

Lesson #9

## **Enjoying Grace**

*And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you...*

***2 Corinthians 12:9***

- I. What is Grace?**
- II. Grace is Nothing Outward**
- III. Grace is God Working Himself into Us**

## Enjoying Grace

The grace of God was not as fully revealed in the Old Testament as it is in the New Testament, because grace actually came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17). After Christ came, there is a full and thorough revelation of grace, and in the New Testament the word grace is used again and again. The New Testament even closes with the mention of grace: "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen" (Rev. 22:21). The Bible begins in the Old Testament with the word, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and it ends in the New Testament with the word, "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints."

### WHAT IS GRACE?

In the biblical and experiential sense, grace means enjoyment. Grace is the enjoyment in our Christian life. ...God wants to bring us into the enjoyment of grace, but there is a frustration to this grace—the self. We ourselves are the frustration. Although Christ has come and grace has come with Him, and although we have been brought into the grace in which we stand, the greatest frustration to this grace is you and I...

God has come to be enjoyed by His called ones. But if we would have this enjoyment, the self must go. Once the self has gone, ...grace comes. It is not easy to lose the self. In order for the self to go, we must suffer loss. Are you willing to lose yourself? I do not believe that anyone is willing to lose himself. Nevertheless, we must lose ourselves before grace can come. To lose the self is to lose our face. When we keep our face we lose grace. If we want to receive grace, we must lose our face. This is the principle. With us, the self must go and then grace will come.

When God called Abraham, He did not say, "Abraham, you must lose yourself and then I will come in to be your grace and enjoyment." No, when God called him, He promised to bless him. The blessing in the Old Testament somewhat equals the grace in the New Testament. What is the difference between blessing and grace? When God gives us something free, that is a blessing. But when this blessing is wrought into our being, it becomes grace. God promised Abraham that He would bless him. When the blessing was wrought into Abraham, it became grace. Abraham's self and natural man were the strongest frustration to God's blessing and forced God to deal with him.

The same is true in our experience. We all have been called, and God has given us the blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3). However, after being called, we are still in ourselves and exercise our self-effort to obtain God's blessing. When I was young, I realized that my flesh was not good. When I was told that the flesh had been crucified on the cross, I was very happy. Then I began to exercise my own effort to put the flesh on the cross. But in exercising my own effort, I frustrated God's grace. The crossing out of the flesh had already been accomplished; it did not need the exercise of my effort. Yet I, the self, was trying to put my flesh on the cross. That self was the greatest frustration to God's grace. It separated me from grace. If we consider our past experience, we shall see that after hearing the good news, we tried many times by ourselves to obtain the things we heard in the good news. Our self-effort has been a frustration to God's grace. Because of this, God has been forced to deal with us.

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### Verses

#### **John 1:17**

*For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.*

#### **Revelation 22:21**

*The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.*

#### **Ephesians 1:3**

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,*

#### **1 Corinthians 15:10**

*But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.*

#### **Galatians 2:20**

*I am crucified with Christ; and [it is] no longer I [who] live, but [it is] Christ [who] lives in me; and the [life] which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the [faith] of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.*

#### **Romans 4:17**

*(As it is written, "I have appointed you a father of many nations") in the sight of God whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls the things not being as being.*

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## GRACE IS NOTHING OUTWARD

The matter of grace has been hidden, concealed, and veiled throughout the years. What is grace? Grace is something of God which is wrought into our being and which works in us and does things for us. It is nothing outward. Grace is God in Christ wrought into our being to live, work, and do things for us. In 1 Corinthians 15:10 Paul says, "By the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me." This word is quite deep. Paul did not say, "By the grace of God I have what I have. I have a good car, a good job, and a good wife by the grace of God." He did not even say, "By the grace of God I do what I do." It is not a matter of doing, having, or working; it is absolutely a matter of being. Hence, Paul says, "By the grace of God I am what I am." This means that the very grace of God had been wrought into his being, making him that kind of person. In Galatians 2:20 Paul says, "No longer I who live, but Christ lives in me." If we put this verse together with 1 Corinthians 15:10, we see that grace is simply Christ living in us. It is "not I, but the grace of God," "no longer I, but Christ." Grace is not outside of us or beside us. It is a divine Person, God Himself in Christ, wrought into our being to be the constituent of our being. Because of the lack of revelation, Christians have misunderstood and misinterpreted grace, thinking of it as something outside of them. But grace is just the Triune God wrought into our being to be what we should be and to live, work, and do things for us so that we may say, "I am what I am by the grace of God. It is not I, but the grace of God."

