

Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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Four Part Harmony: Grace, Law, Faith, and Works

By
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Justin Gerhardt is a full time student in *The Florida School of Preaching*. He wrote this article as an assignment in the *Computer-Based Bible Exegesis Class*. We are placing it in the *Harvesters* that you might know Justin, and something of the work being done in this class. In the coming months additional articles from students in this class will appear. Editor

I love to hear the sweet sound of four voices singing together in harmony. With the presence of each part, the music is complete; a beautiful chord is produced. However, if one part is off-key or is missing, the product that the composer intended cannot be attained. So also is the "four-part harmony" of grace, law, faith, and works. Together, they are a beautiful symphony; apart, a discordant commotion. Neither grace, faith, law, nor works can carry on the melody alone; each must work in harmony with the next in order for man to gain what God offers. Here, we will attempt to analyze these ideas and their collective participation in God's plan.

First, let us define our terms. **Grace** can be explained as "A disposition to be generous or helpful; goodwill. Mercy;

clemency."¹ Of course, as we mean it, this quality is manifested by God. **Law** is defined as "A rule of conduct or procedure established by custom, agreement, or authority."² In this context, that rule would be established by authority; the authority of God. **Faith** means "Confident belief in the truth, value, or trustworthiness of a person, idea, or thing."³ And finally, **works** are "moral or righteous acts or deeds."⁴

Having defined our terms, it shall benefit us to observe grace, law, faith, and works

cooperating in the Bible. The first example we will notice is that of Noah. Observe carefully how each of these four elements is involved. We all know what condition the world was in at this time in history and that because of that condition, God had decided to "destroy man ...from the face of the earth"(Gen. 6:7). However, in verse 8 of the same chapter, the Holy Spirit reveals to us the fact that "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Here is the element of **grace**. Next, in Genesis Chapter 6, God commands Noah to "make...an ark of gopher wood..."(Gen. 6:14). He instructs Noah to build this vessel, and then goes on to elaborate concerning its construction. Here, God sets forth **law**. Moving on, in the eleventh chapter of the book of Hebrews, the inspired author penned what is commonly

¹*American Heritage Talking Dictionary*. The Learning Company, 1997

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

referred to as the "Faith Hall of Fame." It is in this chapter we read that "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet...became heir of the righteousness which is by faith"(Heb. 11:7). Here we find **faith** on the part of Noah. Lastly, after God had chosen by grace to save Noah, had set forth law to be followed, and Noah had answered by faith, Noah was obedient. "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he"(Gen. 6:22). Noah answered with **works**. Clearly, without any one of these four, the end result could not have been attained. Grace, law, faith, and works were all essential in the deliverance of Noah from the great flood.

Secondly, let's take a look at Joshua and the conquest of Jericho. In Joshua Chapter 6, the Lord said to Joshua, "See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, *and* the mighty men of valour"(Josh. 6:2). According to our definition, this is **grace** on the part of God. As we continue reading in this passage, God commands him to "compass the city" in verses 3-5. In doing so, **law** has been passed. Turning to Hebrews 11 once again, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days"(Heb. 11:30). From this, we can safely surmise that **faith** played an instrumental part in the city's conquest. Reading on, the Israelites compassed the city according to God's instruction and "So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass,

when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city"(Josh. 6:20). Action was performed on the part of Israel; **works** were exercised by Joshua and the troops.

"Yes," one may say, "grace, law, faith, and works are present, but is each of these components necessary in every situation? What about the salvation of man? Does this accomplishment involve them also?" In answer to these inquiries, allow me to ask this question: is anyone bold enough to affirm that if Joshua and the Israelites had not compassed the city as God had commanded, would Jericho still have been overthrown? Certainly not. Yet the same person will affirm freely that a person can be saved by grace alone! Consider the repercussions of the dangerous "grace only" position. Only one of two options could logically follow: either *everyone* is saved or *no one* is saved. Since man does not have a part in his salvation, and since God is not a respecter of persons (Ac. 10:34), either *all* are lost or *all* are saved! Furthermore, could grace alone have delivered Jericho into the hands of Joshua? Not according to God's plan! We cannot exclude any one of these elements and be scripturally justified in doing so.

Finally, we will observe briefly the cooperation of these four ingredients in man's

salvation. We are "justified freely by his **grace** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"(Rom. 3:24). Furthermore, we read that "the **law** of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death"(Rom. 8:2). Also in Romans, "...we have access by **faith** into this grace wherein we stand"(Rom. 5:2). We cannot forget, however, that "faith, if it hath not **works**, is dead, being alone"(Jas. 2:17). Truly, unless we allow grace, law, faith, and works to operate with equal force, we are guilty of producing a blatantly inharmonious rendition of a fundamental principle of truth.

