

# My Church has Issues!

Ephesians 2:8 – 10

## I. Intro

- A. **Billy Graham quote:** *There are no perfect churches but if there were, I couldn't join because they wouldn't be perfect anymore.*
- B. Continuing messages focused on the family unit but turn the focus on a different family – family unit known as the church; church is a family, made up of those who've put faith in trust in Christ which makes those part of the church brothers and sisters in Christ – a family
- C. **Question:** So why are there no perfect churches? Because every single church, no matter the denomination, is made up of imperfect people – therefore, our church has issues just like every other church that exists
- D. Not any different today than it was in Biblical times; scripture full of stories about imperfect people
  - i. God's promise to Abraham and Sarah; Sarah's response – she laughed
  - ii. Jacob deceived his father, Isaac – stole his brother's birthright
  - iii. Jonah ran from God when called to preach
  - iv. Martha worried too much – had doubts about Jesus' power
  - v. When Jesus asked His disciples to pray with Him just before His arrest and crucifixion, the disciples couldn't stay awake
- E. All had two things in common: 1) they loved the Lord; 2) they were all imperfect
- F. All struggle at times with feeling not good enough in life – not good enough to date/marry a certain person, not good enough to attend this school, not good enough to get this job, the extreme – not good enough to live
- G. Even some may have struggled with feeling not good enough for God; God doesn't look for people who are “good enough” - God just wants people who have realized they aren't good enough and never will be good enough to earn His favor and who've come to know they desperately need a Savior
- H. Reason why none of us are good enough – sin (**Rom. 3:23**); but God still loves and desires to have a personal relationship with people who know they have this “sin” issue
- I. The apostle Paul knew, accepted his imperfections – knew he need Jesus; **Philippians 3:12 (NIV)**  
12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.
- J. **READ Ephesians 2:8 – 10**

**K. Three truths from passage about the church and the main issue all churches because the people are the church**

## **II. 1 – Show Grace**

- A. When we show grace to others we're doing the same that God has done for us
- B. It's only by grace of God that we are saved, freed from bondage of sin – none of us can take any credit for that; **REFER v. 8a**
- C. **Question:** Want us all to think back to before we surrendered our lives to Christ, what was your spiritual condition at the time? What was your life condition at the time?
- D. When Jesus chose/called His first disciples: **Matthew 4:19 (NIV)**  
19 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."
  - i. There are a lot of "fish" (men, women, children) who need to be caught for Jesus
  - ii. **Question:** Think about – after a fish is caught what's the first thing that needs to be done to prepare that fish to be used (used for food)?  
Cleaned (cleaning fish, the mess – cleaning catfish)
- E. Same when a person first comes to Christ, not quite ready to be used, the have to be cleaned – cleansed from the stain of their sin, and that is a messy process but it's absolutely necessary
- F. Jesus begins that cleaning process (sanctification) but still accepts us just the way we are; **THAT'S GRACE**
- G. It's only by the grace of God that I've been saved from sin and death, and I'm still undergoing sanctification – that cleaning process done by the work of Christ's Spirit in me
- H. As believers in Christ, two things we need to allow unbelievers to do
  - i. **1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)**  
15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,
  - ii. **1<sup>st</sup>** – allow unbelievers to question our faith; let them express their opinions, doubts, fears, questions; never want anyone to have the impression of me as a believer that I've arrived, that I have it all together; Christian journey, walk with Christ and relationship with Him, is a struggle
  - iii. **2<sup>nd</sup>** – allow unbelievers to wrestle with their unbelief; in Mark, father brings his demon-possessed son to Jesus for healing, imperfect dad still struggling with who Jesus is and power of Jesus in his life, Jesus says – *anything is possible to those who believe*
    - a) Father's response: **Mark 9:24 (NIV)**

24 Immediately the boy's father exclaimed (**Lit: *cried out***), "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

- I. **As the church, as people who make up the church, we must allow people to come here who are seeking – let them ask questions – that’s how we came to know and receive Christ and we need to allow others to do the same**
- J. **We need to show/give people grace just like Jesus shows/gives us grace because we are people that are messed up – we are people that have an issue – issue is sin**

### III. **2 – Show Humility**

A. **REFER v. 8, 9**

B. **If you’re here today, and can say that you are saved (daily being cleansed, sanctified from sin), you have no reason to brag/boast because YOU had nothing to do with it**

C. **Bible tells us (paraphrase) – pride is repulsive, humility is attractive**

D. **James 4:6 (NIV)**

... "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."; **taken from Proverbs 3:34 (NIV)**

34 He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble.

E. **As believers need to understand that it’s not our goodness that allows us to enter God’s presence**

F. **Two things we must do to have attitude of humility**

i. **1<sup>st</sup> – let go of our ego (not Eggo); ego - “edging God out”; when we allow our “ego” to become puffed up that’s what we’re doing**

ii. **2<sup>nd</sup> – must be like children; Jesus said, Matthew 18:4 (NIV)**

4 ... whoever humbles himself like this child is **the greatest** in the kingdom of heaven.

### IV. **3 – We’re All Still Under Construction**

A. **Ruth Graham illustration: Traveling, come up on road construction, sign at the end of the construction. Ruth Graham seeing the sign told her husband Billy she wanted those same words as the epitaph on her tombstone. The sign said, – [SHOW SLIDE]**

B. **REFER v. 10 – Question: What is that work He’s doing in us? To do good works in the name of Christ – works of grace**

C. **Grace wasn’t offered to us after we came to Christ; grace was offered to us before we came to Christ; that’s the one word that always needs to be at the foreground of our thoughts and lives - GRACE**

D. **Two things we need to remember as we think about the Lord working in/on us:**

- i. **1<sup>st</sup>** – Do good things/good works in the name of Jesus and for His sake; we as God’s people/God’s church need to be living, breathing trophies of God’s grace – here at church, and in this community
  - a) Famous paintings – Mona Lisa or Last Supper both by da Vinci, Sistene Chapel ceiling by Michelangelo, Whistler’s Mother by James Whistler – the artists didn’t paint those to keep them hidden of public, they painted them to be displayed; God extends to us grace so that we can put it on display to the world
- ii. **2<sup>nd</sup>** – Put a face on grace; how?
  - a) Love others when they act unlovable
  - b) Accept others who are different from us
  - c) Forgive others when they’ve wronged us, even if they don’t deserve it
  - d) Treat others right even when they’ve treated us wrong

## V. Close

- A. Church – we have issues because we’re all sinners
- B. We’re not a perfect church because we’re not perfect people; but, we do serve a perfect God – God of grace
- C. Today, commit to being a person who humbly displays the grace of God in our homes, work, community, and in our church; and realize we’re all still under construction and ... **Philippians 1:6 (NIV)**  
6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.
- D. Jesus is willing and waiting to receive you, not because you’re good enough, but just the way you are with all your issues and imperfections