have not done so, please return your pledge card to the church office as soon as possible. Cards are available on the tables in the back.

- The **Wednesday Evening Study** (7:00-8:30 PM) has begun a new topic: An overview of God’s Old Testament Law and how it relates to the church, Christians, family, and the state in our modern world. We meet from 7:00-8:30 PM at the church and it is also Zoomed online. If you want to be added to the Zoom link please see Pastor Doug.

- **Pastor Dan’s Men’s Bible Study** will meet on Tuesdays, 11/2, 11/16 and 11/30 at 7:00 PM in the church parlor. We are reading through the New Testament. We meet each month on the first, third, and fifth Tuesdays from 7:00-8:30 PM. Join us as we seek to become better disciples of Christ.

- **Operation Christmas Child**—As we have done in the past, the Christian Ed. Board will support Operation Christmas Child again this year. This worthy mission is an outreach to severely impoverished children that provides these children with a shoebox filled with small gifts and the Gospel message of hope in Christ. Brochures with details of the program are available on the tables in the back.
  - Shoeboxes are being distributed today and next Sunday, Nov. 7th.
  - They will be collected on Nov. 14th and 21st. (Nov 21 is the deadline.)

  Please see Sarah Emmons in the fellowship hall after the service today or next Sunday if you would like to support this worthwhile mission.

- **The Missions Board is conducting their annual Hat/Scarf/Glove/Socks collection** during the month of November.
  - A bin is available in the fellowship hall for donations to keep our community warm.
  - The collection will run from Sunday, Oct. 31st until Sunday, Nov. 28th.
  - Any new or homemade donations may be dropped off during this time.

  Much thanks and appreciation from the Missions Board for your yearly support.

- The Missions Board is also looking for **volunteers to staff the ringing of the bell for the Salvation Army Kettle Drive** on Saturday, Dec. 4th from 10 am until 4 pm. We will need 1 to 2 people per door, and will be covering both doors at Stop & Shop in Winsted. A signup sheet will be available on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall, or you may contact Kelly Mallette at 860 485-4950 for more information.

(announcements continued...)
• **November 21st will be a Missions Sunday.** Our part-time evangelist, Rev. Mark Turcio, will give us an update on his labors here in Winsted.

• **The Young Adult Discussion Group** will meet on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month from 3:00 to 4:30 PM. Unless otherwise stated we will meet at the church.

• **Help is needed in leading Children’s Church.** It is very simple to do. No preparation is required. Pastor Dan will train you. Please sign up on the board in the fellowship hall if you would like to help with this ministry. A background check is required.

• **The Greek Self Study Class** (learning the basics of the original language of the New Testament), which is facilitated by Pastor Doug, is held on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month from 5:30 to 6:45 PM. (Please contact Pastor Doug if you are interested.)

• Pastor Doug needs questions for his YouTube channel “**Simply Reformed.**” If you have any questions or suggestions please write them down and drop them in the box in the back of the sanctuary. The channel can be found at: www.youtube.com/simplyreformed.

• **The biblical role of deacons** is to take care of the physical and logistical needs of the church so that the pastors can concentrate on their primary calling “to prayer and ministry of the word.” (Acts 6:4) Deacons are called to handle the more practical matters of the worship service (such as serving communion, collecting the offering, etc.) and t care for “widows and orphans” and the rest of the congregation as well, to assist the pastors.

The **Diocenate is requesting nominations from the congregation for candidates** to serve on this very important board for the term beginning in 2022. A deposit box is available in the back of the sanctuary for your nominations.

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**Hidden Christmas:**

*The Surprising Truth Behind the Birth of Christ*

An Advent Short Book Study led by Pastor Dan

~Open to All~

In *Hidden Christmas: The Surprising Truth Behind the Birth of Christ*, pastor and New York Times bestselling author Tim Keller guides readers through an illuminating journey into the surprising background of the Nativity story, a story that is a celebration of the advent of Jesus Christ, who came to save mankind and restore our humanity to how it was meant to be. This profoundly moving and intellectually provocative book unpacks the message of hope, redemption, and salvation hidden in the biblical account of Jesus’ birth so that readers may experience the redeeming power of God’s grace in a meaningful and deeper way.

