

Grace

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[0:00] Grace. Do you know grace? The grace that's in the Bible, that's what I'm talking about.

! You might know a woman called grace, but I'm talking about grace and how we can know it, how we can live grace. Grace, you're living it. What is grace? Grace has been defined as the good pleasure of God that inclines him to bestow benefits on the undeserving. Thank God for that. Amen? He bestows his benefits upon the unbelieving. His benefits, his favour, his bounty, the wonder of God, it's given. It's gifted to such as we. Given. Grace is given.

It's given despite our being undeserving, despite our being under condemnation and really facing God's wrath. Instead of his wrath, he gives us grace. Isn't that wonderful? We can't fathom it, can we? Grace. Grace can save the worst man. Amen? Grace can save the worst man. To the uttermost. We're called to go to the uttermost and he reaches to the uttermost. His hand is not shortened that it cannot save. And I like to think that he goes even to the guttermost.

You can't go far enough away from him that his hand cannot reach you. Grace can save the worst. And we stand for the truth of salvation. It's by grace. By grace. Grace is the way and it always has been the way to be saved. Some would make this artificial distinction between the old and the new and grace and law. But really, salvation has always been of grace. It's always been of grace. It's grace from alpha to omega, from beginning to end. From the garden, it's been grace. And he is the God of all grace.

He always has been the God of all grace. It's his nature, his character. And I want to look at three important facts about grace tonight. Three facts about grace. Number one, salvation is by grace.

[2:23] God promised a redeemer way back in Eden to Adam and Eve. The promise was there for a redeemer to come. Genesis 3.15, the prophecy, it says, and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.

It's speaking of the bruising of the redeemer. It's speaking of salvation in Christ to come. There was that forward vision of the redeemer to come and of the serpent being defeated by the redeemer to come by his act of grace. So grace was there even at Eden. From the start, grace was there.

And the gospel we preach, one of the descriptions of it is the gospel of grace. The gospel of grace. His throne is called what? The throne of grace. The Bible tells us of the true grace of God, wherein we stand. Peter tells of it in 1 Peter 5 verse 12. It says, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God, wherein you stand. This is the true grace of God, wherein you stand. Some would make this controversial distinction between Peter and Paul, that Paul was somehow the one, the messenger of grace, and Peter preached some other gospel. It's not so. Peter says, we stand by the grace of God.

Peter preached the grace of God just as Paul did. And we stand by his grace. We stand by his grace. Grace, grace, marvellous, infinite, matchless grace. Grace that is greater than all our sin. That's our song. That's our theme. That's our gospel. Grace, grace, grace that is greater than all our sin. And God loves guilty sinners. That's grace, isn't it? That God would love the guilty, the sinful, while we were his enemies. He paid a debt he did not owe. That's grace.

[4:47] God gives heaven's best for earth's worst. That's grace, isn't it? Salvation is by grace, all of grace.

We dare not deviate from this. This must be our resounding message, clearly and strongly and forthrightly, because some would deny the grace of God and miss this truth, this absolute fundamental, that salvation is by grace. You know, someone has said it's better to be divided by truth than united by error.

We can't join party with those that would dullen this message or would confuse this message. Those that would say it's grace, faith, plus. No, it's not.

All of grace. By faith, we receive his gift. And we can't join party with those who would deny that, because to do so would be to join party with a works-based salvation.

Our salvation is not works-based. Absolutely not. If you accept Christ, you have everything to gain and nothing to lose. If you reject Christ, you have nothing to gain and everything to lose.

[6:12] We must have Christ, the God of all grace. We must have him. Only him. Steadfastly, him. Christ alone. Do not delay. Trust him now.

If you're outside of Christ, he is our only hope, our only lifeline. And you can know that you know that you know. You can know for sure that you're saved if you have your trust in him.

He promises you everlasting life. Who is he? John 1.14. We know it tells earlier the word was with God. The word was God.

Then 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.

Full of grace and truth. He is full of grace and truth, our Lord Jesus. Grace came to planet earth. Wow.

[7:14] His name is Jesus. How do you spell grace? J-E-S-U-S. His name is Jesus. And turn with me to Ephesians 2, can you?

Ephesians 2. We'll just dwell a little time there. But I know we're passing through many verses here. And just scratching the surface about grace because it's such a precious truth and such a fundamental doctrine.

We want to get it right. We want to know what grace is all about. Ephesians 2 from verse 1. And you hath he quickened, who are dead in trespasses and sins.

It's saying here you are dead. And you hath he quickened. You hath he made alive. There's only two people. The quick and the dead. Either you're dead or you're quick.

