

Grace Alone

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Date: 21 August 2011

[0:00] Grace Alone It's Romans 5 verses 1 and 2.

! Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith, into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 5, it tells us about faith, of peace, of grace. And I touched on this morning the subject of faith alone.

Faith alone, one of the truths of the Reformation. Firstly was Scripture alone, which we've touched on in a previous message this morning. Faith alone, and tonight grace alone.

Grace alone. The subject of grace, it's an enormous subject. A wonderful truth that we can't really hear more than we need to hear.

[1:13] Because we need to hear more about God's grace and reflect upon it and consider the wonder of it. The grace of God. It's at work in man's life through his Holy Spirit and through his Holy Word.

God deals with man by grace. And without his grace we'd be in big trouble, wouldn't we? Let's face it. Because if God was to deal with us according to what we deserve, it would certainly be not pleasant.

So just some thoughts around the subject of the grace of God. And firstly, that grace is the nature of God. Grace is his nature. If you'd like to turn to 1 Peter chapter 5.

We're going to refer to numbers of Scriptures. You might not be able to catch up with all of them. But 1 Peter 5 and verse 10. He is the source of all grace.

Our Lord is the source of all grace. It says there in 1 Peter 5 verse 10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you.

[2:30] It tells us there that one of his names is the God of all grace. He's the God of all grace. The source of all grace. Grace is the nature of God.

He's gracious to us in his dealings with us. Secondly, grace is the message of God. We read that in Acts 20 verse 32.

Grace is the message that he gives to man. The word of his grace is one of the names of the word of God. The word of his grace.

The gospel is called the gospel of the grace of God. And we read there in Acts 20 verse 32. Acts 20 and verse 32.

Paul says, And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

[3:37] Grace is the message of God. It's the message of the scriptures from beginning to end, from Genesis to Revelation. We see grace right through the pages of his word.

The gospel is the gospel of the grace of God. Grace is the message of God. Thirdly, grace is the gift of God. It's his grace, his gift, that sees salvation realised.

Grace is God's great generosity. The great generosity of our God. The great giver of life.

The giver of every good and perfect gift. We see him in James 4 verse 6. It says there in part, Grace is God's great generosity.

And it's given to the humble. It's given to those that are lowly. It's given to those that are contrite in spirit. It's given to the humble. God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

[4:49] That's his gift to you. If you will but humble yourselves. As the word says to humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. And he will lift you up. Do you believe that tonight?

Who believes that tonight? He will lift you up. If you'll bow in humble repentance, in faith, he will receive you. Think of grace.

What is grace? Someone wrote this illustration of, An explanation of grace. How you could compare it to other things.

For example, when a person works an eight hour day and receives a fair day's pay for his time. That is a wage.

When a person competes with an opponent and receives a trophy for his performance. That is a prize. When a person receives an appropriate recognition for his long service or high achievements. [5:51] That is called an award. But when a person is not capable of earning a wage. Can win no prize.

And deserves no award. Yet receives such a gift. Anyway, that is a good picture of God's unmerited favour.

That is what we mean when we talk about the grace of God. The grace of God. It's not a wage. It's not a prize.

It's not an award. It's not something that we can claim any merit for. But it is a gift. Grace is God's gift. And grace is utterly free.

It's utterly free. What a wonder. What a glory that is. What a praise to his name for that grace. Think of it. You can't pay for it.

[6:47] You can't give anything for it. You can't do anything to earn it, to deserve it, to get it. Here's another quote. This is from an old time preacher, Richard Baxter.

As we paid nothing for God's eternal love. And nothing for the Son of his love. And nothing for his spirit. And our grace and faith.

And nothing for our eternal rest. What an astonishing thought it will be to think of the unmeasurable difference between our deservings and our receivings.

Listen to how he puts it here. Oh, how free was all this love. And how free is this enjoyed glory.

So then let deserved be written on the floor of hell. But on the door of heaven and life, the free gift.

What do we deserve?

[7:50] What do any of us deserve? Hell. Yet, he writes on the door of heaven. The free gift. The free gift. That is his extended grace, isn't it?

