

GRACE - God's Riches at Christ's Expense

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- [0 : 0 0] of this church. Be honest with me. How many of you ever stood and had some sweet old lady say, the Lord is my shepherd. The Lord is my shepherd. Have you ever done that?
- I really can't complain. I did it myself. But I appreciate the folks that were there to scotch for me and help me out when I needed help.
- It's easier to do it at home. Easier to do it at home. All right. Well, thank you for coming. Thankful for our visitors that are here.
- I want to preach to you. Okay. I won't be long. I'll be real short. 2 Corinthians chapter 8. I'll only read one verse of scripture.
- 2 Corinthians chapter 8. I think that if there was a verse that outside of the gospels herself that ever told us the story of Christmas, it's 2 Corinthians chapter 8 and verse 9.
- [1 : 1 9] 2 Corinthians chapter 8 and verse 9. Listen to what the apostle Paul said. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty, that you through his poverty might be rich.
- Does that speak Christmas to you? In the glory land, he had everything and anything that could be thought of.
- But he laid it aside and came down here and was born in a stable, laid in a manger with the poorest of the poor, so that I could live in a mansion.
- Hallelujah for Jesus. Let me pray and we'll start the sermon. Lord, thank you for our heavenly Father. Thank you today for the privilege to pray.
- Lord, thank you for our little people and our Father for the program they've put on. God, I pray that that would stick with them and stick with us all the days of our life.
- [2 : 3 8] I pray, Lord, that you would help us now as we go to preach from your word. Lord, help us, dear God, to expound the scripture in a way that the wayfaring man, though a fool, would not err therein.
- Help us and we'll give you praise in Jesus' name. Amen. The first line there said, you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- You know the old Baptist definition for grace is God's riches at Christ's expense. That is, he's the one that paid the price.
- I believe Tim was right. Christmas is for Christians. Christians celebrate the birth of their Savior. Now, I think I see, and I said this morning, nativity scenes, I can see a possible idolatry there.
- But I can see in a failure to acknowledge Jesus Christ, a suicide. Amen. I hope you grasp what I'm saying.
- [3 : 5 7] Amen. Now, in the book of Ephesians, the second chapter, in the eighth verse, the Bible said, For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it's the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.
- So I guess the question is, preacher, what is grace? One of my favorite books in my library, I have an 1828 Webster Dictionary.

You shouldn't look at modern dictionaries. They need to consult a dictionary. They don't know what the words mean. But if you'll go back to Noah Webster himself, his dictionary says that grace is the free and unmerited love and favor of God.

Amen. It's the spring and the source of all the benefits that men receive from him. As I was looking at that, there were 20 different definitions of the word grace.

And of those 20 different definitions and 20 different concepts, 18 of them had a description of grace as something that was outsourced from God Almighty.

[5 : 13] God is the author of grace. John 1, 17, the law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Definition number four of Webster's grace is this, the application of Christ's righteousness to the sinner.

Man, what a good definition of grace. The application of Christ's righteousness to the sinner. You see, Jesus Christ was spotless.

He was the perfect Lamb of God that could stand before God, stand before Pilate, stand before the Sanhedrin, stand before the entire world.

And the world would have to say, and God in heaven would have to say, I find no fault in Him. He is excellent and His record is spotless.

[6 : 12] And grace, He takes that record. Man, it's getting good up here. He takes that record and He applies it to me. And so here I can stand.

You say, are you spotless? No, not by a long shot. I got all kind of thoughts. One of them, I like pizza. Amen. But listen, when God's grace is applied to me, then the righteousness that Jesus has is accounted to me.

And God looks at me like, hey, I'm not a sinner at all. Paul defines grace as though he was rich, yet he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.

It took grace to leave heaven. It took grace for him to condescend to a manger. It took grace for him to come and lay his head where the cattle feed.

Grace to go hungry for those 40 days that he was tempted in the wilderness. Grace to take the humiliation that he suffered at the hands of Pilate and the soldiers.

