

# Powerful Grace Gifts

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] You're listening to the sermon podcast of Grace Reformed Church in Spring Hill, Tennessee. To learn more about us, visit our website at [gracereformed.org](http://gracereformed.org).
- And now, today's sermon. I know this may shock some of you, but I've been actually pastoring for over 20 years.
- I appreciate the compliment. Thank you. In that time, I have walked people through several different struggles, ranging from anxiety to addiction, from parenting to the loss of a child or a spouse.
- And through 20 years, I have come to witness the reality of two lies that hurt all of us in this room. And it many times, not only does it hurt us, but ends up destroying the life of the Christian.
- And these are the two lies. This world is not this bad. The world is not this bad. It's not that bad. Doesn't God want what is best for us and want us to be blessed?
- [ 1 : 1 0 ] I should expect a life free of pain and sorrow because he loves me. And the second lie that's often told to us, churches has its place, but it isn't the most important part of my daily life.
- I appreciate what it does, but don't see it as essential to my life and faith. And what fascinates me about these two lies is how old they are.
- They're not new. The writers of the New Testament addressed both of these in almost every letter that circulated throughout the church. We don't think about it in this way. We show up with the Bible.
- But the Bible was written as letters. And so when Paul would write a letter and send it to Ephesus, then Ephesus would pass it over to the different churches in Rome. And it would circulate to all the different churches. And as he wrote, as they wrote these letters, they were dealing with the issues of the day.
- But they become universal because they're problems of the heart and the faith. We're going to look at a lot of passages this morning. So if you want to write some of these down, you can do so. Or I'll provide these passages later this week.
- [ 2 : 2 0 ] But listen to how many times we are called to see this life as a journey of trials. That we're not to be expecting there to be progress where eventually there is no pain and suffering.
- And we don't need the warning. This is 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 16 and following. He says this. 2 Corinthians 4 16. So we do not lose heart. Why do you think he has to start saying that?
- Because we are losing heart because our mind is in the wrong place. So that we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.
- For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison. As we look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen.

For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. Now we all would say amen and we agree. But then we walk out this door and what happens? Our hearts eventually take over our mind and we seek that which is here.

[ 3 : 24 ] Verse, this is Romans 8 18. So this was to the church of Corinth. This is to the churches in Rome. Paul writes Romans 8 18. Why does it wait?

Not only us, but the entire world is waiting. Because it's corrupt. It's broke. It's cursed. 2 Timothy 3 12. Paul writing to the young pastor says, Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

While evil people and imposters will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. And I think it's interesting that it's translated this way in James chapter 1.

It's not counted all joy if you fall into trials. It says, counted all joy, James 1 2. My brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds.

This would include physical non-spiritual trials and spiritual trials. Anything in life. It's to be expected. For you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

[ 4 : 37 ] Why is it testing our faith? Because it's reminding us this world is not our home. It's not something that we should expect to go easy. Because it's under a curse. And it is a battle zone.

It is where actual war takes place. Between the spiritual realms. One more passage. 2 Corinthians chapter 2. I think this passage ties both the lies together.

2 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the Father of mercies and of all comfort. Who comforts us in all our afflictions.

So that we might be able to comfort those who are in any affliction. With the comfort with which we ourselves are being comforted by God.

For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings. So through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. Oh man, what a powerful passage. It is saying that it's not God removing us from the affliction.

[ 5 : 40 ] But what does it say? Who comforts us in our affliction. I had the opportunity to do this this week. I sat down with several people. And as they brought to me their afflictions and their suffering and their sorrow.

I was able to comfort them. With the same comfort I received. Different affliction. Same comfort. And what is that? The mercy and the grace and the love and kindness that we have received from our God.

And the promise that this is not it. And this is not the results of your failures. This is not the results of your shortcoming. Or God is angry with you. This is because we live in a world that is broken.

This then combines it with the need of the church. How do you practice this passage?

Comfort those who are being afflicted. How do you do that unless you're what? In their presence. Right? This is 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 and verse 9.

[ 6 : 43 ] For God has not destined us for wrath. But to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep. We might live with him. He starts with the gospel.

Then says this. Therefore encourage one another. And build one another up. Just as you are doing. With what? What do we encourage each other with?

With our salvation and the restoration to come. You cannot apply this to yourself. Encourage yourself. Right?

