

**Discipleship:
An
Introduction to
Systematic Theology and
Apologetics**

Protestant Reformation Doctrines of Salvation

The Heights Church November 24, 2019

Categories of Common Grace: The Intellectual Realm

- **Even though** You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44) **many of the non-elect are productive, respectable, law abiding citizens.**
- **Many non-elect people have great gifts of intelligence, and useful skills that greatly benefits society.**

Categories of Common Grace: The Intellectual Realm

- **The non-elect have knowledge of God:** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (Romans 1:19 -20)

Categories of Common Grace: The Moral Realm

- God uses common grace to restrain people from being as evil as they could be.

For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. (Romans 2:14 – 16)

Categories of Common Grace: The Moral Realm

- God gives all people an inward sense of right and wrong so that they frequently approve of and practice moral standards found in Scripture.

And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you?

For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. (Luke 6:33 – 34)

Categories of Common Grace: The Moral Realm

- God has ordered the world such that living by Biblical standards often brings rewards in the material world and violating Biblical standards often leads to destruction. From these examples a final judgment can be inferred.

Categories of Common Grace: The Creative Realm

- God has given to the elect and non-elect great skills and abilities in diverse spheres such as athletics, music, art, literature, theater and the like as well as the ability to appreciate and enjoy them. Indeed, the non – elect often enjoy even greater giftings than the elect.

Categories of Common Grace: The Creative Realm

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:26 – 31)

Categories of Common Grace: The Societal Realm

- Human government is one of the primary ways evil is restrained for all people.

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

Romans 13:1 – 5)

Categories of Common Grace: The Societal Realm

- The family is the basic building block of society and it is given to believers as well as unbelievers.
- While government and the family are examples of the blessings of societal common grace, sometimes families or governments become so corrupt that they are turned over to their evil desires. Nevertheless, Paul exhorts Roman believer's to obey the corrupt Roman government.

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

(Romans 13:1)

Categories of Common Grace: The Religious Realm

- Common grace even has some spiritual benefit for unbelievers. So there is no restriction on praying for unbeliever's salvation, healing and other types of blessings.

But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, (Matthew 5:44)

Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. (Luke 4:40)

Categories of Common Grace: The Religious Realm

- Finally the proclamation of the gospel to the non-elect who will never come to faith is an example of God's grace and mercy.

Why Does God bestow Common Grace on Undeserving Sinners?

1. To redeem all the elect.

- God maximizes his glory by letting sinners reproduce many generations so that after the Flood the entire earth is populated with a great diversity of people groups with elect who will praise him eternally. After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" (Revelation 7: 9 – 10)

Why Does God bestow Common Grace on Undeserving Sinners?

2. To demonstrate God's goodness and mercy.

- The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. (Psalm 145:9)
- Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel? (Ezekiel 33:11)
- But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for **he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.** (Luke 6:35)

Why Does God bestow Common Grace on Undeserving Sinners?

3. To demonstrate God's justice.

- When God repeatedly invites sinners to come to faith and when they repeatedly refuse his invitation the justice of God in condemning them is seen more clearly.

But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. (Romans 2:5)

Why Does God bestow Common Grace on Undeserving Sinners?

4. To demonstrate God's glory.

- All manifestations of common grace demonstrate God-like qualities. Though all these things are imperfect and tainted by sinful motives, they still significantly reflect the excellence of God and bring glory to him.

How should elect believers respond to the Doctrine of Common Grace?

1. Common grace does not bring about salvation.
2. We must not reject the “good” things that unbelievers do through common grace.
3. We should be thankful to God for the myriad of blessings increasingly bestowed on undeserving sinners by common grace in every activity of life.