

The Revelation of Grace

The nature of grace

The nature of grace is that it keeps multiplying. It is grace that multiplies (2 Pet. 1:2). So we need to have more fellowship and a deeper apprehension of this grace unveiled to us in the New Testament. First we must understand what the nature of grace is. John 1:16 is very clear concerning the nature of grace: “For out of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace,” or more literally the preposition means “*grace in exchange for grace.*” It is compounded grace. It is out of His fullness that we have all received this grace.

Grace is everything proceeding out of Christ

Grace proceeds from Christ. It is everything out of Him — everything that He is and everything that He has done. It includes everything that He has done in the past and everything that He is right now. Grace is what He is as our High Priest, what He is as the One indwelling our spirit, operating in us, energizing, inclining, doing that work inside of us to break down barriers, hardness, resistance, everything that we cannot do. He is in us

The Revelation of Grace

operating, doing an inner work to soften our heart, to incline it, causing the love to flow, writing Himself into our mind, into our heart, into the way we are. Grace is He Himself operating and doing everything. It is not just in our initial salvation, but it is in everything after that. Grace is everything proceeding from Christ. “Out of His fullness we all have received.”

When we go to Romans, we see that we are in a continuous receiving. We are in the position of receiving. So every experience we pass through can be something unique in this universe. As one of our brothers testified, as a human being going through an experience of having his bike stolen, he could stop and receive out of His fullness. Praise the Lord that we could know something beyond our natural reactions. But it is a matter of receiving. Everything is proceeding from Christ.

And this Christ is not afar off. He is a life-giving Spirit in resurrection actually joined to a part of us. A part of you is joined to Christ. You are not just thinking about Him, but you have His very life, nature, impulses, reactions, within you. So just that little inclination to stop and open to Him, that is the grace operating. That is Him. It comes in the form of an inclination. But when you take it out for a moment and analyze the inclination, it is God. Philippians 2:13 indicates that it is God who is at work in

The Revelation of Grace

you producing the willingness and the working for His good pleasure. So every little bit of rise and desire for God in us, even if it is a small amount, that is God. It is God Himself in His inner dynamic of resurrection life able to do something over our being and cause us even to feel it in us, and then we obey, we follow. We say “Amen.” This is grace. Everything is proceeding from Him.

Grace in its highest definition is Christ Himself and everything proceeding from Christ as He imparts His life and nature into us in a continuous way. And our part is to stay on the receiving end, to stay open. It is not to crank yourself up, but to recognize your inability to do it yourself. And that sense of weakness is His sneaky way of getting more fellowship. He wants fellowship. He wants some touch and contact. He loves the fellowship. And the fact that we could open up in the midst of whatever we are passing through is His heart’s delight. This is why Paul could testify, “When I am weak, then I am strong, because His power is actually being perfected in my weakness.” It is actually being perfected. His power can be perfected through weakness. That is Paul’s testimony. So, what a Christ. What an operating Christ. Grace is just everything proceeding from Him.

The Revelation of Grace

*The law was **given**, but grace **came***

John 1:17 says, “For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.” Now if I have this book, and I have some instructions in this book about what brother Charlie should do, I come to him like Moses and I give him the commandments. So Charlie now has some things in his hand that he has to read and follow. That is the law *given* by Moses. But grace and reality *came* through Jesus Christ. Amen! Grace and reality came! There is a big difference. When the law is given, then *you* have to try to do something. And it is so impersonal. It is so hard. You have yourself and you have the law. And then you come under so much condemnation. But grace and reality came.

So He is in you. Just learn how to be filled in your spirit with Himself. Call His name, “Jesus.” By calling that name, our spirit is filled and we interact with everything that is proceeding from Him by opening our mouth. “Be filled singing, speaking, giving thanks.” At your lowest moments, go to your bed and get down on your knees. When you want to complain the most, when you are so unhappy with all your contrary environment — it is either your husband or your wife or your finances or the anxiety about what is coming next — take it all, put it on

The Revelation of Grace

the shelf, get on your knees, and start saying, “Thank You! Thank You! Thank You for everything.” Grace and reality will come. You just touch the Spirit and discover that reality is there.

