

Grace not Merit

Stephen places witches hats in front of the Communion table.

A: Stephen, what are you doing.

S: We are going to have Communion soon, and I have always been very uncomfortable with how Communion is done.

A: What do you mean?

S: Well, we all come forward as one big mob as if we are all the same.

A: We are all the same, aren't we?

S: Do you really want me to spell it out?

A: Yes.

S: Could get a bit awkward in front of all these people.

A: Just spell it out!

S: Ok. You know how at airports there is a VIP lane for the VIPs to get through security quickly?

A: Yes.

S: Likewise, here in Church we are not all the same. We have our VIPs. These are those who have made big sacrifices for God, who have really put themselves out for the kingdom, who have matured into really loving and giving people. They should have VIP access to the body and blood of Jesus. Surely they deserve some preferential treatment. They shouldn't have to stand in the same line with those who have only given little, or those who have come from a really bad life. That wouldn't be right.

A: Is that so? You have 2 barriers here not just the one. What's that about?

S: I'm actually making 3 lines here. The other separation is between those who, while they haven't been spectacular Christians, have been solid, dependable, respectable, law abiding Christians. They shouldn't be expected to stand alongside those who have just come out of living really bad lives, as if they were all the same. So we have the VIP Christian lane; the solid dependable Christian lane; and the 'from a bad life' Christian lane.

A: Mmmm, so where do you place yourself?

S: First I thought I would put myself in the VIP line. After all, I write and perform really good dramas. But then I thought, 'Stephen, you're rather lazy and selfish a lot of the time as well'. So, because that kind of cancels out the good I put myself in the second line. But then I remembered stuff from my past that wasn't good at all, so I reckon I probably belong in the third lane. Other good Christians shouldn't have to stand next to me to receive Jesus' body and blood.

A: Stephen, let me show you the good news of Jesus. (removes witches hats)

S: But, I wouldn't be comfortable with us all coming to the Lord's table as one mob.

A: Jesus is. Doesn't matter who comes to him if they come to him in faith. He has the same smile for them; the same embrace; the same readiness to give out his body and blood; the same readiness to forgive. To Jesus we are all VIPs. That's the amazing thing about his grace.

S: I'm a VIP no matter what my past has been, no matter what sin I'm struggling with now?

A: Yes. We are all VIPs to the God who made us. Amazing Grace.