He's saying you are to take and receive the gospel. And use it in the means of the congregation. He's writing to the church at Thessalonica. So this isn't to an individual. This is to the church. Receive the gospel and encourage one another.

Hebrews 3.12 and following. Take care brothers. Lest there be any of you of an evil unbelieving heart. Leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day.

[ 7 : 38 ] As long as it is called today. That none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ. If indeed we hold fast the original confession. Firm to the end.

I think it's important to note. That the writer of Hebrews. Believes we can be hardened by sin. Right? And because he's worried about sin hardening our heart.

He doesn't tell us to try harder in certain ways. He says we should be there for each other. So that we protect each other from sin blinding us.

And leading us into slavery. This is why later in the book in Hebrews 10. He says. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering. For he who promised is faithful.

And let us consider how to stir one another up to love and to good works. Not neglecting to meet together as the habit of some. But encouraging one another all the more as you see the day drawing near.

[ 8 : 36 ] I could go on and on. But I think this is sufficient to see. That there are so many different letters that keep pointing us to the reality. Of one. We live in a world that is broken and it's hard to live in.

And even brings many of us to the point of desperation. Even of wondering whether the life is worth living. And that God's solution and hope and strength.

Is found in comfort of the gospel within the church. The vitality of the church. What happens when someone believes these lies. And lives according to them.

They become the victims of Satan's attacks. And they have no way of defending themselves from the damage that it brings. This is why there's so many warnings about it. This is what Peter is bringing to the churches.

As he writes to them throughout the provinces of Rome. It seemed that the wicked prospered. And the righteous suffered. And many were being tempted to walk away from their faith.

[ 9 : 42 ] So Peter exposes the reality of this world to their hearts and their minds. And then gives them a new hope and a new purpose and a new perspective. Beyond the current circumstances that they find themselves in.

So turn with me to 1 Peter chapter 2. I want to just look at a couple of reminders. Because it's going to be hard to apply 1 Peter 4. If we don't understand the backdrop. In his first letter Peter mentions suffering 7 times.

7 times. I mean that is the highest number of almost any letter. Because he's writing to a congregation that feels the weight of the world and their sin. And suffering for righteousness sake.

So for those who have been tempted to think that suffering is the wrong experience of life. It needs to go away.

Peter says this. 1 Peter 2.21. If you're a highlighter or an underliner. This would be a good verse to underline. For to this you have been called. Because Christ also suffered for you.

[ 10 : 46 ] Leaving you an example that you might also follow in his steps. It's part of the call. Of being a part of his family. The mission. The will of God.

But it's temporary. I mean remember how many times Paul says temporary. It's not forever. And amidst their suffering.

He comforts them with the truth of the gospel. And it's because of what's the application. It's the purpose of their life. Just back up and look at 1 Peter 2.9.

But you are a chosen race. A royal priesthood. A holy nation. A people for his own possession. That you might proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness.

Into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people. But now you are God's people. Once you had not received mercy.

[ 11 : 44 ] But now you have received mercy. Peter has no understanding of a Christianity. Or a Christian whose life is filled in isolation.

It is not this individual proclamation of his excellencies. He's writing to the churches. And then listen to how he describes them. They're a holy nation. They're God's chosen people.

It's a collective activity. And then listen to how he closes down the first section of his letter. Turn with me to 1 Peter 3.8. In chapter 3 towards the end.

Which is this transition into chapter 4 that we're at now. This is the function that he gives to us. He says this. Finally all of you have unity of mind.

Sympathy. Brotherly love. A tender heart. And a humble mind. This is impossible to do if not in a community. We finally get to the place where he's making the application.

[ 12 : 48 ] You've been rescued out of your slavery. You live in a world that is hard to live in. So don't do that. Live underneath the supernatural power of God's love and his gospel.

Within his chosen people. Within the nation that God blesses. And that is his church. And this leads us to chapter 4.

Look at chapter 4 verse 2. So as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh. No longer for human passions. But for the will of God. This is the contrast we will feel for the rest of our life.

The passions of our flesh drawing us towards. We talked about this already. But sensuality. Anger. Strife. The flesh. But he says instead we live for the will of God.

So what does it mean to live for the will of God then? That's what we have come to now. In covering verses 8 through 11. So how do we go from the feelings that we have?

[ 13 : 50 ] Anxiety. Depression. Struggling. Defining meaning in life. Failure. How do we overcome our past? We do so by first looking to the gospel of how we've been set free.

