

# DOCTRINE OF DYING GRACE

- I. Definition and description.
  - A. Under the principle of grace, which is the title and policy of God's plan, we observe that grace has various aspects that are designed to address the various needs of the human condition.
  - B. While saving grace focuses on all God has to do to provide eternal salvation for man, and living grace focuses on all that God provides for life, dying grace focuses on all God does for the adjusted believer at the end of his life on planet earth.
  - C. As Solomon has so eloquently recorded, the time of old age and approaching death is one that is characterized by a psychological and physical deterioration that leaves many (if not most) believers hating their existence. Eccles. 12:1-7
  - D. Dying grace technically deals with a very limited period of time, but a time that believers will find to be crucial in their experience.
  - E. The grace aspect deals with the blessings associated with the last days and moments that God provides for the adjusted believer.
  - F. These blessings may be both physical and spiritual in nature.
  - G. Spiritually, the believer enjoys the blessings of a clear conscience, inner peace, inner happiness, and capacity for life.
  - H. Physically, God provides the external circumstances for each believer to make the last days of their life very special and productive in His plan.
  - I. The external circumstances may vary widely as seen in the example of Moses (Deut. 34), Stephen (Acts 7), and Paul. IITim.
  - J. Therefore, the believer may face a quick and peaceful exit from this life (Gen. 5:21-24), he may face sickness and disease that will ultimately kill him (IIKings 20:1), or he may face intense persecution that eventuates in his death. Rev. 2:10, 13:15
  - K. Dying grace is the heritage and experience of the adjusted, positive believer, walking in the Spirit, having reached maturity, having finished his Ph<sub>2</sub> course, and facing promotion into Heaven.
- II. Dying grace demands a clear conscience with respect to the salvation adjustment, the maturity adjustment, and the completion of one's course.
  - A. The salvation adjustment. IITim. 1:12
  - B. The maturity adjustment. IITim. 4:7c
  - C. Completion of the course. IITim. 4:7b
- III. Dying grace specifically focuses on the period of time just before the believer is promoted to his Ph<sub>3</sub> niche.
  - A. It may not encompass a long time, as seen in the example of Stephen, a man who died quite suddenly. Acts 7:55-60
  - B. For the apostle Paul, it involved a longer period of time, since he was aware of his impending death and promotion for weeks, if not months. IITim. 4:6-7

- C. Moses may have had only a day, or possibly two, when he became aware that his life on this planet was complete. Deut. 31:14, 32:48
  - D. The local church at Smyrna was told of a specific period of persecution and testing that they would endure, if they intended to gain the wreath. Rev. 2:10
- IV. Dying grace is the link between the maturity adjustment and promotion into Ph<sub>3</sub>.
- A. Paul likened this time to a drink offering. IITim. 4:6
  - B. The drink offering, while it had a character all its own, was related to the animal sacrifice on which it was poured.
    - 1. The main sacrifice was Paul's faithful ministry up to that time.
    - 2. The drink offering refers to the actual sacrifice of his life, a sacrifice that is quite different than his ministry and sacrifices on behalf of others.
  - C. The drink offering was completely wasted from the human viewpoint, yet it was very pleasing to God. Num. 15:7
- V. During this time, whether it is brief or lengthy, the adjusted believer continues to focus on the importance of Bible doctrine and the application of the same.
- A. The example of Moses. Deut. 31:14,19,23-30;33
  - B. The example of Joshua. Josh. 23-24
  - C. The example of Jesus. Matt. 26:63-64; Lk. 23:8-9; Jn. 18:33-37, 19:10-11
  - D. The example of Paul.
    - 1. He continued to emphasize the importance of Bible doctrine to those under his charge. Phil. 1:24-27; IITim. 1:6,13-14, 4:1-5
    - 2. He continued to bear witness to the truth of the gospel. Phil. 1:12, 4:22; IITim. 4:17
    - 3. He completed his ministry of writing scripture. IITim.
    - 4. He was faithful in his prayer life to the end. IITim. 1:3
    - 5. He made provision for the next generation, by leaving his canon in good, qualified hands. IITim. 2:2
    - 6. He continued to warn believers about the enemies of the truth. IITim. 1:15, 2:16-18, 3:6-9, 4:3-4,10,14-15
  - E. It is not the time to stop applying doctrine but to continue to do those things in your niche that are appropriate, and within your power.
  - F. The believer under dying grace will continue to live their life just as they always have under the grace of God. Acts 6:5, 7:55
- VI. The believer who receives dying grace pays tribute to the provision of God, which he has enjoyed.
- A. He is occupied with the spiritual blessings and provision of his Ph<sub>2</sub>. IITim. 1:8-12
  - B. He is grateful for the physical blessings he has enjoyed. Phil. 4:15-18; IITim. 1:16-18
  - C. He has a wealth of fragrant memories that bring him peace, comfort, and happiness IITim. 1:4,16-18
  - D. He enjoys the fellowship of the few, truly positive committed believers who have supported Bible doctrine alongside him in the conflict. Phil. 2:25; IITim. 2:3, 4:11,21
  - E. He is occupied with the blessings of Ph<sub>3</sub>, the realities of SG<sub>3</sub>, and the guarantee of his resurrection. Phil. 3:17-21; IITim. 4:8; Heb. 11:35-40