Grace being brought to us in a sphere

Grace is everything proceeding from Christ. It comes by our gaze upon Him. It is our focus upon Him. First Peter 1:13 says, “Therefore girding up the loins of your mind and being sober, set your hope perfectly, or completely, on the grace being brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” This no doubt implies something of the Lord’s second coming in the future. But the tense of the verb, “being brought,” is a present passive tense. So it means grace right now in the present is being brought to us. And what is being brought? The grace is being brought to you. And the preposition “at” is really the preposition “in.” The preposition ἐν in Greek means “in,” that is, *in* the sphere of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

This indicates that the grace is being brought to us in the sphere of the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is not merely in the future, but also right now in the present. That is why the grace is brought the more we turn away from all the other objects but Himself. Sing to Him.

The Revelation of Grace

Glory in His virtue, His merit, His worthiness, His righteousness, what He is in His person, how He is the Father's Beloved, what He has accomplished, and all of His economy, from His love to us in eternity past to His incarnation to His human life. Everything that He has passed through and done and accomplished — let our spirit soak in that, and the grace is being brought to us in the revelation, in the sphere of the revelation of Jesus Christ. That is why the level of life goes to the top whenever in the church life we are singing about Christ. If you focus too long, too much, on yourself, the level goes down. But the moment we turn to focus on Him, right away the grace is being brought to us.

Grace being multiplied

Concerning the nature of grace, we need to understand that it is everything proceeding from Christ. Not only so, 2 Peter 1:2 shows us something else about the nature of grace. It says, “Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the full knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.” So the grace and the peace is multiplied in a sphere. The sphere is the full knowledge of Him, more about Him, opening up what He accomplished for our salvation. Not only that, it is opening up what He has

The Revelation of Grace

planned in eternity past. Tell me about His purpose in the universe and what I have been made for and what God wants — a building, a corporate habitation for Himself. Tell me about His heart, what is inside — what His good pleasure is, what His will is, what His purpose is, and what His economy is. This is the full knowledge of Him. Grace is being multiplied in the sphere of the full knowledge of Him.

This is why we need to have not the full knowledge of the batting averages and the full knowledge of *The Wall Street Journal* — the full knowledge of so many earthly things. What about the full knowledge of God? That is why we love to be in the Word in these days the way we are. You cannot help but have grace be multiplied to you when you open yourself up to Him to get the full knowledge of Him. So grace is everything proceeding from Christ as we behold Him. We need to focus our whole being on this person as the apostles did: “We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and full of truth, or reality.” So it is beholding Him. “But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18). This is how grace comes and is multiplied.

The Revelation of Grace

Grace is the opposite of works

Then we need to see secondly concerning the nature of grace that it is the opposite of works. This is a big point. And unless we see this we have no way to properly proceed in the Christian life. We must see that grace is the opposite of works. There are several passages that hammer this home. First, let us read Romans chapter 4, beginning with verse 4: “Now to the one who works, his wages are not accounted according to grace.” Look at the way Paul talks. To the one who works, his wages are not accounted according to grace, but according to what is due. Then verse 5 says, “But to the one who does not work, but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted as righteousness.” This is to the one who does not work.

So we must categorically understand the way God calculates these two realms: work and grace. They are opposite. They are two different realms. In this sense, for your salvation, there is not one more thing you need to do this minute, if you are not saved, to be right with God. For you to try to do something to improve yourself is complicating the problem. Stop. God says no works, otherwise your salvation would be accounted to you as something due you due to what you did. But salvation is not in that realm. Salvation is in the realm of all that God has done,

The Revelation of Grace

and it is grace. So we do not work, but we enter into a relationship with a Person whereby we have one position and that is to receive and to keep on receiving.