And then from that sense of freedom. How do we find the purpose for our life now? So Peter gives the church four ways to which we are to care for each other. In fulfilling the will of God.

This is God's will for us. That we love God and we love one another. And what I love about it is he doesn't live that ambiguous. Go figure it out. He gets very practical. Because at times our flesh gets in front of our eyes and our heart.

And we think we're loving one another. But we're really not. And so Peter goes down into the nitty gritty and says. This is how love should look like. So here are the four ways in which the church fulfills the will of God.

Love. This is all going to be in verses 8 through 11. Love, hospitality, service, and honor. Love, hospitality. What did I say the first time? Hospitality.

[ 14 : 56 ] Hospitality. Stay at this church. We create new words. Oh man. My dad was a pastor.

I don't know if he can look down from heaven. But he is definitely laughing. Because this happened every Sunday to him. So. Oh boy. All right. Love, hospitality, service, and honor.

This happens at lunch by the way. My kids tell me often what I misspoke. Because they love me and they care for me. And they want to keep me humble. All right.

Well. Verse 8. For 1 Peter 4.8. He says. Above all. Keep loving one another earnestly. Since love covers a multitude of sins. Now we covered this last week. So I don't want to spend a lot of time on it this week.

But the kind of love that sets us up for the rest of these four. Or the rest of these three applications of what is the will of God. It comes from a sacrificial perspective of life.

[ 15 : 56 ] Covering the hurt and pain of others costs us. You see. When God says. I love you. And I forgive you your sins. It's not that he just kind of says. Okay. It's all good.

No. The demonstration was. Christ came and paid for your sins. So when it says. I love you. I will take on the punishment that is required. For you to be forgiven of your sin.

And so this is why he says. That it covers a multitude of sins. Because we end up burying the consequences. And the realities of what you did to me. I'm going to forgive you. Because Christ has also forgiven me.

Without seeing the love of Christ for us. It is very hard. To love this way. Where our love covers those who hurt us. Especially in a church. I love how people when they describe a church.

Where it's a place of hypocrites. And where they get hurt. I kind of chuckle. Because I'm like. Oh. And outside of the church. It's nothing like that at all.

[ 16 : 58 ] There are no hypocrites. And people don't hurt each other. I'm not sure what world you live in. But. It's full of sinners. But it is true though.

The church is often supposed to be a safe place. And it is not. Because. We remove the preaching of the gospel. And we remove the will of God for us. And we don't emphasize love. As we should.

We emphasize selfishness. And we emphasize sensuality. Or we ignored it altogether. And we are left weak in this way. So what does sacrificial love look like?

Looking at Christ's love for us. And how it transforms our heart and our mind. What does that look like to. Then practice that upon others. And that's what the next few points are about.

So love leads us to. A proper understanding of the will of God. And the outflow of it. Which is hospitality. Got it right that time. 1 Peter 4.9.

[ 17 : 52 ] I mean it is simple as possible. Peter is not trying to bury the lead. He just says. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. Do you think Peter may have been talking with people.

Who are like. Man it's hard having people in your life. And serving them. I mean I'll do it. But it's like. Can I pick and choose who comes over? Because this is like. Peter's like.

Hey look. Real love. Is to do it and not grumble. Man as a parent. I pick on my kids all the time. But I'll pick on me this time. My dad used to say this to me all the time. He's like.

Son I don't care that you did it. I cared how you did it. Right. I obeyed his words. But my attitude showed my heart. I grumbled the entire time. And this is what Peter's getting at.

See Peter isn't just. He's pointing out the problem. If you're grumbling while doing it. That means you're not really understanding. The affections of where it comes from. This is that part of the isolation.

[ 18 : 50 ] Where we lie to ourselves. That it's just easier. To just do this on my own. We are good. And I really don't need other people. And you know.

It's their fault. If they need my relationship anyways. This is how we treat it. If their life was as good as my life. They wouldn't need me to be in it. Right.

I'm not sure how we're supposed to practice. The first and second commandment. That Peter is applying for us. As being the will of God. If we're not willing to put ourselves.

In the presence of others. So Peter is calling the church. To fellowship. Because he knows. We will need it in the midst. Of our suffering and pain. We're not showing hospitality.

Because it's a good thing to do. We're showing hospitality. Because it's needed. It's needed. But we find all kinds of reasons to grumble.