**Meeting Dates:** Sunday following the worship service in the music room. Join us for an overview by Pastor Dan, selected readings, and discussion. **Draw near to Christ in this Advent season.**

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<th>Nov. 28</th>
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<td>Session 2 (read chapters 3-5)</td>
<td>Dec. 5</td>
<td>11:30 am – 12:15 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 3 (read chapters 6-8)</td>
<td>Dec. 12</td>
<td>11:30 am – 12:15 pm</td>
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*Please sign up in the fellowship hall by Nov. 14th. Please pay Pastor Dan $5 for the books which will be available by Nov. 21st.*
Introduction – Reformation Sunday

1) Protestants (Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Anglicans/Episcopalians, Dutch Reformed, Methodists, etc.) celebrate October 31st as Reformation Sunday.
   a) The Reformation was that period in the 16th century when many "protested" the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church and broke away from Rome.
   b) It was on October 31, 1517, the German monk and professor of theology, Martin Luther (1483-1546 AD), posted 95 Theses in Wittenberg, to start theological debate on the corrupt medieval practice of indulgences.
   c) Though Luther did not at first intend to break away from Rome, he soon realized the church was not just morally corrupt but also theologically.
      i) Everything is theological
      ii) Bad practices and teaching come from bad theology.
   d) Rome had corrupted two fundamental things:
      i) Authority: Placing the church in Rome over the Scriptures.
      ii) The Gospel: By making it more man-centered without any assurance.

2) Because of the fallen nature of man we struggle to think and act in a God-centered way, while the focus on the self comes so easy.
   a) The idea that we can earn our salvation by our own merits is a common heresy.
   b) It is the default view of all of man’s religions.
      i) Paganism, Atheism, Islam, Secularism, Hinduism, Neo-Marxism, Taoism, Darwinism, etc.
      ii) All save Christianity: Which only teaches that only God alone saves.
          • And the only way God can save is through He who is fully God, fully man and without sin: The God-man Jesus Christ.
          • This makes Christianity unique, and the only true religion.

   a) The Lord Jesus treats Peter most harshly when the apostle suggests the Lord avoid the cross. Matthew 16:21-23
   b) Compare Paul’s patience dealing with the Corinthian church (who have numerous egregious moral failings) with his stinging rebuke to the Galatians because they’re corrupting the Gospel by adding works to justification (i.e. being declared right with God). Galatians 5:1ff

4) It has been a common problem throughout the history of the church to add works to salvation.
   a) Even the early church (right after the apostles, Cir. 100-500 AD) quickly became weak on their understanding of the Gospel.
i) God raised up Augustine (354-430 AD), kind of the grandfather of the Reformation, to call the church to return to the central biblical themes of grace, faith and God centered salvation that many had lost focus on.

ii) And heresy (i.e. false teaching) was becoming rampant. To give two examples:
   • Pelagianism: Salvation is possible by man’s actions without God’s grace
   • Semi-Pelagianism: Man can start and/or continue with salvation without the need for God’s grace.

b) During Luther’s time the main theological debate became over the same issue.

i) Rome taught that though grace was necessary for salvation, it wasn’t sufficient.
   • Man’s merit must be added to earn justification.
   • Christ’s saving grace is passively received in the sacraments but it is not **efficacious** (Meaning: “having the power to produce a desired effect.”)
   • Therefore, it would be blasphemous to say one can have assurance in one’s salvation.
   • One could never be in this life, like the blessed man described by Paul, as, “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, and whose sins have been covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account.” – Rom 4:7-8

ii) Luther, and all later Protestants, rejected this false teaching.
   • They returned to the biblical doctrine of “sola gratia”:
     That salvation is by “grace alone.”
   • That grace is not only necessary, it’s also sufficient.
   • Christ’s merits, imputed/credited (not infused) are received by grace alone, through faith alone, on account of Christ alone, for God’s glory alone, as taught in Holy Scripture, which alone is our final authority.¹
   • God’s grace is efficacious – It’s active, it’s power, and fully saves.
   • Thus, we can, and should, have full assurance that our lawless deeds have been forgiven, our sins have been covered, we are blessed, because the Lord will not take into account our sins – not because of our merits, but solely because of Christ’s.

