

1644-Grace

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 13 December 2020

[0:00] My subject today is the grace of God. God's grace. It's been called the most powerful force in the universe. And it's used over 100 times in the New Testament. It's what sets Christianity apart from all other religions. Titus 2 verse 11 through 14. It says for the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts.

We should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.

Let's hear about what the Bible speaks to us of the grace of God. Grace. What is it? It's God's favour made available on behalf of sinners who do not deserve it. It's not earned. It's not merited. And it is for us.

Verse 11. It says that God's grace reaches us. God's grace is potentially available to all who care to access it. It has appeared to all men. It brings salvation. It reaches us.

Secondly, grace teaches us. It teaches us how to live. It teaches us how men ought to say no to sin and yes to righteousness. Grace trains us. It teaches us how to live a godly life. God's grace provokes faith and life to fruitfulness and service, to be a peculiar set-apart people zealous of good works.

[1:52] Grace and peace to you is a much repeated phrase that Paul uses. He begins each of his letters that way. It's a recurring theme through the word of God. Grace teaches us. And God has written the book of grace for us, for our learning. It's the Bible. The whole Bible is the story of God's grace.

Paul urges, for our learning. Paul urges, for our learning. 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.

It says, verse 11, that the grace of God brings salvation. Grace is our salvation. Grace is our life in Christ. It shows us how to live. Grace saves us. It makes us. It shapes us. And grace grows. Even in the most unworthy.

God's grace can abound. It says grace abounds towards us. Romans 5, verse 20, it says, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Praise God.

Paul knew that. He knew that personally. He was a man that was at one time breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. He was antichrist. Yet God turned Paul around 180 degrees on the Damascus road. He still went to Damascus, but instead of killing the Christians, he gave the gospel to others.

[3:19] Grace. We're talking about, verse 11, the grace of God. Grace. It's all that God is free to do and does for man on the basis of the work of the cross, the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace is a resource that can never be earned or deserved, but can only be received as a gift. Grace is absolutely free. It works apart from all human works or merit.

It's important to get to know that salvation is a gift of God. That's vital to be clear about. Ephesians 2, verse 8, it says, for by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves.

It is the gift of God. Grace makes it possible. This very gift of God. The grace of God brings salvation. We're talking about the grace of God.

Grace is one of the key attributes of our God. It's supremely revealed in the person and work of Christ. It's his very nature. Tyndale translated grace as loving kindness.

[4:22] Grace stands in the contrast to wrath. Grace and wrath, loving kindness and the wrath of God. Wrath is the righteous reaction of a perfectly holy being towards sin.

Yet God acts in his sweet forgiveness and mercy towards the objects of his grace. Thankfully, our God is called the God of all grace. 1 Peter 5, verse 10.

Grace is revealed in Christ. Grace in human skin. Grace came down. He was made flesh. The grace of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ, full of grace and truth, it says in John 1, 14.

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.

The Lord Jesus is grace personified. Grace has come and paid us a visit. Our Lord Jesus is grace incarnate in the flesh.

[5:22] And this should impact our lives. John 1, 16, it says, And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.

Verse 17, it says, For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Friends, grace saves. And grace teaches us.

Teaches us how to live. The character of Christ should be seen in us, in our lives and actions, his nature, his heart. As he truly lives in us and lives through us, his grace flows.

His life on earth was love demonstrated through relationships. We see God's grace at work in his compassion and his kindness. Our first text shows us that to live soberly, righteously and godly, it requires the grace of God.

And this grace we tell of is practical. May we learn to practice grace in dealing with others. There's a story told after the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

[6:31] No person in all of East Germany was more despised than the former communist dictator, Erich Honecker. He had been stripped of all his offices, and even the Communist Party rejected him.

Kicked out of his villa, the new government refused him and his wife new housing. And the Honeckers were homeless and destitute. Then a man, Pastor Holmer, a director of a Christian help centre north of Berlin, was made aware of the Honecker Straits.

And Pastor Holmer felt it would be wrong to give them a room meant for even needier people. So the pastor and his family decided to take the former dictator into their own home.

Eric Honecker's wife, Margot, had ruled the East German educational system for 26 years. And eight of Pastor Holmer's ten children had been turned down from higher education due to Mrs. Honecker's policies, which discriminated against Christians.

And now the Holmers were caring for their personal enemy. The most hated man in Germany. This was so unnatural, so unconventional, and so Christ-like.

[7:50] By the grace of God, the Holmers loved their enemies, did them good, blessed them and prayed for them. They turned the other cheek. They gave their enemies their coat, their own home.

And they did to the Honeckers what they would have wished the Honeckers would do to them. Friends, that's grace. That's called grace, isn't it? The grace of God. The grace of God that redeems us.

The grace of God that teaches us, that reaches us, that teaches us, that grows. Grace is the key to a fruitful and productive Christian life.

And we can increase in this. It says 2 Peter 3 verse 18. But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. To Him be glory, both now and forever.

Amen. Holiness is our growing in grace. It's God's transforming work, doing its work within our lives. This is holiness. It's a moment by moment growing in God's grace.

[8:50] It's growing more in love with Jesus day by day. It's being transformed from one degree of glory to another. It's good to consider if we sense a problem.

What's stopping us from growing? Every new day we can display more grace and exercise more grace with others. God doesn't want us to be running low, as it were, in this quality.

If we had some kind of measure, there's some kind of meter of faith as we need to recharge. Recharge the grace. Replenish it. Get a grace refill.

And Timothy 2 verse 1. Paul urges Timothy. He says, Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Notice it's His grace.

The grace of God, it says, verse 11. God's grace. That's what we need. Not any working of our own, but His grace working in us. His grace brings strength for us to work.

