The Abundant Grace Of God: Salvation For All

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[0:00] The abundant grace of God poured into their lives through His Word. And they're being drawn to Him through the teaching and preaching of the Word of God.

And that's what we're going to look at even more in depth this morning before we go about with the baptisms themselves. I'd like to read Titus 2 verses 11 through 14.
Paul writes to his young protege and son in the faith, For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, who are zealous for good works.
Father, I thank You for Your Word, and I ask, Lord, that You would guide our time this morning. Amen. So last week we explored the abundant grace of God as it relates to the incarnation.
That is, the birth of Jesus at Christmas. And it is, I appreciate the last song that we sang with the praise band up here, the recognition that Jesus was born as a baby, not just to be born as a blessing to His parents, though He was, but He was born with the purpose and intent to die on our behalf.
[1:57] And that's, you may see a little bit of a different, we're not done decorating, by the way, but you may see a different emphasis this year as it relates to the decorations during Christmas.

For one, in lieu of a Christmas tree, we have the cross and the manger. And just a reminder that this baby was born with an intent and a purpose that would be realized 33 years later when He'd go to the cross and give His life.
It was for the forgiveness of our sins. And so as we celebrate Christmas, and we give thanks to God for Jesus, who took on flesh, the Word taking on flesh and dwelling among us, and being the manifestation of grace and truth, and being the one who explains and exegetes the Father for us to know and understand, we celebrate that in realization and in light of the cross.
Because it is at the cross that He offers us a choice to receive or reject Him in His gift of salvation.
In the 19th century, a preacher named George Whitefield traveled throughout England and America, sharing the message of salvation through Christ.
He was a preacher for 34 years. He died when he was 55 years old. In his efforts, he made 13 trips across the Atlantic Ocean. And I figured that out.
[3:42] If you figure six to eight weeks per trip, given the mode of transportation across the Atlantic at that time, he spent about a year and a half to two years of his life on the sea, traveling from one country back to the other.

It's estimated that he preached 18,000 formal sermons. And with his informal instructions pushing him closer to the 30,000 to 40,000 range.
When George Whitefield would preach a sermon on a Sunday morning or a Monday morning or whatever day of the week it was that he preached, he'd preach his sermon. Then he'd go back to the house or wherever he was staying.
And it wouldn't be uncommon for him to, if he was at a hotel, to go out on the balcony and continue proclaiming. His crowds would gather around where he was staying. Much like people would do today with a celebrity that they know is staying in a certain area.
The paparazzi gathers around. That's what they did. And so he'd go out on the balcony and proclaim even more of the gospel. So 30,000 to 40,000 messages potentially.
[4:55] And I looked at that. That's on average 10 to 23 sermons a week over 34 years. So since we only meet once, we're going to up it a little more.

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And I want to try to see if I can catch this guy. But no, that's a lot. And that's a lot to give. And at the time that he died, he died in Newburyport, Massachusetts.
He's actually buried in a crypt underneath the pulpit of the church that he was going to be preaching at. I can't remember if he was going to preach at or he had just preached at.
But either way, his desire was to be buried under the pulpit because that's where he spent his life. And that's where he proclaimed the truth of the word of God. He was so passionate about the gospel.
And his passion was so infectious that thousands would come at once to hear him. In fact, there's one instance in Boston Common where it's estimated that 25,000 people came to hear him speak.
[6:01] And I would like to also remind you that this is at a time where there are no sound systems to amplify his voice. He had a booming voice where all 25,000 people could hear him clearly.

It's estimated that he preached to 10 million people in his lifetime. In Whitefield, he believed that God's grace was available to everyone.
And he was so impassioned by the grace and love of God that he had to go and tell everyone. His ministry started by going out and preaching in a field where there would be some passerbys.
And the first time, maybe it started with like a dozen people stopping. And then the next time, maybe it was two or three dozen. And the next thing you know, there's a hundred. And then it just keeps growing. The more he is preaching, the more he's proclaiming the truth of the gospel and the word of God, the more people want to hear it because he was impassioned by it.
It was the passion of his life to let people know this message. And the truth of the matter is that God's grace is so jarring.
[7:17] It is just so, I can't think of the word. The word jarring doesn't really, like it's just one of those things that just grips you and grasps you when you understand it in its context, its complete context.

