

# Grace for Growth

God's Provision for Your Growth

# Review

- God's decrees
- God's loving plan for his people
  - How God has chosen to order his world for his glory
- God's plan includes the means of grace
- Thus the focus is upon God's provision and not on man's actions
- Means of Grace
  - Provision for your growth as a Christian

# Review

- Worship
- Centers on God's honor not man's
- Not what I get out of it
  - but what I can offer to God
- The Word
- Has all that is needed for life and godliness – thus it is my life
- So knowing, reading the Word is not primarily an activity to benefit me
  - It is to know how I can bring honor to my covenant Lord

# Review

- Prayer is to center on bringing honor to God
  - Eph. 1:15-19a
- Sacraments
  - The sacraments are about what God has done, not man's choices
- Church Membership
  - Being with the people of God to bring honor to God as a body
- Fully embracing these provisions for growth will bring huge blessing to my life

# God's Provision

- Growth is both corporate and individual
- However, individual growth will not occur without corporate
- Without the blessing of the corporate body of the church
  - Instability and doubt will dominate
  - Ephesians 4:11-16

# Prayer

- Prayer to the God of Scripture
  - Not a natural response
- God speaks to us through his word
  - We speak to God in prayer
- Prayer is a command
  - Luke 18:1; Eph. 6:18; I Thess. 5:17-18
- The focus of prayer is how to bring honor to God – not to fix my problems

# Prayer

- Prayer – One example Eph. 1:17-19
- 17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.
- 18 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,
- 19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

# Prayer

- One way to structure prayer
- Adoration
- Confession
- Thanksgiving
- Supplication - requests
- For ourselves and for others
- Prayers of others in Scripture and the Psalms offer examples of how to pray

# Prayer

- Faith and Prayer Ephesians 3:20
  - Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,
- Sin and Prayer – Heb. 4:16
  - Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
  - Seeing our sin should drive us to prayer

# The Sacraments

- Faith and Prayer
- Protestants generally define the sacraments as ordinances instituted by Christ for the purpose of revealing himself and the benefits of the gospel to us.
  - Morton Smith
- We believe there are 2 such sacraments instituted by Christ

# The Sacraments

- The Lord's Supper & Baptism
- Both sacraments have visible, tangible elements
  - Bread & Wine
  - Water
- The Lord's Supper
- We believe that Christ is spiritually present with us as we partake

# The Lord's Supper

- Catholic view
  - The elements, bread & wine actually change and become the body & blood of Christ
  - This is called transubstantiation
- Lutheran view
  - The elements don't change but the body and blood of Christ are present with them
  - Consubstantiation

# The Lord's Supper

- We believe that Christ is spiritually present with us as we partake
  - There is not change to the bread & wine
  - Nothing else is added
- Passover & The Lord's Supper
- Matthew 26:18; 26-29
- The purpose of the Supper is to remember – 1 Cor. 11
  - The bread & wine are designed to do this

# Next Week

- Baptism and the Church