

Pt 5: **GRACE**
God's favor and enabling power

Acts 4:33 (NIV) *With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.*

Acts 14:26 (NIV) *From Attalia they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed.*

1. THE MEANING OF GRACE

Grace is "God's unmerited favour."

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT) *God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.*

It also means "God's enabling power."

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 (NIV) *May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.*

Not only does His grace make us accepted into the family of God, but it also provides the power we need to live the Christian life.

Ephesians 1:4-6 (NLT) *Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son.*

It is only by God's power that we can be transformed.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV) *Therefore if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come!*

In every area of our lives, it is God's grace that causes us to grow and be strong.

2 Peter 3:18 (NIV) *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*

2. GRACE GIVEN TO THE HEROES OF FAITH

This enabling grace is shown in the lives of men and women throughout the whole Bible. Every hero of faith began his walk with God aware of his own weakness and inability.

a. Grace in the life of the Apostle Paul

Acts 15:40 (NIV) *But Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.*

Before Paul and Silas set out on their missionary journey together, the church at Antioch prayed for them and commended them to the grace of the Lord for the work that was ahead of them.

2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV) *My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.*

This promise is for us as well.

b. Grace in the life of Moses

Exodus 3:11-13 (NIV) *But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain." Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"*

When God told Moses to go down to Egypt and tell Pharaoh to let his 3,000,000 people go free from slavery, Moses' immediate response was as follows:

3:11 *"Who am I?"*

3:13 *"Who are You?"*

4:1 *"They won't believe me!"*

4:10 *"I'm not eloquent!"*

4:13 *"Lord, send someone else!"*

But with God's grace, Moses did go down to Egypt, and with signs and wonders brought the people of Israel out as God told him to.

3. GRACE RELEASED IN OUR LIVES

a. Trusting and Obeying God

As we trust and obey God's Word His grace, His enabling power, will help us.

2 Peter 3:18 (NIV) *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*

b. Demonstrating Grace

Grace is not something just to be claimed (something we receive from God) but it is also meant to be demonstrated. God's grace is incredible. Because of his grace, he is fully satisfied with you and me!

For there to be true maturity in Christ, people must be given room to grow, which includes room to fail, to think on their own, to disagree, to make mistakes.

We will never grow in Christ if we continually operate in fear, being controlled by someone else's demands or expectations.

4. TWO IMPORTANT PROMISES TO REMEMBER

a. We have Bold Access to the Throne of Grace

Hebrews 4:16 (NIV) *Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

Sometimes sin trips us up, and this can cause us to lose confidence before God.

1 Peter 1:18-19 (NIV) *For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

We need to read scriptures like that and remember that Jesus' death on the cross, his blood, satisfied God, once and for all.

It is a matter of faith in God's word.

The blood not only satisfies God but it also cleanses our conscience.

Hebrews 10:22 (NIV) *Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

The blood never changes and it never will. Our approach to God is therefore one of boldness; that boldness is ours through the blood and never through our own personal achievements.

b. God is Able

2 Corinthians 9:8 (NIV) *And 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.*

CONCLUSION

Let's make the decision today to receive God's grace into every area and problem that we experience in our lives.

Let's demonstrate and share grace with those around us.