

Grace and Moser – “Misunderstood?”

Dub McClish

Introduction

On March 3, 2010, I delivered a lecture on the closing night of the Spring, Texas, *Contending for the Faith* Lectureship. The lectureship was devoted to reviewing books (in one case, a sermon) produced by men who have veered from the Truth, thereby contributing to the grievous apostasy the church has experienced in recent decades. The intent of each speaker was to expose the errors of the authors and warn others of their deadly doctrine.

My assignment was to review the two books written by the late K.C. Moser, *The Way of Salvation* (1932) and *The Gist of Romans* (1957) (my MSS is under “Long Manuscripts” on this Website, titled “Grace-Only – Moser’s Books Reviewed”). Both of these books advocate a “grace-only” approach to salvation, and they disparage the Scriptural concept that the Gospel is God’s spiritual law to which all men have been accountable since the cross (Heb. 9:16–17; 10:9, et al.). Contemporary change agents in the church, all of whom are “grace-only” crusaders, acknowledge Moser’s books as the source of their dictum (they certainly did not get it from the New Testament) and Moser as their hero.

On March 5, Fran Moser Winkles, brother Moser’s daughter (whom I have never met), viewed my lecture from the archives on the Spring congregation’s Website (www.churchesofchrist.com). Afterward, she visited our personal Website (www.thescripturecache.com) and wrote the following note in our Guest Book.

Fran Moser Winkles’ Note

From: dubfranw@aol.com

Date: Fri, 05 Mar 2010 13:04:36 -0500

To: tgjoriginal@verizon.net

Subject: You've got a new entry

Fran Moser Winkles has left a message in your Guestbook.

Topic: Lectureship

Mr. McLish [sic]:

I just finished listening to your lecture on Dad's books.

It makes me sad that you didn't know him and that you can never sit down with him and have him explain to you his teachings on Grace. You would have come away understanding the wonderful Grace of God and would have been a different man because of it.

Fran Moser Winkles

My Response

From: Dub McClish at tgjoriginal@verizon.net

Date: Fri, 05 Mar 2010 18:17:30 -0600

To: dubfranw@aol.com

Subject: Re: You've got a new entry

Dear Fran:

Thank you for visiting our Website and for posting a note in our Guest Book. Since you have visited scripturecache.com, you perhaps have downloaded and read my article, "Revisiting the 'Man or the Plan' Discussion" (listed under "Longer Articles"), parts of which I included in my lecture at Spring. In the time allotted, I was only able to cover half of the MSS that I prepared. It is included in full in the attractive hard cover book (600+ pp.) of all of the lectures (available from *Contending for the Faith*, 281.350.5516). I encourage you to purchase this book for all of its excellent content.

While I did not know your father, my father-in-law must have met him at some time. His autographed copy of your father's first book was passed on to me. My father-in-law no more agreed with the thrust of your father's books than I do, however. This is not to say that I disagree with everything in his books, and in my full MSS, I call attention to some points to which I subscribe.

I fully understand your natural tendency to be partial toward your father, his work, and his convictions – because he is your father. I am sure that he must have been a fine man in many ways, which fact I do not in any way question. As you surely would not deny, however, "fine men" may be woefully mistaken in their doctrine through ignorance or otherwise (e.g., Cornelius). As to meeting him so that he could explain to me his teachings on grace, such was not at all necessary. He could not have made his

grace doctrine plainer in person than he did in his books. Most of his contemporary brethren (with some of whom he surely had personal discussions about his doctrine [e.g., Whiteside, Wallace, Boles, Srygley, Nichol, Showalter, et al.]) obviously understood him well enough. They recognized the damaging consequences his erroneous grace doctrine implied. They saw it for what it was — a constant repudiation of the existence of the law of Christ, coupled with a de-emphasis of the authority of Christ and obedience to the same. Many of us still see plainly what those men of a by-gone generation saw when we read your dad's books.

It is also significant that those of his day who **agreed** with him (e.g., Brewer, Mattox, Thomas, Massey, et al.) understood him well, knowing that he was advancing an inordinate emphasis on grace with which they heartily concurred. Does not the fact that the other LCC Bible faculty jokingly (although it was far from humorous) called your father "the Baptist preacher" in the LCC Bible department tell you something about the fundamental error of his approach to grace? And if that is not enough, does it not speak volumes that the well-traveled Baptist debater, Ben M. Bogard, publicly claimed *The Way of Salvation* to be a statement of his (Bogard's) doctrine and used that book in his debates with faithful brethren to taunt and embarrass them?

No, I have no problem understanding your dad's view of the grace of God, as you imply; I understand it all too well. Nor have modern liberals in the church misunderstood what your father taught; they credit him with their grace-only heresy of more recent times (as quoted and documented in my MSS). I doubt that many of them had a sit-down meeting with him thereby enabling them to understand his doctrine. They have understood his slant on grace, just as we who oppose it have understood.

The "grace-only" dictum your father pioneered among the Lord's people has served as the principal vehicle of the efforts of these self-described "change agents." These are they who conceive of the church of the Lord as merely a denomination in the cesspool of denominationalism, and they are seeking to make that very hideous thing of it as rapidly as they can. With no intent to be unkind, while I have no reason to believe that your father thought in those terms concerning the church, his doctrine served as

the seed from which much of the grievous apostasy of the past half-century has sprouted. *Grace-only* is the banner under which they march, and your father is their hero. You see, succeeding generations generally take error further than the generation that originated the error.

It is not that I do not believe in or understand “the wonderful grace of God,” as you imply (and as all of today's liberals would falsely accuse me and others of my convictions). As I said in my lecture, their accusation stems from the fact that we do not believe in or preach their (and your father's) **perversion** of it.

I, too, regret that I never met your father, but not because of the reason you stated. You may be right – had I come under his sway as an impressionable young man, I might have “been a different man because of it.” How thankful to God I am that I did not fall under his spell. I say with great sadness concerning a man who was obviously well endowed with ability: Only eternity will reveal the damage your father's doctrine has done to the church of our Lord.

Yours in the Cause,

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[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Lighthouse*, weekly bulletin of Northpoint Church of Christ, Denton, TX, March 7, 2010, of which I was editor.]

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