**Biblical Foundations – The Doctrine of Redemption (Common Grace)**

**What are the undeserved blessings that God gives to all people, both believers and nonbelievers?**

When Adam and Eve sinned, they became worthy of eternal punishment and separation from God. (Genesis 2:17) In the same way, when humans beings sin today they become liable to the wrath of God and to eternal punishment. (Romans 6:23) This means that once people sin, God’s justice would require only one thing- *that they be eternally separated from God*, cut off from experiencing any good from him, and that they live forever in hell, receiving only his wrath eternally. In fact, this was what happened to angels who sinned, and it could justly have happened to us as well. (2 Peter 2:4)

But in fact, Adam and Eve did not die at once (though the sentence of death began to be worked out in their lives on the day they sinned). The full execution of the sentence of death was delayed for many years. Moreover, millions of their descendants even to this day do not die and go to hell as soon as they sin, but they continue to live for many years, enjoying countless blessings in this world. How can this be- *how can God continue to give blessings to sinners who deserve only death*- not only those who will ultimately be saved but also to millions who will never be saved and whose sins will never be forgiven?

The answer to these questions is that God bestows common grace. ***Common grace*** can be defined as follows: **the grace of God by which he gives people innumerable blessings that are not part of salvation**. The word “***common”*** here is used to indicate something that is common to all people and is not restricted to believers or the elect only.

In distinction from common grace, the grace of God that brings people to salvation is often referred to as ***“saving grace.”*** Of course, when we speak of ***“common grace”*** and ***“saving grace,”*** we are not implying that there are two different kinds of grace in God, but only that God’s grace manifests itself in the world in different ways. Common grace is different from saving grace in its results (it does not bring salvation), in its recipients (it is given to believers and unbelievers alike), and in its source (it does not directly flow from Christ’s atoning work, since Christ death did not earn any measure of forgiveness for unbelievers, and therefore did not merit the blessing of common grace for them either). However, it should be stated that common grace does flow indirectly from Christ’s redemptive work because the fact that God did not judge the world at once when sin entered it was primarily or exclusively due to the fact that he planned eventually to save some sinners through the death of his son.

**Examples of Common Grace**- if we look at the world around us and contrast it with the fires of hell that the world deserves, we can immediately see abundant evidence of God’s common grace in thousands of examples in everyday life. We can distinguish several specific categories in which this common grace is seen.

1. **Physical Realm**- the benefits we experience in our physical beings.
2. **Intellectual Realm**- the ability to grasp truth, intelligence, and understanding.
3. **Moral Realm**- restrains people from being as evil as they could and should be.
4. **Creative Realm**- significant measures of skill in artistry, music, athletics, cooking, writing, etc.
5. **Societal Realm**-
6. **Religious Realm**