

**“Core Values: Grace”**  
*1 Corinthians 15:10*  
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(Large Group, September 22, 2017)

**1 Corinthians 15:10**

*But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.*

**Introduction**

We receive God’s grace through the Word of God and prayer so that we can live out our daily callings. As the church, our call is to carry out redemptive history. For our specific church, we are to produce kingdom workers for the glory of God.

This is a very important message because everything hinges on whether we receive His grace or not. Grace allows us to accomplish what God intended for us. For us to live maximally, we need the grace of God. People ask me, “How have you pastored the same church for 27 years?” Grace. 30 years of marriage? Grace. It helps us in the extraordinary times so we can accomplish extraordinary things, but it also helps us in the mundane times so that we can keep going.

Life is not like YouTube. YouTube only highlights extraordinary things. But in order for people to achieve those things, it requires much practice and failure. At one point during my 27 years of ministry, I was in serious depression as I realized my own sin and inadequacy, and I wanted to quit everything. The only thing that sustained me during that time was the grace of God that strengthened and empowered me to go on. We need the grace of God every day. One day becomes 365 days, which makes up one year, which has amounted to 27 years of ministry, 30 years of marriage, and 50-some years of life.

**I. What is grace?**

**A. Justification grace- Our identity [Who I am]**

*1 Corinthians 15:10 - But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.*

This is a tremendously important verse as Paul finishes a section on the resurrection of Jesus Christ and how we have this power. This is justification grace, talking about his identity. Paul is saying, “I am a hell-deserving sinner, but I am saved by the grace of God, and that’s who I am.” There are many ways to define our identity, but as we look into Scripture, there are two essential identities that will matter for eternity: whether you are in or apart from. Paul is saying that by the grace of God, he is in union with Christ.

**B. Glorification grace- Our empowerment [What do I do]**

*1 Corinthians 15:10 - But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.*

Often we think that once we're saved forgiven, everything is okay and nothing matters anymore. There is some truth to that, but if you are saved by the grace of God, something happens. When you are justified in Jesus Christ, it makes you want to love. You have a foreign desire that makes you want to do something for the kingdom out of love for people and not out of love for yourself. Grace makes you work hard – not to earn your salvation, but to display His salvation so that others can be saved and see the love of Jesus Christ. Glorification grace says, “Christ is in me.”

### **C. Defining grace- God's Resources At Christ's Expense**

-Everything good that we get from God because of Jesus  
As God would give His Son, He gives to us.

### **D. Words of grace- Key words related to grace**

#### **1. Heart- Where we receive His grace**

This is the center of our being and where we receive grace. The same concept is used in the world when we use the phrase, “I love you with all of my heart”, which means with the entire core of my essence. The connection between God and us is in our heart. It's the seed of our motive.

#### **2. Motive- Why we need His grace**

Motive is why we do everything. There is motive in everything we do. When God sees us, He sees our motives and why we do things. This is the most important thing about us that God cares about. Why do you want to be a great student? For your glory, for others, or for God? Our motives are selfish. That is why we need His grace.

#### **3. Dual Nature- What happens when we receive His grace**

The heart is made of natures - bodies of desires. You are born with a sinful nature. When you become Christian and accept Jesus as your Savior and Lord, the DNA of Christ comes in, and a new nature is born. Now you have two natures: Adam's selfish, sinful-nature, and Jesus Christ's nature. Suddenly you want to love God, love others, and worship. As Christians, we have many desires but they can be categorized into two desires, which is called dual nature.

Grace, by the Holy Spirit, gives to our spirit's nature power and love, so we can overcome our selfishness and love God and others. By grace as Christians, even though we have a sinful nature, we continue to grow to love God. Grace to us is like gas to an engine, like electricity to appliances, like power to our soul. It is what we absolutely need for spiritual survival as Christians. Eventually, as we repent for our sins, the only thing we will want will be Jesus.

God can change us by His grace. There is a quote that says, “Only God can turn a mess into a message, a test into a testimony, a trial into a triumph, and a victim into a victory.” As sinners, all of us are everything that was listed first. But in Jesus Christ, we can progressively become everything in the latter.

## **II. What happens when we receive grace?**

We will see an x-ray of our hearts from our past, present, and future.

### **Overview of the Book of Romans**

Grace fulfills the plan of God for my joy [1-8]

Grace fulfills the plan of God for His glory [9-16]

We are living for His glory, which is our pleasure and our joy. This is the purpose of human life.

#### **A. Grace and Romans**

##### **1. Justification grace [1-4]**

*Romans 3:23-24 - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,*

We were born as sinners, but by His grace, we are justified and forgiven.

##### **2. Glorification grace [5-8]**

*Romans 5:2 - Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice*

This grace helps us to see, experience, and become like the glory of God. We become glorious, like Jesus.

