

## The Whole Church #24 – Grace #5

AT Snacks-- August 4, 2024

Andy Taylor/Trinity Fellowship- Sayre, Oklahoma

### Monday:

The experts say that one of the factors that determines a long, healthy, fruitful and good life is personal relationships with one another. So be aware that the enemy tries to get between you and the people that you're in relationship with. So heads up, you're going to get your relationships tested, and remember, it's not the leadership's responsibility to settle your differences, it's your responsibility.

When you make the relationship more important than the problem, the payoff is that God not only restores your relationship, but He makes it better and stronger than it was before.

The standard definition of grace that has stood the test of time is: The unmerited, unearned favor of God. God has given you grace that passes understanding. That's why it's so hard to define.

I don't know if we will ever fully understand grace until we're face to face in the next life. But in the meantime, you can't even start to understand grace unless you're experiencing it.

2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "*For He, God, the Father, made Him (Jesus), Who know no sin, to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ*". That's a divine swap.

All previous sins, all sins now, and all future sins, He took all those on Himself when He went to the cross. He took what we had coming, and, in turn, we got the same relationship that Jesus has with the Father. You have been sanctified, you have been justified and you have been washed. It's already happened in you.

When you become aware, and you get the revelation of what's already been done for you, it just makes sense, so start to act like it. Paul said, "*Walk out your salvation with fear and trembling*".

### Tuesday:

Something happened in us when we said "yes" to Jesus. It manifests as you walk with the Lord in relationship with Him. But it's up to us to embrace that truth, walk in it, and enjoy the process, as we're being conformed into His image.

When you start to talk grace, you find yourself in situations where you need to exercise grace. When you talk about grace and teach about grace, God allows you to be in situations where the grace that we're talking about gets tested. He tests it to see if your behavior, conduct and attitude reflect grace, and not just something that we talk about.

Some of these tests are really intense and tough, but the good thing is that God is always there, by and through His Spirit, to help you navigate that, so you don't have to do it yourself. **You can do it, but will you do it?**

There is a real controversy out there in the body of Christ over grace, and some accusations are

pointed at people of grace, grace churches and grace preachers. Some say that we go too far with grace.

If you want to make people mad, preach the law. If you want to make them furious, preach grace.

There are some valid arguments out there, and it's really, really important for you, as grace people, to look at what these arguments and accusations, and make sure that we don't fall in error on the other side of grace, being presumptive about grace and getting lax about things in your life that you shouldn't be lax and lazy about.

### Wednesday:

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in his book, "The Cost of Discipleship" (1937) brought out several concerns about grace taken in vain, or people going into the ditch in grace. These are the concerns that were brought up that we should take a look at:

- **Lack of Transformation:** Cheap grace implies receiving God's forgiveness without a corresponding transformation in your life. It implies accepting grace without repentance, a change of behavior or commitment to living according to Christian values.
  - You are getting ready to grow a bunch more as you understand grace. Most of us may not be enjoying life to the fullest. But if you pay attention, if you'll put your hand to the plow, if you'll investigate grace, it's going to help you enjoy your life so you can be free, as Jesus died for you to be.
- **Absence of Discipleship:** True grace involves discipleship and a willingness to follow Jesus, even at great personal cost. Cheap grace suggests a form of faith that doesn't require the difficult and often sacrificial journey.
  - The Lord requires difficult and often sacrificial things that you have to encounter in your life. God wants to show you that your faith is not some little, flimsy, positive mental attitude, but your faith is the same kind of faith that God used when He spoke the world into being. But no one can activate your faith but you.
- **Complacency:** Some people believe that viewing grace as cheap leads to complacency, where believers might feel free to sin without concern for the consequences, and relying on grace as a safety net, rather than striving to live a holy and righteous life.

### Thursday:

- **Devaluation (minimizing) of Christ's Sacrifice:** By treating grace as something easily obtained and requiring nothing in return, detractors argue that it devalues the significance of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.
  - If you are walking with the Lord and going through some trials in life, you're experiencing grace. Not just a little, not just enough but abundant grace, more than you need. That gives you a picture of Who the Father is.
  - When you start to understand grace, you're going to spend a lot of your time in

the place of gratitude toward God and the more you're going to love Him.

