

An Embarrassing Admission

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson went camping together. During the night, Holmes nudged his friend and said, "Look up and tell me what you see." Watson replied, "I can see millions of stars." Holmes then asked, "And what does that tell you?" Thinking it was a test of some sort, Watson declared, "Astronomically, it means that there are millions of galaxies with perhaps billions of planets. Horologically, I calculate that the time is about three o'clock. Astrologically, I notice that Saturn is in Leo. Theologically, I can see that God is infinite and that we are insignificant. Meteorologically, I think that tomorrow will be a beautiful day. So, what does it tell you, Holmes?" Holmes exclaimed, "Watson, you fool. Someone has stolen our tent."



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Have you ever had moments like that? Times when you simply overlooked the obvious. I suppose everyone has at one time or another. Some of those moments make us laugh while others bring embarrassment and even shame. That was true of me with grace. So much of my early preaching was devoted to exposing doctrinal and moral error that I had overlooked the most important "issue" of all — grace. Though I touched on it from time to time, it was more of a supporting actor than the main star. It had a small role but never dominated the script. Thankfully, I have since learned that grace must be center stage or the entire production is skewed.

The gospel is the message of God's grace bestowed on sinners through Jesus Christ. That is why it is referred to as "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24) and "the word of his grace" (Acts 14:3; 20:32), and why those who heard "the gospel" were said to have heard "the grace of God in truth" (Colossians 1:5-6). Moreover, we are saved by grace (Ephesians 2:8), called by grace (2 Timothy 1:9), justified by grace (Titus 3:7), and strengthened by grace (Hebrews 13:9). Therefore, it is vitally important that we give grace the attention it deserves.

Grace puts the "good" in Good News. It provides healing to those who hurt, help to those who struggle, and hope to those who despair. It straightens crooked paths, softens hardened hearts, sustains wearied minds, and saves lost souls. Grace is God's answer to man's problems!