[9:45] His grace brings strength for us to serve. His grace strengthens us to keep going, to love the Lord more, to love His Word, His Church, His people. And we draw our strength from this source of grace, who is the Almighty God Himself.

The Bible is called the Word of His grace. God's Spirit is called the Spirit of grace. And His grace activates, it works in us, it works through us.

His grace enables us to serve. Our service must be fueled by grace. In Hebrews 12 verse 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.

Serving with grace is serving God with faithfulness and with humility. Know that God will reward your service. And keep on faithfully serving.

1 Peter 4 verse 10 it says, As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

[10:54] Every man it says, we've all been given a deposit, as it were, of grace. What abilities can we have to serve God? They're given by grace. They're extensions of His grace.

His gifts to us. You have been entrusted with priceless treasures. Be a faithful steward. Don't keep the goodness of God to yourself. Give it away. God has given you His grace.

And God's grace never fails, friends. God's grace is always available for us. His grace sustains us. All that we are and have and do, it's all thanks to His grace.

You might feel inadequate. But God's grace is your enabler. God's plan is for us to abound in grace. And to abound to every good work. It says in 2 Corinthians 9 verse 8.

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. Where does it start? God is able to make all grace abound toward you.

[11:58] Grace. Our sufficiency is of God. His abounding grace. That's what we need. Grace. To think of it, it's the wonderful nature of God.

His kindness. His character. And grace comes and makes its home in our hearts. Grace teaches us. It's like learning a language. Let us learn that language, as it were, of grace.

Grace. To be forgiving in grace. To be rebuking in grace, if need be. To be restoring in grace. And encouraging in grace. Grace is God's plan. And we must have it.

It's been said, grace, you need it. You can't live without it. But you can't purchase it. And you can't earn it. It only comes by means of a gift. And when you receive it, you immediately realize how much you needed it all along.

And you wonder how you could have lived so long without it. Grace. It's free. It's unmerited. Noah found it. In Genesis 9, it says, Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

[13:02] Grace. It's God's life-changing power operating in our lives. And the grace itself is all about the grace of God. Acts 20, verse 24. It's the grace of God.

His grace that saves us. It's grace, as it were, like the shepherds seeking the lost sheep. Grace is God's love unconditionally given to his wayward children. And what's more, it's this grace that sustains us.

This grace that brings forgiveness. Freedom from guilt. And victory. It's by grace. Grace. As God's people, we're called to be people of grace. It says of the people of God in Acts 4, 33, that great grace, great grace, was upon them all.

It's been said, where there is no grace, there is no gospel. Some would miss grace. And that would be a great error. Grace is what makes Christianity unique.

No other religion has grace. Have you ever met graceless people? Graceless people? Selfish, sour, critical? Oh, that God would baptize such with his awesome grace.

[14:12] Yes. May we rather be a people that radiate grace. That we be a community of grace. Such was the early church. People like Barnabas.

He showed grace. And he found grace when he visited the church at Antioch, Acts 11, 23. It says, Barnabas, when he saw the grace of God, he was glad.

Grace shows. It's evident. It gladdens the heart. It manifests itself. And you'll see it like Barnabas did. So, grace. It's essential.

Grace is essential to save us, to sanctify us. Grace is essential for us to grow. And we must have grace. Again, as Paul exhorted Timothy, he said, and it's a command.

He says this to Timothy 2, verse 1. Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Do you want to be a strong Christian?

[15:09] Are you strong in Jesus Christ? Strong in the grace that is in Jesus Christ. What's your grace level today? Is it a little bit on the low side?

We need a recharge. God can recharge your grace. His grace will strengthen you. Put your trust in the grace of God.

Put it there. He is the God of all grace. And he always has been the God of all grace. The gospel is the gospel of grace. And his throne is called the throne of his grace.

Grace. Marvelous, infinite, matchless, wonderful grace. Grace that is greater than all our sin. We must have it. Essentially, it's an encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace came to planet Earth. And his name is Jesus, isn't it? Grace. We're saved by the free, unmerited favor and grace of God.

[16:07] Plus nothing else. It's all of Christ or it's none of Christ. His grace brings salvation, it says. He freely extends his love gift.

And grace is that mighty love power of God. Grace is his divinely imparted ability. Grace is dynamic. It's not static. It's active.

Ever working within us. And grace teaches us. It shows us how to live. Grace trains us in what to say no to. And grace is God's grace that is at work within us.

And he does his will in us. Grace empowers us for his service. And grace brings freedom. It releases us. Galatians 5 verse 1.

It says, The angel didn't come on the inside to inspect the people.

[17:29] He saw the blood. That's what mattered. The blood. Are you covered by the blood? Do you know the saving of his blood? When the father looks at a believer, someone who's placed his or her faith in the blood of Jesus, the blood shed for us at the cross, he sees the blood.

And it's the blood of the lamb that is our saving. We're accepted on the basis of that. Of that blood. Nothing that we have done.

That is grace. We're accepted by God regardless of our performance. As the thief on the cross who confessed our Lord, the Lord says today, you shall be with me.

God is the impartor of grace in our lives. And he gives us the great riches of his grace. We have to be lowly enough to come by faith. Because it says God gives grace to who?

The humble. It's been said grace is the desire and power that God gives us to do his will. He can give you the grace. He can teach you his will.

[18:37] How to live. To truly live. To truly live. And we can make a holy resolution. We can know a grace filled heart. The grace of God that bringeth salvation.

And every believer is a trophy of his grace. We can thank God for his grace today. And we can seek God's grace in prayer. Hebrews 4.16 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. Grace is our victory. Pray through. Trust the grace of God.