



## “Don’t You Believe in the Grace of God?”

Al Parr

It seemed more like a condemnation than a question, but that’s what he said to me. Of course I trust in the grace of God, and I’m thankful for it, but why did he ask?

We had been discussing whether a divorced person could marry again. My latest contribution to the conversation had been the reading of Matthew 19:9, and his incredulous response suggested his belief that, in the final judgment, the grace of God will trump the law of God. There are many who just can’t see how love, mercy and grace can co-exist with law, judgment and justice. They usually resolve the conflict by deciding that one characteristic must over-ride the other. The outcome is that, when there’s a law one doesn’t like, he “just trusts in the grace of God” to make it come out in man’s favor later.

But the law of God *is* the grace of God! Paul wrote, “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11-12). By the grace (unmerited favor) of God, salvation from sin’s punishment is offered to all mankind. We only know that because it’s written in the Book. But the Book also teaches us how to receive that promised gift: salvation is given to those who, “in this present world,” “live soberly, righteously and godly” (adverbs, all of which are defined and illustrated in the pages of the Book).

When you are called into judgment, God won’t say, “Never mind what I said, come on in.” He’ll judge whether you will have accepted His grace on earth by obeying what is written.

*for Confirming the Churches*  
strengthening smaller churches in difficult situations