

Sunday, April 10, 2022 am

**CLOSER TO GOD 2022 (12)**  
**The Grace of God (3)**  
**The Wonderful Grace of God - Demonstrated**

Today, we continue our study of the grace of God. This is part of our theme for 2022 – Closer to God. We have devoted 2 lessons to the subject of God’s grace. In these lessons we have talked about what grace is, how grace does not mean we do nothing, and in our last lesson, we addressed some ways that grace can be abused (universalism, Calvinism, cheap grace, Once saved-always saved, grace is license to sin and finally our works counter grace – e.g. if our good outweighs our bad, we have earned our salvation). All these are contradictory to the subject of grace. And that brings us to our lesson for today – we want to address what the grace of God is and has done for us.

**I. The Grace of God**

- a. Titus 2:11 – the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men... it is available to everyone. Again, be reminded that grace is the prime factor in our salvation.
- b. Examples of God’s grace at work in scripture
  - i. In defining grace, we gave 3 examples – Noah, the bronze serpent and the walls of Jericho. Many others could be added to these. Let’s consider some other examples from a different perspective:
  - ii. **Paul** – 1 Timothy 1:15 – Paul viewed himself as the chief of sinners. Note vs. 12-14. See also Galatians 1:13-16 – it was through the grace of God that he was separated. NOTE: Paul’s former conduct – he was an enemy of God. But God knew his heart and thus Paul was presented with opportunity to change. And he did! We are blessed because of Paul’s efforts which are manifested to us through God’s grace.
  - iii. **David** – Samuel 11 & 12 records David’s sin with Bathsheba and its aftermath. What David did was truly deserving of death. He multiplied sins trying to cover up his adultery. We know it backfired on him. Nathan confronts David as he unwittingly pronounces sentence on himself. But Nathan notes that God had pardoned David – 2 Samuel 12:13-15. We find here God’s grace was undeserved, but He showed it anyways.
  - iv. **Manasseh** – 2 Chronicles 33 – he was a very wicked king. He was the son of Hezekiah who was a very good king. But Manasseh reverts back to the ways of his evil and idolatrous ancestors (not his father). 2 Chronicles 33:1-9 – he reinstated idolatry, sacrifices his son, consulted sorcery, erected idols in the house of the LORD and seduced Judah to sin against the Lord. Because of his sins he was punished and carried away captive by Assyria with hooks and fetters to Babylon. BUT notice 2 Chronicles 33:12-16 – he repented, and the LORD restored him. When he was returned to Jerusalem, he removed the idols showing his repentance. God was gracious in forgiving him, even with all his sins.
  - v. These examples, and others show the greatness of God’s grace. The point is that God CAN forgive ANY sin we are guilty of.
    1. We sometimes think that we are undeserving and so wicked we ask, “How could God ever forgive me?”
    2. It is a valid question, and in all honesty, it is the truth. We ARE undeserving.
    3. But the answer is: GRACE! God, through His grace can and WANTS to forgive us, if we will reach out to Him in repentance (NOTE: Every example above demonstrated repentance). He desires our salvation – 2 Peter 3:9, 1 Timothy 2:4