##### **3. Redemptive historical grace [9-11]**

*Romans 11:5 - So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.*

In the Old Testament, there were Jews. Gentiles are Spiritual Jews. By Jesus Christ, we have become part of redemptive history. God is saving His people, generation by generation. Just as someone showed Christ to you and you became Christian, God will use you to convert someone so they can know Christ. That is what has been happening throughout history because of grace. The grace you experience in your growth is what He’s been doing all throughout history.

##### **4. Missional grace [12-16]**

*Romans 12:6 - Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;*

Grace is going to use us where we are, where we live, in our workplaces, in our families. We want to train you as much as we can so that after you graduate, wherever you go, you will become a means of God’s grace. By the grace given to us, we serve one another so that His grace can be spread all over the world.

## **B. Justification grace- I am in Christ [1-4]**

**Romans 3:23-24** - *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, We were born as sinners, but by His grace we are justified and forgiven*

Justification is really about approval of God. We care about the approval of people. Some of you don't care as much about others' approval, but you care about your own. But the Bible says that you should only care about the approval of God. In eternity everything is evaluated not by you, your parents, or your professors, but by God who redeemed and created you. We can only be approved by God through Jesus Christ by putting our faith in Jesus Christ who died for our sins - His death on the cross.

### **1. Am I sinful? Jesus died as me- I am as sinless as Jesus**

When we put our faith in Jesus Christ that is how God the Father sees us. That means Jesus died as me. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, He sees it as if you died for your sins on the cross. Because you are justified in Jesus Christ, you can say, "I am as sinless as Jesus because I am in Jesus." This is tremendously helpful when you sin.

### **2. Am I righteous? Jesus lived as me- I am as righteous as Jesus**

Not only did Jesus die as you, but Jesus lived a righteous life that qualified him to die for us. We typically don't think His life is relevant to us, just His death. But just as Jesus lived a righteous life, He sees me as righteous. I know it's hard to say that because you try to approve of yourself, but this is what God sees. To the degree to which you are convinced of this, you will grow in your spiritual life.

### **3. Am I loved by God? Jesus is loved as me- I am as loved as Jesus**

Whenever you fail, you don't feel like going to God. You don't think He'd forgive you again and again, but He does. That means we can repent again and again. So whenever you sin, you can ask for forgiveness. You don't *feel* like you're forgiven because this truth isn't in you. God has approved of you in Jesus, but you haven't approved of yourself. That's a separate sin, and you need to repent of that. Engrave this truth in your heart. Otherwise, you are trying to be God, and you are degrading the value of Jesus Christ. His blood is greater than your sin. His blood is more powerful than your addiction. This is justification in Jesus Christ, and it has to be the foundation. When we fall, we never fall into the puddle of our sin or into hell; we fall on the rock solid foundation of Jesus Christ.

You need to remember these three phrases so when you fall, you can say, "Thank you Jesus." His blood is always more powerful than the dirt of your sin, so you can keep going.

## **C. Glorification grace- Christ is in me [5-8]**

**Romans 5:1-2** - *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

Justification grace is like our birth, and glorification grace is like our growth. We are becoming more like Jesus Christ.

**Phase 1: Born without glory [Romans 3:23]**

We have sinned. It's our nature. The motive of our desires prior to Jesus was to solely live for our own glory. There is no glory, no beauty of Jesus inside of us.

**Phase 2: The birth of glory Romans [Romans 5:2]**

When Jesus Christ justified us, we received grace. A spiritual nature was born, and now we rejoice in the growth of the glory of God. We now have dual nature.

People ask, "What does it mean to be saved?" This is what it means to be saved. Has a heart change taken place that is proven through life change? You have the DNA of Adam, do you now also have the DNA of Jesus?

Can you lose salvation? No, the spirit never dies. We have two natures. It's hard to distinguish between these two. When people don't understand what happens in our hearts, they think we can lose salvation. But no, we can never lose salvation.

Think about Judas. Judas was one of the twelve disciples, but there is a good possibility he was never a believer. Peter was another disciple, and he denied Jesus three times. We could easily look at him and ask ourselves, "Was he a believer?" I believe he was because he always came back and repented. The Spirit's nature was alive.

When believers sin they can fall into addiction, but they are only going bungee jumping. They are going to come back. You can never run away from the hand of God. Nothing can separate you from the love of Jesus Christ.

**Phase 3: The growth of glory in us [Romans 5:3-5]**

This is why Romans 5:2 talks about suffering. Basically, the Book of Romans addresses that life is filled with suffering, but we rejoice and grow in our suffering. Suffering produces endurance because the Spirit's nature is working in the midst of suffering, so you can endure. This produces character so you can become more like Jesus Christ, which produces hope and continued growth. God's grace has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Every day, He's pouring His grace into your hearts so you cannot help but to grow and persevere in the midst of hardships. You grow so you glow for His glory.

We keep growing in our hearts. We still sin, but we outgrow our sinful nature in Christ. Our sinful nature does not become smaller or vanish. We just have to grow more in Jesus Christ. That's why when Jesus returns, He has to extract the sinful nature from our hearts.