So what we need to learn is to stop ourselves, stop our own energy, stop this religious self that is ever trying to improve itself and ever trying to attain to certain levels. We need to learn to stop that realm. God has a wonderful design in making these two realms opposite. In the realm of works, we do not need God. We are independent. We are the source. We are the doer. And the credit comes back to us. So pride sets in. Self-righteousness sets in. And we become creatures in whom the enemy can roost with his nature of pride. Grace, in opposition to works, is a realm where you are dependent. Everything is from God. God is the source. God is the initiator. God is the doer. God is the one working all in all.

In the realm of grace, something marvelous opens up to us in this universe. We see what God deigned to do in the beginning. He wants to be the source, to be all in all to every man. So He says now it is grace and not works. This is the deeper understanding of why God operates, not on the basis of works, but of grace. It is because He Himself wants to be all. He wants to be your all. He wants not just a part of your life, like a glove compartment Jesus. You put Him away and you live your own life. Once in

The Revelation of Grace

a while you pull Him out and use Him in distressful situations. Because you have a need, because something in your life is needy, you need God for this. You have a problem. You need God. You are just using the Lord. He is not satisfied with that. He wants everything, and He wants to be everything. So He has a wonderful system — grace, not works. We must see the distinction between these two systems or realms.

Works cancel out grace

Now look at Romans 11:5. Let the nail get hit again. In verse 5 Paul says, “In the same way then at the present time also there has come into being a remnant according to the selection of grace. But if by grace, it is no longer out of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace.” You just canceled grace out if you come out of works. This shows us how clear the word is concerning the opposite realms of grace and works. Grace cannot exist if it is mixed with the slightest degree of works. The two realms must ever remain mutually exclusive.

Grace, not of works

Then we go to Ephesians 2. Probably we all could say

The Revelation of Grace

verses 8 and 9 from memory: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves,” literally in Greek, “not *out of* you.” It shows the source in a more graphic way in the original language — “not out of you.” It is not out of you. Then Paul says in the last part, “it is the gift of God; not of works that no one should boast.” This means that we have no ground to do anything out of our energy in any way. Even when you are passing through some kind of depression and thinking about how you are going to come out of this, how your environment will change to alleviate this, or how you can get to another level, maybe do something — all this inward cogitation is nothing but works rather than a simple contact, like a dependent child, with His name on your lips, “Jesus, I need You. Jesus.” Then something proceeds from Him, and that is His grace and energy operating in you.

Then when I come to talk with you, yes, you have your problems, you have your weaknesses, but you taste like Christ. There is a taste of Christ. There is an essence of Christ about you (cf. 2 Cor. 2:15-16). You are not just a good person. You are not just a disciplined person. You are someone who has an active inner life with a Person, Jesus Christ. And you emanate that. His grace is operating. So many times all we do is rearrange our thoughts — we replace bad thoughts with good thoughts.

The Revelation of Grace

I did this for years in my marriage life. I tried to simply look at things from a different angle. Things did not agree with me from one angle so I tried to look at them from another angle. This was the power of positive thinking, although I would not have admitted that. But that is what I did. The point is that it is not a matter of rearranging your thoughts. It is a matter of contacting a Person. Amen! It is knowing Him. It is not out of works in the realm of our mind lest any man should boast. It is grace. It is another realm. It is a realm of contacting and receiving This Person.

Nullifying grace by works

Now we look at Galatians 2:21. Paul says, “I do not nullify the grace of God.” What do you mean, Paul? How could you nullify grace? Well, you can. If you kick into that works mode and you do something out of your self, as the Galatian believers were doing there — being circumcised to have another standing with God or a better feeling in their conscience or to have some kind of favor with God — if that kicks in, you nullify grace. So actually Paul says, “I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness is through law, then Christ has died for nothing.” That means it is a real insult to the cross to exercise my own energy rather than have an absolute

The Revelation of Grace

relationship with my Jesus whereby He is my everything all day long. And whatever surfaces in me is only material to call on His name and to ask Him to live in me.

