

III. INTERFERENCE.

You need the insulation of the spiritual vitality to get through the radiation field of bad theology.

Back to Our Analogy

The gravity of what is here below holds most believers back from what is above!

As a rocket must break through barriers to reach new heights so must a Christian. The higher the altitude, the greater the grace!

Grace Defined: Freely-given favor even unto enablement (divine, as in the case of the Bible). Freely-given as opposed to reluctantly given.

Not only have our sins been expiated but God has been propitiated through the merits of Christ applied on our behalf upon salvation. That is, we have been restored to a standing of good will with Him!

Illustration! Borrowed truck returned after it has been greatly abused with only a flippant reference to insurance would result in hurt feelings that the insurance company could not address.

Roy Rogers used to close out his TV program of the 1950s with the words, "May the good Lord take a likin' to you!"

This is part of what grace is, it is unmerited favor. But it must be more! More than unmerited favor – although this is part of it. The, **God's Riches At Christ's Expense** acronym, is helpful.

To summarize Paul's teachings on grace, he describes it as the enlightenment, enrichment and enablement God has available to us, according to our measure of faith, to experience the abundant life Christ spoke of John 7:37-39 and 10 (among other places) through the power of the Spirit.

SEE: II Corinthians 9:8, 11; Ephesians 1:15-23 (18); 3:14-21.

Illustration! Story of man being viewed afar off seemingly pumping the well, when in fact, it was the well pumping him! It was artesian!

Summarization

Why settle for "churchianity" when you could have true Christianity?

BREAKTHROUGH CHRISTIANITY

"Why Christians Plateau"

"I press toward the mark" Phil. 3:14

READ: Philippians 3:14-15; Hebrews 5:11-14.

Your Christianity can go to a new level! If it does it will make a major positive difference in every aspect of your life.

Your church's theme this year is "Grow in Grace."

READ: II Peter 3:17-18 (II Peter 1:14-21 – "knowing I must shortly put off this tabernacle"). Truth rests on the lips of dying men! These are Peter's last words to us!

**Marriage, Parenting, Church, Job
+ Grace = Breakthrough Christianity!**

or

**Rejection, Guilt, Shame, Regret, Grief & Loneliness
+ Grace = Breakthrough Christianity!**

Most Christians have "plateaued" – leveled out in their Christian experience. That is, **they have settled into a level of commitment and have not moved much from such for years.**

Because of this, they have formulated a "**hodgepodge Christianity**" – one that is a combination of Christian principles and worldly ones. The result is a religiosity that heightens on Sundays and is "juiced" a little bit on Wednesday evenings but fades otherwise – a sort of "churchianity" displaces true Christianity.

In other words, **a far cry from what God had in mind** when the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...blessed us with **ALL** spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3) with the intention that we "might be filled with all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:20).

I am not here to hype but to revitalize your hope!

READ: Colossians 3:1-3.

What is keeping us from doing such? Let's go to our promotional word picture.

Setting up Conference Theme Analogy

To some of us, space travel is a bigger deal than it is to others.

I grew up during the space race between us and Russia (then the USSR). Out national security was at stake.

We would watch rocket launches in school on TVs.

Astronauts were the thing in the 1960s and early 1970s.

I would hurry home from school to watch "Major Astro" who came on at around 4:00 PM.

There were great shows like the "Reluctant Astronaut" starring Don Knotts.

I remember the shadowy – ghostlike quality of the images that came back to us in black and white over our TVs when Neil Armstrong first walked on the moon. (CST - 20:56:15 20 July, 1969)

No matter what comes into your mind when you hear about space travel, you know that you just do not stick a rocket on a launch pad and blast it out into space. **There are various barriers that have to be overcome.**

Three Obstacles for a Rocket to Overcome in Leaving this Earth:

1. First, there is GRAVITY. That is the weight of the rocket in relation to the earth's gravitational pull on it.

Gravity is the force that tends to draw all bodies toward the center of the earth. Weight is the force of gravity acting on a body.

A rocket must reach about 25,000 mph to escape the earth's gravitational pull (escape velocity) – that's about 7 miles per second.

2. Then there is the INTENSITY. All the power must be harnessed.

It takes great technology (rocket science!?) it takes to design and construct a vehicle that can be controlled under such thrust.

3. There is also RADIOACTIVITY to pass through in the Van Allen Belts as well as in space itself (sun). The Belts are not as a force field barrier rather they are a region of high radiation.

The Apollo astronauts, who went to the moon, passed through these Belts (inner and outer), but the passage only took about a half hour. Because of protection, they were not exposed to dangerous levels of radiation long enough to do them any harm. (The Space Shuttle and the International Space Station orbit well below the innermost edge of these belts.)

These three basic areas are why you and I are not taking trips into outer space! *It is the only reason is it not?*

There is a pull, from within, to this world system and hence **indifference**. There is **ignorance** on how to break through. There is **interference** between us and God.

Three Basic Reasons Why Christians Plateau

I. INDIFFERENCE.

READ: I John 2:15-17. Our fallen nature is attracted to these three areas of appeal.

However, upon salvation, we receive a new nature that is attracted by the heavenly (I Peter 1:3-4 – "partakers of the divine nature").

This is what our focus is going to be.

You will feel some **resistance** to what is said but if you are truly saved you will also feel some **attraction**.

II. IGNORANCE.

Satanic strongholds (synonymn for stronghold: stranglehold, throttlehold, iron hold vice-like grip, monopoly) **that must be broken through. II Corinthians 10:3-6.**

You have available to you the grace technology – "divinely given know-how and wherewithal" – **needed to break through these strongholds – habits of thought, etc.**