[7 : 29] Grace to take our sins in his body. Grace to take the mockery and to die on a cruel cross. Grace to use a borrowed tomb.

But the power and the justice of God, in the third day, he arose from the dead. Hallelujah for Jesus. We cannot comprehend the debt of poverty for the Word to become flesh.

We just cannot understand how the Son of God would come and actually die on a cruel cross and do that for me and do that for you.

And if you were the only sinner that ever was born, he would do it just the same. Nor do we understand the estimation of the wealth that he left behind, the wealth of all heaven, the wealth that he left.

But we received because of Christmas. Hallelujah for Christmas. Merry Christmas to you. You may not hear that at the store.

[8 : 32] You may hear happy holiday. Or you may hear happy whatever. But I'd like to say Merry Christmas to you. Merry Christmas. Paul's assertion here is the motivation.

Actually, he's working with the Corinthian people trying to get them to give. That's what he's trying to do. Trying to get. You know, it's more blessing to give than to receive.

But Baptists have kind of got that twisted around. And they say, well, I'd rather give than I would give. But the Apostle Paul, as he's trying to motivate the Corinthians to give, he states this, that Jesus Christ is our example.

And he said, you know, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor. Did you ever read about the riches of the new Jerusalem?

Did you ever read about the city of God? Did you ever sing about that place that has Jasper walls and has gates of pearl and streets of gold and foundations of all manner of precious stones and a river of life and a crystal sea and a tree of life and a throne of God and the sun I always shine?

[9 : 52] Did you ever read about that city? Amen. What a wealthy place. Amen. The angelic ministers are like flames of fire darting back and forth just to do his will.

The incorporated wealth of the world couldn't buy a plot in that city. Amen. Not a home there. There's a lot of cows, I guess, in Texas.

Not many hills. When I was out there, it seemed like there wasn't any hills, just all cows and flat land. But I don't know how many hills there is. But if there was a thousand hills in Texas, he owns the cattle on a thousand hills.

He owns every cow in Texas. Amen. Flat land, hillside, and mountain top. Amen. They tell me, I read this, I don't know whether it's true or not, they tell me that the Queen of England is the richest woman in the world.

And I would say this to you, that certainly the wealth of Buckingham Palace or Windsor Castle or wherever you, if you would put them all together, she'd be a pauper.

[11 : 02] Are you listening? She would be a pauper in the glory land. Amen. I'm talking about when though he was rich. He was rich. Amen. Amen.

Had Solomon's fleet of ships not been broken up, had he signed Geper, they still could not have sailed with enough treasure to lay one block of sidewalk in the city where Jesus came.

Amen. Poor. How poor. He left it all, the Bible said, for a stable. He left it all to, as Molly sings, pay a debt he didn't owe.

Amen. Amen. He left it. And if you could total the corporate sin of everybody in this building, and you could add to that the individual sin of you and I, the group sin of America, the sins of the whole world, and all of them, every one of them, he's a propitiation for our sins, not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.

Our economy's wild and crazy, and our government just as crazy. They bailed out every mismanaged corporation, every employee, and the debt's charged to the taxpayer, and the taxpayer doesn't have the money to pay it.

[12 : 18] But let me tell you that the greatest bailout that I ever heard about was that time when the Lord Jesus Christ bailed me out and paid my debt and paid it in full.

Hallelujah. That might be old backwards preaching to you, but thank God he paid that debt for me. Amen. God's riches at Christ's expense.

Christ's existence is wealth. He had the power to create anything that he wanted or so desired.

Deuteronomy chapter 8 verse 18 says, He gives us the power to get wealth. He's the one that controls the purse strings of America. People think they do.

Wall Street thinks it does. All of the crooked investors think they do. But God's running the thing. And just about the time they think they got her under control, the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, and he'll turn it another way.

[13 : 19] He took on the poverty of a manger. Wise men brought among their gifts gold. Probably used that gold. Is it getting hot in here? Y'all not hot?