I'm just blown away by it. And I pray that you are as well. You can be left dumbfounded by the love expressed through his son who was born in a manger and died on a cross as a criminal, having not done anything wrong.
So I wanted to just consider this as we consider this next phrase in Titus 2.11. Last week we looked at the grace of God has appeared.
The incarnation of Christ, God taking on flesh, being born in a manger. And then we get this phrase, bringing salvation for all people.
A lot of people don't understand what salvation is about or why we need it. And so I wanted to take us back to the start, to the book of beginnings, where it starts.
[8:29] And I promise we're not going to cover Genesis through Revelation today, but we're going to kind of speed through it a little bit. But please turn with me to Genesis 1. I have like three or four points if I stick with my notes.

One thing we have to consider about God is his goodness. And that's made evident to us from the very beginning.
Because in the beginning, God gave us his goodness. Genesis 1, verse 1, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form and void and darkness was over the face of the deep.
And the spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And then verses 3 and following take us through, and you can read it for yourself.
The days that God took of creation. What he created on each day and how he fills creation thoroughly. And we get to verse 31.
[9:40] It says that God saw everything that he had made. And behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning. The sixth day.

So from nothing to everything in six days. And this everything that God had created at this point in time is considered very good.
Now I know some of you might have a hard time understanding that. Because when you look at Genesis 1 and verse 28.
I'm sorry, verse 29. He says, Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of the earth. And every tree with seed and its fruit. You shall have them for food. You're wondering, well, where's the steak?

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Where's the delicious meat and the hamburger and all that stuff that we get to enjoy? All those ribs and barbecue ribs. They didn't have that in the beginning.
[10:42] That comes later. You've got to get to Genesis 9 to see where that all comes in. But the fact is that God is good in that he created everything. And it was very good at the creation period of six days.

There was no death. There was no disease. There was no suffering. There was no sin or its consequences. It was exactly as God intended it to be.
And it was nothing like we could ever possibly know in our day today. Even our perspective of goodness is marred.
It is not perfect. But what God gave in the beginning, it was. He gave us his goodness. He gave us that perfection. But yet, when you turn to Genesis 3, we fail.
We see failure. We see the introduction of sin and its consequences. But even in our failure, we see that God gives us hope.
[11:48] In verses 1 through 5 of Genesis 3, you know the account. The serpent and Eve and that conversation.

And people get caught up. Well, how does a serpent talk and all this stuff? Don't get caught up in the details. I'm not saying that there are not answers to that. There are. But the intent is this.
Is that God had created everything very good. And he gave one prohibition. Do not eat from this tree in the midst of the garden. And the whole purpose here is to show the temptation and the draw for Eve to do the one thing she was told not to do.
For Adam to do the one thing he was told not to do. And so we see in the midst of failure that God gives us hope.
Let's read verses 6 through 19. So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.
[12:59] And she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. And the eyes of both were opened. And they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

So I'm going to stop there for a second. The innocence of creation is gone with that verse. Something has changed. It's not that their nakedness was bad, but it's now it's become bad in their sight.
It has become awkward in their sight. What was once a good, perfect creation is now changed. Because of the decision to disobey God.
Verse 8. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, Where are you?
And he said, I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid. Because I was naked, and I hid myself. And he said, Who told you you were naked?
[14:09] Have you eaten of the tree which I commanded you not to eat? The man said, The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.

Then the Lord God said to the woman, What is this that you have done? And the woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I ate.
Passing the buck, unwilling to take responsibility for their actions. Some things never change. Verse 14. The Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, Cursed are you above all livestock, and above all beasts of the field.
On your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring.
He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. To the woman he said, I will surely multiply your pain and childbearing.
[15:17] In pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you. And to Adam he said, Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, you shall not eat of it.

Cursed is the ground because of you. In pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the plants of the field.

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By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken. For you are dust, and to dust you shall return.
Then jumping down to verse 22. Then the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become like one of us, and knowing good and evil. Now lest he reach out his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.
Therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden, to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden, he placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword that turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.
[16:29] From everything being very good, to everything being marred by sin. Sin brings about death, and all the bad stuff that we experience.

the hardship, the trials, the dishonesty. James 1, 14 and 15, But each person is tempted, when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.
Then desire, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin. And when sin is fully grown, it brings forth death. Sin, the entrance of sin into the world, through the actions of Adam and Eve, introduces death, disease, and suffering.
Even still, in the midst of the consequences of sin, comes hope for us. The fact that there is death, is actually a grace from God. Because it prevents us from living forever, in the consequences of sin. And the fact that man was cast out, of the garden of Eden, and was prevented, to come back in, and to access the tree of life, is a grace from God.
[17:43] Because, should Adam and Eve, have eaten from that tree, we would have lived forever, in the consequence of sin.

