

## Devotional Thought

Week of June 9, 2008

THEME: By the Grace of God

**“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. “**

*2 Corinthians 8:9*

A newspaper told of a woman who offered a man five thousand dollars to kill her husband. She was arrested; she pleaded guilty, but she walked out of the criminal court a free woman! The reason for her release: the husband whom she sought to destroy had bailed her out of jail and then pleaded with the court not to punish her.

The judge in telling the woman that she would not be sentenced said: *“I don’t know anybody in the world who would take a woman back after she paid someone to kill him.”*

Here is an example of grace! Here we see unmerited favor since the wife had done nothing to merit such goodness and love on the part of her husband. But grace is more than unmerited favor; it is favor given where punishment is deserved. Surely this woman deserved to be punished according to man’s law.

If you are looking for a standard of giving, here they are. The Lord Jesus Christ who was rich came down from heaven and took a place of poverty that we might become rich. Imagine leaving heaven and coming down to earth to be born in Bethlehem and be treated the way He was treated. This was unmerited favor because He did not have to do it but He did.

Likewise, the woman in the newspaper article received unmerited favor. She deserved to be punished under the law. But, because of the love of her husband she did not get what she deserved.

Here are two instances of grace. They relate to us in that we did not deserve His pardon or love. On the contrary, our sins and rebellion against His Word deserved and demanded a just condemnation. Yet He, in His marvelous mercy, loved us and paid our penalty on the cross through His Son Jesus. Be careful when you complain about not getting what you deserve – do you really want what you deserve?

**PRAYER:** *Gracious, loving, and forgiving God, thank you for your forgiving grace.*

*You are the source of our life and comfort. Help us to stop and look into the face of our soul and admit before You who we are and who we are not. Forgive us our yesterdays and provide us the strength to confess our guilt to You that we may obtain Your mercy. We ask this in the name of Your Son Jesus.*

**Rev. Dr. James E. Russell, Jr.**

**Presiding Elder**