[ 19 : 46 ] Don't we? I'm too busy. I don't have time. I don't have a nice home. I don't have a big enough home. I don't have the energy for people's problems.

I'm an introvert. By the way. The Bible does give you some relief on that. It says. Show hospitality. Except for if you're an introvert. Then you're good. I'm very sympathetic to that though.

Because. I did marry someone. Who is very opposite of me. My wife and I couldn't be more opposite. And that's good. It's a gift from the Lord. For me. But it reminds me. Of how much work it is for introverts.

To exert that kind of an energy. Because it's just not easy. So I'm not here to pick on you. And just say. You should somehow get over it. This is why all of us. Have to rely on God's mercy. And his grace.

Right? Sometimes people like. Well those who. Have this like energy. On the outside. They are the ones that should do it. Well that means the burden. Is only carried by some. And not only some are being helped. So it's in God's grace.

[ 20 : 45 ] That he says. When we are weak. Even in our personalities. When we are weak. He is strong. If our hearts and minds. Are set on the flesh.

Then we are going to look for the excuses. To get out of this. And in the end. We are hurting ourselves. And others. That's the lie. I will be better off. If I don't practice. What Peter is saying. And Peter is saying.

No no. This is the will of God. Because it's good for you. And it's good for others. And it's healthy to remember. It's not so that we can have. A fun train ride to the zoo. It's because we live in a war.

And people are being attacked. And they live in desperation. Do you know there are people. Who walk into this room. And they literally. Are not sure. What lies before them. What the next day.

Brings for them. The amount of stress. And pressure. And depression. That weighs on them. But when you said. Hey how are you. And how was your week this week. They give you a smile. And they say the right Christian thing.

[ 21 : 40 ] I'm doing great. Thank you for asking. I've said this for years. More lies are told on Sunday. Than any other day of the week. Why? Well because we've created a culture. Where we can't be weak. We can't be frail.

So how do we know. If we're living according. To the spirit in this way. Well just look to Christ. And allow him to motivate you. And you will fail.

And you will fumble. And you will do all the wrong things. In hospitality. But if it's two people. Who both love Christ. They're going to show what? Love.

And love covers a multitude. Of not only sin. But frailty. The goal of hospitality church.

Is to gather. The people of God. Together. So that they can. Care for each other. Not impress each other. I feel that way.

[ 22 : 41 ] I know you do. We want people to be impressed. With our homes. And with our lives. That's not what Peter's concerned with. It's impossible. To carry the burdens of people. For trying to first impress them.

Just have the desire. To care for them. And they will be cared for. And they will care. Less about. What the food is. And how clean. The house is. It's still good.

To clean your house though. There is a reason though. That I try. As much as I possibly can. To spend as much time. At my home. Or in my backyard. With men. Because I want. To practice this.

I want to be in their life. This Friday night. I had several men. Over to the house. And we laughed about. The 90s. And dress. And music. And then we talked about. Christ. And stranger things.

And aliens. And the gospel. What we were doing. We were being hospitable. We were gathering. So that we could know each other. And there were moments. Of confession. And crying. Because this is what happens.

[ 23 : 38 ] When we spend time. With each other. If you turn. And look at Acts chapter 2. What did the early church do? How did they respond. To the message of the king? They heard the gospel. From the apostles.

And all of a sudden. Their life changes. And this is different for them. Because they were converted. As adults. This is Acts 2 46. It says this. And day by day.

Attending the temple together. And breaking bread. In their homes. They received their food. With glad and generous hearts. Praising and having favor. With all the people. And the Lord added to their number.

Day by day. Those who were being saved. Why were they doing this? Keep reading in verse. The prior two verses. So Acts 2 44.

And all who believed. Were. I'm sorry. And all who believed. Were together. And had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions. And belongings.

[ 24 : 34 ] And distributing the proceeds. The proceeds to all. As they had needed. The reason why. They decided to dedicate. This affection. Towards each other.

On a. More than once a week. Opportunity. Is because they realized. They were a part. Of a group of people. That had something. In common. And what was it? They had been set free.

From the bondage of sin. And they had a king. That loved them. Unconditionally. And sacrificially. They had something. To live for. Other than their flesh.

And their selfishness. This is why. They wanted to spend time. With each other. Because they had affection. For the king. Peter then moves on.