And the fact that that access was cut off, gives us hope of a future deliverance, from the consequences of sin. And Romans 8, 20 and 21, says the creation was subjected, subjected to futility.
Not willingly, but because of him who subjected it. In hope, in hope, that the creation itself, will be set free, from its bondage to corruption, and obtain the freedom, of the glory of the children of God.
So the fact that there is, we are subjected, to sin, and its consequences, is in and of itself, not a horrible thing. It is the grace of God, that we die, and don't live forever, with our breaking down bodies, and the suffering, and disease, that we experience, on this earth.
And you see God, in verse 15, of chapter 3, in Genesis, promises hope, through the offspring, or the word could be, seed, of the woman.
[19:01] Historically, the offspring, or seed, is tracked through the man, not the woman. Consider the genealogies, any genealogy, you go to in the Bible, it is going to list, the son of, and the son of, and the son of, and the son of.

It's always tracked, through the male. And there's the occasional, female sprinkled in there, especially in Jesus' genealogies, and we covered that, a couple years ago. But the fact is, historically, the seed, the offspring, is tracked through the man.
And so this unusual wording, in Genesis 3, verse 15, where it talks about the, her offspring, or her seed, the seed of the woman, would seem to indicate, that this offspring, would not have, an earthly father.
And the promise that, in verse 15 also, speaking to the serpent, this seed, this offspring, will bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.
That is the difference, between a death blow, and a temporary wound. And as we have the privilege, on this side of the cross, to look back, at the Old Testament, look back at prophecies, look back at the proclamation, of God, we can see, if you stomp, on the head, of a snake, that is intended, to kill it.
[20:33] But if you get, bit on your heel, that is most likely, a temporary wound. I actually can't think, of an instance, where it wouldn't be, a temporary wound, unless you're given the venom, and all that.

That's besides the point. The point is this, you're talking about, a death blow, versus a temporary wound. You're talking about, the temporary wound, of Jesus, who is the seed, of the woman, who has no earthly father, who goes to the cross, seemingly defeated.
But that is a temporary wound, because three days later, he rose again, from the grave, showing that he, has control, over his own, body, and life.

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He has victory, over sin, and death. And that what Satan, tried to accomplish, through the cross, of Christ, ended up, bad for him, and was ultimately, a death blow, to him.
And you've got to read, to the end, of the Bible, to see how that plays out. But we see, that in our failure, God gives us hope.
[21:42] Now turn with me, to Matthew 1. Consider all those pages, that you're, going by, shooting through, right now, to get to Matthew 1.

Because they're important. We'll get to that, in a second. Matthew 1, verses 18 through 25. Now the birth of Jesus Christ, took place in this way.
When his mother Mary, had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found, to be with child, from the Holy Spirit. And her husband, Joseph, being a just man, and unwilling, to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her, quietly.
But as he considered, these things, behold, an angel of the Lord, appeared to him, in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not fear, to take Mary as her wife, for that which is conceived, in her, is from, the Holy Spirit.
And she will, bear a son, and you shall call, his name Jesus, for he will save, his people, from their sins. And this took place, to fulfill, what the Lord, had spoken, by the prophet, behold, the virgin, shall conceive, and bear a son, and they shall call, his name, Emmanuel, which means, God with us.
[23:02] When Joseph, woke from his, from sleep, he did as the angel, the Lord commanded him, he took his wife, but knew her not, until she had given, birth to a son, and called his name, Jesus.

Which means, God saves. For hundreds of years, God sent prophets, to his people, to give clues, related to the coming, of the promised, Messiah.
For hundreds of years, he gave clues, related to that promise, made in Genesis 3, verse 15, concerning the seed, of the woman. And we know, because of that, seed of the woman, and this is, a reference, to a miraculous, appearance, in a miraculous way, in which that promise, would be fulfilled.
And you see, that the angel, appeared to Mary, in Luke 1, to give explanation, and he appears here, to Joseph, in Matthew 1, to give explanation. The fact that, this child, that Mary has, is not, caused, by a man.
It does not, come about, because of a man, having intercourse, with her, and her conceiving. But it's through, the Holy Spirit. Wherein, there is no longer, an earthly, aspect, from the, from a father's perspective.
[24:31] But Jesus truly, is the seed, of the woman. And this is why, there, that God chose, someone to go, and prepare the people, for the ministry, of Jesus.

