



It's by Grace—not works

God's unmerited, unearned, underserved favor & love, power, strength, ability, provision, mercy. One of the most profound yet simple way to define the grace of God is Jesus. Jesus is the grace of God. Contrary to what some believe, **grace is not a doctrine, but a person.** That person is Jesus. Jesus is grace. No Jesus, no grace. John 1:17 *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

Everything God does in our lives is based on his grace. We need not only to get a hold of the grace of God but continue in it (Acts 13:43 and 2 Timothy 2:1). You will be tempted to try to relate to God based on your performance, holiness, once again. You need to be rooted and grounded in the revelation of the grace of God because it is fundamental to our relationship with him.

Grace= the gospel = nearly too good to be true news of God's unconditional love and grace (Romans 1:16; Acts 20:24; and Galatians 1:6)

Romans 11:6 And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

One revelation that could transform our lives and relationship with God as believers is the revelation and understanding that God moves in our lives not based on our performance such as daily devotion, studying the Word, giving, going to church, reading our bibles, holiness, obedience or anything like that. Many of us understand that it is by the grace of God that we are saved—of course through faith, but without His grace, our faith could not accomplish salvation. It was by grace. We received the greatest miracle by grace, why do we think the lesser ones will be by our works and good deeds?

Our dealing with the Lord under the new covenant is not by works. It is by grace and it cannot be both works and grace. This verse brings out that it is either or, but not both. It cannot be by works if it is by grace and vice versa.

As I talk about the grace of God, I want to establish this upfront. Some have tried to dismiss the revelation of the grace of God citing that it encourages people to sin. Nothing can be further from the truth! The opposite is true. The grace of God does not empower people to sin but sets them free from the bondage and stronghold of sin. In the same way, I'm not promoting sin rather setting people free from sin and condemnation so they "*go and sin no more*" (John 8:11). People do not need permission or a license to sin from me. They are already sinning without it. The grace of God sets people free from sin and gives them the desire (Philippians 2:13) and power (Romans 1:16) to live a godly life. Anyone who says because they have received the grace of God and the unconditional love of God, they can live like the devil and sin all they want **MUST** to be born again or they need to get their stinking mind renewed (Romans 12:1-2).

Grace encourages people *not* to sin. To believe that grace encourages people to sin is to say that Jesus encourage people to sin which is a lie. Grace frees people to live as God pleases, not as they please. The truth is people sin more without the revelation of grace (Jesus).

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

—Titus 2:11-12

Notice that this would read this way after an understanding that Jesus is the grace of God.....For *Jesus* who brings salvation has appeared unto all men....

The grace of God teaches us to live a godly life and deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and live righteously and godly right now. It frees people from sin *not* free them to sin.

If a husband knows and understands that his wife loves him dearly, that understanding does not push him to cheat on her, rather it sends him closer to her making him more faithful. If he were to say, "my wife loves me so much I can cheat and sleep around," that man has missed the true revelation of her love for him. He needs to get born again, renew his mind or sue his mind for not working when it is needed the most. The tactic of fear and condemnation is powerless to set people free from sin. The motivations of the law cannot set people free. People must be taught the love and the grace of God for them to live a godly life.

Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

—Romans 5:20

Where sin abounds or increases, the grace of God abounds much more, not to encourage or promote sin, but to set people free from sin. The strength of God and His power to set us free from the dominion of sin supersedes the sin itself. The grace of God is bigger and stronger than all our shortcomings.

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

—Ephesians 2:8-9

- a) For by Jesus we are saved..... This would read this way after an understanding that Jesus is grace.
- b) The passage above makes it clear that salvation (peace, forgiveness of sins, deliverance, restoration, prosperity) was not by works. It was a gift. We do not earn gifts or perform for them and should we do, they're no longer gifts but wages. We just receive gifts which is exactly what faith does.
- c) Our faith only appropriates what grace has already made available. Grace is God's part that provides everything we need even before we have the need while on the other hand faith is our positive response to the unmerited, unearned and undeserved provision, power, goodness, blessing, favor, and love of God. If grace has not provided for it, faith cannot.