- VII. The alternative to dying grace is the sin unto death (SUD); this is the lot of the believer that rejects Bible doctrine and the spiritual adjustments. IJn. 5:16-17
- A. While anyone who has believed in Christ is saved and possesses eternal life, the believer who rejects the adjustments will find that their death is not a promotion but the final act of Divine discipline in Ph<sub>2</sub>. ISam. 31:3-6; ICor. 5:1-5
  - B. Because he has rejected the fellowship of God in time, God denies him fellowship and comfort at this most crucial of times. Prov. 1:24-32; IITim. 2:12b; Rev. 2:22
  - C. Since he has not pursued doctrine and has not stored the Word of God in the brain computer, the promises that mean so much to the adjusted believer have no real meaning or impact on him. Rom. 8:18; IICor. 4:16-18, 5:8
  - D. His lifetime of yielding to the sin nature leaves him fearful and disbelieving; thus, he faces the prospect of moving into eternity with little or no confidence. Rom. 8:15; IJn. 2:28
  - E. He does not enjoy inner peace regarding God's future provision for those he loves and is leaving behind. Jn. 19:26-27; ITim. 5:3
  - F. However, the sin unto death can be averted by spiritual recovery, which makes the believer a candidate for dying grace once again. IICor. 2:6-7; Jms. 5:14-15
- VIII. The exception to dying grace is the rapture generation.
- A. One generation of believers in human history will not face the reality of physical death, as all previous generations have. ICor. 15:51; IThess. 4:13-18
  - B. The believers that are alive at Christ's coming will have their earthly bodies instantaneously transformed into resurrection bodies, not experiencing those things that are associated with physical death. ICor. 15:52-53
  - C. This is illustrated by the translation of Enoch, which serves as an Old Testament type of the rapture. Gen. 5:21-24
  - D. However, the rapture generation is not generally pleasing to God due to their rejection of Bible doctrine. IITim. 3:5-9, 4:3-4; Rev. 3:14-21
- IX. Conclusions.
- A. Dying grace is the final blessing for the adjusted believer in this life.
  - B. He dies as he had lived, focused on the importance of doctrine.
  - C. The means of death is not an issue; it may be anything from quiet and peaceful to exceedingly painful and violent. IIKings 2:10; Acts 7:58
  - D. This believer is occupied with the Ph<sub>3</sub> promises related to his reward. IITim. 4:8
  - E. This is a very special blessing reserved for those who have completed their course and come to the end of their life with a clear conscience in regard to the plan of God.
  - F. Dying grace is characterized by an absence of fear. Ps. 23:4

*Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His godly ones.  
Ps. 116:15*