5) The clarity of this great biblical truth (grace alone), again doesn’t come easy, it requires special revelation of the New Covenant, a new Covenant of Grace.

**Grace Before Pentecost**

1) This somewhat vagueness about grace is seen in the earlier parts of the Bible, even the early parts of the New Testament.
   a) James only mentions grace in one verse. James 4:6
   b) James certainly doesn’t deny grace alone.
   c) It’s just that later writes (Peter, Paul, the author of Hebrews) will work out grace in a more systematic way.

2) The simple definition of “grace” is “unmerited favor” or a “kindness you don’t deserve.
3) The word “grace”, in English Bibles, doesn’t appear too much before Pentecost (50 days after Easter when the Holy Spirit is given to the church in a special way).
   a) In our pew Bibles (NASB) “grace” is used 131 times. (hên)
   b) Yet between Genesis and Acts 2 (Pentecost) it is found only 13 times.
3) The Hebrew word for “grace” (תָּן, hên), however, is found throughout the Old Testament (OT).
   a) It’s usually translated as “favor: an act that displays fondness or compassion to another.”
   b) Genesis 6:8 – “But Noah found favor (הֵן) in the eyes of the LORD.”
   c) Proverbs 3:34 – “Though He scoffs at the scoffers, yet He gives (הֵן) grace to the afflicted”
4) The OT speaks of new clarity, revelation, of grace with the new covenant.
   a) Zechariah 12:10 – “I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.”
   b) This clearly refers to Christ and Pentecost on some level. Is 44:3; Ezek 39:29; Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-21
5) As the NT teaches:
   a) John 1:17 – “For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.”
   b) 1Peter 1:10-12 – “As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.”
   c) The OT saints were saved by grace too.
   d) However, their religious systems were “shadows and figures” of the reality we now have in Christ.
   e) This is why in the later writings of the Bible the word “grace” is used more than “favor.”
      i) The clarity of the power of God’s favor, i.e. grace, is given clarity with the New Covenant.
      ii) One of the best books to explain the power of grace is Ephesians.

**Ephesians 2:4-9**

1) Ephesians is one of the great books in the Bible to understand the nature of grace.
   a) “Grace” is mentioned more times (12) in the 6 chapters of Ephesians than all the Old Testament (11). [In the NASB.]
   b) See: Eph 1:2,6-7; 2:5,7-8; 3:2,7-8; 4:7,29; 6:24.
   c) Especially in 1:2-7 & 2:5-8 which is fundamental to understand the power of God’s grace.
   d) Today, let’s look at Eph 2:5-8.
2) Ephesians 2:1-10 is Pastor Doug's favorite text to proclaim/explain the Gospel to someone. (Titus 3:3-8 is a close second.)
   a) Ephesians 2:1-3 begins with the problem: Sin.
   b) Ephesians 2:10 ends with the outcome: Good works.
   c) The middle section, Ephesians 2:4-8, is about the Gospel of salvation, the power of God.
   d) Let's focus in on the grace parts.
3) The first sentence on the Gospel (v.4-5) is choppy in its grammar:
   a) Something rare for the eloquent Paul.
   b) He ends the sentence with a break by putting the key point in a parenthesis.
      i) As one commentator calls it: A "parenthetical outburst". (Hoeher, 331)
      ii) Another commentator explains it's an "impassioned underlining of what the confessional statements he is making". (Lincoln, 102)
   c) The key point is: "(by grace you have been saved)" - Eph 2:5b
4) This begs the question: This saving grace, what does it refer to?
   a) Answer: Everything that comes before it in the sentence.
   b) This includes:
      i) "God, being rich in mercy," (v.4)
      ii) "because of His great love with which He loved us," (v.4)
      iii) "even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ" (v.5)
   c) This is not just an attitude of favor God has towards His people.
      i) It's also a powerful action of that favor that makes us alive in Christ!
      ii) Grace is doing something – it is efficacious.
   d) All aspects of our salvation are by grace, and grace alone.
      i) God’s election, our new birth, faith, repentance, adoption, good works = Grace alone.
      ii) How beautiful is it to realize how powerful God’s grace has been in your life!
   e) How does that old saying go: "But by the grace of God go I."
5) Because salvation is all by grace Paul is able to conclude...
   a) "and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." – Eph 2:6-7
      i) Since salvation is all by grace, and we can have full assurance, and we on some profound way, now have "mysterious sweet communion" already with the heavenly reigning Christ.
      ii) Therefore in "the ages to come" (the final new heavens and new earth) God the Father will show us the surpassing riches of His grace toward us in Christ.
        • What a staggering view of heaven this is!
• Last week we looked at how hell is a place of unending sorrow and rage at God. (A place devoid of God’s special saving grace.)
• Heaven, however, is a place of unending God’s grace!