Many years ago, I would find notes written, and I would pick them up around the house. They were my wife's goals. And her goals were wonderful goals — to be patient with the children, to be a proper wife to me. She wanted to be a Bible wife. When we got married I said, "I want to marry a Bible wife." In my concept that was Proverbs 31. Oh, I would measure her all the time by Proverbs 31. Is she up early in the morning? Is she . . . ? This was my concept. Anyway, she made all these little notes. And I noticed for many months she felt forlorn because she was not accomplishing them. She was in a realm of wanting but not knowing how, until she entered into this life of grace. She has her own testimony. The Lord became everything to her.

Then I discovered her going around the house calling on the Lord, even over the baby's diapers. All of a sudden Christ was all over the place in the house. Anyway, this is grace. There is a big difference between attempting to be something, striving to attain, and interacting with a Person constantly. Then you find out about Him and you get to know Him. You get to know how He feels, what He loves, what His desires are. You are not just a Christian

The Revelation of Grace

on the surface waiting to go to heaven. But you are finding out the divine nature right now — how God is as a mother, how God is as a father, how God is as a parent. You find out His feeling because you are contacting this Person. This is grace. This is the operation of grace in our being.

Falling from grace

Let us go on to Galatians 5:2 where Paul says, “Behold, I Paul say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.” You can actually cause Christ in your being not to profit you by where you go. What is your system? How do you tick? What is on the inside? What do you relate to? Do you relate to the law, a standard, or your self? Or do you relate to Christ Himself as a Person? Actually we can nullify Christ. You may have Christ. He may actually be in you. But by what you relate to, you may put Him out of operation and cause His benefit to your inner being to be nullified. If you get on the track of works in your self and not an openness to Him, you will nullify grace and He will not profit you. This is what Paul was saying. O Galatians, you started out wonderfully. But then all of a sudden you switched tracks. Someone fed you something about circumcision, that you need to do this, and now you are going back to the

The Revelation of Grace

law. You are on another track. And there “Christ will profit you nothing.”

Verse 3 says, “And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law.” If you want to go for the law, go for the whole thing. Put the ten commandments and all the interpretation of them all over the wall. Then Paul says, “You have been brought to nought, separated from Christ.” That means you have nullified Him: “You who are being justified by law; you have fallen from out of grace.” This does not mean you lose your salvation. There is a misinterpretation in the Christian world that to fall from grace means you lose your salvation. Paul does not mean that. He means that if as a believer you relate to things out of yourself — your works, law — you have fallen out of the realm of grace. As a result, Christ does not profit you. But if you will come back and open your mouth like a little child to this Person and receive and receive and receive, then Christ will profit you. Stop this energy. Stop yourself and open up to Him. He is the Savior. You are not the savior. I am not the savior. We must let Him save us.

Falling short of the grace of God

Then we go to Hebrews 12:15 which says, “Looking

The Revelation of Grace

carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and through this many be defiled.” Here Paul is speaking in the context of being disciplined by the Lord, being chastened, even scourged. This means our feathers are ruffled by our environment. You are passing through something right now that does not look like God’s love to you. It seems like He has forsaken you. You know those moments: “If the Lord really loved me and He really cared for me, why is this happening to me?” So this is what can happen in our environments.

But here in verse 15 he says, “Looking carefully lest anyone fall away from the grace of God.” If you fall away from that grace, eventually bitterness is going to spring up in you. If you do not enjoy grace and the supply of God in your depleted state, when everything has gone the wrong way and God does not become your sufficiency in that, then that environment is right there ready to pry up bitterness inside of you. Trace your bitterness. Where is its source? It is because you have gone to your thinking. You have allowed the devil to think in your mind and charge God and accuse Him that if He really loved you He would not let this happen to you.

Yet the Lord says, “Whom the Lord loves, He chas-

The Revelation of Grace

tens, and scourges everyone whom He receives,” indicating that in those “rubber meet the road” experiences, we need to stay with the grace of God. Do not fall away from grace. Paul was on the verge of it. He prayed three times, “Lord, remove the thorn. Lord, remove the thorn.” The Lord did not answer Paul’s prayer the way he prayed. Then after the third time he saw, “Oh.” The Lord touched him. He said, “My grace is sufficient for you.” And when Paul saw the inward supply of God Himself being enough, while coexisting with this problem facing him, even he could feel it — “It is a thorn in my flesh. But in the presence of that thorn, I am enjoying a supply of grace” — as a result he turned his whole attitude: “Therefore I would rather glory in my weaknesses.” His whole attitude changed. So he did not depart from the grace.