**Phase 4: The climax of glory in us [Romans 5:2; 1 John 3:2]**

*1 John 3:2 - Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.*

We will be like Jesus in what way? In the context of 1 John, He is talking about sinlessness. Our sinful nature will be gone. An extraction takes place, and only the Spirit's nature remains. We will be like Jesus in that sense. Continuously throughout eternity, we will receive more and more of Jesus to grow. We will never be Jesus, but we will continuously grow to be more like Jesus.

There is a degree difference in our reward in heaven because how much we fight to become more like Jesus matters. Right now the only reason why we cannot experience so much more joy is because our sinful nature remains in us. We're hungry, so we receive grace, but when our sinful nature is gone, we will not be able to describe what it will be like - we will only want Jesus.

#### **Phase 5: The endless growth of glory in us [Romans 5:2]**

In eternity, we will continue to grow to be more and more like Christ. This is what will happen throughout eternity. To summarize this concept, I included something I wrote: "I am not who I want to be, but I am not who I was. I am thankful for the progress of the Spirit in me. I am not in control of moments, circumstances, or people, but I was able to grow because a moment of mourning became a moment of yearning. A place of bleeding became a place of training, and my worst enemies became my best teachers." This is because of the grace of God that is available to us. Outward circumstances don't matter because there is a flood of grace coming into our hearts. We can overcome and grow through everything for the glory of Jesus Christ.

### **III. How do I receive grace?**

#### **A. Repentance- foundation, confession, repetition, progression, [again and again]**

Repentance means a change of direction. If we repent, we receive grace.

*1 John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

It would be unjust for God the Father not to forgive our sins because Jesus died as us, and He faithfully keeps His promise. That's the foundation - because of Jesus.

Confession is agreeing. When we read God's Word and see our desires, sins, and motives, we confess and agree with what God says is sin. If we confess our sins, He will forgive us. Confession is not just a one-time event, but we must keep on confessing. If we keep on confessing, He is faithful and just to keep on forgiving us. That's where we get the phrase "again and again". We need to keep on receiving forgiveness, and then

progression happens. He cleanses us from all unrighteousness, which means that we will change and grow to become like Christ.

**1. Justification repentance- for salvation that leads to the change of identity**

This is the first time you are doing this. God's grace has changed your heart in such a way that you see your sin and the cross. You see that you need to be saved for the first time, which leads to a change of identity. You were apart from Christ, but now you will be in Jesus Christ.

**2. Glorification repentance- for growth that leads to the change of character**

For all of us who are in Jesus Christ, we need glorification repentance for our growth that leads to change of character. When you sin, you repent, not so that you can be justified, but so that you can hate sin and love Christ more. You can grow, be glorified, and become more like Jesus Christ.

**B. Faith- The limitlessness, the availability, and the end goal [more and more]**

*Ephesians 3:19 - and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

We can't even know this love and grace. All the fullness of God is infinite, and His desire and intent is to fill you with that. This is like Niagara Falls, and we have a small cup as our heart. He is trying to put as much grace into you as possible. As much as we desire, we will grow and receive. There is limitlessness in the availability of His grace. He can give you more than you can even imagine according to the power that is at work. The end goal of grace is for Him to be glorified and honored in our midst.

**C. Means of grace- CFC**

**1. The Word**

The Word of God will be preached at just about every meeting at our church. We will teach you the Word so that in your personal study of the Word, you will get more blessings.

**2. Prayer**

This is responding to the Word of God and responding to God. Through the Word, we get God.

**3. Worship**

When the Word comes in, worship goes out. When worship comes out and we hear one another's worship, we have more worship of God. We can have fellowship through singing. Learn to sing to one another spiritual songs and hymns.

**4. Fellowship**

This is the sharing of Jesus. Vertical grace comes in, and a horizontal sharing of that grace is fellowship. When you pray for one another, incredible fellowship takes place.

### **5. Baptism**

This is a declaration of justification grace.

### **6. The Lord's Supper/ Communion**

This is the Word of God acted out, displaying the Gospel. It is a source of growth because He is feeding you, and His grace sustains you.

### **7. Giving**

God has given us His grace through monetary means. We show that grace to one another as we give to each other.

### **8. Serving**

We use spiritual gifts and serve one another through the church so we can be strengthened, and we can show God to the world.

### **9. Evangelism and missions**

This is making God's grace available to the world. The world will see the great, gracious, and glorious God.

## **Conclusion**

*[YouTube Video Link - [https://youtu.be/i5\\_EuMsn7\\_o](https://youtu.be/i5_EuMsn7_o)]*

They become unlikely friends and odd heroes to each other. Each did what he/she is supposed to do based on their abilities and gifts. They were serving each other - one gave life, the other resources. Each became the others' heroes. It's similar for us, but we have The Hero that is Jesus. He gave His life and riches to us. As we give our lives and our riches for others, we receive God's grace and release God's grace. We picture The Hero. We become the means through which God gives His grace to the world. We fail, we lack, and we can never brag about our love for God because we always fail Him. But we don't have to brag about ourselves, we can brag about His love for us because His love never fails.