

GRACE...*Living A Life Full Of Grace*

Hebrews 12:15; Ephesians 2:1-10

“See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled...”

The Christian life doesn't *begin* by *grace* and then *proceed* in *our own strength*. We *begin*, *grow*, and finally *reach home* by *grace* and *grace alone*. Even though most Christians can agree with that statement *intellectually*, our *experience* often betrays a tendency toward *grace's two enemies: legalism* and *license*.

I have seen way too many in the church wage this *battle*. Even though a Christian from childhood, they go on to *“rededicate”* their life to Jesus again and again, never sure if their efforts at *sanctification* are enough to *keep* God's *favor*.

I've found that way to many Christians, post-conversion, tend toward *legalism* or *license (liberty)* in their pursuit of *sanctification*. One person I know had a strict *Independent Fundamental Reformed Baptist* background. They always tended toward *legalism*, and fought it biblically for years. Another person I know spent many years searching for joy worldly pleasures. They battled an impulse of *liberty* and *license* calling it *grace* for many years. Many pendulums swing after conversion: from *legalism* to *license*, or *vice versa*.

Personally, the church I grew up in helped me understand *how to become* a Christian...but it took me a lot longer to learn about the *pilgrimage* that follows salvation...the need for *daily repentance* and *killing sin*, *praying* for the *fruit of the Spirit*, and other *crucial elements* of *sanctification*. I lived as if *justification* came by *grace through faith* but *sanctification* came by *law* or *personal effort*.

My life was a frustrating merry-go-round of *sin...rededication*, *...law-keeping* in *my own strength...sin, rededication, law-*

keeping...you get the picture. I felt that I had to keep proving to God that I was *serious* about him.

Fortunately, both **Galatians** and **Philippians** encourage us to know that by *grace*, we press on to *know God* more deeply and hold on to what we discover about Him. And *by grace*, He *opens our eyes* and *makes us grow*.

“I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.”

~Galatians 2:21

The *grace* of God *calms* us, *settles* us, and *fills* us with *peace*. And it also raises us up to *defy sin* and *Satan*. Many of us are very accustomed to the more familiar forms of *graces* such as *compassion*, *gentleness*, and *patience*...but we can't neglect the virtue of *stubborn, holy defiance* either. Such *defiance*, *strengthens* us to *resist temptation*, *reclaim enemy territory*, and *refuse to curse God in suffering*. In Christ, we do not cower before the enemies of our soul.

It all began with *grace*...and the **Word** is full of *grace* and *truth*. The **new covenant** is a *covenant of grace*.

“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testified about Him and cried out, saying, ‘This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’” For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.”

~John 1:14-17

GRACE...it isn't given for us to do what we want to do...it is given for us to do what we ought to do.

God's Desire + God's Strength = God's Will
(Power) (God's Glory)

Regarding Salvation...

*“So that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His **grace** in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For **by grace you have been saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”*

~Ephesians 2:7-9

*“But if it is by grace, it is **no longer on the basis of works**, otherwise **grace is no longer grace**.”*

~Romans 11:6

*“...Being justified as a gift by His **grace** through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus...”*

~Romans 3:24

God desires all to *repent* and be *saved*.

**All be saved + Victory over death = Eternal Life...
Heaven**

II Peter 3:9 Romans 1:16 I Thessalonians 5:9

I Timothy 2:4 I Corinthians 1:18

Ezekiel 18:23, 32

Ezekiel 33:11

*“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, **not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance**.”*

~II Peter 3:9

*“...God our Savior...**desires all men to be saved** and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

~I Timothy 2:3-4

*“Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked...For **I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies**...Therefore, **repent and live**.”*

~Ezekiel 18:23, 32

*“...**I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked**, but rather that the wicked turn back from his way and live...”*

~Ezekiel 33:11

*“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the **power of God** for salvation to everyone who believes...”*

~Romans 1:16

*“For the word of the cross is **foolishness to those who are perishing**, but to us who are being saved it is the **power of God**.”*

~I Corinthians 1:18

*“For God has not destined us for wrath, but for **obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ**.”*

~I Thessalonians 5:9

Grace in our Spiritual Growth...

*“And now I commend you to God and to the word of His **grace**, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”*

~Acts 20:32

*“...Through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this **grace** in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.”*

~Romans 5:2

*“But by the **grace** of God I am what I am, and His **grace** toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the **grace** of God with me.”*

~I Corinthians 15:10

In Our Works...

God created us to *work*...*not* for our *salvation*, but *out of our salvation* for His *glory* and His *good pleasure*.