I want to be quick, don't you? Alive. Quickened. Made alive. And he has made you alive. Truly alive. To truly live. He hath quickened you. Who are dead in trespasses and sins.

[8:17] Verse 2. Where in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

Verse 3. Get that here.

We were rightfully due his wrath. That's all we deserve. Really. Look, I'm speaking for myself. That's all I deserve. His wrath.

His rightful anger against my sin. But, it says, but. But God. Verse 4. But God, who is rich in mercy, wherewith he loved us.

He's rich in mercy for his great love, wherewith he loved us. That just changes everything, doesn't it? From wrath to with his great love. His mercy.

[9:18] His richness in mercy. His great love. Verse 5. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. By grace, ye are saved.

We were dead. He's made us alive. Living. Really living. Really alive. Truly alive. And it says there, in those few words there.

Those five words. By grace, ye are saved. Ye are saved. Ye are saved. Now, there's a comfort there, isn't there? That you can say, I am saved.

I am saved. Because that tells me, verse 5. By grace, ye are saved. I can say, yes, it says I'm saved. By his grace. Yes, I know.

I know that I'm saved. By grace are ye saved. Verse 6. And hath raised us up together with him. He's raised us up together. He's made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

[10:16] Not only by grace are ye saved. We're seated and enthroned in heavenly places. We're lifted from sin and shame. We're declared to be the sons and daughters of the living God.

As many as received him. So then gave ye the power to become the sons of God. Even to them that believe on his name. It says we're lifted up. We're enthroned. We're seated. We're lifted up. And into that place of privilege and relationship. That we can be called the sons and daughters of the living God. You know, there's a wonderful joy there, isn't there? Don't you know that joy today?

What a joy it is. Glory. Glory to God. God. You know, I really find it very faulty when some modern versions, they talk about the only son of God.

As in John 3.16, they say only son. He's the only begotten son. Because he's not the only son.

We're his sons. We're his daughters. We're his children. By grace.

[11:17] By faith. And we are seated. We're lifted up. Seated together in heavenly places, it says. Verse 7. That in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.

The riches of his grace. We're going to be singing glory, Hosanna, Hallelujah in the ages to come. A hundred years from now, we'll be singing his praises. Two hundred years.

Three hundred years. Through the ages to come, it says. We're going to show the exceeding riches of his grace. We're going to be joyful in his grace in eternity beyond.

The exceeding riches of his grace. His kindness. This will be our song through eternal ages. His exceeding riches. His grace. He's lavished it upon us.

He's not kind of poured dribs and drabs. It's just been lavished upon us. It's been poured out. The exceeding riches of his grace. Verse 8. It says. For by grace are ye saved.

[12:20] S-A-V-E-D. By grace are ye saved. Through faith. And that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God.

Not of works, lest any man should boast. 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 grace. Through faith. This is a fundamental truth. This is the truth that has laid hidden in the dark ages. And we see some that it came to light.

The flicker began in Luther's day. And others we see the justification by faith. By faith. It's by grace. Through faith. And this fundamental truth is that solid doctrine we can know and stand upon.

We don't get salvation by our deeds. No one does. The Muslims might try. The Mormons might try. The Buddhists, you name it. They can try by their deeds.

[13:23] Well-meaning professing Christians can try to save themselves by their deeds. But you cannot be justified by the works of the law. It's not of works, lest any man should boast.

Not by works of righteousness that we have done. According to his mercy he saved us. So it's not by our deeds. It's by his gift. This is the fundamental contradiction with every other religion and Christianity.

Bible Christianity. It's his kindness. It's undeserved. As a Christian, think of what you have. Born again. We have peace for the past, grace for the present, and glory for the future.

What a joy that is. Peace for the past, grace for the present, glory for the future. By grace are you saved through faith. Salvation has always only ever been by grace through faith.

We must get a hold of that. By grace are ye saved. Present sense, possession. You have that through faith. And that's not to, obviously, I'm not saying that we can, you know, presume by our own reckoning or our own intellect.

[14:38] But when God's word says it and we believe it, we claim his promise, we fulfill his direction, it says we can stay.

Yes, assuredly, it's in black and white. This is a legal document. This is the law of the Lord. It says, I am saved by grace through faith. Through faith. Salvation.

And it's all thanks to his grace. We see in Ephesians 1, you want to flick back to Ephesians 1 from verses 6 through 7. It tells of, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he is made as accepted in the beloved.

To the praise of the glory of his grace. Verse 7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. He is not sparing.

