

The Christian Life is Lived By Grace

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[0 : 00] John chapter 1, verse 1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was with God, He was with God in the beginning.

Through Him all things were made. Without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.

The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. There came a man who was sent from God. His name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through Him all men might believe.

He Himself was not the light. He came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

He was in the world. And though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him. He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him.

[1 : 08] Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision, or a husband's will, but born of God.

The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John testifies concerning Him. He cries out, saying, This was He of whom I said, He who comes after me has surpassed me because He was before me.

From the fullness of His grace, we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Christ, no one has ever seen God, but God, the one and only, who is at the Father's side, has made Him known. We recently had to replace an old van with a newer SUV, and I've noticed that it doesn't hold as much gas as the old van did, which simply means that I'm making more trips to the gas station as I hit the empty quicker and need to stop and fill up more often.

[2 : 37] How far can you go in the Christian life before you need to stop and fill up? Not far at all.

It's, in fact, much shorter than you may realize because God has so designed us that we are in continual need of Him.

He made it this way on purpose that forces us to live in dependence upon Him at all times. I need thee.

Oh, I need thee. Every hour, I need thee. But that's not soon enough. Just every hour. I need Him for the next breath.

I can't go far on the last one. And if He doesn't give me the next one, then I won't be living anymore. And what's true physically is also true spiritually.

[3 : 36] We're just that dependent upon the Lord. We don't have a spiritual gas tank, a grace tank, to fill up and then live on it for the next week.

There's no storage of grace. There's no shelf life of grace. It's spent as fast as it's given. It's like we need a solar panel to run our car, but without a battery that stores up the energy so it's constantly receiving the rays from the sun in order to moment by moment power the car.

Even so, believers, we live in a state of constant need of new mercies, fresh supplies of grace.

That means I can't go far at all without needing new grace. Yesterday's manna sustained me then, but I need new manna today. This morning's devotions are not enough to meet this afternoon's temptations.

I need moment by moment grace. So our needed supply of grace is not only great, it's constant. It's 24-7.

[4 : 52] It's without let-up. I need fresh grace. Now we're studying the topic of God's grace, His favor for the undeserving.

Last week we saw that the Apostle Paul refers to the Gospel as the Gospel of the grace of God. that the Gospel is the good news about God's grace, that He's gracious.

Grace is God's riches at Christ's expense. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor so that you through His poverty might become rich. We saw how rich we are because of how poor He became. Now today we find that John starts his Gospel by telling us of one who is full of grace and from whose fullness all we who believe have received grace upon grace.

Who is this one so full of grace? We're not left to guess, are we? He begins in verses 1 and 2, who in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.

[6 : 09] The same was in the beginning with God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us and we beheld His glory, the glory of the one and only who came from the Father full of grace and truth.

And verse 16, from that fullness have all we received grace upon grace.

So it's clear who we're speaking of. It's the eternal Son of God who was with God in the beginning. When the world began, He already was there with God creating.

And without Him was not anything made that was made. He was with God and yet He was God. He is God. He who became, this is the one who became a real human being.

He became flesh. That means like us, flesh and bone, flesh and blood. He became a real human being and He lived where we live.

[7 : 16] He was in the world, we're told. The very world that was made by Him and yet the world did not know Him. The world ignored Him.

The world dismissed Him as the greatest irrelevance in life. Some things are important to people. Not Jesus. He was in the world but the world didn't recognize Him, didn't know Him, didn't want to know Him, was content to live without Him.

Oh, but then He came to His own people. not just to His own world, He came to His own people, the offspring of Abraham, the Hebrews, who had all the prophecies that told about His coming and still His own received Him not.

They despised and rejected Him. So the world didn't know Him and His own didn't receive Him. Ah, but there were some glad exceptions.

Some exceptions of grace. Those who did receive Him as their Lord and Savior and believed in His name and trusting themselves into His hands to save them from their sins.

[8 : 33] These are the ones who have received from Him from His fullness of grace, grace upon grace. this God-man who is full of grace is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 17 makes it clear. The law was given through Moses. That means it was delivered through Moses on tablets of stone, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Moses received the law and through Moses that law was sent into the world. But Jesus brings it. You see, grace and truth comes in a person.