*“And God is able to make all **grace** abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed...”*

~II Corinthians 9:8

Created to work + Gifted and Talented = We work with God...not for God

Ephesians 2:10 Philippians 4:13 Philippians 2:13
II Timothy 3:17 II Corinthians 12:9

*“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for **good works**, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”*

~Ephesians 2:10

*“I can do all things through Him who **strengthens** me.”*

~Philippians 4:13

*“And He has said to me, ‘My **grace** is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.”*

~II Corinthians 12:9

*“For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for **His good pleasure**.”*

~Philippians 2:13

Note: Spiritual Gifts are described as “**grace gifts**” in Scripture.

*“As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the **manifold grace** of God.”*

~I Peter 4:10

*“Since we have gifts that differ according to the **grace** given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly...”*

~Romans 12:6

“So that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

~II Timothy 3:17

Dealing With Sin...

*“The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, **grace** abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, even so **grace** would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

~Romans 5:20-21

*“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His **grace**”*

~Ephesians 1:7

Repent + Authority to forgive sin = Cleansed of all unrighteousness

Repentance...The message of **John**...the message of **Jesus**... the message of **Peter**...the message of **Paul**...the message of the apostles.

*“He said, ‘Friend, **your sins are forgiven** you’...The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason...Who can **forgive sins**, but God alone?...So that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to **forgive sins**, He said to the paralytic, ‘I say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home’.”*

~Luke 5:20-21, 24

*“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to **forgive us** our sins and to **cleanse us** from all unrighteousness.”*

~I John 1:9

*“What shall we say then? **Are we to continue in sin** so that **grace** may increase? **May it never be!** How shall we who*

died to sin still live in it?...What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!"

~Romans 6:1-2, 15

Grace In Our Speech...

"But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison."

~James 3:8

"If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless."

~James 1:26

"So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell."

~James 3:5-6

"Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear."

~Ephesians 4:29

"Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person."

~Colossians 4:6

Our Lifestyle...

"For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

~Galatians 5:13

Purity + Victory over temptation = Holiness

Matthew 5:8 I Corinthians 10:13 I Peter 1:16

I John 3:2-3

I Peter 1:15

Ephesians 5:3

*"Blessed are the **pure** in heart, for they shall see God."*

~Matthew 5:8

*"Beloved, now we are children of God...and everyone who has this hope fixed on Him, **purifies** himself, just as He is pure."*

~I John 3:2-3

*"Like the Holy One who called you, be **holy** yourselves also in all your behavior."*

~I Peter 1:15

*"But immorality or any impurity or greed **must not even be named among you**, as is proper among saints."*

~Ephesians 5:3

*"No **temptation** has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation **will provide the way of escape** also, so that you will be able to endure it."*

~I Corinthians 10:13

*"It is written, 'You shall be **holy**, for I am **holy**.'"*

~I Peter 1:16

KEY FACTORS OF GRACE

- **Freely given:** It's a gift...it's not earned or deserved.

Ephesians 2:8-9 Ephesians 3:7 Psalm 84:11 Romans 12:6

As we *receive* grace, we are to *give* grace also.

- **Ephesians 4:29** (it will give grace to those who hear)
- **Given to all:** Given to both the saved and the unsaved.

*“For the **grace** of God has appeared...to all men.”*

~Titus 2:11

*“The **grace** of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.”*

~Revelation 22:21

(Last verse in the Bible)

- **Given in measure:** As we respond to grace, God gives more grace. Grace is given in degrees...we don't get it all at once. We are to grow in grace.

Romans 5:17 (abundance) **Romans 5:20** (abounds) **II**

Peter 3:18 (grow in grace) **I Peter 1:2** (full measure)

Ephesians 4:7

- **Sufficient for every situation:** Given according to the need of the moment.(Dying grace on dying days)

II Corinthians 12:9 (sufficient) **Proverbs 3:34** (to the afflicted)

- **Grace can be resisted and rejected:**

*“See to it that no one comes short of the **grace** of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled.”*

~Hebrews 12:15

Stubbornness...(Romans 2:5)

Pride...(Psalms and Proverbs...**I John 2:16**, one of three root sins)

Hard-hearted...(Ephesians 4:18)

Calloused heart...(Ephesians 4:19)

Seared conscience...(I Timothy 4:2)

- **Grace requires humility:** (**James 4:6; Matthew 5:5; I Peter 5:5**)

Humility...A wise person recognizing his true condition before God...and in need of God's grace.

Humiliation...A proud person being embarrassed...and rejecting God's grace.

“For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.”

~Romans 12:3