He's not withholding. There's riches of his grace. Grace. It motivated God's master plan. His grand plan of salvation. And it's all to the glory of his name.

[15:39] It's all to the praise of the glory of his grace. That's what we give the praise to. Not of man. Not of any effort of our own doing.

It's all to the praise of the glory of his grace. 1.6 of Ephesians. Ephesians 1.6. All the glory is his. The glory is his.

The glory of his grace. He has made us accepted. Redeemed through his blood. Our sins forgiven. What a joy to know the sins forgiven. Not only does this judge declare us free. And declares us guiltless. The guilt is gone. The sin is gone. The forgiveness is comprehensive. Our sins forgiven. According to the riches of his grace. Salvation is something that the sinner does not deserve. At all. Not even in the slightest bit.

[16:38] Now some would think. Oh well I'll try. No it's not trying. It's trusting. Oh I'll do. Do. Do. No it's not doing. It's done.

Finished. The finished work. Calvary finished it all. Salvation is something we do not deserve. And a person is saved by the free unmerited favor and grace of God.

Plus nothing else. Plus nothing else. You cannot add to it. As far as salvation. We can add to our faith.

We can work out our salvation. But the salvation is God's work. We do not make our salvation happen. It's the grace of God plus nothing else.

It's all of Christ or none of Christ. His grace brings salvation. And he freely extends this love gift. Titus 2.11 it says. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.

[17:40] It's the grace of God that brings salvation. Grace is revealed in Christ. Grace is in human skin. Grace personified.

Grace made flesh in Christ. No one is saved by self-effort. Salvation has always been by grace through faith. There's only one gospel.

And that's it. The gospel of grace. One way of salvation. One redeeming love. One saviour. And it reaches the guilty. That's grace. That's grace. You can claim it.

You can know it. Know it. Personally know it. And we must trust Christ solely and totally. For eternity. For our soul's salvation. And claim his promise.

He that believeth in me. Shall never die. Salvation is by grace. Secondly. Sanctification is by grace.

[18:38] Sanctification. Sanctification. In other words. Our holiness. He sanctifies. He makes us holy. We're called to be saints. Which means holy ones. He has made sanctification possible by grace.

He saves us. And he sanctifies us. And it's all a work of his grace. That's not to say we can't put our own energy into it.

But the sanctifying is truly him. As Christ is our sanctification. He is our sanctification. And our victory does not come by our own effort or attainment.

Our victory over sin comes because of the finished work of the cross. Grace is our victory. And Christ has defeated our foe. We don't have to help him. Christ has defeated our foe.

Our position is victory. We're seated in heavenly places. So in a reality we don't fight for our victory. We fight from victory.

[19:40] We fight from victory. Because our position is victory. And the devil wants to keep people captive. As if some Christians they've got this mind that they've got to kind of keep themselves.

No, he does that. He keeps us. He keeps you. Christ has set us free. We're his possession. We're in his hand.

Grace is God's influence upon the heart. It's expressed in life. And grace rules and reigns in the believer. Romans 5.21 it says. Romans 5.21 As sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

It's saying grace reigns. Grace rules. In other words, grace is on the throne. Not only is there a throne of his grace, but grace rules. Grace is on the throne. Grace rules over our heart.

The heart. The throne of our heart. It's as if heaven's throne is an administration of grace. And our gracious king is Christ. He's full of grace and truth.

[20:49] Grace is sufficient. Grace is sufficient. Grace is sufficient. And we've got grounds for security. Security. Eternal security.

In that he secures us. He is our refuge and strength. He is the one who keeps us. He defends us. He protects us. He holds us.

He secures us. As someone has put it, I'm quoting here, if a person could lose his salvation, he would have to do something to keep it. We don't do anything. We don't do anything to save ourselves.

We cannot. And the quote goes on, If he has to do something to keep it, bracket, live a holy life, not sin, confess all known sin, etc., end bracket.

He then is ultimately relying on his own works to get to heaven. Not on Jesus Christ and his finished work alone. Now I know this is a subject people see differently.

[21:49] I used to see it differently than I see it now. But when you actually get that fundamental truth that grace is his saving work, that grace is his sanctifying work, that grace, it's to the praise of his grace.

It's to the glory of him that we can know and trust he is able to keep. He is able to keep that which I've given unto him.

He's able to keep us. And we can trust that he is able. God is able. We're not hanging on by a thread. It's like some almost think, oh, have I done enough?

Or am I doing enough? Have I lost it today because I'm feeling a bit backsliding? Or I'm not feeling like praying today? It's not of that. We're sanctified by his grace.