Some people and ministers preach and teach that if we go to church, give, pray, read our bibles and love our neighbors, God will bless us and if we do not then He won't. Although the Word clearly instructs us to do all the above, the reason is not so that God blesses us, but because He has blessed us, and He is a good God. What they are saying is God deals with you and I based on our performance and not based on His grace and faith in Jesus and His finished work on the cross.

First it must be said, that even on our best day we come short of the glory and standard of God which is Jesus. Romans 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;* In comparison to Jesus, none of us measures up. If God deals with us based on our goodness, holiness, generosity, then we are done and have no chance because none of us can make the standard that God demands. God's standard for anything is perfection—nothing less. Because none of us can make that standard, God provides everything we need by His grace and all we need to do is receive it by faith.

We can't perform nor work ourselves into the love of God, the blessing of God, and heaven because we can't do it perfectly. Even if you are better than me and your neighbor combined, you still come short of the required standard of God. If God moves in your life based on your performance or good deeds, then how good do you have to be? How faithful do you have to be? Does God require 85 or 99%? If you trust in your ability and performance, you will always fall short. You need to have your faith and trust in Jesus whose performance never fails. By the grace of God through faith in Jesus, you and I are qualified, blessed, and loved.

But what is God's required standard? **God's standard is 100% and it is the only passing grade. If you make 99.99% you have failed, even if you are better than the guy with 70%. It's one perfect standard. God doesn't grade on a curve. You either make 100% or you have failed (James 2:10). No man can make 100%, that's why Jesus who was in the flesh came to earth and became a man took our place and paid for all our shortcomings.** He lived a sinless life and fulfilled the law in its entirety and made 100% for us and He deposited that perfection into our individual account and is now available by **ONLY** believing and putting faith in Him.

Since believing in Jesus is the only way into relationship, salvation, and right standing with God, every person can make it; good or bad, better or worse, 99.99% or 85% if they only **believe** in Jesus as their Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9-10). Christianity is not a list of do's and don'ts like all other religions. Believing in Jesus is the greatest equalizer of those who are not as good as others. Good or bad, we can all choose to believe regardless of how good our works and performance are. Grace deposited; faith withdraws. Grace provides the food, but faith cooks it.

I used to say, "when you give, you have given God a reason to bless you." Now I have received the revelation of grace and I do not say that anymore. That would be pure legalism and error. What I was saying is that my gift moves God to give to me, love me, and/or bless me, yet God gave to me before I ever could give to Him. I was saying that God responded to me based on my holiness and faithfulness, yet He does by grace. My gift is no match to the gift of Jesus who God gave for us all. My giving changes my heart and softens it towards God but does not affect His love, blessing, or goodness to me. God would love me the same if I never gave Him or served Him another

day of my life. His love for me is not based on what I do for Him but on His grace and our faith in Jesus.

God is after you—your heart, not your service or your gift.

Now I give to God, but with a different motive. I give cheerfully than ever before. It is no longer an obligation nor is it a debt I owe. I do not owe God and by giving. I'm not paying Him back. I can't pay Him. I give to Him because He has given to me and loves me so much for which I'm very thankful to Him. When I give, I'm giving out of a heart of gratitude. I give because I want to honor Him (Proverbs 3:9). My giving is no longer to get a thing from Him, rather because I have received all I have and everything good from Him. Everything I have and give to the Lord I have received and comes from Him. 1 Chronicles 29:10-16 *Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. 11 Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. 12 Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. 13 Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. 14 But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? **for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.** 15 For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding. 16 O LORD our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name **cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own.** (Emphasis mine)*

And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

—Genesis 25:27-28 (emphasis mine)

We live in a performance-based world. If you do well you get promoted, if you mess up you get fired. You did not get your job because of your employer's unconditional love for you. You had to earn it. It was by merit. If you work harder, you get a raise, or else you don't. We treat each other based on performance not unconditional love. That is how this fallen world operates. One of the problems is we have taken this same mindset and transposed it on God and His kingdom. We think that this is the same way God relates to us and deals with us which is not true. The kingdom of God operates quite differently from the way this world does.

For God and His kingdom, His love towards us is completely unconditional. We do not work to earn it or achieve it. It is all given to us by grace, not by works. **For a lifetime on this earth and all eternity, we could never perform good enough to earn the love and blessing of God.** It doesn't come by performance.