b) This full assurance is even seen in the grammar of “by grace you have been saved”.
   i) It's in what is called the “perfect tense” in Greek.
   ii) This combines two concepts together:
       • A complete action (“you have been saved”)
       • With continuing results (“you are saved”)
   iii) So, this salvation we have is complete and perfect now and is continually being worked out in us!
   iv) This is only possible if salvation is by grace alone.

6) To reemphasize the critical point, Paul repeats himself in one of the greatest single verses describing the Gospel: “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.” – Eph 2:8
   a) The “gift of God” refers to everything that come before it: Faith, Grace, God’s kindness, all of God’s salvation.
   b) To emphasize the totality of grace, Paul concludes the sentence with: “not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”
      i) If salvation is at all by our ability then either despair or arrogance will creep in.
      ii) Devoid of any real assurance or long-term power.

7) Now worldly thinking might suggest that if everything is by grace wouldn't that make one lazy?
   a) Not according to Scripture.
      i) Romans 1:16 – “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!”
      ii) As Paul concludes this section: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.” – Eph 2:10
   c) How could someone who understands the efficacy of Christ’s grace be lazy?
   d) Instead, the full biblical Gospel of by grace alone, through faith alone, on account of Christ alone, is the very power of God. Rom 1:15-17 1Cor 1:18-24

8) This is what it is to be a Protestant, whether Congregational, Baptist, Lutheran, etc.

**Protestantism's Historic Commitment to Sola Gratia**

1) Lutheran – The Formula of Concord of 1577 AD.

   11.14. This brief exposition of the doctrine of God’s eternal election gives God his glory entirely and completely, because He out of pure grace alone, without any merit of ours, saves us “according to the purpose” of his will. Nor will this doctrine ever give anyone occasion either to despair or to lead a reckless and godless life.
2) Anglican/Episcopal – Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England of 1571 AD.

10. The condition of Man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God: Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing (i.e. preceding/going before) us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

3) Methodist – Articles of Religion of 1784 AD.

Article 8  [The same as Article 10 of the Anglican 39 Articles – see above.]

4) German Reformed – Heidelberg Catechism of 1563 AD.

Question #60: How are thou righteous before God?

Answer: Only by a true faith in Jesus Christ; so that, though my conscience accuse me, that I have grossly transgressed all the commandments of God, and kept none of them, and am still inclined to all evil; notwithstanding, God, without any merit of mine, but only of mere grace, grants and imputes to me, the perfect satisfaction, righteousness and holiness of Christ; even so, as if I never had had, nor committed any sin: yea, as if I had fully accomplished all that obedience which Christ has accomplished for me; inasmuch as I embrace such benefit with a believing heart.

5) Presbyterian – Westminster Confession of Faith of 1647 AD.