- Grace has to be experienced to be understood. He loves us and requires nothing in return.
- What are you going to do to demonstrate your love to Him? As you communicate, listen, and let your requests be made known to God and your prayer time and the time of just listening in and basking in the presence of God with no agenda, you experience the love and the grace of God, and it has a transforming effect to it.
- **Hyper Grace:** Sometimes, to the exclusion of teachings about sin, repentance, and the need for moral and ethical living, some people take grace lightly, in vain, and they get lax in their life. The accusers also say that we are too soft on sin. That we don't come to church to talk about sin. We come to talk about the goodness of God; but **an accurate understanding of grace always leads to less sin, never more.**
  - Hyper grace often suggests that once a person has accepted Christ, there's no further need for ongoing repentance or confession of sins. **WE DON'T PROMOTE THAT!**
- **Overemphasis on Grace:** Proponents of hyper-grace focus heavily on God's grace and forgiveness, sometimes to the exclusion of teachings about sin, repentance and the need for moral and ethical living.
- **Minimization of Sin:** Critics argue that hyper-grace teachings can downplay the seriousness of sin and its consequences. The perspective may lead believers to think that sin is not a significant issue, because God's grace covers all sins, past, present, and future.
- **Lack of Emphasis on Repentance:** Hyper-grace teachings often suggest that once a person has accepted Christ, there is no further need for ongoing repentance or confession of sins. This can be seen as contrary to traditional Christian teaching, which holds that repentance is a continuous and necessary part of the Christian life.
- **Security in Salvation:** Hyper-grace proponents typically emphasize the assurance of salvation to a degree that suggests believers have no need to worry about their standing with God, regardless of their behavior. While assurance of salvation is a biblical concept, critics believe hyper-grace takes it to an extreme that encourages complacency.

### **Friday:**

Are you forgiven? When you really, really look at grace, you start to understand that forgiveness has already been bought. I don't ask for forgiveness for my sins, because I've already been forgiven. So when you receive that forgiveness, I don't believe that you have to ask for forgiveness for every sin.

You will live differently in your life if you believe that you're forgiven.

In one of John's letters, he wrote, "*Little children, these things I write to you, that you may know, that you have eternal life*". That's not about wondering if you're going to make it to heaven or

not. COME ON! Is the grace of God not bigger than that?

If you still are asking for forgiveness for your sins, keep on, it's no problem to me. But, don't take one scripture and build a whole case on that alone.

Being under grace doesn't mean that you go out and sin and it's okay. Paul said, "*all things are lawful, but not all things are productive*". There are consequences when you sin.

Anybody preaching a mixture of law and grace isn't preaching grace at all.

It's important, especially during this time, to be a person of the Word.

I was a recipient of some huge, big time, plum-off-the-charts grace, when God rescued me in my life. I'm a grace person because of that. So when I'm talking up here about grace, it's really important that you check out what I say, because you're going to become a hard core person of grace.

### **Saturday:**

The more you understand grace through experience, the more righteous your conduct and behavior will be.

You should be mature. We are not messing around. I'm not trying to give you some little message that will make you feel better for a few hours, and then you'll get over it. I'm trying to equip you for the season that we are in.

You are probably going to get tested in some areas where you have to show grace. You're going to be in some situations where you receive and you learn more about grace, and you know a lot more about it, because you are experiencing a deeper revelation of it.

Presumptive grace is skating around the edges of true righteous conduct. It's unhealthy to be lax in your moral thought, in your speech, or in your actions. "*For you, brethren, have been called to liberty. But don't use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh*". You don't want to cause your brother to stumble.

The people are criticizing people like you about grace because they're arguing that God is not as good as we say He is.

Are you satisfied with your spiritual life? Is your spiritual life where you want it to be? If your answer is no, why? So what do you need to do to change it, to make your spiritual life where it needs to be? Because, remember, your whole life is only going to go as well as your spiritual life is going. It all comes down to this. WILL YOU DO IT?

The hard part about understanding grace is breaking out of the Bible Belt mentality about it. That's one of the hardest things to do.