It is a lie from hell that God's love for us is tied to our performance. The truth is that we all do not deserve what we get. God loves us not because we are lovely but because He is love (1 John 4:8, 16). That is His nature. The Old Testament mentality of blessing and cursing needs to go because, under the New Covenant, God deals with us and loves us not because we are worthy or deserving, but because of Jesus and His finished work on the Cross. If you are lonely, depressed, discouraged, and defeated, you can use some of God's unconditional love. A revelation of how much God loves you can completely revolutionize your life.

Isaiah 64:6 *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*

Some have gone about trying to establish their righteousness rather than the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus. For everyone who has believed on the Lord Jesus they have received and have become the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

- a) Philippians 3:9 *And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:*
- b) Romans 10:3-4 *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. [4] For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*

Whatever God does in our lives and the blessing on our lives is not by merit. No one is worthy enough to earn it, deserve it or even qualify. God moves in our lives by His grace. It is unearned and undeserved. Our actions of faithfulness and obedience are simply a response to what God has done for us by grace. They cannot earn a thing from Him.

Everything we have is by the grace of God—salvation, healing, riches, property, peace, etc. He blesses us not because we have done all things right, but because He is good and has done all things right for us. If we want to get things from God based on our performance, we should give up now. No one can make the standard God demands. It's 'simply by grace. It's by Jesus' righteousness, faithfulness, obedience, and holiness.

A. He first loved us

1 John 4:19 “*We love him, because he first loved us.*” 1 John 4:10,18-19 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. [18] There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. [19] We love him, because he first loved us.

- a) We love God because He first loved us. We did not initiate the love relationship we have with Jesus. He did. God took the very first step towards us even before we had anything good in us.
 - i) It is impossible to love God first. Without Him, we have no clue how love looks like. True love is demonstrated by God to us. He had to love us first for us to love Him back.
- b) Before we were born again God reached out and extended His love to us by grace. It was unearned or undeserved. We hadn't fasted, tithed, or cleaned up our act. We were in a sorry state. We deserved nothing. How much more now that we are the children of God? Does God love us less now that we in a relationship with Him or more? The truth is He loves us more and much more now. If He extended His love and mercy while we were yet sinners, is He now going to do less that we become His own children?
 - i) For instance, if you loved your husband before you married him, do you love him less after you get married, or do you love him more?
 - ii) You need a greater reason than a paycheck to go to work; a greater reason than I will be divorced to love your wife, on and on the list goes.
 - That greater reason is knowing how much God loves you. His love for you will cause you to do the right thing even when no one is looking.

Understanding the grace and love of God will set you free to love, serve, give, forgive, and so forth.

- iii) If you are struggling in any area of your life, the bottom line is you do not know or understand God's love and grace for you.

If you understand that the Lord loves you, and get a revelation of His grace for you, you can't help but love, serve, give, and worship Him. That will be your natural response.

B. He now loves us Much More

Romans 5:6-10 "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. **Much more** then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, **much more**, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

- a) How do you know Jesus loves you? He died for you. He took the bullet for you/us.
 - i) Understanding this is the foundation to a greater, deeper revelation, and experience of God's love for us. Even when we do not feel loved, we can rest on the truth that Jesus died for us demonstrating His love for us.
- b) These verses have a powerful lesson we can learn about the love of God. While we were still a sinner, Jesus died for us.
 - i) We had done nothing good nor had we lived a godly life for Him to love us. In other words, His love for us was entirely based on Him—not us. **It was unconditional.**
 - ii) If God loved us so much to die for us while we were still sinners, He loves us much more now that we are now justified.
- c) He doesn't love us less or **more** but **much more** now that we are His children. If He loved us unconditionally while still in the world, He loves even much more unconditionally now that we are His children.
- d) Religion has taught us that we should come as we are and that God loves us unconditionally, but as soon as we do and get saved, the next day they say, "If you do not straighten up and get your act together, God won't bless you. He won't love you."