From the practical. To the supernatural. In his letter. This is where. I get myself in trouble. Because I actually believe. What the bible teaches. And I try not to filter it.

[ 25 : 29 ] The comments. On some of the sermons. That have gone out recently. Have been fascinating to me. Because I actually believe. The bible is magical.

It's supernatural. It does what it says. That it does. And so this leads us. To the third point. So love. Hospitality. And service. But what kind of service? The kind of service.

We are called to. Is not just. Working in children's ministry. Which we need. And setting things up. And tearing things down. These are all functional.

And they're helpful. But that's not what Peter. Is talking about. He's speaking about. Something that is powerful. Look at verse 10. As each has received.

A gift. Use it. To serve one another. As good stewards. Of God's varied grace. Whoever speaks. As one who speaks. Oracles of God.

[ 26 : 22 ] Or words from God. Whoever serves. As one who serves. By the strength. That God supplies. So these gifts. Are not some kind of like. Gift in which.

It's disconnected. From the giver. He's saying. The gifts. Represent the giver. And listen to this. And the strength. To which God supplies it.

And he doesn't say. That it's given to some. Some of you. Have been given a gift. Therefore. Some of you. Need to use it. No. He says. All of us. Are to serve one another.

And we are serving one another. Underneath the supernatural power. Of the gift of grace. That God has given us. Turn with me. Really quick. To Romans chapter 12. Paul also talks in this way.

It's actually multiple times. In the Bible. But this is Romans chapter 12. In verse 3. Paul says it this way. For by the grace. Given to me. I say to everyone.

[ 27 : 17 ] Among you. Not to think of himself. More highly. Than he ought to think. But to think with sober judgment. According to the measure of faith. That God has assigned. So do you have more faith than me? No.

We've been all assigned. Equal faith. For as in one body. We have many members. And the members do not all have the same function. So we though many. Are one body in Christ.

And individually members of one another. Having gifts that differ. According to the grace given to us. And that he starts to name them. So there is something that happens.

When people with the title of God's children. Gather. And they show hospitality. They gather together on a Sunday. And they start performing the gift. That God has given them.

He says it produces strength. Into the congregation. Both Peter and Paul believe. That each member of the body. Adds strength.

[ 28 : 11 ] From a supernatural standpoint. Now listen. Some of you have probably come from churches. Or have been participants. In the spiritual gift tests.

Just for the sake of humor. Humoring me. How many of you have taken a spiritual gift test? Yeah. A lot of you have. Right? And some of you are laughing. Because you got done with it. And you're like.

There's no way that's my spiritual gift. I do not have the spiritual gift of being a clown. That's just not happening. Whether they're helpful or not. I've seen some of them. I think Peter tells us how to find it.

Like what is my spiritual gift? Peter tells us. He says go to work. Just start loving. Just start caring. And eventually you're going to find your spot.

And eventually you're going to find out. Where God has given you the capacity. To help and care for people. In my. In this church. In my role. The elders have seen and affirm.

[ 29 : 10 ] Which is why I have this role. That I am gifted in the area of teaching. And preaching and shepherding. This is why we observe. At times we see deacons. Who are serving in certain ways.

Which they should have the title and role. And elders who are being trained. But not every role has a title. And we shouldn't think of it in that way. You should think of it in this way. I don't know what God has given me.

All I know is that he has. And whether I ever find it out or not. I just want to be connected to a body. And love and serve. And in doing so. I know that when I serve.

God's strength is given to me. To fulfill that service. And it brings a supernatural strength. To the church. So this is.

How the attitude of the believer is to be. According to Peter and Paul. We are driven by love. We are driven by compassion. And then committing ourselves. To laying down the flesh.

[ 30 : 09 ]    Saying no to ourselves. And saying yes to the will of God. He is saying. You are bringing a supernatural gift. Into the church. 1 Corinthians 12 is another passage.

So 1 Corinthians 12. Romans 12. 1 Peter 4. These all mention. The nature of the spiritual gift. But turn with me real quick. To Colossians chapter 2. Because I want you to see it in practice. Both Colossians.

The church in Colossae. And the church in Ephesus. Paul gives examples. Examples of what ends up happening. When this is presented. So Colossians 2.18.

It says this. Let no one disqualify you. Insisting on asceticism. That is. Trying to. Try to resist sin.