Okay. Probably had to use that gold to finance his trip into Egypt. A poor by trade. A carpenter in Nazareth.

His lifelong lodging was the Mount of Olives. Poverty of the cross. A borrowed tomb. Let me help you. Matthew chapter 18. If you'll turn over there, it's the story of a debtor.

And this debtor owes 10,000 talents. I believe is what it says. And had nothing to pay. Now the scholars tell me that a talent is the highest Hebrew weight.

That they don't have any weight higher than a talent. And they don't have any number higher than a myriad. The highest Hebrew number, the thing can get astronomical.

[14 : 28] But then if you'll read in some places, a talent is assigned the weight of 100 pounds. Okay. So he owes 10,000 talents.

That's 10,000 times 100 pounds. So I don't know. Clinton's the mathematician. Is that a million pounds? He owes a million pounds?

Gold, the last time I knew, was about \$400 an ounce. An ounce, not a pound. And this guy owes a million pounds.

At \$400 an ounce. How'd you like to bail that guy out? Look at verse 25. He didn't have a cotton-picking penny.

He didn't have this huge debt. And he didn't have one bit to pay on it.

[15 : 31] In the Old Testament, the sacrifices of bulls and goats, that they would come to the altar and they'd offer that as a payment for their sin. Every year on the Day of Atonement, they would come and they would offer the sacrificial animal as a token payment.

But listen to the preacher. It didn't cover the innards. It didn't cover the innards. And so, do you know what I'm talking about? How many of you ever been in financial straits?

Look at me. I'm 63 years old. I know what I'm talking about. Have you ever been where you had to call a bank up and say, I can't make a payment. I'll just make the innards this week. And whenever you do that, the principle doesn't go down at all.

All you do is borrow time to say, well, later on. Amen. Later on, we'll get the money together to pay you.

Right now, we're just kind of holding the man from calling the loan. That's all we're doing. Amen. 1929. The stock market crashed.

[16 : 38] And everybody called in the loan. And nobody had nothing to pay. And everybody went into what we call the Great Depression. But listen to me. Those, every year on the Day of Atonement, they would just pay the innards.

The principle was still the same from the foundation of the world. And at Calvary, God called in the loan. And God said, I need the payment. And hallelujah.

Jesus paid the payment. He didn't pay the interest, brother. He paid the whole thing. It's all paid for by the blood of the Lamb. God's riches at Christ's expense.

Riches of salvation obtained. Riches of a church that was bought. Riches of a comforter that's provided. Riches of a promise that needs supplied.

Riches of a mansion that he built. Riches of a return that he's coming one of these days. And riches of a crown that I'm going to get away. I don't know.

[17 : 39] That was the time when that would have had everybody shouting. But we're too wealthy today. We don't realize what we've got. Grace terminates any merit system whatsoever.

The law had totally deadened any hope of self-salvation. I mean, everybody, whenever they, you know, what they will do, everybody will say, well, I'm a good guy.

But I'm really not all that good. Until you go to pointing out they're good. Then they get, they're bad. And then they get kind of angry at the preacher. And they say, you shouldn't preach like that.

That hurts people's feelings. Well, you shouldn't sin like that. And that wouldn't hurt your feelings. We serve God not in a deadness of a letter, but in a newness of the spirit.

God has concluded all under sin. And therefore, any acceptance that anybody gets, it all has got to come the same way. It must come through Jesus Christ.

[18 : 43] Our perfection is totally due to our position. Because I'm in Him. I'm accepted. In the Beloved.

What the law could not do. And that it was weak in the flesh. God sent forth His Son. And condemned sin in the flesh. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.

That walk after the Spirit of God. We are thus set free. Set free. Hallelujah. If the Son makes you free, you're free indeed. It is by faith, not by works.

It is not by petition. It is not by merit. It is not by prayer. It is not by struggle. But it is by grace through faith. God spared not His own Son.