- i) **What they are saying is that God's love and blessings for that person is based on their goodness and holiness.**
- e) **How holy do you have to be to receive from God? Who sets that percentage?** Brothers and sisters, it is a deception to think that you can deserve or earn a thing from God based on your holiness and goodness. At your best in all your actions, you still fail.
- f) What the mindset of performance to be blessed does to a new believer is to send him or her into condemnation and a performance-based legalistic mindset which will defeat them because none of us can ever **perform 100% to deserve or earn the blessing and love of God.**
- g) If our actions were what was required, then Jesus did not need to go to the cross and pay for our sins. We could have performed our way into relationship with God. Of course, this thinking is ridiculous. None of us qualifies in our actions so God did everything for us, independent of us, and solely dependent on Jesus and His righteousness, not ours.
- h) I'm here to tell you that God's kind of love towards you is not dependent on how good you are, but only on Jesus. **You can't act well enough to deserve, qualify for, or earn the love and blessing of God.** Only Jesus was qualified, and we only tap into that love, favor, and blessing because of our faith in Jesus.
 - i) If God loves you proportional to our goodness, then the Old Testament law is still in effect. Times have changed because of Jesus. Hallelujah! Now we can love God, give, worship without the fear of rejection when we fail.

True, some people may be better than others in the outward act and conduct but, that is not the basis for God's blessing in our lives—Jesus is. You may be better than me, but nothing can you receive from God based on your own goodness. Isaiah 64:6 says *“that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.”*

There is no person in the Word that Jesus healed or helped in anyway based on their performance. It was all by His grace. God loved us before we ever did a thing right to the point of making the greatest sacrifice. Then what makes us think that now everything else is now based on our goodness and faithfulness.

Yes, we have to be faithful. It's good for us and the LORD loves it, but it is not for Him to bless us. Our actions are important because they can open a door to Satan who comes into steal, kill, and destroy. Our actions also soften our hearts toward the Lord. What they do not is earn the blessing, or anything from God.

It's good to read the Word, give, serve, love others, pray and all these things the Word teaches—but why? Our motives are more important than our actions (Matthew 6:1-7). One thing is true, we should not be doing these things to score points with God nor to earn blessings, protection or healing. Matter of fact we can't. There is no action that we can do that can earn a thing from God. Jesus did it all and nothing is left to do. The blood of Jesus was the only currency that could purchase a thing from God. God is not a mafia or a businessman that must to be paid in exchange for protection, blessing and so forth.

We need to do what we do from a position of our relationship with God, our love for the Lord, gratitude, personal growth, being a blessing to others, and closing any inroad to the devil—not to cause God to move in our lives. God moved 2,000 years ago. For everything we receive from the LORD, and for every need we have, God has already provided for it by grace. He anticipated it and made provision for it betimes. So, you can't do a thing to earn it what has already been provided. With God, His provision proceeds our need. If done in faith, what our giving, praying, going to church, loving our neighbor, being faithful, and being obedient does is simply release what has already been made available. Faith does not make or produce but receives or manifests. It's like when you turn the water tap nob for water to come out, the nob is not what causes the water to come nor is that the time when the water is sent from the water or utility company. The water was already present, pumped, and supplied by the water company before we had the need for it, but we need to turn the nob to release or manifest it. When you flip your light switch, that is not when the light comes. The light is already present and has already been there, but you have to flip the switch to allow it to flow or manifest. This explains why although God has provided the water and the light by grace even before we have a need, we have to do certain things in faith to release and manifest it. The issue is not the supply or with the supplier, rather the ignorance on our part on how to release what is already been provided and made available.

Mark 10—Records a rich young ruler who wanted something to do to enter into the kingdom of God. Since he wanted to perform and work for it, Jesus pointed him to the law, but he claimed to have kept the law since his childhood. This man was lying or deceived. No one has ever kept the law or can keep the law in thought, word, and deed. No one has kept a single law perfectly let alone the 613 laws. Only Jesus was able to do that. Jesus pointed the rich young ruler to something to do and he failed. He couldn't. The point was you cannot inherit the Kingdom of God

through work, good deeds or performance. You cannot earn it. You only enter in through faith in Jesus—not through your good deeds.

John 6:28-29 mentions a group of people who asked Jesus what they had to do to work the works of God. They thought they had to do some work or performance, but Jesus responded to them and told them that the work they had to do was a **work of believing on Jesus**—not doing things such as giving, going to church, etc. If all of that is true and it is, then why do we think we have to perform or work to earn the minor blessings in comparison to salvation (relationship with God which includes the forgiveness of our sins).