By means of physical. Starvation and beating. Or worship of angels. Going on. In details about visions. Puffed up. Without reason.

[ 31 : 07 ]    By his sensuous mind. I think that's fascinating. I've had people come. And tell me about the visions. To which they have had. And I'm not impressed by them. Because if that is not for the benefit.

Of building up the body of Christ. It's only for your praise. It's only so that we're wowed with you. And Paul's like. Don't let that. Don't let. Don't be wowed by that. And not holding fast to the head.

From whom the whole body. Nourished and knit together. Through its joints and ligaments. Grows with a growth that is from God. Did you hear this? So Peter is saying. Show hospitality.

Serve one another. Do so with the gift of grace. That God has given to you. And then in here he says. It functions like a real body. And when that body is jointed.

And connected together. What ends up happening to them? It says it grows with the power source. That is the greatest power source. In the universe. Do not read that.

[ 32 : 04 ]    And somehow make it fleshly. It literally says. When you gather like you are right now. And we serve. We sing. We hear the word of God. It says. His power.

Comes and strengthens. Our church. And our souls. And our minds. And our hearts. That means if you're not here.

And you're not connected to the body. Or a body in general. And you're not living according to the will of God. You are not promised to be strengthened. You are literally removing yourself.

From the source of the supernatural strength. So. We need to treat it in this way. Turn real quick. You heard me quote this. But I'm going to quote it again.

Ephesians 4. 11 and 12. Ephesians 4. 11 and 12. He points it out this way. And he gave. Meaning the Holy Spirit. Mentioning other gifts of the Spirit.

[ 33 : 04 ]    He gave the apostles. The prophets. The evangelists. The shepherds and teachers. To equip the saints. For the work of ministry. For building up the body of Christ. Christ. So we know. That these are all supernatural grace gifts.

For the building up of us. In a supernatural way. In which it is the strength of God. So life in the church is not for fun. For help with life's problems.

For good advice. For marital advice. Life in the church. According to the New Testament. Is the power source. Of our spiritual existence.

Explaining me. How else we apply. These type of passages. I don't know how else to apply them. So many Christians.

Are trapped in sin. Following the flesh. That drives them. Not the spirit. Following the lives of Satan. Leading no one to freedom. And instead. Keeping themselves trapped.

[ 34 : 05 ] And not experiencing. The freedom and joy. And happiness. That really comes. Within the body of Christ. I have so many people. That come into my office. And ask me to help. With their marriages.

And their addictions. Struggles. And sometimes. I think. They expect me. To give them. Some kind of like. You know.

Spiritual verse bomb. That just kind of like. Boom. Snipers their problem away. Oh that was a bad illustration. Bad timing. That removes their problems.

Public speaking is hard y'all. Thank you for the grace. I appreciate that. I can see it in their face though. As I began to walk them through.

The supernatural. Powerful. Guaranteed promise. Of God's power in their life. I can see it on their face. I don't want to live that way John.

[ 35 : 04 ] I want to continue to live my way. Just without the sin. I want to live my way. Without the struggle. And Peter tells us. What God's will is.

And if we're willing to listen. We will understand the benefits. And receive the benefits of it. Church he saved us. By the death of his son. He wants what is best for us.

And he promises what is best for us. And then gives us a significant. Powerful purpose in the planet. I mean we are literally. Literally transforming people.

Out of the domain of darkness. And then giving them comfort. Until they die. Or. We live in blindness. With the rest of the world. Selfishly.

Intoxicating ourselves. With that which has. No value to anyone. And only tears them down. And at the end of our life. Our life has. No significance. Friends. So.

[ 36 : 07 ] To speak bluntly. If we prioritize. Our life. According to what he's saying. It looks different. It does. But we prioritize our lives differently.

Don't we? It's sports. And schooling. Entertainment. Culture. Above the power of God's church. We wonder. We wonder why. The effects of our life. Are the way that they are.

Just look at where you. Investigate. Invest your time. You will have the results. I've seen it for 20 years now. I've seen it in my own life. I'm guilty.

Of the very thing. I am preaching. Right now. This is why the New Testament. Wrote this for 2,000 years. Because it applies. Because the same tactics. Are being used. Today. Today. Today. Today.

Today. Today. Today. Today. Today. But at the end of it. I've said this a lot lately. I am not a guy that lives. I don't live my life trying to avoid problems.

