

## Grace our Strength – II.

Last week we looked at grace.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us.

(Eph. 1:1-8)

Holy Spirit inspired this because He wants us to understand the grace that is ours in Christ. Grace is always undeserved, abundant and available.

### I. **Undeserved Grace**

...He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world

Grace is, first of all, undeserved.

This is clearly seen in God's choosing us from eternity past, before the world was made.

We could have done nothing to deserve it, because we didn't exist.

We also see that God predestined us to adoption.

Why did He do this? Because He is gracious and kind.

In love He predestined us to adoption as sons...

From my wife's studies on grace, she defines grace as,

...The doctrine that justifies the ungodly and reveals over and over the absolute nature of God and His everlasting kindness toward us.

The nature of Grace is that it is always undeserved. We may struggle to understand God's sovereign choice of us, and His plan for our lives, but we can understand His goodness as we see the '*kind intention of His will.*'

## II. Abundant Grace

...the grace of our Lord was more than abundant..." (1 Tim. 1:14)

... grace which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. (Eph. 1:7)

God's grace to us is abundant!

**Freely bestowed** [charitoo] — Lit. '*He has graced us with His grace.*'

according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us. (Eph. 1:7)

In this letter Paul writes:

"For by grace we 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." (Eph. 2:8-9).

Grace is about a relationship of love between man and God.

The Law shows people their sins and puts them in bondage to guilt.

In all religions people are under the Law, endlessly condemned.

Religion cannot save anyone. Paul concludes this:

"Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3:19-20).

Kenneth Wuest writes,

"Do this and live!" the Law demands,  
But gives me neither feet nor hands.  
A better word God's grace does bring,  
It bids me fly and gives me wings.<sup>1</sup>

The conclusion is this:

"...for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift [lit. - *justified freely*] by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus..." (Rom. 3:23-24)

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Wuest, *Romans in the Greek New Testament*.

MacArthur writes,

“Our heavenly Father does not simply give us subsistence forgiveness that will barely cover our sins if we are careful not to overdo. We cannot sin beyond God’s grace, because as wicked and extensive as our sins might be or become, they will never approach the greatness of His grace. His forgiveness is infinite, and He lavishes it without measure upon those who trust in His Son. We therefore not only can enjoy future glory with God but present fellowship with Him as well.”<sup>2</sup>

Hundreds of years before Messiah purchased our salvation the prophet Micah proclaimed God’s infinite love and grace through Him,

Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession?

He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love. He will again have compassion on us;

He will tread our iniquities under foot.

Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

(Micah 7:18-19).

Undeserved Grace, Abundant Grace

### **III. Available Grace**

Grace is much more than unmerited favor.

It is available to God’s people in every circumstance.

In his letter to the Corinthians Paul testified about grace,

For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 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. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach or so you believed.

(1 Cor. 15:9-10).

### **Evangelism**

Paul labored but spoke of it as the grace of God working in him.

Paul evangelized by preaching the gospel; he gave out the word of God.

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<sup>2</sup> MacArthur, p. 25.

Grace is that which works in us and through us  
to accomplish great things for Christ on behalf of His church.

“Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

Eph. 3:20

### **Edification**

Personal growth of grace.

“Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears. 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 20:31-32).

Peter said: “...grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Pet. 3:18).

### **Exhortation**

Paul exhorted the Philippians to allow God to work in their lives:

“...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure”  
(Phil. 2:12-13).

Grace is God working in us, to give us the desire and power to do God’s will.

We may not want to do God’s will.

Grace helps us want to; and then provides the strength to do it.

### **Endurance**

Paul endured many trials because of His ministry.

2 Cor. 11:23-29

“Five times I received from the Jews, thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers...” (V. 24-26)

**Next Week: the ultimate Experience of Grace**