And we read in Acts 11 verse 18. What God's grace means for me, for you. What does it mean? Acts 11 verse 18.

There's so many verses we could refer to about grace. And this actually doesn't use the word grace yet. You can see grace in these phrases here.

In Acts 11 verse 18. And we see salvation granted to the Gentiles in the context here. It says, verse 18. When they heard these things, they held their peace and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

God in his grace. God in his grace extended the reach of his hand to such as we, to Gentiles.

Beyond the realm of Israel, beyond the realm of the holy nation, God extended grace.

[9:05] And it says, God granted repentance unto life. God grants grace. God grants it to those who will trust him. They glorified God and said, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

God grants grace. He enables us to repent. And it's his great gift to us. Fourthly, we see grace is the salvation of God. Grace is salvation.

John 1. Salvation is grace. John 1.10 through 17 it says, As we know it's speaking of the word, the word who was God, who is God.

John 1.10, He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

[10:22] And the word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us. And we beheld his glory, the glory, as of the only begotten, of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 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, and of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace.

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Grace came by Jesus Christ.

The word God made flesh dwelling amongst us, tabernacling with man, living in human skin, and becoming sin for sinful man.

Truth and grace came by Jesus Christ. We need God's grace. Why? Because we deserve hell. Every man deserves hell. We must rely upon his grace.

[11:28] Friends, tonight, don't rely on anything but, nothing but the grace. Nothing but his grace to you. Don't rely on baptism. Don't rely on good works.

Don't rely on church membership. Don't rely on your own thinking, or feeling, emotions, or senses. Even the words you might say. It's faith. It's grace. It's ultimately and absolutely only his grace that can save your soul. It's only the grace of God that grants you repentance, that allows you to call on his name.

It's only his grace that you can plead in this day. Thank God we can't find grace still. As Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

Grace is still amazing today. It's still present for today. And salvation comes when faith is linked with grace.

[12:34] Faith is linked with grace. You trust him and he extends that gift to you.

the gift of his grace. Don't rely on anything but. We see that in Acts 15 verse 11. We must rely upon his grace to be saved.

You know, there's well-meaning people. We've met many through our life. Religious people. They think they're saved. Yet they haven't found his grace.

They haven't trusted the finished work. The finished work of the cross. Some think there's still more to be done. They've still got to earn it. To work for it.

To deserve it. You cannot. Cannot ever. Cannot ever deserve a skerrick of his grace. And it's not by any doing of your own.

[13:32] That you can maintain your salvation. It's only his grace from start to finish. That's the only thing we can rest upon. Acts 15 verse 11 it says, But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved even as they.

We believe through his grace. Faith and grace. Faith and grace are linked. He's rich with his grace. He extends his grace lavishing it upon us.

And we its recipients while unworthy are glad receivers of it. God's grace it's abundant in Christ in whom we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace.

Ephesians 1 verse 7. Romans 3 verse 24. You may wish to turn there too. Friends, it's forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace.

we have nothing to give in return. Nothing to give in exchange other than our filthy rags of righteousness.

[14:50] Friends, don't trust in any doing of your own. Don't trust in any righteousness of your own. It must be his. It must be his grace. It must be his work. His finished work.

He says, It is finished. It was done once for all. Once for all. Ephesians 1 verse 7 says, We have redemption through his blood.

The forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. In Romans 3 verse 24 it says, Being justified freely by his grace.

Freely justified by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Friends, tonight I'm not taking it for granted that every soul knows him today.

You may think you know him and yet you've never trusted the grace. You've never trusted the blood of the Lamb to save your soul, to wash away every stain of sin.

[15:48] That's your only hope. It's your only hope. Please, please trust him. Trust him now. Trust him now. Freely justified by his grace.

How can we? How can we with a sinful heart, a heart that is desperately wicked? Who can know it? Thank God. God can penetrate the darkest, foulest heart of man.

God can open the heart to that penetrating power of his truth. In Acts 16, 14 we read a lovely verse there that speaks volumes to me.

Acts 16, verse 14. What the grace of God can do in a heart? Acts 16, verse 14. We see the conversion of Lydia.

And see what happens here. Acts 16, 14. Paul is here ministering in the region and verse 14 of Acts 16.

