

Grace Extended

- **What a privilege to be in the House of God this morning & I trust that you have come today with worship in your heart for He is worthy to be praised today, Amen?**
- **You know, I was thinking the past week just how wonderfully blessed we really are & how thankful we should be for God's marvelous grace.**
 - It doesn't matter who you are today, God has extended His grace towards you.
 - Grace cannot be worked for, earned, purchased or inherited. It can only be given.
 - You may have turned from God time & again & yet, God is gracious towards you.
 - As much as we may get tired of being preached too & no matter how uncomfortable the conviction of the Holy Spirit may seem at times, if it were not for God's grace, can you imagine how different our lives would be without God's grace?
- **If you are here this morning, and you have never accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, I want you to know we are praying for you today. We are praying that you would allow the conviction of the Holy Spirit to draw you to Him today.**
- **Many of you this morning are saved, but you are facing some real issues in your life today. You may feel as though you are all alone, but I assure you, according to the Word of God, our Heavenly Father is in the midst of your storm today & He is able to see you through it.**
- **Prayer**
- **One of the sweetest words in the English language is the word "Grace".**
 - Some use that term to describe the blessing before they eat. Others use it to describe a person or a company being lenient towards them. And some have even named their children after this beautiful word.
 - But my focus this morning will not be on an a prayer or a payment extension. My focus this morning is on the One who gave us the perfect picture of Grace through the cross of Calvary.
 - I looked back & I have spoken 4 times already specifically on the subject of Grace, 3 of those times being last year alone.
 - "Amazing Grace"
 - "God's Gift of Grace"
 - "His Grace Abounds"
 - "Grace That Is Greater Than Our Sin"
 - Perhaps one of the reasons I enjoy preaching about God's grace is for the fact that without it this morning, you & I would be lost & helpless for eternity. But b/c of Grace, we have victory through the death, burial & resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- **The Bible has a lot to say about Grace & this morning I want to preach on several aspects of the Grace that God gives to each of us.**
- 1. **Common Grace (Matthew 5:45)**
 - The Bible makes it clear that God loves us all. He created us and He made us to worship & glorify Him. And b/c of His love for us, there is a Common Grace that He extends to all.
 - Matthew 5:45 – "for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."
 - God shows indiscriminating love to all people, allowing the sun to rise and rain to fall on both the evil and the good, the righteous and the unrighteous.
 - Thankfully, God's love for us is unbiased & He reaches to the poor & the rich, the educated & the dumb, the weak & the strong, to those that love Him & even those who betray Him.
 - Though Jesus was mocked & ridiculed over and over again, He still had compassion for all & offered grace to even His accusers.

- He gives the unsaved the privilege to have good health, earn a living, gain possessions & provide for their family.
- Perhaps you are here this morning & you know of someone that has turned from God & not serving Him. God has extended this grace towards them in that He has given them another day to hear the Gospel message.
- That's Common Grace, but then there's ...

2. Saving Grace (Ephesians 2:8)

- This saving grace goes far beyond Common Grace. Through His Saving Grace, God has paid the ransom for all who receive this free gift of salvation.
 - Ephesians 2:8 – “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:”
- Now some people don't necessarily like this verse b/c they are trusting in their works to secure their home in Heaven. However, Jesus makes it clear that if you receive this salvation, it will certainly not be through anything that we have done, but all through the blood of His Sacrifice.
- His grace is what saves us. It's not baptism, it's not church, it's not tithing ... it's His Saving Grace that takes an old wicked sinner & makes him fit for the Kingdom of God.

3. Justifying Grace (Romans 3:24)

- Before we accepted Christ as our Savior, the Bible reminds us (Eph. 2) that we were “dead in our trespasses and sins.”
 - We had no hope for this life, much less for eternity.
 - Undeserving of God's forgiveness or His love.
 - Worthy only to die in our sins & face the judgment of a place called hell.
- But when we were saved & asked Christ to come into our lives, from that moment we were justified of all of our sins before God. In other words, those sins that we carried for so many years were now once and for all wiped clean & we were justified.
 - Romans 3:24 – “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:”
- His Justifying Grace places us before God, unworthy as we are, without accusation. We are justified through the blood of Jesus Christ & we are able to stand before God, “just as if we had never sinned.”

