

Stewardship Sabbath Sermon – November 2020

“NEWTON’S 3RD LAW”

By Pastor Ray Hartwell

Scripture Reading - 2 Corinthians 8:9

Opening Hymn 516 All the Way

Closing Hymn 308 Wholly Thine

Isaac Newton was an English mathematician, astronomer, theologian, author and physicist. He died in 1727. He gave us a number of firsts: laws of motion, universal gravitation, first reflecting telescope, first calculation of the speed of sound, and one of the fathers of Calculus.

Newtonian mechanics has been superseded by special relativity, but it is still useful as an approximation when the speeds involved are much slower than the speed of light.

He is well remembered for describing the power of gravity.

With gravity, we know the pull of the moon affects the tides of the oceans on earth.

He postulated three laws of motion which laid the classical foundation of mechanics.

Newton’s 3rd law of motion:

Every action has an opposite and equal reaction.

Actions have a reaction.

Actions create a movement.

What is fascinating, is that the same is true in the spiritual world.

The gift of Grace has an action on our life, and that action calls forth an equal reaction.

See, there is a power of grace.

Grace is not just a concept.

Grace is *not* just a good feeling.

Grace is *not* just an evening of the accounts.

Grace actually has a dynamic, inherent power.

It has the power to change things. To move things. To initiate things.

And grace moves us beyond a joyful right standing with God,
to imitating the actions and character of God.

Perhaps you have done a study of grace. And you have grown as you learned more about grace.

Here is another step in that growth.

Newton’s 3rd law

Every action has an opposite and equal reaction.

We see it in an illustration of a bird flying. Its wings push down on the air. The air pushes up on the bird and wings. This is what enables the bird to fly.

So what is the action that God's grace causes on your life and mine?

You see, God's grace is poured out from a heart of heaven that loves to give.
God is the great giver.

The very cross of Christ reveals that God holds nothing back from you and me. There is nothing He won't give for our re-instatement into the very family of God. The highest gift the Father could give, was the very life of His own son.

READ:

Romans 8:32

He who spared not his own son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not also, along with him, freely give us all things?

There was no more valuable gift. No fantastic world in the universe. No exchange of valuable commodities, precious metals, rare gems. No sending some mighty angels. No, none of that. God gave Himself in the very son of God. He was the richest gift that could be given. And God gave, that we might be rich.

2 Corinthians 8:9 New King James Version (NKJV)

⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

Have you every stopped the swirl of life long enough to just think about how much you mean to the Father God? How utterly valuable you are to Him? He gave it ALL for you. That is grace to the max!

That kind of giving, also is described by Newton's 3rd law of motion.

In the spiritual realm, when God gives so great, how do we react?

Here is the 3rd law of Newton in the spiritual life:

We love Him because He first loved us. 1 John 4:19

See,

There is a "Reciprocal Principle."

Every action has an opposite and equal reaction.

Grace urges us to respond with sacrifice of our own.

Or, if we don't, then we never understood and received grace.

"The law of gratitude is the natural principle that action and reaction are always equal and in opposite directions." -- Wallace D. Wattles

When you and I accept God's great grace, we are also called into a life of giving and sharing, as a love response to all that has been poured out on us. We are grateful for His grace.

That is the true principle for that term that corporate America has discovered – **stewardship**. Care for and give back.

Biblical stewardship understands that God is the great giver. He has given greatly to me. He invites me to become a giver like Him.

And not just a generous and compassionate person, but to give to the very work and effort to reach souls for salvation. That is why Christ created and called the church into existence. And why God leads us to return His tithe and our offerings.

It is a love response. A spiritual law of motion. As God has moved all of heaven for my salvation, I commit to moving my resources into His work to reach someone else with the message of salvation and God's grace.

“No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus;

“So those who are the partakers of the grace of Christ will be ready to make any sacrifice, that others for whom He died may share the heavenly gift. STC p. 78

That is really the lesson Christ wanted the rich young ruler catch. Remember, he came running down the road, knelt at the feet of Jesus, and asked about obtaining eternal life. Lots of times, we think Jesus told him to divest of everything, become destitute and then he would “qualify” for eternal life. But Jesus always taught grace. Teaching to “qualify” would be inconsistent with everything else Jesus taught everyone else.

Well, maybe the rich young ruler was a special exception. Maybe the rich have to be told to give it all away?

The purpose of this conversation was not about turning the rich into poverty.

Jesus was inquiring of the rich young ruler's heart. Did he understand grace enough? Did the rich young ruler understand that when he received grace, he literally received all the treasure of heaven, and he could gratefully give generously?

Matthew 19:21 If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; come, follow me.

Receiving grace, leads us, in the 3rd law of motion, to become generous just as God was and is generous with us.

Now today, there is an effort to counter-act this law of physics and this spiritual law. This law of action in response to grace.

The monkey wrench thrown in the gears, is that the evil one has introduced a conspiracy of discontent.

He leads you and me to think that we can't be content in life, unless we acquire more. More stuff, more influence, more fun, more experiences, more in comparison to those around us.

This conspiracy of discontent also runs right up against the reality of God's grace and His promise. It leads us to think, "If I return to God His tithe of 10% and my offerings of love above that, I won't have enough." I will run out. I will be stuck."

It seeks to block from us the promise and the action of :

Psalm 84:11 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹¹ For the Lord God *is* a sun and shield;

The Lord will give grace and glory;

No good *thing* will He withhold

From those who walk uprightly

The evil one plays up that conspiracy of discontent pretty well.

Closing Illustration.

(I had my own dog up on the platform with me in church for this illustration. If you don't have a dog that would naturally react that way, you can adjust this to say something like:

Many folks have dogs as pets. They love and care for them. – use some of the ideas in this illustration.

Many of those dogs act as if every meal put down for them by their owners, is their last meal in life. They guard that dog food dish...)

It is kind of like our life with our dog, here.

Meet Nessie. We are thinking of nick-naming her Grateful Ness. Nessie fully loves and appreciates her family. From day one, even as a little puppy, she was totally glad to be part of her adoptive human family. Loyal, eager, affectionate, ready to join in, protective, grateful for all attention and care.

One interesting aspect. We have lovingly cared for this dog for 8 ½ years. Provided for her daily. Never failed to provide food and water. But frequently, when we get near her food dish, she races right up to it and stands over it protectively. It is as if she is worried that we will eat her dog food. Now, we never have. But she acts like this is her last meal and we had better not take it, because she may never get another meal of Purina Pro-Plan Salmon and Rice.

Every day for 8 and ½ years, she has always been provided with more dog food. Over 3,100 times, food has been provided for her. Never taken away or eaten by us.

But she fears she may not have enough for tomorrow, so she has to stand over her food and start gulping it down, if you get too near to her dish. We laugh at her fears that cause her defensive dog dish actions.

We all have fears. And yet, there is a way out of our fears:

1 John 4:18 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹⁸There is no fear in love; but **perfect love casts out fear**

How easy, though, it is as humans, to forget God's grace. The conspiracy of discontent seeks to interject itself between us and God's application of His Grace. You see, like Newton's 3rd law, God's grace leads us to react with being generous givers ourselves. We can give, and we are called to give, because God has so generously given to us. We can give, because we don't have to fear for the future.