- c. Jesus coming to this earth – I'll deal with His death in a while, but first let us consider His time on earth. We find the life of Jesus a manifestation of God's grace AND His grace (but remember that He IS God - John 1:1, 10:30-33; Phil. 2:5-6, etc.). He demonstrated grace in His actions and teachings.
- i. John 1:14-17 – Jesus became flesh and dwelt among us... He was full of grace and truth.
  - ii. Jesus came not to be served, but to serve. Matthew 20:28, Luke 22:27. Jesus demonstrated this as He washed His apostle's feet – John 13:1-16.
  - iii. Many of His miracles were acts of grace –
    1. Raising the son of a widow (Luke 7:11-18) – vs. 13 notes that He had compassion on her.
    2. Giving strength to a man at the pool of Bethesda – John 5:1-16. Jesus finds him and asks if he wants to be made well.
    3. Giving sight to a man born blind – John 9
    4. Feeding a hungry crowd – twice – Matthew 14:15-21, 15:32-39
    5. Cleansing 10 lepers, including a Samaritan – Luke 17:11-19
    6. On occasions, He healed entire multitudes – Matthew 4:24, 10:1, 12:15, etc.
    7. Jesus cared as He saw people suffering. He acted showing His grace, power and authority.
  - iv. Many of His parables demonstrated the grace of God
    1. A servant owing 10,000 talents – Matthew 18:21-35 – it was a parable about forgiveness. Jesus was illustrating how God forgives a debt of sin that we can NEVER repay. In response, we are to forgive others.
    2. The prodigal son – Luke 15:11-32. A parable likely directed to Pharisees who criticized Jesus for showing mercy to "sinners". Again, Jesus is illustrating the depth of God's grace toward others.
    3. The parable of the laborers – Matthew 20:1-16. A landowner hires laborers throughout the day, but at the end of the day he pays each of them a denarius (a day's wages). Jesus shows God's grace when you come to Him, regardless of the time in your life. He also reminds us to be gracious toward others rather than being self-righteous.
    4. The unjust judge – Luke 18:1-8. A widow is defrauded and pleads for justice, but an unjust judge will not listen to her. But because of her persistence, he eventually does avenge her. Jesus uses this to illustrate how God hears and will answer our prayers if we go to Him persistently (but not necessarily how we think).
  - v. Jesus restores Peter –
    1. We are familiar with Peter denying Jesus 3 times (Matthew 26:30-35). While it was destined to happen, Peter still was not without fault – as the rooster crowed at his final denial, Luke 22:60-61 tells us the Lord looked at Peter and when he saw the Lord, Peter remembered the warning and went out and wept bitterly.
    2. John 21:15-23 is likely a response of restoration to Peter based upon that. This shows the grace of Jesus as He continues to commission Peter. Jesus knew his character and heart.
  - vi. Jesus forgiving sins –
    1. Matthew 9:2 as He forgives the paralytic
    2. Luke 7:47 – As Simon passes judgment on Jesus (Luke 7:36ff), Jesus rebukes him and forgives the "sinner" who washed His feet
    3. The cross – the thief. Luke 23:39-43 – even in agonizing pain, Jesus sees the heart of that thief and forgives him.
  - vii. In Jesus you find an example of God's grace and HOW that grace is to be reflected in us (more on this in our next lesson).

- d. Ultimately Demonstrated in Jesus's death –
- i. If you want to consider the depth of God's grace, think for a few moments about what was involved with a crucifixion. It was a barbaric death.
  - ii. Hebrews 2:9 – Jesus, for the suffering of death, by the grace of God He tasted death for us.
  - iii. Hebrews 12:1-3 – we look to Him who “for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, endured such hostilities, etc.
  - iv. 1 Peter 2:21-24 – He suffered for us.
  - v. Romans 5:6-8 – God demonstrates His own love toward us, in letting Jesus die on that cross. God acting in love shows His grace.
  - vi. Ephesians 2:4-9 – God who is rich in mercy and love, saved us by His grace. He did this allowing Jesus to die. Consider that both the mercy and love of God are manifestations of His grace toward us.
  - vii. 2 Corinthians 8:9 – Jesus showed His grace by His willingness to die for us.
  - viii. AND, as He was being nailed to that cross, he prays, “Father forgive them...” (Luke 23:34).
  - ix. Friends, that is the grace of God.

In this lesson we have seen God's grace at work in accounts of scripture and ultimately what that means for us. And we have devoted time to the ultimate example of His grace – Jesus. Because of God's grace demonstrated, we have reason to believe that God genuinely cares for us and to realize that there is hope for us. He has provided the means to save us and to sustain us as His children. We will address the grace of God a little further next week. But for now, do you appreciate the grace of God? Think about it!