These passages show us that we need to stay with the grace. This is not our life overcoming. It is not our own energy making it through. We need to learn how to cultivate a constant big relationship with Him where we are drawing off of His life, because the deepest meaning of the principle of grace and works is that God wants to be your all. He does not want anything of ourself. That is why these verses draw a line. These are two opposite categories: works and grace.

The Revelation of Grace

Not out of works which we did

Look at all these verses that help us to see something. Titus 3:5 says, “Not out of works in righteousness which we did but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.” Then verse 7 says, “in order that having been justified by His *grace*, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” So verse 5 says, “works which we have done,” in contrast to mercy and grace. It is clear that grace is opposite works, and works is a different realm than grace.

Ceasing from our own works and entering into His rest

Then Hebrews 4 reveals the mutual exclusivity of grace and works. First we see God Himself resting from His own works. In verse 4 it says, “For He has spoken somewhere concerning the seventh day thus, And God rested on the seventh day from all His works.” So God Himself rested from His works. Then we go to verse 10 in the same chapter: “For he who has entered into His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His own.” And verse 11 says, “Let us therefore be

The Revelation of Grace

diligent to enter into that rest lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.” So here this rest is an entering into the total grace of God proceeding from Christ to be everything. And we cease from our own works and enter into that rest. This is the rest of the Christian life. We are not authorized. We are not the legitimate ones to handle ourselves, to change ourselves. I am not qualified to change my mind, to change my emotions, to change my will. I am not the authorized one. That is all full of labor and works. I have one obligation and that is to enter into His rest. And that rest is the rest proceeding in our spirit. It is the rest of grace in exchange for grace. It is the rest of trusting and casting our whole being upon Him. The rest is coming boldly to the throne of grace.

I think these verses just hammer this in all the way — that grace is the opposite of works. There are two realms we can live in. We can live in the realm of works or in the realm of grace. And if you are in the realm of works, of your self, of your own energy, you are doing the living. Paul said, “If I build again that system that I destroyed, I become a transgressor.” No, it is no longer I. I have been crucified with Christ. This working I, this law-keeping I, this I that wants to make it, has been crucified. So what God thought of us is that He did not even give us a chance.

The Revelation of Grace

He just eliminated us out of the picture. In other words, I am crucified with Christ. That verse is right in the middle of the law-keeping I wanting to please God out from its own source. Paul is saying that it is no longer I, but Christ with grace coming to me at the revelation of Him.

So widen and increase your gaze on Jesus, and learn how to inwardly make transfers during the day, unloading this working self by using His name instantly, “Jesus,” when you catch yourself. When you are striving, when the record has already started to play and you are listening to that same old record again, break the record with His name, “Jesus! Live in me. You be everything.” What an insult that I change myself. What an insult that I am the source of my salvation. What an affront to God when God wants to be all. This is the deep significance of grace. God wants to be all.

Yet grace produces works

Grace produces works. The Reformation and the brothers at the Reformation time emphasized this first point: grace and works are opposite. And the gospel has become very clear concerning the opposite realms of grace and works. But not much is said about what happens when you receive the grace. When you receive

The Revelation of Grace

the grace, and when the grace is operating in you, it produces works. We need to care for the balance of the Word. On the one hand, you have to be clear in your inner life that it is not *you* as the source, but it is *Him*. But when He operates in you, when He works in you, something happens in you and issues out of you. This operation of grace is related to His purpose at His second coming to usher in the kingdom age. Thus, there is a relationship between grace and the kingdom.

Our experience of grace today is related to our full enjoyment of the kingdom in the future. We get a foretaste of it right now in the church life, which is a kind of mini-kingdom. Romans 14 says that the kingdom of God is our relationships with one another where we are not bickering over eating and drinking: What should I eat? What should I not eat? What should I do? That is not the kingdom. And Paul is talking about the church, and he is talking about the relationships between one another. He is saying, “The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Hallelujah! We have that among us. Whenever we enjoy that righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, the kingdom is here, and this is His grace among us.