C. Walk as we received Him at first.

Colossians 2:6 “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:”

- i) We all received salvation by faith in Jesus, not by our own good deeds and keeping of the law, but when we get born again, we fall into the trap to perform to earn the blessing, favor, and love of God through our good deeds. We are trying to earn what we already have. This is the wrong approach. The way we received salvation—by faith, is the same way we continue walk and live our lives.

This list below I got from Barry Bennett’s teachings who is one of the premier bible teachers in the body of Christ today.

- a) Grace is strength (2 Cor. 12:9).
- b) Grace is provision (2 Cor. 9:8).
- c) Grace is power (Acts 4:33).
- d) Grace builds us up and gives us our inheritance (Acts 20:32).
- e) Grace gives us gifts (Rom. 12:6).
- f) Grace gives us consolation and hope (2 Thess. 2:16).
- g) Grace is faith and love (1 Tim. 1:14).
- h) Grace is mercy and help in time of need (Heb. 4:16).
- i) Grace is multiplied unto us through the knowledge of God (2 Pet. 1:2).
- j) Grace labors abundantly (1 Cor. 15:10).
- k) Grace lives holy (Titus 2:11-12).
- l) Grace brings boldness (Romans 15:15).
- m) Grace causes us to think soberly (Romans 12:3)
- n) Grace is not works or performance (Romans 11:6). It is by grace or by works but not both.
- o) Grace abounds much more where sin abounds (Romans 5:20), not to encourage us to sin but to set us free from sin.

More on grace:

Other things to note and learn about the grace of God.

- a) Hebrews 13:9 It is good that the heart be established by grace. We are Established by grace—not by works.
- b) John 1:14 *And 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.*
 - i) Full of grace and truth—Being full of grace is also being full of truth. Grace and truth are siblings. Jesus is grace and is also truth (John 14:6).
- c) John 1:16 *And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.*
 - i) We have received grace for grace or grace upon grace or the abundance of grace.
- d) John 1:17 *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* Jesus revealed the grace of God to us.
- e) Acts 20:24—the gospel of the grace of God is also the grace of God. Whenever we preach the gospel, we are preaching the grace of God.
- f) We need to continue in grace—Acts 13:43
 - o We need to be consistent in the grace of God.
- g) We need to be stay strong in grace—2 Timothy 1:2
 - o Grace brings us strength. **We need stay in grace to stay strong.**
- h) Great grace—Acts 4:33
 - o We can believe God for great grace and more grace.
- i) Grow in grace—2 Peter 3:18
 - o We can grow in grace.
- j) Grace and peace be multiplied unto us—2 Peter 1:2

- o Grace and peace can be multiplied, not doubled in our lives if we acquire more knowledge through the Word of God.
- k) God of all grace—1 Peter 5:10
 - o There are different and more facets to the grace of God.
- l) Grace to help—Hebrews 4:16
 - o God's grace is available to help in the time of need.
- m) Justified by His grace—Titus 3:7
 - o We are justified by His grace.
- n) Labors by the grace of God—1 Corinthians 15:10
 - o The grace of God is not lazy. It labors much more than an average person.
- o) Grace of God brings Salvation—Titus 2:11
 - o Grace is the doorway to salvation. We are saved by God's grace. No grace = No salvation.
- p) Grace has appeared to all men—Titus 2:11-12
 - o God's grace is not hidden. It has appeared unto all men. This grace has appeared to bring salvation meaning, Jesus is the grace of God.
- q) Giveth grace to the humble—1 Peter 5:5; James 4:6
- r) Grace is exceedingly abundant—1 Timothy 1:14
- s) Speech be always with grace seasoned—Colossians 4:6
- t) Giveth more grace—James 4:6

Conclusion:

So, if sin was the issue for stopping God from blessing us, it has been paid for and resolved. It's no longer a barrier between us and God. Isaiah 59:1-2 has been fulfilled and taken care of. Our sins no longer separate us from the Lord because they have been paid for. Now enter into a personal relationship with the Lord by receiving Jesus, the payment, and ransom for all your sins.

All our good deeds are not the root to our blessing or relationship with God, rather the byproduct of that relationship. We should give, love the Lord, study the Word and fellowship with believers, not as an obligation, but as a fruit of our relationship with the Lord.

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