

Lesson 8

The Work of Grace

Opening Verse: **Romans 1:1,7**

¹*PAUL, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,*

⁷*To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: **Grace to you** and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Introduction:

If you read every Epistle that Apostle Paul wrote to the churches, it began with this apostolic blessing of impartation. This was not a greeting but Paul was imparting and expressing what he considered to be the two most important elements in a Christian's life, **grace** and **peace**. They are vital concepts that we need to learn and embrace in our walk with God for they both define scriptural practicality. For you can't have true spirituality without fully **understanding** and **walking** in God's grace.

Saved by Grace and Not by Works

Ephesians 2:8–9

⁸*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

- We are saved by grace and **not by our own works of righteousness** (self-righteousness)

Titus 3:5 *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*

Ephesians 2:10

¹⁰*For **we are his workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus **unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

- We are saved by the **WORKING OF GOD'S GRACE**
- These are the good works that we do because the Spirit of GRACE is at work in us to do the will of God.

NOTES

About God's RIGHTEOUSNESS:

RIGHTEOUSNESS = Being cleared of transgression or sin (*Romans 5:16-18*); it is also about having a right or approved relationship with God (*Matt. 6:33*).

JUSTIFICATION is the **process** of attaining righteousness, and **RIGHTEOUSNESS** is the **product**.

- We cannot attain righteousness on our own. (*Isaiah 64:6*)
- Righteousness is not attained by works. (*Romans 4:18-25*)
- Human nature is the opposite of righteousness. (*Romans 3:10-18*).
- **Repentance** clears us from unrighteousness (*1 Jn 1:9*).
- **Our righteousness is a GIFT from God**
***Romans 5:17** For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*
 - After we repent, we **"put on" His righteousness**.
- Our God-given righteousness is our **defensive armor** against the enemy's attacks (*Ephesians 6:14*). His blood is our defense against the spirit of condemnation.
- It is our garment of salvation, being covered by the **robe of righteousness**. (*Isaiah 61:10*)
- Justification produces righteousness **BY MY FAITH** thus it is my faith that is accounted as righteousness.

***Romans 5:1** Therefore being justified (RIGHTEOUS) by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

My faith is not an emotional thing, but it is a mental and spiritual thing WHEREIN **I become convinced in my mind and spirit that He is God, that He loves me, and that He died for me AND I BELIEVE IT!** And **I need to HAVE CONFIDENCE in His BLOOD** because that blood justifies, cleanses and it's what will keep me innocent and blameless every single day!

- RIGHTEOUSNESS = **INNOCENCE** (like you never sinned)
- Then **STUDYING** God's Word helps us to **GROW** in righteousness. (*2 Timothy 3:16-17*)

Purest DEFINITION of GRACE:

Philippians 2:13 *For it is God which **worketh** in you both to **will** and to **do** of his good pleasure.*

Worketh = TO ACTIVATE, TO OPERATE

To Will = WISH, WANT and DESIRE

To Do = SUPERNATURAL ABILITY TO DO WHAT YOU CANNOT DO ON YOUR OWN

This verse summarizes GRACE and tell us what grace does – **for it is God that activates in you and I, to wish, want or desire to please God** – It is God activating and operating our desire – a strong or firm resolution or commitment because I can't do it on my own.

So if I have any desire to please God, that activation of our will is the working of grace. And our ability to please God, is also from God. Because God also provides the means to do His will. It's ALL God and nothing about me.

Basically, GRACE is the supernatural impartation of the strength and the ability to do what your humanity cannot do on its own.

Inaccurate Definitions of GRACE:

- **It is NOT a PASSIVE experience NOR a LICENSE to SIN**
It is a gift from God that provides us the power to do His will so that we would not fall in sin.
- **More than the UNMERITED FAVOR of God**
This “unmerited favor” only refers to the “condition” of grace (that we did not deserve God's gift) but it does not tell us what grace IS and what grace DOES.
- **Grace is NOT the same as Mercy**
MERCY is about His covering of righteousness upon us or WHEN God does not give us the judgement that we deserve, as His blood paid the price for our sins and is what changes our eternal destination.

Mercy only deals with our past and does not change what's inside of us. But it is GRACE that changes us as it deals with our PRESENT and our FUTURE.