He is grace and truth embodied. And it's Him who is full of grace and from His fullness we receive grace upon grace.

Now that's good news for us who need grace all the time every day. That there is one who is full of grace and from Him we receive. The truth that we want to see this morning and get a hold of is this.

[9 : 49] That the whole of the Christian life is one of receiving grace from Jesus Christ. The whole of the Christian life is just constantly to be receiving grace from the fullness in Jesus.

Now the text says that He's full of grace. We could speak of truth but it's a series on grace so we're limiting it to the grace and that is highlighted for us here. He's full of grace.

Well, just how full of grace is He? For your encouragement He is full with a divine fullness.

Colossians 1 19 God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him.

Colossians 2 9 In Him in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form. So how full is Jesus of grace?

Oh, there is in Jesus a God-sized fullness of grace. That means it's infinite. That means it's an exhaustless supply of grace. Now when you and I give something we become poor.

[10 : 59] We don't have as much to give. not so with Him. He is an infinite fountain of grace. And believers it's from this fullness that we have received.

Now E.W. Pink asked the question well what have we received from Christ? He asked another question ah what have we not received? Is that not the better question?

As Paul himself says what do you have that you've not received? Well, we're told what we've received verse 16 from His divine fullness we have received grace upon grace.

Grace upon grace. God's free favor upon God's free favor flowing one after another. So you're standing there on the shore and there's the ocean and a wave splashes at your feet.

and no sooner does it splash at your feet than there's another one coming right behind it and another after it and you could stand there forever and those waves just keep coming to you.

[12 : 08] That's the fullness of grace in Jesus. It is grace upon grace upon grace upon grace. grace upon grace a continuous uninterrupted supply of grace and every bit of it needed by us.

His fullness for our constant neediness. You see how this Savior full of grace perfectly suits our need for grace.

He giveth and giveth and giveth again. Now this is John's heaven drawn picture then of the Christian life. The whole Christian life is one of ever receiving grace from Christ's fullness.

The Christian life starts with grace and it ends with grace and every step between is one of receiving grace. And that's why the Reformation truth, one of the Reformation truths was sola gratia by grace alone because the whole Christian life is just that, grace upon grace.

Now let's consider some of the waves of grace that you have received and I say some because again it's an infinite ocean. But what was the first wave of grace that you received from this divine fullness of grace?

[13 : 36] Well you were chosen in Christ before the creation of the world Ephesians 1 4 says. Chosen to be holy, chosen to be saved.

2 Thess 2.13 Now why did God choose us? Well the answer is grace. Romans 11 5 and 6 at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.

And if by grace then it's no longer by works because if it were works then grace would no longer be grace. You see grace by very definition rules out any works of ours.

If you would like to think that you were chosen because of something in you then it wouldn't be by grace. And that's what Paul is saying. No we were there is an elect people chosen by grace.

Unworthy. Nothing found in them to commend themselves to God that he would choose us. and yet he chose us in Christ. Election is unconditional.

[14 : 44] It's not conditioned on anything that God saw or foresaw in us. Oh he's going to trust in Jesus so I'll choose him. No that would be by works. Something found in us.

Election is by grace. Undeserved. Rather those who are his enemies were chosen to be his own.

2 Timothy 1 9 and 10 God who has saved us and called us to a holy life not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.

This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time. But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus who has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

I say this was the first wave of grace to crash upon your shore. Grace was given us in him before the world began. Grace of being chosen marked out as those who are to be saved in Jesus Christ.

[15 : 56] It was a gracious choice. And this grace that was given us in Christ before the beginning of time has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus.

And that simply matches what John told us in John 1.17 that grace and truth came in Jesus Christ. Here Paul tells us that this grace has now been revealed through the appearing of Christ.

So grace can't be separated from the person of Christ. Grace came in Jesus Christ. So that's the first wave chosen in him before the beginning of time.

It was a gracious choice. And then the second wave that crashed upon us was the accomplishment of that salvation in time by the Lord Jesus.

2,000 years ago the word was made flesh and dwelt among us. He appeared here on earth to save us by his perfect life and atoning death.