And it's the mighty love power of God that he saves us. He sanctifies us. And grace is something dynamic. Of course, I want to get the message across here.

[23:02] I'm not saying just sit back and be a lazy, careless Christian. Because he has saved us. Because of the great riches of his grace.

Because of the glory. The praise of the glory of his grace. Because of the riches of his grace. We're heirs and inheritors and sons and daughters of the mighty God.

Then grace motivates us. Grace moves us. Grace is something dynamic. Grace is something that's dynamic in its operation. That it impacts our lives, our hearts, our worldview, our thinking.

Grace is his divinely imparted ability. Grace is dynamic. And it's ever working within us. And 2 Peter 3.18. It tells us that grace is something that increases and extends.

It's God's will that we grow in grace, it says. But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever.

[24:09] Grace is not static. It's dynamic. We're called to grow. And as a Christian, wow, you've got such a privilege.

To think what you have. The marvellous grace of God. And we want to grow in that, to increase it, to extend it, to manifest it. And to know the blessing and the promises of God that you have as children of God.

It says in 1 John 4 verse 4, We are overcomers.

It's saying we are greater than he that is in the world. God's sanctifying work of grace. Grace helps us.

Grace gives us power over sin. Grace helps us to overcome. And grace is accessed through faith. And Titus 2, we read, you might want to turn to Titus 2, where it talks again about grace.

[25:15] Grace teaches us how to live. Grace trains us in what to say no to. In other words, sanctification. Keep clear of sin. It says that in Titus 2 verse 11, it says, For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.

Salvation by grace, right? The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Verse 12, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.

There's sanctification really, isn't it? Live right. Grace teaches us to live right, to say no, to sin.

And then we see thirdly, verse 13, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ. The third aspect is here, verse 14.

Our service is by grace. Our salvation is by grace. Our sanctification is by grace. And the third point is that our service is by grace.

[26:20] It says, verse 14, Grace inspires us.

It fires us up. Service is by grace. It trains us. He calls us to be zealous of good works. Grace enables us.

Grace is our running shoes. Grace is the weapons of our warfare. Grace is the opportunity to serve. Grace is ministry. Grace is God's enabling. Grace is our business. Grace is how we are able to serve God acceptably. Hebrews 12, 28, it says, For we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved.

Let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Grace helps us to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

[27:21] Let us have grace, it says. When we are a saved man, a saved woman, God gives us grace to save us, to sanctify us, to make us holy, and to equip us for his service.

It's all of grace. Grace is our calling. Grace is our vocation. Grace is our job. It's our occupation, our preoccupation. So how should we serve?

Watch the words we say. May they be words of grace. Ephesians 4, 29, Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good for the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Let that be that yard on our lips, that the words that proceed will minister grace unto the hearers. He commissions us as messengers of his grace.

He's called us to declare the gospel of his grace. He's declared us to be transmitters of this grace that we have received, to be faithful stewards of this grace.

[28:26] 1 Peter 4, verse 10, it says, He says, We see in verse 4 of Titus 2, Grace activates us to serve.

Grace is lived out. It's not that we are saved by our works, but we are saved unto good works. Ephesians 2, 8 through 10, it says, 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.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. So, and likewise, Titus 3, verse 8, talks about being careful to maintain good works.

There's a commission there. Good works are not something that a person must do in order to be saved. They are an end product. They are a flow-on effect.

Good works are something that a saved person does because he is saved. Because God is working in and through. Grace is God at work in our lives.

[30:05] You know, sometimes we can big note ourselves or think too highly of ourselves about what we might do, but really it's all to the praise of his grace, isn't it?

Any good works that we might do, it's only because God is working in and through that he is able to minister through weak human vessels and it's all to the praise of his grace.

And in Philippians 2, 13, it says, It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God works it out. Grace works out. And so be encouraged, brothers and sisters, to think, how can I be a channel of his grace?

How can I be used of God for his grace to impact others through me? How can I be a grace giver? How can I be a transmitter of his grace that I have received?

It's all by his grace. In 2 Corinthians 9, verse 8, it says, 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.

[31:11] The God of all grace is able to make all grace abound toward you so that you've got that sufficiency to abound to every good work. So grace fuels us.

It's the fuel in our tank. Grace empowers us for his service. And works are the results, not the requirement of our salvation.

It's putting the cart before the horse. Works are the result, not the requirement of our salvation.

Good works follow the salvation, but they're not the requirement or the means of salvation.

But that's not to say we should be lazy, but we should extend grace. We should apply grace. We should live grace. Ask yourself, am I showing grace?