The working of grace in the Apostle Paul's life ...

1 Corinthians 15:10

*But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain (WAS NOT USELESS); but I laboured more abundantly than they all: **yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.***

In essence, Paul was saying that - *I am just a conduit for this labor because it is God that is ordering and empowering all this labor through me.*

And that's the same faith and attitude that we need to have, because God is no respecter of persons and He can also use us mightily through the power of His grace.

2 Corinthians 12:7-9

*⁷And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. ⁸For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. ⁹And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.** Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

The Apostle asked God three times to remove his infirmity but it was God's will for him to endure it by grace. Because Paul received so much revelation from God, this thorn in his flesh was necessary to keep him saved.

We need to have confidence in the grace of God, that we can endure any thorn in the flesh that He allows in our life.

Another Definition of God's Grace = His Love

Luke 6:32-33 *For if ye love them which love you, what thank (GRACE) have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank (GRACE) have ye? for sinners also do even the same.*

- THANK = its Greek root word means **GRACE**

This scripture is saying that if you love those who love you, you have no evidence of grace working in you. And if you do good to those who do good to you, you have no evidence of grace working in your life.

Our human love does not have the ability to love others the same way as we love ourselves. And God commands us to do that in Matthew 22:37-40.

So here's another definition of grace ...

GRACE = God's LOVE in operation by His Spirit.

It is the love of God at work in me, by the agency of the Spirit of God that dwells in me, activating and causing to be operative in me, to be and do those things in and through me that I cannot do myself.

The FULLNESS of Grace

John 1:14-17

*¹⁴And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. ¹⁵John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. ¹⁶And of his fulness have all we received, and **grace for (UNTO) grace.** ¹⁷For the law was given by Moses (he was the CONDUIT), **but grace and truth came (TO COME INTO EXISTENCE) by Jesus Christ.***

- **You can't separate GRACE from TRUTH.** We need both of these to work together!
- **Grace is not static or finite but it's progressive! Walking in grace is progressive!** Our lives need to be continuously progressing in grace (our yielded-ness to His will).
- **Our grace should be multiplied** (1 Peter 1:2) AND we are commanded to "grow" in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).
- The OT was the proof that our flesh could not obey the law and so **God provided grace and Truth through the conduit of Jesus Christ.** And His sinless life demonstrated the power of grace, God's gift to us.

Abundance of Power = Abundance of God's Grace

Acts 4:33

³³ And with **great power** gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and **great grace** was upon them all.

Grace is the process of God's empowerment in us to be abundant in yielding to His will so that His power can be manifested, and it is God Who is the One doing ALL THE WORK!

Obtain Mercy & Pursue Grace

Hebrews 4:15–16

¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly (WITH CONFIDENCE, NOT BEGGING) unto the throne of grace, that we may **obtain mercy**, and **find grace** (to help) in time of need.

- In the Old Testament it was a mercy seat. In the New Testament it is a throne of grace.
- **To OBTAIN mercy = we take what is offered** (I don't need to work for it, I didn't earn it, it's a gift, all I have to do is to take it; same as receiving the Holy Ghost).
- **Then to FIND grace = I need to want it enough to PURSUE it.**

Grace means me getting out of the way so that GRACE can do all the work. So that the One doing it gets all the credit, and all the glory!

So for grace to operate through me – **I've got to give up on me.** I can't let this flesh be in control. I've got to die to myself. This is the only way that GRACE can work.

Yielding to our Flesh DENIES the Work of Grace

John 12:24 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*

Luke 9:23

*And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and **take up his cross daily**, and follow me.*

If you want to see God's glory manifested in your life, you need to be willing to be dead and your life hid with Christ in God. You've got to be willing to be decreased so that He can be increased. Be willing to lose all the trappings of success so that He gets all the credit.

Grace Keeps Us From Falling

2 Peter 3:18

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

2 Corinthians 12:9

⁹*And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.** Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

Philippians 4:13

¹³*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

(WUEST)

I am strong for all things in the One who constantly infuses strength in me.

When we have enough of His grace every day – then we have enough of God's empowerment in us to keep us from falling and to keep us involved in doing His will.