[17:01] It says, And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

Her heart God opened. Then it says she was baptized. She demonstrated faith in Christ.

How did it happen when the Lord opened her heart? Her heart, the Lord opened and she attended to the things spoken of Paul.

And friends, God in His grace, God in His infinite, amazing, absolute grace, God is the one who opens the heart.

He is the cause. And here's the effect. He opened her heart so she could attend to the word of God, the truth of salvation.

[18:12] God is the ultimate and absolute source of salvation. We know that familiar one in Ephesians 2, For by grace are you saved through faith that not of yourselves.

It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. Grace. Grace.

Another aspect of grace is that grace is something that is continuing with the believer. If you are a believer, grace is with you. God's grace is with you.

We read in Romans 5, verse 2, the one we started with, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Grace is the continuing presence of God in our life. He walks with us and He talks with us along this narrow way. And the good news is that this grace can reach the furthest, the foulest, to the gutter most.

[19:22] Grace can come even now, even tonight. There was a plumber's van that had a slogan, their kind of statement of business on the side of this plumber's van.

It said, there is no place too deep, too dark, or too dirty for us to handle. And grace is just like that too.

There's no place too deep, too dark, too dirty, that God's grace cannot be extended. In this time of His mercy, the gospel is extended.

His hand is extended to the deepest, the darkest, the dirtiest. And He intervenes to stop us from going to hell. He intervenes to save us in that mad rush to hell.

And sin is like a terminal disease that has us in its grip. And He saves us. He saves us as we trust Him. Friends, there's much we could say of grace.

[20:27] And it must be that grace upon which we stand, by which we have access by faith, and wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Here's another scripture, Colossians 1, 21, I'll just read that. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight.

If you continue in the faith, grounded and settled and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you have heard. Friends, we were sometimes alienated, estranged, separated, divided from God, a great barrier, a great wall between us and Him, enemies in our minds by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled.

Friends, that's the truth of grace and that is in which we still stand. Here's a quote, Grace seeks us and saves us. Grace keeps us secure. Grace enables us to serve and to endure the tests and trials of life.

Grace will bring about our sanctification in this life and will ultimately bring us to glory from beginning to end. We are the object of divine grace.

[21:53] Think of that. You know, sometimes we can think that we've got something to lay claim to, but as if there's something that we deserve our salvation. Friends, we must never come to such a place.

We must always have the wonder of Calvary in our minds. We must always have the wonder of who Christ is and what He has done, His extended gift to man.

Grace is our continuing daily experience with God. Here's how someone put it when we can sometimes treat grace lightly. Here's how someone put it here.

And let's not make the mistake of doing this, friends. Let's not treat grace lightly and carelessly and flippantly today. Let's always have the wonder, the amazement of that amazing grace.

if when you sin you run away from God rather than to God you have failed to fully realise the grace of God.

[22:57] Run to Him. To Him. If when you contemplate your own value as a human being you rehearse in your mind your personal accomplishments, what you've done, there might be lots of good things you've done rather than the person of Christ.

The person of Christ. You have failed to fully embrace the grace of God. Let's not lay any claim on any of our doings however good they may be.

It must be the person of Christ that occupies us. If you typically say to yourself I obey therefore I am accepted rather than I am accepted therefore I obey you have failed to realise the reality of divine grace.

It's not because you've accepted Him that you've got any merit. It's because He's accepted you. He's accepted you. If you are motivated by fear and insecurity rather than joy and confidence you have failed to understand the grace of God.

We've got joy and confidence. This grace is cause for joy. It's cause for assurance. If your confidence is in baptism church attendance faithful giving or any other religious activity rather than who Jesus is and what He has done for you you have failed to understand the grace of God.

[24:26] Not religious works not anything of ourselves not any works of righteousness that we have done but according to His mercy according to His grace He has saved us.