## GRACE IS GOD WORKING HIMSELF INTO US

As we have seen, God's intention is to work Himself into a corporate man that He might have a corporate expression. This is the basic concept of the divine revelation in the Bible. This is God's eternal purpose. God called Abraham with the purpose of working Himself into him, but Abraham had a strong self. This natural self was the strongest frustration

to God's purpose. The same is true with us today. God's purpose is to work Himself into us to be our life and even to be our living, but our natural self frustrates this. Therefore, God must cut us and deal with us that He may get into us to be everything to us. God does not need us to love others and to be humble that society might be improved. If God wants a better society, He only needs to say, "Better society," and it will come into being. He calls things not being as being (Rom. 4:17) and does not need our help. God wants to work Himself into us to be our humility and our everything. He wants us to say, "Lord, I am nothing and will not do anything. I just open up to You that You might come in, make Your home in me, live in me, and do everything for me. Lord, You live and I'll enjoy Your living. Whenever You do something in me, I'll say, 'Praise You, Lord. This is wonderful! I am not the doer; I am an enjoyer, appreciating all You are doing for me.'"

God's intention today is to deal with our natural being that we may have the full experience of Himself in Christ wrought into us as our enjoyment. Christ is here waiting to be your grace. You must say, "Lord, I am nothing and I can do nothing. Even if I could do something, it would never be recognized by You. Come, Lord, and do Your job and be the best student for me. This is Your job, not mine. You charge me, and I return the charge to You and ask You to fulfill it. Lord, You be the best student and I will praise You for it." Whenever I prayed like this, the Lord always did the best job. This is grace.

Grace is God working Himself into our being as our enjoyment. The very God today is not only God the Father, but also God the Son and God the Spirit. Moreover, God the Spirit is the Spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29), and this grace is the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7), which is "the varied grace" (1 Pet. 4:10), the "all grace" (1 Pet. 5:10), and the "sufficient grace" (2 Cor. 12:9). The Triune God is such a grace, and this grace is now with our spirit (Gal. 6:18). Grace is the divine Person of the Triune God as the Spirit indwelling our spirit. It is the Spirit of grace indwelling our spirit to be our enjoyment that we may enjoy God as our life and our everything,

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### Hebrews 10:29

*By how much do you think he will be thought worthy of worse punishment who has trampled underfoot the Son of God and has considered the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing and has insulted the Spirit of grace?*

### 1 Peter 3:7

*Husbands, in like manner dwell together with [them] according to knowledge, as with the weaker, female vessel, assigning honor to [them] as also to fellow heirs of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.*

### 1 Peter 4:10

*Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God.*

### 1 Peter 5:10

*But the God of all grace, He who has called you into His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself perfect, establish, strengthen, [and] ground [you].*

### 2 Corinthians 12:9

*And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.*

### Galatians 6:18

*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.*

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even as our living. This is why every one of Paul's Epistles ends with the words, "Grace be with you." For example, 2 Corinthians 13:14 says, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." Grace is not outside of us; it is in us. Whatever we call it, the Spirit of grace or the grace of life, it is something living and divine in our spirit. We do have such a divine reality, the Triune God Himself, in our spirit as our grace and enjoyment. When He loves others through us, this love is our enjoyment. When He lives Himself out through us, this living is also our enjoyment. Day and night we may enjoy His living through us.

Why then do we suffer? Because the self, the ego, the natural man, is still here and must be dealt with. Praise Him that no dealing is in vain. Every dealing from God is a breaking of our natural man that we may enjoy more of Him as our grace. Thus, we have Abraham and Isaac; we have the suffering of the loss and the enjoyment of the gain. This gain is not the

gain of outward things; it is the gain of the indwelling One, that is, the Spirit of grace and the grace of life. Again I say, whatever God gives as a gift outside of us is, at the most, a blessing. When this gift is wrought into our being, becoming the life element within us, it is grace. The blessing must become the grace. In the Old Testament, God gave many things to His people as blessings, but all those things were merely outward blessings. Before Christ came, none of those blessings had been wrought into God's people. Christ came not only to die on the cross for us, but, after His death, to become the life-giving Spirit to enter into our being. Thus, in the New Testament, we have the terms "in Christ" and "Christ in you." Now He is in us and we are in Him. Whatever God gives us in Christ has been wrought into our being and has become grace, our enjoyment. Now we are not merely under His blessing; we are in His grace and His grace is in us. What are you enjoying today—blessing or grace? The New Testament never says, "Blessing be with you." Rather, it says repeatedly, "Grace be with you."

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**2 Corinthians 13:14**

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

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