

WHAT IS GRACE

INTRO

When a person accepts Jesus Christ and is saved by grace through faith Ephesians 2:7, it is the beginning of a life intended by God to be the total reign of His grace Romans 5:17, 21. Getting saved is only the introduction to the grace of God. It gives us access to the Throne of Grace Romans 5:1, 2; Hebrews 4:16 and His grace does not end at salvation James 4:6, 10. To know Jesus is to know the grace of God John 1:14-16. To understand the message of the Gospel is to understand grace Acts 14:3; 20:24, 32.

I. What Is Grace?

A. Grace is God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

1. God's riches: all of God's provision and everything He has done.

- a. Righteousness 2 Corinthians 5:21.
- b. Deliverance Colossians 1:13.
- c. Healing 1 Peter 2:24.
- d. Prosperity 2 Corinthians 8:9.
- e. Salvation Ephesians 2:4-9.
- f. Justification Romans 3:24.
- g. Peace Ephesians 2:15.
- h. Blessing Ephesians 1:3.
- i. All things Romans 8:32; 2 Peter 1:2, 3.
- j. Abraham's blessing Deuteronomy 28:1-14; Galatians 3:14.
- k. Forgiveness Ephesians 1:7.

2. Christ's expense.

- a. His blood Ephesians 1:7.
- b. His being made sin and separated from His Father 2 Corinthians 5:21
- c. His death Romans 5:8, 17.
- d. His life as a ransom Ephesians 1:7.
- e. His being made the curse Galatians 3:13.
- f. His body bruised, chastised, and beaten Isaiah 53:3-5.
- g. His health Matthew 8:17.
- h. Grace is always based on God, not on us. He initiated it, provided it, and paid for it.

B. Unconditional, unmerited favor Romans 11:6.

1. All of grace, all of God. Man could not add to God's work, could not work for it, earn it, and certainly did not deserve it. Otherwise grace is no more grace. Grace is totally based on God, not on man.
2. What was necessary to get God to save us, redeem us, forgive us, bless us, accept us, declare us not guilty, make us righteous, call us His children, and heal us was done in the:
 - a. Total absence of human obligation. You were not obligated to do anything to get God to provide it.
 - b. Total absence of human guilt. There is nothing you could do wrong making you guilty which could keep God from doing it.
 - c. Total absence of human merit. There is nothing you could do good enough to earn, work for, merit, or deserve it.
3. Grace means nothing was done conditioned upon what you could do or not do. Man's works do not mix with God's pure grace.

C. Grace is God's enabling power. Whatever God requires, His grace enables us to do it, and makes us sufficient.

1. Everyone is given a common share of grace Ephesians 4:7.

2. Everyone is given an uncommon share to function in different ways
Romans 1:5; 12:5, 6; 15:15, 16; 1 Corinthians 3:10; 15:9; Galatians 1:5.
 3. This grace enables us to minister to others Ephesians 3:2, 7, 8. It is the great equalizer to human inadequacy/inability.
 4. This grace makes us what we are and allows us to do what we do 1 Corinthians 15:10. The grace of God enabled him to labor more abundantly.
 5. This grace did not start with us and should not end with us 1 Corinthians 4:6, 7; 1 Peter 4:10. Knowing grace produces true humility.
 6. This grace we exhibit in visible ways can be seen and perceived by others Acts 11:23; Galatians 2:9.
 7. This grace is sufficient to face all of life's circumstances and weaknesses 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. Sufficient - To be enough; to be possessed of sufficient strength; to be strong enough:
 - a. In infirmities: weakness, inability to produce results and perform.
 - b. In reproaches: insults, mistreatments, injuries, harm/hurt.
 - c. In necessities: what must needs be, distress, and pain caused by necessity.
 - d. In persecutions: that which drives, harasses, and vexes.
 - e. In distresses: anguish, narrowness of place, crowded, pressed.
 8. This grace is sufficient to help in time of need Hebrews 4:16—timely help, opportune help, seasonal help.
 9. This grace is sufficient to complete what God has started in your life Zechariah 4:6, 7; Philippians 1:6. We can be frustrated in the uncompleted areas of our lives.
 10. This grace is sufficient to destroy sin's power or any fresh uprisings of sin in our lives Romans 5:20; 6:14.
- D. Grace is God's abounding toward man Ephesians 1:8. God's initiating a move toward man.
1. God blessed us, chose us, predestinated us, accepted us, redeemed us, and abounded toward us Ephesians 1:3-8.
 2. Faith moves God, but we must understand God already moved first before we could help, add to or mess up His work Romans 5:8.
 3. All of the past tense facts of God's Word show us God moved first—we only respond.
 4. There is nothing we could do to complete the plan, only respond to the completed plan. We often wait on God, but He is waiting on us.
 - a. Before we received Jesus—He sent Jesus.
 - b. Before we ask to be healed—He sent Jesus to bare our sicknesses.
 - c. Before we ask for financial help—He already provided.
 - d. Before we ask for deliverance —He already delivered us.
 - e. Before the problem/need came—the answer/provision existed.
 5. We cannot try hard to get God to do anything—only gain knowledge of His grace of what He has already done and receive the completed plan. Knowing grace takes the strain and struggle out of our approach to God.

II. This Grace Comes to the Humble.

- A. It takes humility to receive what you do not deserve, work for or earn. Grace stops you dead in your tracks of self-effort James 4:6, 10.
- B. The number one hindrance to growing in grace is pride. Pride resists the grace of God. Humility submits to the grace of God. Pride says, "I will do it on my own and my way." Humility says, "Thy will for me is best; by faith receive it," 1 Peter 5:5-7.