[17 : 13] We didn't deserve for God to give up his own beloved son for us. We were rebels. We didn't like him. We deserved hell. But he didn't treat us as our sins deserve but instead he treated his own son as our sins deserve and he treats us as he deserves.

That's grace. Christ was damned so that we might be forgiven and have eternal life. He was impoverished that we might be enriched.

That's grace. Hebrews 2:9 tells us that Jesus became a man so that he might die. God cannot die. Jesus became a man. The word was made flesh that he might die for us. Listen how Hebrews 2:9 speaks of it. He became a man so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. By the grace of God he tasted death for us. Now sometimes that might give us the wrong idea. If you think by tasting death for us that he just took a little taste and spit it out.

[18:29] Sometimes we might think of the difference between tasting and eating and so we think well somebody eats something and swallows it that's one thing but if they just taste it then they really didn't get the full thing.

That's not what it's saying. It's not saying that Jesus just had a little taste of death. No. To taste death means he experienced death. He went through it all the way through it.

If I ask you what's the flavor of strawberry and you try to explain it to me what do I know about the flavor of strawberry?

Not a lot but if you give me a strawberry and I taste it well now I know. I've experienced it. And that's what Jesus did. He didn't just talk about it.

He didn't just watch our experience. He himself tasted. He experienced death for us and it was by the grace of God that he experienced it. Anybody here deserve to have Jesus die instead of you?

[19:33] No. It's grace. It's unmerited favor. And what a wave of grace that just pounded upon our shore when Jesus went to the cross and by grace tasted death for us.

That was our salvation accomplished. We saw the election to be saved. Then Jesus coming 2,000 years ago and accomplishing that salvation by his perfect life and death.

We come now to the application of that salvation in our own lifetime. Your lifetime and mine dear believers. And this too is all of grace. What's the first application of grace to us that I want to highlight?

It's effectual calling. It's God's work in our hearts in converting us. That time when you came from darkness to light.

From death to life. We looked at it in the morning Sunday school. That conversion experience. We saw it this morning. The Bible teaches that the gospel found us in a state of inability.

[20:46] When the gospel came to us, we were unable to repent. We were unable to believe on Christ or to do anything to prepare ourselves for salvation.

We were so in love with our sin that we would never in a billion years repent and believe and receive Jesus Christ. You see, Jesus says, whoever comes to me, I will in no wise cast out.

But Jesus knows that there's a problem with people. Who will come to Christ? Well, listen to what he says, John 6, 44.

No one can come to me unless the Father draws him. Man is so lost, so dead in sin, so unable to do anything toward his salvation that he will never be saved unless the Father first does something. He must draw him. It's the same word used of what the apostles did in pulling the nets into the boat. They drew the nets in.

[21:54] And the Father must exert a power that is stronger than our love for sin and self, stronger than our hatred for his law and him and his authority. He must have a more powerful pull than the pull of our sin if ever anyone is to be saved.

2 Timothy 1, 9, he saved us and called us. That's what I'm talking about, that effectual call that brought us to Christ. It's a grace, a grace that was given us.

I didn't deserve to be effectually brought to Jesus Christ. I didn't deserve to have the Father lay hold of my heart and pull me into the boat of salvation, to pull me to Jesus, to get into the ark of Christ.

Why was I made to hear thy voice and enter while there's room, when thousands make a wretched choice and rather starve than come? It was because there was an irresistible grace that sweetly drew us in, else we had still refused to taste and perished in our sin.

It was because he made us willing in the day of his power that we came or we would have still refused to taste, refused to come to Christ for life. That's grace.

[23:22] We were born with Christ rejecting hearts. And what do Christ rejecting hearts do? They reject Christ. That's the nature of the heart.

In fact, that's what makes coming to Christ impossible. Jesus says it's easier to get a camel to go through the eye of a needle than that anyone should be saved.

But what is impossible with men is possible with God because he does effectually draw, he does have an irresistible grace to overcome all of man's resistance.

He gives new hearts to desire Christ. He gives new eyes to see beauty in him. He gives repentance. You needed repentance. Without repentance, you'll never see the Lord. Where do I get that? God has exalted Christ to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance. The fullness of grace in Jesus giving repentance, enabling us to turn and repudiate our sin and to embrace Jesus.