4. Teaching Grace (Titus 2:11-12)

- Titus 2:11-12 – “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;”
- God's Grace is so often abused & taken for granted & many today use it a license to live their lives as they choose.
 - “I'm under grace, so I can live as I want.”
 - “God's given me grace so I can go out & commit adultery, He will forgive me.”
 - “I've been saved, so I can enjoy my life & live in sin.”
- Folks, that's not living under Grace. When you are living under Grace, the Grace of God will teach you to live a Holy & a separated life, “pleasing unto God.”
 - If what you have is not making you want to be more like Jesus, all you have is religion.
 - When God gives His Grace to you, folks, it changes you.
 - It makes you desire to change.
 - It makes you unhappy with sin in your life.
 - It makes you dissatisfied with the way your life is.
 - It makes you want to turn from the person you use to be & allow God to change you into the person He wants you to be.
 - It makes you want to cling to God & know more about Him.
 - That's called Teaching Grace.

- II Corinthians 5:17 – “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”
- This Teaching Grace shows us how to abstain from ungodliness, wickedness, the sins of this world & drives us to live a Christ-centered, God-fearing life.

5. Enabling Grace (II Corinthians 12:8-10)

- There are times where God does some miraculous things in our lives & He changes our circumstances from bad to good, sad to happy, seemingly almost instantly, right?
 - The Dr. says we have some terminal illness, we go back for further check-ups & it's gone.
 - I will never forget the Sunday Morning this entire congregation gathered around this altar & prayed for this young lady & this young man b/c the Dr.'s had already said one of them probably wouldn't make it & there was a chance that both of them would not make it & yet, here they are this morning in our congregation, continuing to serve God, continuing to lead others to Christ. God changed that situation in a moment.
- Many more of us have certainly prayed prayers of deliverance or healing & it seemed as though God was already at the door waiting to help us & we ought to thank God for those miraculous moments of God's Grace, regardless of how big or small they may seem in our eyes.
- But then, there are times where God chooses not to deliver us, but instead to Enable us to go through the storm.
 - **Paul**
 - II Corinthians 12:8-10 – “For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee**: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”
 - Paul had already cried out to the Lord on three different occasions & begged God to deliver Him from this affliction in his life.
 - Surely a man of God would be able to get through, surely he would be able to win the favor of God, surely he would be healed so that he could continue to do a great work for the cause of Christ.
 - But instead of healing, God gave Enabling Grace to overcome this affliction & bring glory to God, and to give him the confidence to say, “I take pleasure in my infirmities ... for Christ's sake.
 - **Job**
 - If any one man needed deliverance in his life, it was certainly Job.
 - He didn't ask for this destruction in his life. He was a humble man who loved & respected God. Surely God would not allow him to go through this kind of suffering without some kind of purpose, right?
 - God did have a purpose. He was seeking to Enable him through the Grace that only He could give.
 - And b/c of the Grace that God extended to Job, he was able to say as the persecution had come to all-time high, “Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”
 - **Daniel in the Lion's Den**
 - He was committed to pray & seek the face of the Lord three times a day.
 - Even when the King was tricked into signing a foolish decree that would put Daniel's life in grave danger, God gave him Grace to have confidence that God would protect him.
 - **Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego in the Fiery Furnace**

- Three young men who had proven their commitment & love to God several times already, were forced to face “the firing squad” if you will for their faith. But they didn’t run & hide, they don’t cower down to the pressures, instead they stood strong & were tossed into the fiery furnace where b/c of God’s Grace, even the flames couldn’t harm them.
- Listen, there are some people here this morning who have some real issues they are facing today. And perhaps you think it unfair to face such trials if you are faithfully living for God.
- I got some teenagers up here who are facing some real problems, some real fears, some real temptations in their lives. And guys, while you are trying to live for God, you are wondering why all these problems are surrounding you. Why doesn’t God just pull you out?
- And there are times when these moments come in our life & we cry out to God for deliverance, He doesn’t come barging in like the cavalry. Instead He reaches down & gives Enabling Grace so that He might carry you through the storm you are facing.
 - Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”
 - We always hope that God will cease our pain & discomfort quickly don’t we? But when trials come our way, we are commanded to call out to the One who is in control of this seemingly chaotic world.
 - Preacher Earl
- You may be facing issues today, things may not be going the way that you planned it right now in your life, but as the Psalmist stated in 46:1, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”
 - We have One that we can cry out too, and not only will He hear our prayers, He has the power to deliver us or extend to us the grace to carry on.
- **Perhaps you are here this morning & you have been a recipient of God’s Common Grace, but you have never received His Saving Grace & applied it to your life.**
 - Today would be an awesome day for you to just surrender your lives to Him & exchange your sinful life for a place of justification before God. Why don’t you trust in Him today?
- **Maybe you are here this morning & you are going through a time where God is teaching you some things or perhaps you are struggling & you need God to enable you to carry on, why don’t you cry out to Him today?**
- **Perhaps you came here this morning feeling helpless & that there was no way for you to find any help. There is One that can bring peace to your situation, His name is Jesus. Why don’t you come to Him today?**