Our participation in this kind of life, keeping ourselves in the realm of righteousness, peace, and joy in the

The Revelation of Grace

Holy Spirit, is a strong testimony in our own conscience, that the kingdom life one day is not going to be different from this. It is going to be more intense and it is going to be purified from every other element, but it is going to be of the same nature. So we are enjoying a kingdom life today for the manifestation of that kingdom in the future.

Working out of the realm of grace

Now let us look at Paul's testimony in 1 Corinthians 15:10: "But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which was with me." Nothing could be clearer. On the one hand, Paul was the one who made it so clear. There is a demarcation between works and grace. But in this verse he says his labor, his work, was more than all of them, which means he was not working out of the source of himself. He was drawing. He was calling. He was dependent upon that grace supply. And he labored more than they all, but he had to qualify it just so there would be no misunderstanding, as though he were holding himself up with all this wonderful energy: "Yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me."

That means, brothers and sisters, on the one hand,

The Revelation of Grace

stop yourself. But on the other hand, when grace flows in, you will be very active. You will serve. You will give. You will preach the gospel. You will labor in the Word. You will find yourself in the stream of grace, which is like a soldier, like an athlete, and like a farmer (2 Tim. 2:1-6). You will deny yourself. You will take up your cross. You will keep your body under. You will be taught to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. You will discover there is an energy in you that is limiting you to walk a narrow path and not a broad road. Someone else can walk the broad road, but I can't because I am inwardly energized by Another Life that has taken me over.

And now Christ lives in me: "I labored more than they all." This means that if you have a genuine experience of grace, it will issue in works, in fruit. It will be manifested. You will find yourself to be a different person. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:10, "I labored, yet not I but the grace with me." No one could read Paul's life and say he was lazy. Yet he was the man that said if this is of works, then grace is canceled. The same man who said that said his laboring was the grace working with him.

Grace-works

Then look at 2 Corinthians 9:8: "And God is able to

The Revelation of Grace

make all grace abound unto you, that, in everything always having all sufficiency, you may abound unto every good work.” Here Paul connects grace with every good work. And God is able to make this grace abound. And then look, it is extensive: “everything, always have all sufficiency, you may abound unto every good work.” That means there should be a good work in you. Here it was to give an offering to the saints in Judea, to get a collection for the brothers and sisters in that part. Paul was fellowshiping with them about giving financially. That was a good work. And Paul connects that with the word grace.

So really what you find here is grace-works. They were willing a year ago to give. Paul talked to them and they responded, “Oh, yes, we want to give. We want to give.” But one year passed by and they did not give. So Paul gives them a little push. He says, “Now the brothers are coming and I do not want to be embarrassed when they come. I told them that you were going to give, and now I want to make sure that you do it.” So he gives them a little shove. But you could see the grace was already working. They had a willingness. There was a desire. But they needed someone to remind them to actually do it by giving their offerings to the saints (2 Cor. 8;10-11).

That *actual obedience* is the working out of grace,

The Revelation of Grace

and it is the manifestation of grace to the churches. And this participation in grace is something related to the kingdom reward. One day we will stand before the Lord and He will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” Not that you worked out of your own energy and your flesh, but that you took My possessions, you took My grace, and you traded, trading the grace, exchanging the grace. The Lord says, “Enter into My joy.” And that joy is just responsibility with Him to rule and to reign with Christ over this earth for His kingdom. So our enjoyment and participation in grace today has an effect upon our responsibility with Him in the coming age.

Examples of grace-works

Every bit of turning to get the supply of the grace today is related to the coming age. Taking the cross, having experiences of grace, is something related to the kingdom age. In 1 Peter 2 it is very practical. I am reading from a literal translation which is more accurate here than many other translations. Verse 18 says, “Household servants, be subject in all fear to your masters, not only to the good and forbearing,” it is nice to have a good boss, isn’t it? “but also to the crooked.” Be subject to the crooked boss. How about that? Everyone could be happy

The Revelation of Grace

with a good boss. You do not even need to be saved. If your boss is so nice, you do not need to be saved. You do not need grace. He just treats you nicely. But what about being under a situation that is not so pleasant?