[24 : 38] We refuse to turn. We will not turn. And what does he do? He gives us the grace to turn. He makes us willing in the day of his power. We needed faith.

We needed faith in Jesus. We're only saved through faith, but we had no faith. We believed in ourselves, but not in him. Ephesians 2, 8, 9 says we're saved by grace through faith, but the faith itself is a gracious gift of God.

So there's absolutely nothing for us to boast of in our salvation. What do you have that you've not received? The very faith with which you cast your soul on Christ was a gracious gift from Jesus. Paul says in Romans 4 and verse 16, therefore the promise, that is of eternal life, comes by faith so that it might be by grace.

Faith and grace go together. If salvation is by faith, then it's by grace, he's saying. Because what is faith? Faith is nothing of your own work to brag about.

[25 : 50] It's the empty hands held out to receive Jesus. Nothing in my hands I bring. That's faith. Lord Jesus, I receive you. And Christ gives himself to us.

The greatest tidal wave of all, the tsunami of grace. He gives himself to us, an eternal life in him. Faith is just the empty hands of faith that receives him.

Have you ever heard a beggar boasting about his emptiness? His bankruptcy? Is that something to brag about? So, no, the only thing a beggar who is enriched brags about is his benefactor, the one that gave him everything.

He'll boast about him, but he doesn't boast. Do you see how holy these clothes were I was wearing? Did you see how dirty and empty and bankrupt I was? You see these big hands that I held?

No. It's all about the benefactor. And that's why if anyone is saved by faith through by grace through faith, there's nothing to boast about.

[26 : 59] Faith is a receiving grace, not a meriting grace. Faith doesn't merit anything. Faith doesn't earn anything. Faith is just a receiving grace by which we receive Christ and eternal life in him.

You say, but I believed. I received Christ. Yes, but why? John tells us because you were born of God. That's why you received him. You had a new birth.

You had a new heart given you because remember you're born with a Christ rejecting heart and Christ rejecting hearts will always reject Christ until the spirit of God comes and makes that heart good soil to receive the gospel and to come and embrace Christ.

It's all grace. It's grace given. Grace upon grace. So that Acts 18 and verse 27 says, when Apollos arrived in Corinth, he was a great help to those who by grace believed.

I love the historian Luke in the book of Acts because he doesn't just tell us what happened, he tells us why it happened. That Apollos, when he came to Corinth, he was a great help to the believers.

[28 : 14] believers. But he doesn't say that, does he? He was a great help to those who by grace had believed. Again, just reminding us, have you believed?

It was only by grace that you believed. For as many as were ordained to eternal life believed, Acts 13 48. As many as were ordained to eternal life, as many as God chose by grace before the creation of the world, as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

It's not the opposite. As many as believed were ordained to eternal life. No, no. As many were ordained to eternal life. They're the ones that believed. Why?

Because those are the ones that God's spirit gave grace to. Grace to believe. Grace to repent. Grace to receive Christ.

That's why when Lydia was saved, we're told that the Lord opened her heart that she might respond to Paul's message. Something had to happen to her heart which was like a walled-up castle.

[29 : 22] If ever she's to receive Christ, her heart had to be opened. That's what the Lord did for her. That's grace. That's why she believed the gospel.

And brother and sister, that's why you believe. It was by grace that you believed. so Paul, where'd you get your grace from? Where'd you get your faith from?

Where'd you get your love from? The grace of our Lord Jesus was poured out on me abundantly along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Faith was poured out on me. That was grace. Well, what happens after we believe in Christ? What's the next volley of waves of grace that we receive?

Well, we receive justification. How does any ungodly person like you and me have the almighty judge of heaven who knows everything about us bring the gavel down and say, righteous.

[30 : 24] I declare that man, woman, boy, or girl is righteous in my sight. How does that happen? That we're justified? Paul tells us, Titus 3, 7, having been justified by his grace.

We might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. We were justified by grace. And then we were adopted into God's family next, weren't we? As justified in Christ, we were now adopted into the family of God.