[ 37 : 02 ] I tried living that way. It's exhausting. It's exhausting. How many of you are rule followers? How many are exhausted by a world that likes to break the rules?

I exhaust you. I'm a rule breaker. I don't like living this way. Because I know eventually over time.

I'm going to fail. And so I lose motivation. It's kind of like when I buy a new car. I just take a screwdriver. Go boom. Then done. We're good to go. No longer worry about the washer doing it for me.

This is what is next. Peter is setting this up. The will of God is motivated by love. The application is hospitality and service. But in the end.

It's because we want our king to be known for who he is. And this is honor. Love, hospitality, service, and honor. Look at verse 11. At the end of it.

[ 38 : 02 ] Or midway down. It says, In order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. We, by nature, like to glorify things.

We love to represent that which we think deserves praise. Whether it's a sports team or an artist or a musician. Right? We want to.

What are we doing? We want to draw the attention to the artist. And there's nothing wrong with that. If we've enjoyed something that is good. We recommend it. I like recommending good food.

I like recommending a good movie. Why? Because I received benefit from it. And I think you would too. This is the heart of what Peter is saying. When you really understand what Jesus is for us.

We want everything that we do in life. At the end of it. If we're done completing it. At the end of it. We want it to be. Okay. Now do you see why he's worthy?

[ 39 : 04 ] Now do you see why he's glorious? Now do you see why he should be praised? I live the way I live. Because I want you at the end to see. He's the one who gave it to me.

In all praise it goes to the king. This is helpful. Paul talks about it in this way. He says not everything is beneficial. Or profitable.

Right? So maybe we should set aside those things. At the end of the day we can't go. I don't know if this glorifies the king. I don't know if it brings praise to his name. He goes then maybe throw it aside. It might be just a waste of time.

A distraction. But we can feel it church. I'm telling you right now. It's healthy to ask yourself. What am I about to do? Is this really going to bring praise to my king?

What am I about to put on? What am I about to wear? Am I drawn to the attention of myself? Am I drawn to the attention because I want people to be impressed with me? Or am I putting something on because at the end of it.

[ 40 : 04 ] I am just a priest. I'm just a temple. I house God. And I want people to be drawn to him. I don't want him to be distracted by me. By what I say and how I conduct myself.

Why? Because the ultimate aim is that we want to love and care for people and not offend them. We want to draw them to Christ. We don't want to deflect them away. And so this is towards the end of this first section of chapter four.

But church, I hope and I always pray that when we walk out of here, our motivation is not fear, guilt, and shame. Now some of us have felt guilt. Because we know we're trapped in sin.

That's good. You should feel guilty. Because sin is what robs us from the joy of Christ. Some of us have shame for what we have done. We know it is wrong. And we need to repent of it.

That's also good. But the motivation should not be, I need to try harder. For that is in your own strength. And there's nothing in the text that says you do it in your own strength. What does he say?

[ 41 : 08 ] You gather within the body of Christ. You spend time with each other. And when that body functions as it should, the strength of God will come into your heart and your mind. And he will transform you to be something other than you are.

It is by God's grace. Paul says it this way. The way in which you began, which is faith in God's sovereign power to save your soul, is the same way in which you continue in God's sovereign power to change you.

And he uses his means. It was his death on the cross, his means to save you. He'll use his church to transform you. And he calls you to believe it, trust it, and follow it.

So that at the end, we can say, oh, glory and praise to the king. I had nothing to be involved with this. Your other option is to keep doing what you're doing and then watch for the results.

Watch for the results. The outcome of your life will be the affections of your heart. Out of the heart, the mouth speaks. If we put Christ in there, we fill our hearts and our minds with the joy of Jesus, then from that comes mercy, forgiveness, and kindness.

[ 42 : 16 ] Not perfection, church. Not perfection. Mercy, kindness, and forgiveness. There is a difference. There is a, we will not be perfect until he appears. This is where our church literally can experience the supernatural nature of what's already inside of us.

Let's pray. Father, I'm thankful that with boldness, I can stand up here and preach grace and obedience, forgiveness, and glory unto you.

Lord, give us the strength to truly see your words. Father, I myself am weak, and I struggle to believe that these things are true. Lord, give the elders strength as we seek to shepherd this congregation.

In Jesus' name, amen. Thanks for listening to the sermon podcast of Grace Reformed Church in Spring Hill, Tennessee, where everyone is in equal need of grace.

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