But gave Him, freely gave Him for all of us. How shall He not freely give us all things? Now this is the truth. He does discipline. He does correct us.

[19 : 45] He does chastise us. But He never condemns us if we're His child. Romans 8, 1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.

God's children are justified. But they're justified on the merit of Jesus. They're not justified on the merit of their self. It is impossible to have any assurance of salvation unless you base it on the blood of Jesus Christ.

Because you'll always wind up a day late and a dollar short. Have you ever noticed that? Every time you make a promise to God about what you're going to do, the devil will see to it you come just about that close to fulfill it.

But never make it. But thank God whenever the Lord Jesus Christ comes on the scene, then you can fulfill the promises of God because He does it for you.

The preaching of Jesus, especially the preaching of the cross, is God's appointed way of exchanging my poverty for His prosperity. To the Jew, it was a stumbling block.

[20 : 45] To the Greek, it was foolishness. But us that are saved, it is the power of God. Hallelujah for the cross. Am I scaring you? I don't leave here much.

Especially if I'm on television. The greatest problem that God ever had to confront was not creation. The Bible said the stars are the work of His fingers.

Isaiah chapter 53 says that salvation is the work of His honor. The problem, the greatest problem that God ever faced, how could He be just and yet a justifier of the ungodly?

The problem is solved at Calvary. The problem is solved. God is totally satisfied with the sacrifice of His Son. We do not have a partial payment.

We do not have an interest payment. I am forever and eternally accepted on the grounds of the blood of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah. What can wash away my sins?

[21 : 55] Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Repetition is seen in many verses of Scripture. Repetition ought to be done in our preaching. And so let me repeat again.

For by grace are you saved. It's the grace of God. Do you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might be made rich?

Christ died for our sins. According to the Scripture, Philippians 2 says, made Himself of no reputation, took upon Him the form of a servant, and made it in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion of a man, humbled Himself, humbled Himself to death, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him. Matthew 26, 39, let this cup pass with me, but nevertheless not my will, but thy will be done. The same chapter, verse 28, this is my blood, shed for many for the remission of sin.

Ephesians 2 and 8, for by grace are you saved. God does not look upon our social status. God does not look upon our wealth, whether we're rich or poor, what kind of physical ability we have, whether we're red, yellow, black or white, male or female, rich to all that call upon Him.

[23 : 09] Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. I call on His name, and you're looking at one fat boy that's got His name written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

He sees us as a lost soul in need of a Savior. And that's why that rich man became poor. That's how this poor man became rich.

I'm rich tonight. My father is rich in houses and land, holds the wealth of this old world in His hands. A tent or a cottage, why should I care?

They're building a palace for me over there. Outcast from home, yet still I may sing glory to God. I'm a child of the King.

Amen. Our verse said, you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake, He became poor.

[24 : 18] That's Christmas. That's when it happened. There when they came to Bethlehem, there whenever they asked at the, I don't know whether it was Holiday Inn or Marriott or where it was, but wherever it was, there's no room.

Let me ask you this. If Jesus would come by your pew tonight, would you say, I got room for you.

I'll allow you to come live in my life, live in my heart. Or would you like those rich people along ago, say, well, we don't have any place for you.

Go on, maybe you can find a place in a stable somewhere. But our hearts already occupied. Occupied with the things of Christmas. Occupied with the things of the world.

I say, Lord Jesus, come into my heart. Fill my life. Fill my soul. Let me be a Christian. I want to be a Christian.

[25 : 26] For you. Let's bow for prayer. Heads are bowed, eyes are closed.

No one looking around for just a moment. I wonder what you witness with me right now. Say, Preacher, I know exactly what you're talking about.

I remember the time that I asked Jesus Christ to come in and give me his wealth in exchange for my poverty. God bless you.

Hands already going up. I wonder would you slip up your hand and hold it real high and say, Preacher, I'm saved. I'm a child of God. I'm a child of God. I'm a child of God.

I'm a child of God. And I pray with him.