

*Sunday, May 17, 2026 am*

## **What God Has (and has not) Joined Together (12) Grace and Law (1)**

Today we continue our 2026 theme, “What God has joined together”. This lesson continues to examine elements related to our salvation. We have noted numerous doctrinal topics which are misinterpreted by many. We have addressed how God has joined together: Faith and works, baptism and salvation, the gospel and doctrine of Christ that relate to our need to be obedient to His will. In this lesson I want to notice another “divine couplet” which addresses 2 more terms we must consider – grace and law. We want to notice how they are and are NOT joined together.

If you do an online search of how grace and law are joined together, you will find most conservative denominational messages speak of the importance of keeping God’s law. However, they will note that law keeping is not essential to one’s salvation. The premise is that salvation is by God’s grace and thus law keeping (works) are not essential. Very similar to a grace/faith/works discussion. Let us address what God’s word says about grace and law.

NOTE: This will be a 2 part lesson. Today I want to emphasize what God’s grace is and how the gospel is related to it. In our next lesson, we will tie together God’s grace and keeping His law.

### **I. God’s grace and our salvation**

- a. What is the grace of God? Unmerited favor. Someone who does something for you, even if you do not deserve it or have not earned it.
- b. We ARE saved by grace and therein is our only hope. When we think of this grace it describes God’s part in our salvation. Everything He has done to make salvation possible, both in being saved AND staying saved can be summarized by the word “grace”.
  - i. Ephesians 2:4-9 helps us understand this.
  - ii. Ephesians 1:7 – redemption in Jesus, the forgiveness of sins, through the riches of God’s grace.
  - iii. Titus 2:11 – we are justified freely by His grace
  - iv. Romans 5:1-2 – through faith we have access to the grace of God in which we stand.
  - v. Hebrews 2:9 – it was by the grace of God that Jesus “tasted death for everyone”.

### **II. How do we learn about the grace of God?**

- a. The only way we learn of God’s grace is because He has told us in His word.
- b. Be reminded of 1 Corinthians 2:8-9 notes that we know the things God has prepared for us because He has revealed them to us.
- c. Ephesians 3:1-7 Paul notes that they had heard (been taught) of the dispensation of the grace of God... by revelation. Paul is saying that what he taught was salvation available to ALL (Gentiles included) because of God’s grace. Let us consider the Ephesians for a moment (cf. Ephesians 2:8-9 - since that passage is often used to dismiss doing anything to be saved)
  - i. Ephesians 1:13 notes they heard the word and believed. Vs 9, God had made known the mystery “according to His good pleasure” (i.e., His grace).
  - ii. Acts 20:24 - Paul speaking to the Ephesians elders described his message as the gospel of the grace of God. Acts 20:27 - Paul had declared to them “the whole counsel of God” and commended them to “the word of His grace which is able to build you up (32).
- d. Galatians 1:6 – Paul marveled that they were turning so soon from the grace of Christ to a different gospel. The point being that grace had been proclaimed to them in the TRUE gospel.
- e. Titus 2:11-12 – The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us...

- f. Colossians 1:5-6 speaks of knowing the grace of God in truth which they had heard.
- g. 2 Peter 1:2, *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,*
- h. God's grace and the gospel. One way that we can learn how two things are related is by comparing what is said about each of them. There are some things that God's grace accomplishes, that are also said of the gospel. Let's consider a few of these.
  - i. We are called – 2 Timothy 1:9 – we are called with a holy calling, according to His grace and purpose; 2 Thessalonians 2:14 – we are called by the gospel for obtaining glory
  - ii. We are taught – Titus 2:11-12 – the grace of God which brings salvation has appeared teaching us...; 2 Timothy 3:16-17 – all scripture inspired of God is profitable for teaching...
  - iii. Faith is a product of – Acts 18:27 – Paul helped brethren who had believed through grace; Romans 10:17 – faith comes by hearing the word of God
  - iv. Saves us – Ephesians 2:5, 8 – by grace you have been saved; Romans 1:16 – the gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Ephesians 1:13).
  - v. Granting eternal life (i.e., the hope of our salvation) – Titus 3:7 – justified by His grace, we become heirs of the hope of eternal life; Colossians 1:5 – hope laid up for you in heaven, which you heard in the gospel (cf. 1 John 5:13 – things written that you may know you have eternal life).

### III. Does the grace of God mean we do nothing?

- a. Absolutely not! Some say that if we do anything to be saved, our salvation is by works and not by grace. They might quote Romans 11:6, *And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.* Or some of the above verses. I will get back to Romans 11:6 later in this lesson.
- b. We have many examples of God's grace provoking a response (action). To receive God's gracious gifts they had to act.
  - i. Noah – Genesis 6:8 tells us he found grace in the eyes of the Lord. But through his faith he built an ark and thereby saved himself and his family = Hebrews 11:7. God INTRUCTED him to build that ark and he obeyed – Genesis 6:22.
  - ii. The bronze serpent – recorded in Numbers 21:4-9, after Israel again demonstrated ingratitude in the wilderness fiery serpents that killed when they bit were sent throughout the camp. As people cried out to Moses that they had sinned, God provided a way of deliverance. When bitten make your way to the midst of the camp and look up at a bronze serpent and you will be healed. That healing would be by God's grace! BUT it required faith and action on the part of those bitten. Of interest is that Jesus will actually allude to this in John 3:14-16 in His conversation with Nicodemus. He ties it to our salvation.
  - iii. Jericho – Joshua 6:2 – it was GIVEN to Israel from the LORD. But to receive it they had instructions they were expected to follow.
  - iv. Paul – 1 Timothy 1:12-16 – Paul is thankful to Christ Jesus for his salvation which he described as, *the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant.* Both Acts 9:18 and Acts 22:16 describe what Paul did to obey the gospel.

In summary, why do we know about the grace of God? Because He has told us in His word. And while salvation is ultimately the result of His grace, we need the gospel to tell us HOW we can contact the gifts of His grace. Will you do what is necessary to receive the grace of God? Think about it!