Congregational – Savoy Declaration of Faith of 1658 AD.

9.4 When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, He freeth him from his natural bondage under sin, and by His grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so as that, by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly nor only will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.

6) Baptist – Second London Confession of Faith of 1689 AD.

9.4 When God converts sinners and transforms them into the state of grace, He frees them from their natural bondage to sin and by His grace alone enables them to will and to do freely what is spiritually good. Yet because of their remaining corruption, they do not perfectly nor exclusively will what is good but also will what is evil.

7) Second Congregational Church's Statement of Faith – "7. We believe that all who repent of sin and receive the Lord Jesus Christ, which is by grace alone, through faith alone, are born of the Holy Spirit and thereby become the children of God and shall not come into condemnation and that the Lord Jesus Christ gives them everlasting life."

Conclusion

1) Let us rejoice and remember the Reformation, and that by God’s grace, we are Protestants.

   a) Not for foolish sectarian, ethnic or regional reasons.
   b) But that in our history, our creeds, our theological works, and in our pulpits, the great core Gospel truth is held: That salvation is by grace alone.
   c) Therefore, since it’s all of God, and not by our works, to God alone be the glory!

2) As we go to the Lord’s Table let us reflect on Heb 4:14-16 – “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”
318 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

In that day shall a fountain be opened... for sin and uncleanness.

— Zechariah 13:1

Robert Robinson
Jeff Redd, 2nd stanza, alt.

NETTLETON
John Wyeth

1 Come, Thou Fount of ev-ery bless-ing, Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
2 This my glad com-mem-o-ra-tion That 'til now I've safe-ly come;
3 O to grace how great a debt-or Dai-ly I'm con-strained to be!

1 Streams of mer-cy, nev-er ceas-ing, Call for songs of loud-est praise.
2 And I hope, by Thy good pleas-ure, Safe-ly to ar-rise at home.
3 Let Thy good-ness, like a fet-ter, Bind my wan-der-ing heart to Thee:

1 Teach me some me-lo-dious son-net, Sung by flaming tongues a-bove; Praise the
2 Je-sus sought me when a strang-er, Wan-dering from the fold of God; He, to
3 Prone to wan-der, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love: Here's my

Alternate ending for 2nd stanza into har-mo-niza-tion.

1 mount! I'm fixed up-on it, Mount of Thy redeeming love.
2 res-cue me from dan-ger, Interposed His pre-ci-ous blood. blood.
3 heart, O take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts a-bove. A-men.
Jesus, Lover of My Soul
First Tune

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

MARTYN 7.7.7.7.D.
Simeon B. Marsh, 1798-1875

1 Jesus, lover of my soul, Let me to thy bosom fly,
2 Other refuge have I none; Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
3 Plenteous grace with thee is found, Grace to cover all my sin;

While the nearer waters roll, While the tempest still is high;
Leave, ah! leave me not alone, Still support and comfort me.
Let the healing streams abound, Make and keep me pure within.

Hide me, O my Savior, hide, Till the storm of life is past;
All my trust on thee is stayed, All my help from thee I bring;
Thou of life the fountain art, Freely let me take of thee;

Safe into the haven guide, O receive my soul at last!
Cover my defenseless head With the shadow of thy wing.
Spring thou up within my heart, Rise to all eternity. Amen.

PRESENCE AND GUIDANCE
Amazing Grace!
How Sweet the Sound

For by grace are ye saved through faith... — Ephesians 2:8

John Newton
John P. Rees, stanza 5

Amazing Grace
American Melody
Carrell and Clayton’s Virginia Harmony
Harmonized by Edwin O. Excell

1 Amazing grace! How sweet the sound—That saved a wretch like me!
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears relieved;
3 The Lord has promised good to me, His word my hope secures;
4 Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come;
5 When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun,

1 I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see.
2 How precious did that grace appear The hour I first believed!
3 He will my shield and portion be As long as life endures.
4 'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.
5 We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we'd first begun.