☪ Three Entering the Field

In December the following men will be completing their studies to enter full-time work in the cause of the Lord: Dudley Gushman will be returning to Jamaica; Manston Kerkula will be returning to Liberia; and Ben Radford will be working in the United States. See back page for more details.

The Harvesters

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TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

What Does It Mean To Be A Christian Like Paul?

Below is a table of contents for the *1999 Florida School of Preaching Lectures*. This will be the Thirty Year Anniversary of the School and we have made this a special volume. It will contain an Appendix with articles that will not be a part of the oral and video lectures. This material is topical in nature. It provides answers to controversial issues that face us as we present New Testament Christianity today. You will want this volume for it will be of value to you as you seek to reach others. If we are going to please God, we must go back to his designated models and authoritative spokesmen. Paul, not Campbell and Stone, Paul, not Calvin and Luther. "What Does It Mean To Be A Christian Like Paul?"

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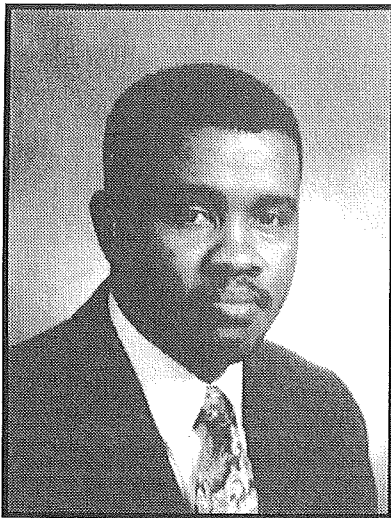
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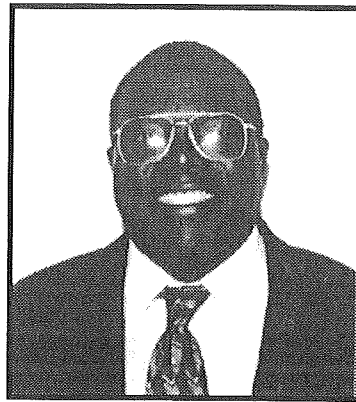
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Dudley Charles Gushman

Dudley is from Jamaica. He is married and has two children. He served in the Jamaica Combine Cadet Force, the youth department of the Jamaica Defense force and held the rank of lieutenant. Before coming to the Florida School of Preaching he attended the Jamaica School of Preaching. Upon returning to Jamaica he plans to establish a congregation on the south central side of the island.

Dudley has worked with the Lincoln Crescent Church of Christ in Jamaica and the Elleston Road Church of Christ. He directed the World Bible School follow-up program for seven years. He has conducted gospel meetings there and taught workshops on Evangelism

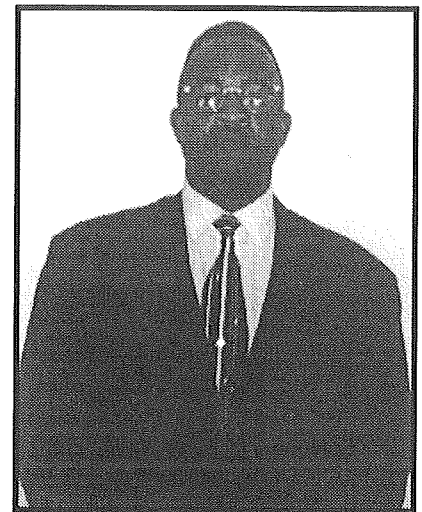


Jewide Manston Kerkula

Jewide is a native of Liberia. He is married with four children. His wife Massah has been attending some classes with him the past year. He plans to return to his native land and establish a strong congregation and to reach as many souls as possible in Liberia and West Africa.

Before coming to the Florida School of Preaching he served as follow up on World Bible School contacts. He has preached on the Ivory Coast, Ghana, and Liberia. He went with students last summer to Jamaica and plans to visit Haiti before he completes his school work in December.

Jewide has studied Animal Science in Cairo University in Egypt, and is a graduate of the Ghana Bible College.



Benjamin L. Radford

Benjamin is married and has six children. He spent a number of years in the U. S. Army. He was operations sergeant for the 51st Transportation Company, U. S. Army, 1983-1993. While in the military he preached for congregations in Germany. He has preached for congregations in Alaska, Florida, Louisiana and Washington State.

Brother Radford is currently residing in Kissimmee, Florida. He attends the Kissimmee Church of Christ. Upon completion of school he will remain in the area and seek a faithful congregation of the Lord with which to work. If he does not find a congregation seeking a preacher, he plans to start a congregation in the area where he grew up.

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