Some dear friends of mine they make that mistake they think it's through doings of their own that they merit salvation it's nothing of the sort God forbid that any should think such a thing or they think that they can keep themselves saved by working it's not so it's not so it's grace from start to end it must be otherwise it's works based salvation you can't keep yourself saved it's only His grace that keeps you saved that alone not of any doing of your own not of any doing of your own that would be a great mistake if when you look at other Christians you resent them for their spiritual growth you have failed to fully embrace the grace of God thank God there's others that you can look to and thank God for that others are doing different works you can thank God for them don't be jealous of another grace of God the grace of God if when you grow and increase in your conformity to Christ you pat yourself on the back and you silently congratulate yourself for doing what other Christians have not you have failed to fully embrace the grace of God whatever talents and gifts that you have it's God's giving it's God's enabling it's God's empowering it's God's strengthening it's nothing of yourself God forbid that we should glory save him the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ if when you fall short of your personal goals you envision God scowling at you rather than smiling you have failed to fully embrace the grace of God he's our father he's looking over us he's watching over you you can trust him and he's there to forgive to pick you up if you think that God doesn't love you and cherish you because you are overweight or underpaid or outperformed or inadequate you have failed to fully embrace the grace of God don't put yourself down

God's made you who you are God's given you a place to serve he's given you people to reach he's given you life to live make the most of every breath if you think that God's love you because you aren't overweight or because you are highly paid or because you are more than adequate for every responsibility you have failed to fully realise the grace of God don't lay claim to any gain of your own any making of yourself let it be God gets the praise and finally if when you contemplate the free forgiveness of sins you are tempted to use that as an excuse to sin all the more you know nothing of the grace of God God forbid that I should sin God forbid that I should use grace as an excuse to

sin it's because of his grace we want to love him more we yearn to serve him more we want him to have more of us that is grace friends to recap thus far grace is the nature of God God is gracious God is gracious to sinful man even now even still to such as we to such as me God is the source of all grace he is the God of all grace look to him look to him not to religion look to that one the God of all grace he is your only hope he is your only hope grace is the nature of God grace is the gift of God grace he grants grace to the humble don't be proud he will bypass you he resists the proud but be humble humble yourself come to him with a bended heart and he will give grace to the humble grace is the message of God from start to end grace is the salvation of God from that moment to when we see his face the moment you're born again grace starts and when you're glorified grace is still there right through from conversion to glorification it's grace grace is the salvation of

[28:51] God he opens up hearts the great heart doctor the great heart surgeon and he replaces that heart of stone with a heart of flesh a spiritual heart and grace is the continuing presence of God as you walk day by day by day grace is with you God's grace is with you and you're growing in grace you're going from glory to glory to glory from grace to grace to grace grace is sure have you found grace that's the question grace it must be grace it must be grace not works not works grace that rules over us it says in Romans 5 21 that as sin hath reigned unto death even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord death used to reign death used to be king death used to have control and rule over you now grace rules over us grace we're servants of God we're glad servants of God it's not an unwilling service it's a glad service that he calls us to we cannot be saved by grace and kept by works some people think that they think they're saved by grace and they're kept by works that's wrong it cannot be don't put any credit don't put any weight in your works they follow the grace they follow the grace and it's on his grace that we must rest on that alone on the finished work of

God grace abounds it abounds still it says that God is able to make all grace abound toward you that you having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work thank God for that thank God that every breath we have yet to breathe we can abound unto every good work friends you've got life to live he's put you on this planet for a reason he's saved you for his glory and let everything that have breath praise the Lord let everything praise him it's the chief end of man is to glorify God for his pleasure we were created think of that puts it in context doesn't it we weren't created for our own pleasure although he thankfully!

gives us some pleasure in life from time to time but we were created for his pleasure for his pleasure think of that how can you give God pleasure this week sometimes in this pleasure driven world that we live in it's all about man having pleasure isn't it about man having things that would please his way but let your life be such that you're living in for his good pleasure and Hebrews 12 28 it says Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear serve God acceptably in this time of grace in this dispensation of grace in this season of grace let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear and lastly friends it says let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need thank god we can pray for grace we can come to a throne upon which is seated the gracious one the god the god of all grace it's where he reigns today and it's where he's enthroned today he is that one who extends grace still he extends grace to you faltering christian whilst we may be at times he extends grace to us in all of our foul ups and mess ups of life at times god still extends grace and friends we can only rest in that rest in let us pray