Verse 19 says, “For this is grace.” Want to know what grace is? “This is grace, if anyone, because of a consciousness of God, bears sorrows by suffering unjustly. For what glory is it if, while sinning and being buffeted, you endure? But if, while doing good and suffering, you endure, this is grace with God.” This is grace. This means there is a supply of grace coming because if it was up to you, you would walk out. You would lose your temper. You are in a situation at work where you are tested to the hilt and that is as it should be. Thank Him that He did not leave you to yourself, but He let you come to the end of your energy by putting someone in your life that bothers you to the uttermost. Do you realize this is God’s mercy? He is not leaving us to ourselves. He is allowing us to feel weak, needy, dependent, which would drive us not up a wall but to Him. Amen! It would drive us to Him. This is grace. So what happens is that inwardly, silently, you are telling the Lord, “Lord, I cannot make it with this person. Lord, I cannot do it. If it is left up to me, my temper is going to come out. I am going to lose the job. Jesus, You have to live in me. You have to be everything in

The Revelation of Grace

me. God, I am needy. I have to have you right now. Quick!” You need Him right this minute. You have to go somewhere to call on His name.

This is grace, and what happens is that He begins to oil your personality with Himself. He begins to coat you. You are just coated. And then your disposition is different. And let me tell you, the main thing in the kingdom is the multiplication of grace in our disposition. How much grace have you and I enjoyed for the Lord to transform us into His image, to have a dispositional change? This is what brings us into the kingdom full steam ahead. When the Lord spoke of the kingdom in Matthew 5, 6, and 7, he started with disposition: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom. Blessed are they that mourn. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are you when men say all manner of evil and revile you. Blessed are the peacemakers.” All this is directly related to disposition. Kingdom life is a life with a dispositional transformation.

*Multiplying grace in our disposition for
an abundant entrance into the kingdom*

Let us turn to 2 Peter 1:2 and we will see how we start out: “Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the full

The Revelation of Grace

knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.” So the burden is for the multiplication of grace in verse 2. Then verse 3 says, “Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and virtue.” So we see that we have some capital. We have divine power. It is called the riches of His grace. So what God has done is that He has granted to us divine power.

So there is atomic energy from the Godhead in your spirit. Divine power is resident in us for everything — for life and godliness. Life is the inward side, and godliness is the outward expression. So everything is there. That is in verse 3. Then Peter says, “Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust. So not only do we have the divine power, but we also have precious promises. We have something within us and we have something without. You have God’s power in you, and you have His promises in your hand.

Now by these promises you and I actually participate in the divine nature, which is God’s disposition. Everything that is in that divine nature can be imparted into me by handling the Word, praying with it, praying over it,

The Revelation of Grace

and letting it indwell in me richly. So we partake of the divine nature. We have the Word. Then Peter says in verses 5-7, “And for this very reason also, adding all diligence, supply bountifully in your faith virtue; and in virtue, knowledge; and in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, endurance; and in endurance, godliness; and in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love.” That means you have the faith in verse 1. Faith is in you in verse 1. Divine power is in you in verse 3. The Word is with you in verse 4. Now cooperate with it. Exercise yourself. Add diligence to work with what you already have. Make some other decisions. Instead of spending your time in the newspaper, instead of spending your time in front of the TV, instead of looking at that magazine that you are always looking at, instead of that, make a few little decisions that will change your intake. Go to another source. Open yourself to some reading that is going to supply your spirit. Feed that part. You fed the other part. Now feed that part. Simply cooperate with the potential energy that is resident within you.