And Ephesians 1, 5, and 6 tells us this too is grace. For he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will to the praise of his glorious grace.

So why are you a child of God? Well, it's all to the praise of his glorious grace that he adopted me. Didn't see anything in me that I'd like to have him for my son.

No, it was grace to the praise of his grace, not to any worthiness in me. And then there's sanctification that began. There's an initial sanctification that happens when we're first converted and we're set free from our bondage to sin.

[31 : 40] The reign of sin is broken. We were slaves of sin, willing slaves of sin, dupes of Satan, doing his will. And God began that work of sanctification by breaking the bondage to sin.

We don't have to sin anymore. He has set us free. We've died with Christ to sin's reign. But then there's the ongoing progressive sanctification. That too is grace.

How is it that you become more and more holy in your Christian life? How do you make a millimeter of advancement in holiness in the Christian life?

Well, God is at work in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure, Philippians 2.13. That's how you advance. Because God's at work in you.

That's grace. He's at work in you giving you the desire, the will to please God, to follow your new master, to repudiate the old master.

[32 : 49] And then he's working in you, enabling you to obey and to follow through with the willingness. You have no willingness or ability except what God works in you.

You know that, Christian? You never did one thing willingly for Christ that he did not first work in you. That's grace. That's grace.

And so the whole of the Christian life is just working out what God has worked in. God done. You have no good fruit in your life except that which is produced by the sap of grace received from your fruitful vine, Jesus, as you are united to him, abiding in him.

What happens? His sap of grace flows into you and produces the fruit of Christian character, the graces of the Christian life.

But apart from him, even as believers, we can do nothing. We're dependent. We're that much dependent. Just as the branch is dependent for the continual supply of sap from the vine, we're constantly dependent upon grace.

[33 : 59] And that's what we have in the fullness of grace in Jesus Christ. Grace upon grace. So if God has anything good to say to us, it's grace.

If God has ever done anything good to us, it is grace. And if we have ever done anything good for God, it is no less grace.

There's a story in 1 Chronicles 29 where David is giving thanks to the Lord for the willing gifts of the people of their possessions and their gold and silver, to go into the building of the temple.

And it's a wonderful prayer. And basically what he says, everything comes from you and we have given you only that which comes from your hand.

So David is praising the Lord for the willingness to give that he noticed in the people. Why doesn't he just praise the people? Why is he praising God for their willingness?

[35 : 09] because it's God who is at work in his people to will, to want to do what's right. And David says, and besides, we've given you nothing but what you first gave us.

Do you know that's true of you? Not just of what you give monetarily to God in your worship. You didn't put one penny into the offering box out there but that he first gave it to you.

and what's true of our monies is true of everything we give to God in worship. We give thee but thine own.

You came and you gave heartfelt praise to God this morning in singing. Where'd you get that praising heart? Who was it that turned your heart off of yourself and off of your problems long enough to focus on God and to bless him for being your king?

That cares for you with such good intentions as he does. You got that from God. And so you see the whole of the Christian life, the whole of sanctification is grace.

[36 : 20] God working in us and we working out what he works in. And last we come to perseverance. Perseverance is by grace. Christian why are you still in the way?

Some of you have been saved in the last year or two and you're still here. You're still plotting. Some of you have been saved 40, 50 years and you're still here. Why is that? Well, because I'm just determined to make it all the way to the end.

Where did you get that determination? Why have you survived and come through the many temptations in this world? You live in a world that is ever alluring you.

It's pressuring you. It's pulling you and pushing you to be conformed to it. To turn your back on Christ and just to plunge in with the world and its desires.

And you live in a world with a busy devil who wants you damned and wants to take you away from Jesus Christ. And he has deceived you. And he has knocked you to the ground.

[37 : 24] Yet here you are. You're still here. You're still persevering. How so? Why are you still on the narrow road that leads to life?

Because his grip of grace is not about to let you go. His preserving grace is enabling you to persevere. He's still working in you as he promised to do.

And so when you fall, he renews your faith and repentance and you go on. You get up and go on. Simon, Simon, Satan has desired to sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you, Jesus told him, that your faith will not fail.