Engage grace. Before engaging mouth. You know, am I showing grace or am I having a lack of grace towards others? Grace. It's the real life that we live, isn't it?

[32:14] In the real life world, where the rubber hits the road, grace is fundamental, isn't it? So how we ought to live, to be a gracious person, sometimes it can be hard, can't it, to be gracious.

I have my moments. But grace empowers us, doesn't it? His grace helps us. Salvation by grace. Thank God for that. And it's the finished work. It's based on works of righteousness. Not works of righteousness, which we have done, but his work.

The work. The work. The comprehensive work of Calvary. Because Jesus is sufficient. His grace is sufficient.

And that's all we can hang on to, is his grace, isn't it? And the grace that he gives us as saved men and women, helps us to fight this battle that we're in, in this world that's wayward and hellward and God-hating.

[33:21] To give us a fighting spirit, a zeal, to be zealous of good works. When there's people constantly trying to put our fire out and quench what God's doing, be zealous of good works.

Grace avails. Grace avails today. Moody said this, just a quick quote to close here. This is Moody, the old evangelist. He said, See what he did for John Bunyan.

How he made him one of the mightiest instruments for good the world ever saw. That swearing Bedford tinker. Bunyan was a foul-mouthed tinker, someone who mended shoes.

John Bunyan was transformed. He wrote his life story, *Grace Abounding*, to the chief of sinners.

That's what Bunyan called himself. And the quote goes on from Moody, If we had a telescope which would enable us to look into heaven, as Stephen did, Moody says, I can imagine we would see the thief.

Who believed on Jesus while on the cross, very near to the throne. Ask him how he got there. And he would tell you, it was through the grace of God.

[34:38] See how the grace of God could save Mary Magdalene, possessed of seven devils. Ask her what it was that melted her heart. And she would tell you that it was the grace of God.

Look again at the woman whom Christ met at the well at Syca. The Saviour offered her a cup of the living water. She drank. And now she walks the crystal pavement of heaven.

See how the grace of God could change Zacchaeus, Zacchaeus, the hated publican, the tax collector, the Jericho. Who loves the tax office? Now he is in the yonder world of light.

He was brought there by the sovereign grace of God. You will have noticed that many of those who are about the most unlikely have by the very power of God's grace become very eminent in his service.

Look at the 12 apostles of Christ. They were all unlettered men, unlearned, ignorant. This ought to encourage all whose education is limited to give themselves to God's work.

[35:53] There's no education standard to serve God. You don't have to be literate. Amen. Grace. All of grace.

And the quote goes on, Grace is glory begun.

Glory is grace made perfect. Now, the starting point is salvation. Born again. A new creature in Christ. Grace.

Faith. Glory is begun. And then ultimately, glory is grace made perfect. When we enter his presence, grace is the first degree of glory.

Glory is the highest degree of grace. There's a song that goes, Oh, to grace, how great a debtor. Daily I'm constrained to be. Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.

[36:56] Prone to wonder, Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love. Here's my heart. Oh, take and seal it. Seal it for thy courts above.

Friends, we've been talking about grace. Grace brings salvation. Claim it by faith, the grace of God. Grace makes possible our sanctification.

Grace teaches us how to live. Say no to ungodly lusts. To live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. And grace helps us to serve.

Not that we have any claim of praise or of merit or of recognition for anything we do for his sake.

That we are unprofitable servants doing that which is our duty to do. Find what God wants you to do and do it. And his grace will enable you to.

[38:04] Let's pray. Our Lord and Saviour, we thank you for these precious souls here today. For each one that is here. Lord, for every heart, every home represents it.

Lord, may we claim that promise that you give that we can believe and we can be saved. Lord, for as simple as it is that we can but trust in that finished work of the cross where you took our sin and paid the penalty for it and you paid it fully there.

Lord, we claim by faith salvation, by grace, through your faith. Lord, Lord, we pray, help us to be a sanctified people to walk in a way that honours you.

Help us to be filled with grace and also that you'll help us to work and serve graciously, gracefully, filled with grace, filled by grace.

Lord, to be a grace, a people of grace and it'll all be to the praise of the glory of your grace. Lord, help us to have that mind, that heart and not to take it lightly or carelessly.

[39:18] We know some might take such a message and think it's an excuse for ease or self-reliance but it's none of that.

Our reliance is on you, our Lord. Our sufficiency is of God and we know it's only thanks to you that we are even saved people here today and we don't take that lightly, that privilege to be children of God.

Help us, Lord, to have conduct becoming that we can be to the praise of the glory of your grace as ransomed,! saved, sanctified and serving saints.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.