In Isaiah 40, verse 3, he makes a promise, of a voice crying, in the wilderness, prepare the way, of the Lord, make straight, in the desert, a highway for our God. And you get to John, the gospel of John, chapter 1, verse 23, where John the Baptist, is asked by the Pharisees, and the Sadducees, who are you?
Are you the prophet? Are you Elijah? Are you the one, we are expecting to come? And he says, no. They said, then who are you? And he says, I am the voice, of one crying out, in the wilderness. Make straight the way, of the Lord, as the prophet Isaiah said. So John the Baptist, was sent by God, to prepare people, for Jesus. John the Baptist, who is Jesus' cousin, six months, older, than Jesus, was there, to prepare, the way, for the people, to know, who was to come.
Who John, refers to, as the Lamb of God, who takes away, the sin of the world. And in the angel's, proclamation to Joseph, Jesus would save his people, from their sins.
[25:52] He is the ultimate expression, of God's abundant grace, to this world. In Romans 5, verses 6 through 8, for while we were still, weak, or while we were still, sinners, at the right time, Christ died, for the ungodly.

For one will scarcely die, for a righteous person, though perhaps, for a good person, one would dare even to die. But God shows his love, for us, in that while we, were still sinners, Christ died for us.
The great, abundant grace of God, shown through his love, expressed through, sending his son, to be born, on Christmas, in a manger, in a miraculous way, to ultimately, be the penalty, to take the penalty, for our sin, on the cross.

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He died, in our place. He took the punishment, upon himself, while we were still, enemies of God, while we were still, sinners, while we still, were in our own ways, in our own flesh, and doing our own thing.
God's love, is expressed, despite who you are. God's love, is expressed, despite your sin, despite your rebellion, despite your hatred, for him. He still, shows love, toward you.
[27:03] And we know, in John 3, 16 through 18, for God so loved the world, that he gave his only son, that whoever believes, in him, should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God did not send, his son into the world, to condemn the world, but in order that the world, might be saved, through him. Whoever believes, in him, is not condemned. But whoever does not believe, is condemned already, because he does not believe, in the name, of the only son, of God. God. That is, the proclamation, of the gospel message, from Jesus, himself. He didn't come, to condemn the world, he came to save it.
And he offers, salvation, to all people. Acts 17, verses 30 and 31, the apostle Paul, as he was preaching, said the times of ignorance, God overlooked.
But now, he commands, all people everywhere, to repent. Because he has fixed, a day on which, he will judge, the world in righteousness, by a man, whom he has appointed.
[28:18] And of this, he has given assurance, to all, by raising him, from the dead. Jesus's first appearance, when he was born, in a manger, grew up, had a ministry, of love, compassion, towards people.

That appearance, was not about, condemning, the world. That appearance, was about him, coming to save, the world. And to offer, salvation, for all men.
But there's a time, coming, when the one, who died on the cross, was raised, again, to life, he will return.
And when he returns, that is when he will judge, the world, in righteousness. So don't misunderstand. It's not that, you know, Jesus coming, it's not that, there won't be, a judgment.
It's that, it hasn't happened, yet. And the offer, of salvation, is extended, to all people, everywhere. God commands, all people, everywhere, to repent, and believe, in Jesus.
[29:39] the day will come, when we'll all stand, before God, in judgment, and give an accounting, of our sin. And how we have, offended, his law, and expectation.

And in that time, we'll either be guilty, because of our unbelief, or be delivered, because of our belief. None of us, will have an excuse, and the only hope, of deliverance, is through Jesus Christ, God's, Son.
So I appeal, to you today, to hear the words, of Christ. Whoever believes, in him, should not perish, but have, eternal life.
Whoever believes, is not condemned, but whoever does not believe, is condemned, already. because he has not believed, in the name, of the only, Son of God.
Dear Lord, I thank you, for your word today. And I thank you, Lord, for this opportunity, we have, to gather. Lord, to worship you, and to give praise, and thanks, because of the work, you do in our lives, and the call, to salvation, to each, and every one, of us.
[31:09] Lord, I pray for people here, who, who mock at this message, Lord, who hear it, and scoff. Lord, I pray that, they would not be, too far gone, that your spirit, would soften them.

Lord, that they would come, to a point, of true belief, in your Son, who gave his life, as an expression, of the true, abundant grace, of God.
And Lord, for those who know, the message, Lord, that we boldly proclaim it, in Jesus name, Amen.

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