And when you are recovered, not if, but when you are recovered, strengthen your brothers. How can Jesus be so certain that when Peter denies that he even knows him, that he's going to recover? Because Jesus prays for him. And there is grace in Jesus' prayers to recover the fallen sinner, the fallen Christian. why is there, after your fall, a repentance and a fresh faith in Jesus?

[38 : 37] It's because of the grace of God at work in your heart. In 1 Corinthians 1, the first chapter, Paul writes to the church that's in that immoral city of Corinth.

It's just a, it's one of the wonders of the world that there's a church of God in Corinth. And that they persevere in holiness in such an unholy environment.

And so Paul says in verse 4, I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. But why are you thanking God for what you see?

Because he is giving grace in Christ Jesus to these people. He will keep you strong to the end so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus.

God who has called you into fellowship with his son Jesus Christ our Lord is faithful. It's his grace that keeps you strong to the end.

[39 : 37] So he can write in his second letter to these same people chapter 1, 21, and 22. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ.

He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, put his spirit in our hearts as a deposit guaranteeing what is to come. Heaven is sure.

It's a guaranteed thing. Why? Not because of your determination but because of his determination to get you all the way home to heaven. His ongoing work at making you stand firm in Christ.

Blessed be God for his grace. Remember Christian making the journey to the celestial city and all the temptations. Well he stops at Interpreter's house to learn some important lessons for along the way.

And he comes into one room and there's a fire burning against the wall. And there's someone throwing buckets of water on the fire trying to extinguish it.

[40 : 40] And yet the fire is not extinguished but burns brighter and hotter. Why is this? Interpreter says this fire is the work of grace that is wrought in the heart.

The devil does all he can to extinguish this work of grace. Now to see why the work of grace never went out Christian was taken around behind the wall and there he saw a man secretly yet continually pouring in oil.

This interpreter said is Christ who continually with the oil of his grace maintains the work already begun in the heart.

Why have you made it this far? Why will you make it to the end? Because of the grace that is in Jesus Christ that you are receiving grace upon grace. One dose after another.

That's why you're still in the way that leads to life. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. So we've seen the Christian is receiving, receiving, receiving grace from this fullness in Jesus.

[41 : 57] The first step and every step thereafter and yes for the last step. The last step of the Christian life will land you into an eternal ocean of grace with wave upon wave breaking at your feet bringing you one blessing of grace after another.

First Peter 1 3 says, set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. Now what's going to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed?

Well you're going to get a new body. A perfect body. And you're going to see him as he is and you're going to be made like him. And you're going to enter into a new heavens and a new earth. the home of righteousness and you're going to have a reunion with all the righteous ones that have gone before you forever and ever without break. You will dwell in the joy of the Lord in his presence. That's what's coming for the Christian and Peter labels all that we hope to receive in that day as grace. The grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.

[43 : 11] You see even then God's not done giving grace. It's like he's just getting warmed up. When we've been there ten thousand years bright shining as the sun we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun and we'll have new reasons to sing his praise because we will ever be receiving grace upon grace from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ. All that we hope to receive is grace. All the rewards are rewards of grace. Unmerited, undeserved.

And so it is grace upon grace from the fullness in Jesus. Now why is this? Let me just say there was a godly minister who was on his deathbed and one of his fellow elders came to him as he was nearing the end and says, Pastor, you've had a faithful ministry here for many, many years.

You are now going on to receive your reward. And he immediately said, No, I am going to receive mercy. Everything that I receive will be mercy, will be grace.

Yes, there are rewards, but they are rewards of grace. And so it's receiving forever and ever more and more grace. Now, that's the fullness of grace in Jesus.

[44 : 39] Why is he so full of grace? Because you need grace. You need grace to make it through this life. You need grace to be saved. You need grace to persevere just as we've seen.

And you need it to draw on it over and over moment by moment. So what are you facing? Paul had a thorn in the flesh, something that was sent by Satan to torment him.

Maybe you've got some nagging problem in your life that does torment you. Lord, how long must I wake up every day to the same problem?

And the Lord Jesus said to Paul what he would say to every one of you, my grace is sufficient for you. My grace is sufficient.

