



Grace That Is Greater Than All Our Sin

**Devotion presented at a women's bible study by
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Grace is God's unmerited favor toward His greatest creation...man. However, grace is so much more than a short definition in which God's attribute of forgiveness and kindness is revealed. It is love in action; love given without restraint. As the author of the great hymn applicably states, "The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell. It goes beyond the highest star and reaches to the lowest hell. Oh...the love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong! It shall forevermore endure—the saints and angel's song." That love is lovingly and freely given by God through HIS GRACE and mercy

The word "grace" can...like forgiveness, repentance, regeneration, and salvation...mean something as broad as describing the whole of God's activity toward man or as narrow as describing a single minute segment of that activity. Grace is the kindness and forgiveness from God that we don't deserve. Someone said, "There is nothing we have done, nor can ever do to earn this favor. It is a gift from God." I think it is well said in the Word of God. "The wages of man's sin is death; but, the gift of God is eternal life through His Son, Jesus." **Romans 6:23.**

The GIFT is eternal life...God's grace.

There are various words and attributes that further define grace in detail. They are kindness, charity, graciousness, loveliness, and undeserved favor. We have a God who stretches each of these words to the uttermost. No mind can comprehend how gracious, kind, and compassionate God is. The Word of God describes God's grace: "But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness." Psalm 86:15

We find that there are also various types of grace in the Word of God. All of the types mentioned reveal the compassionate grace God bestows on His children; namely...

- **Devine Grace** - a theological term present in many religions. It has been defined as the divine influence which operates in humans to regenerate and sanctify, to inspire virtuous impulses, and to impart strength to endure trials and resist temptation. It is also an individual virtue or excellence of divine origin.
- **Special Grace** - Spiritual gifts associated with one's state in life and intended to build up the Body of Christ. What does this mean?

1 Corinthians 12—1 “Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.

⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.”

1 Corinthians 12 includes various verses dealing with our GRACIOUS GOD giving spiritual gifts to believers distributed by the Holy Spirit. All of these gifts are given by God to specific believers for the intent of bringing souls into the Kingdom and training new converts to be a force of power in the world in which they live and breathe. The gift is “special” (special grace), but the one receiving the gift is no more “special” than any other believer. The believer using these special grace gifts must work in the humility of the Lord; not thinking that they are on a higher level than the person being trained or being equipped for service. God shows no partiality (is not a respecter of persons) and is fair and just in dealing with every soul. God is not willing that anyone should

perish...but, He does give us a choice. We accept his grace (gift) or we don't. Our job as believers is to *“rescue the perishing, care for the dying. Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save.”*

- **Sanctifying Grace** - grace that gives us the power to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts puts ungodliness and worldly lusts in our past. Sanctifying grace teaches us to renounce those things, not only to avoid them.
- **Actual Grace** - God's intervention and support in every day moments of life is important for ongoing growth and conversion.
- **Irresistible Grace** - Note: History is evidence of grace that has been resisted.
We resist God's grace; but, God's grace is so powerful that it overcomes our natural resistance to it. The irresistible grace is the grace that causes us to say “NO” to the corrupt way of life.
- **Teaching Grace - Titus 2:11-13**, *“For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹² It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.”*
 - ✓ This is the grace that teaches us that by denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we can and should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age; looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,
 - ✓ *Teaching grace includes:* teaching and exhibiting encouragement, correction, and discipline. God's grace instructs us to order our lives in a fashion that pleases the Lord as we try our best to do right in all circumstances.
- **Effectual grace** - *“...for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.”* *Philippians 2:13* This is the grace whereby God gives us the power to do His work “not in our own strength” for it is God Who is all the while effectually at work in you [energizing and creating in you the power and desire], both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight.

- ✓ **Grace changes a man from inside out.** He has new desires and a will to be obedient. The Holy Spirit creates in us the will and the desire.
- ✓ **If a man lusts for gold, grace enables him to conquer greed.**
Grace causes a man to conquer his fleshly desires.
- ✓ **The proud man is led by Grace to give up his worldly ambitions.**
- ✓ **Grace trains the idler to be diligent.**
- ✓ **Jesus is the capstone of our salvation.** Grace will finish the work that He has begun.

- To this grace, we must understand that Jesus is the capstone of salvation for all those who believe. The “capstone” is the high point—the crowning achievement (definition: Webster).
- Jesus is the “*author and finisher of our faith.*” He gave us the Holy Spirit to convict and convince us that He (Jesus) is surely and completely “The (only) way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father unless it is through the Son.”

NOTE: When any work is done through human **might** or **power** we can take credit for it, but when the work is done by the continual supply of the **Spirit**, then it is all to the glory of God’s **grace**.

Titus 3:4-7, “*But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared (THAT’S GRACE), not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*”

- **Prevenient grace** - Pre-“before” and Venient “to go”- God’s Grace that goes before. Prevenient Grace is the grace whereby we have been saved. Ephesians 2:8, “*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—*”). John 1:12 states, “*To all who received He gave the right to become children of God.*”

- ✓ Prevenient Grace is God's grace which has gone before any conscience decision that we may or may not have made to receive Him. For those who have received Him it is because his grace has enabled them to receive Him. For those who have rejected him, it is because they have freely rejected it.
- ✓ Titus 3:4 basically says, "*We were rescued by the kindness and the love of God.*" He reached out to us long before we reached out to Him. He knew me before I knew Him. That is Prevenient Grace.
- ✓ Titus 3:4 is saying, "Salvation comes through a twofold channel: the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. AND...It is poured out on us (grace given freely) through Jesus (justification by His grace)."

Note: Our salvation isn't based on any **works of righteousness which we have done** (*there is none righteous; no, not one*).

In and of itself, response to an altar call does not save. Saying the sinner's prayer does not save. Baptism does not save. Church attendance does not save. Giving does not save. Reading the Bible does not save. Each of these may be wonderful **works of righteousness**, but they do not save us. Instead, **according to His mercy He saved us. Mercy saves.**

Romans 4:5. "*But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*" KJV

Rom 2:4, "*Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?* **The goodness and kindness of God leads you to repentance. God is a good God...and He will save when we choose to repent.**

It is important to know... Prevenient Grace is grace applied to our lives before justification.

If I were to define in my words as to the meaning of PREVENIENT GRACE, I would say, "It is divine grace that precedes human decision. It exists prior to and without reference to anything humans may have done. As humans are corrupted by the effects of sin, prevenient grace allows persons to engage their God-given free will to choose the salvation offered by God in Jesus Christ or to reject that saving offer."

And, Oh...are we blessed! Jesus said, “Because you (Thomas) have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” John 20:29.

From the song by Julia H. Johnston,



GRACE THAT IS GREATER THAN ALL OUR SIN—



“Dark is the stain that we cannot hide; What can we do to wash it away?

Look! There is flowing a crimson tide, brighter than snow you may be today.

Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace, freely bestowed on all who believe!

You that are longing to see His face, will you this moment His grace receive?

The question in the song is asked to every wayward soul:

WILL YOU THIS MOMENT HIS GRACE TO RECEIVE?