Potential energy is like pulling a bow back with an arrow. When it is pulled back, that is called potential energy. When I let it go, that is kinetic energy. That is energy in motion. In us we have divine power. This means there is potential energy. You do not know how

The Revelation of Grace

much energy is in you. You have a heavenly time bomb inside. Now just let that potential energy be translated into kinetic energy. Pick up the Word. Pray. Sing. Fellowship. Share the gospel. Release the potential energy by cooperating with that divine nature and power. And what happens is that there is more self-control in your life. There is more patience. There is more gentleness. Christ grows in us. Grace multiplies in our disposition.

Now listen to this. Verse 8 says, “For these things,” these things which we just read from verses 5 through 7, “existing in you and abounding,” if they are there, whether they are there in a fully developed way or whether they are growing in you, the seeds are there. He is operating. There is a difference in your disposition. Listen to this, “they constitute you neither idle nor unfruitful unto the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he in whom these things are not present” — you are always angry, you are always up in arms about this or that — “he is blind, being shortsighted, having forgotten the cleansing of his past sins. Therefore, brothers, be the more diligent to make your calling and selection firm, for by doing these things you shall by no means ever stumble. For in this way,” now we get to the issue of all this, “in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly and bountifully supplied to you.”

The Revelation of Grace

This indicates that when multiplied grace is manifesting itself in our disposition, be sure there is no intimidation or fear at the judgment seat of Christ. You shall by no means stumble. Today if you can drop your complaint and say, "Forgive me, dear. I am sorry I said that," you are entreatable. You are not swelled up with your pride, but God has cracked you. You are broken. There is something of Christ in your disposition, because you are drawing from His grace. If this kind of inner activity is in you today, the Lord will say, "I feel comfortable with your disposition. Well done, good and faithful servant. Have an abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom. My kingdom is a kingdom of peace. It is a kingdom of meekness. It is a kingdom of mercy. It is a kingdom of Myself embodied in My people's dispositions ruling this earth."

So today we are enjoying the grace with every little turn, every experience of Christ, in all our relationships. Our relationships are not perfect. The church is not perfection in the sense that we think of perfection. It is a mish-mash. But in the mish-mash, grace is coming. Grace is coming. Yes, things get overlooked. Yes, things get forgotten. You get neglected, and no one pays attention to you. In the past we used to have programs in the Christian world to take care of that, right? We formed

The Revelation of Grace

a committee to take care of all the ones that had self-pity. But here it is not that way. You just die. Amen! It is just a matter of slaughter. That is what Paul said, “We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Yea, but in all these things we are more than conquerors” because we have Another Life (Rom. 8:36-37). Grace is the portion in our spirit (Gal. 6:18). Then this brings us straight into the kingdom.

So this shows that the enjoyment of grace today is for the kingdom in the next age. And the fact that the Lord could say to the Philadelphian church, “Be careful that no one take your crown,” means that they *had* the crown before they entered the kingdom. It cannot be taken away unless you have it. And the crown is a crown of glory (1 Pet. 5:4). It is a crown of life (James 1:12; Rev. 2:10). It is a crown of righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8). It is a crown of incorruption (1 Cor. 9:25). It is a crown of rejoicing (1 Thess. 2:19). So when there is life in you, when there is glory, when there is rejoicing, when you are not living a corruptible life, but an incorruptible one, you have been crowned already because you are participating in the grace proceeding from this Person.

And it will just be the frosting on the cake at the judgment seat. As Paul said, “In that day every man will have his praise from God” (1 Cor. 4:5). Doesn’t this make

The Revelation of Grace

you want to go for grace? Take the grace (Heb. 12:28). Enjoy the grace. Stop yourself. Do not live out of your works. Do not look at your self. Do not expect anything from yourself, but keep your gaze upon Him. Enjoy Him. And then let Him supply. Let Him funnel His life into you. And then you will be, we will all be, like Paul, “I labored more than they all, yet not I, but the grace with me.” There will be more giving. There will be more serving. There will be more care for one another. There will be more of the gospel. There will be more willingness to go to the ends of the earth for His testimony. And then the kingdom will come. That is what will happen because grace is with us. Amen.

— *Bill Freeman*
12/13/96

Ministry Publications © 1996
P. O. Box 48255, Spokane, WA 99228
1.800.573.4105 / Fax 509.468.4222