It's enough for you. He didn't choose to heal Paul. He says I've got a better plan. I'm going to sustain you under that trial. And Paul learned to thank God for his grace that in weakness God's power might rest upon him.

[45 : 44] Christ's power might rest on him. Grace is power resting upon the child who is tempted. Sufficient grace. My grace is sufficient. It's abounding grace.

God is able to make all grace abound to you so that in all things, at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. You see, that includes every situation you could ever be in.

You won't just eat by, you will abound in grace. There's always more grace to be had because as James 4, 6 says, he gives more grace.

More grace than what? More grace than the flesh inside of you yearns after that which God has forbidden. There's more grace given by God. More grace than the temptations that come from without.

There's more grace to be found in Jesus Christ and he gives more grace. Do you want more grace? He gives grace to the humble.

[46 : 48] He resists the proud, James says, but he gives grace to the humble. So own it. Own your need of grace. Do you need to be forgiven? Paul says, where sin abounded, grace super abounds.

Can I come again and confess my sin? Sin abounds, grace super abounds. As Sinclair Ferguson says, Jesus is more full of grace than you could ever be of sin.

Go to him. Abounding grace. Grace that is greater than all my sins. Do you need grace to mortify sin, to grow in holiness, grace to be revived?

Do you need to be guided in this life, a decision, perseverance? There's grace in Jesus for that too. Then ask and you will receive. For everyone who asks, receives.

That's Jesus' own promise. He was full of grace. Just says, ask and you will receive. Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.

[47 : 52] You know there is a throne of grace? Where Jesus, the King of grace, reigns? You know what he's dispensing from that throne?

Mercy and grace to help us in our time of need. Why wouldn't we run to him who is so full of grace? He delights to give it. He just loves to give grace.

He's that gracious. He's that full of grace. Just wanting to dump more and more. And he just says, come, come, own what you are, come with your empty buckets.

Bring your empty buckets to this infinite fountain. Fear not that thy need shall exceed his provision. Our God ever yearns his resources to share.

For out of his infinite riches in Jesus, he giveth and giveth and giveth again. That's your Lord. That's your Savior. And that should not only make us a prayerful people, it should make us a grateful people.

[48 : 55] When I think of what I deserve and what I receive from him, out of the overflowing with thanksgiving, because what I deserve is hell, and anything less than hell is grace.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord. Thank you. And so you're swimming in mercies. You're in the ocean of grace. Will today's grace find in you a thankfulness and praise for grace received?

We ought to be a grateful people and we ought to be a gracious people. The fact that we are living moment by moment upon God's undeserved grace and favor toward us ought to make us the most gracious people on the planet to other people around us.

not giving them what they deserve, but giving them what we have received, grace. You know, this is the only time you can glorify God that way.

There's none of this business to be done for God later. It's only in this world where people mistreat you that you have the opportunity to magnify the grace of God that you have received by showing the same grace to others.

[50 : 12] grace. Yes, this grace, this fullness of grace in Jesus ought to make us prayerful, grateful, gracious, and it ought to make us obedient lovers of Jesus.

Oh, to grace, how great a debtor, daily I'm constrained to be. Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.

Do you sense that? That you go into debt to God's grace every day, every moment. Now let that grace, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.

That's the dynamics of Romans 12, 1, and 2. In light of all God's mercies, all God's grace received, let us then present ourselves as a living sacrifice to him.

Let's do that together. We thank you, Father, for your son, that you are pleased to have all the fullness of the Godhead to dwell in him.

[51 : 22] And that means that his supply of grace is infinite, and that we who are his people have received grace upon grace. Thank you for not treating us as our sins deserve.

thank you that everywhere upon, at every point from our election in eternity past to eternity future, when we'll still be receiving, you will deal with us in grace, grace in our Lord Jesus.

And so do make us prayerful. Make us to be found at the throne of grace, seeking help for ourselves and for others. make us to be more joyful, more full of gladness in this gracious Savior that is ours, moment by moment, to draw upon and make us to be of the same stamp, men of grace, women of grace, young people of grace towards others.

And then let this grace just seal our hearts as we offer them up to you now again, in Jesus' name, amen.