



# ***THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE***

**By Randy Boyd**

## **Introduction:**

The Bible is full of important concepts and principles and for most of us, it would be impossible to be an expert in every area, but there is one that is critical for every believer to know well and be full of knowledge and understanding – **GRACE**. There is so much written and said about the grace of God today, but it seems that most believers don't really know much about this subject. What a pity. The New Testament alone speaks of grace 119 times directly and hundreds of more times indirectly. If God gave written teaching on a subject this many times, don't you think it would be wise for us to be full of the knowledge of His grace. Listen to what the Bible has to say:

In almost every letter written by one of the apostles, they begin the letter something like this. . .

***“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*** Eph 1:2

Peter tells the followers of Jesus. . .

***“but grow in the grace . . . of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. . .”*** 2 Pet 3:18

And Paul, as a spiritual father to Timothy, charges him to. . .

***“You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”*** 2 Tim 2:1

The questions arise: *How can I grow in that which I know very little or nothing about? And how can I grow strong in and thrive within that which I am unfamiliar with?* **We had better get a grip on God's grace and let Him get His grip of grace firmly upon us!**

## **What is Grace?**

Over the years, we have all heard many definitions of grace but none of them do justice or at all adequately represent the realities of the depths or truths of the grace of God. The problem is that it is impossible to put into human language the spiritual realities we see and experience in Jesus Christ. I can imagine the incredible struggles within the writers of scripture as they sought to put into human words and understanding the revelation and experiences they had in Him. Nevertheless, we must try.

## **GRACE IS. . .**

**#1 A divine attitude and attribute of God's heart.** – Grace is born within the heart of God, and it is from there and there alone that it flows.

In the Old Testament, the equivalent word for grace was favor (*chen – hbr*). This word favor is an amazing word as you trace it through the scriptures. The underlying meaning is that God looks upon my weak and pitiful life and finds me unbelievably attractive. So attractive in fact, that He desires to draw me near to Him and share all of His great wealth with me. There is **NO HINT** within this word of my doing anything to bring on this attraction by my good works, not my own righteousness, or even by the keeping of His law. This attraction to be near us and bless us springs entirely out of the gracious nature of God Himself.

In the New Testament, we get even a deeper glimpse into the grace filled heart of God. The Greek word for grace in the New Testament is *charis*. Within this word we see that He not only draws us near and shares all of

His great wealth with us, but in the root of the New Testament word grace is the idea that He gives us the very opposite of what we deserve and it is all free - a life of continually receiving of the free gifts of God. The biblical concept of grace is that within the heart of God Himself is this unbelievable aggressive benevolence toward men, which causes Him to reach out to them and invite them to come and receive the riches He has stored up for them in Jesus Christ. And best of all, it is all free. Yes, a free gift of grace. As we begin this journey into the grace of God, we first see God Himself. We see a heart brimming with love and good will toward us desiring not to give us what our sins deserve, but rather to shower upon us the great riches of His Son Jesus. God is truly *the God of all grace!*

## **GRACE IS . . .**

### **#2 A divine storehouse of every kind of riches we might ever need for life and godliness.**

God's grace is more than just an attitude in His heart toward us. It is secondly, a whole host of God's great riches made available to us in Jesus Christ. When Jesus died and rose again, He didn't just take away our sins. There are many things He purchased and provided for us. Listen to the word of God:

***For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. 2 Cor 8:9***

***“Blessed {be} the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly {places} in Christ. . . according to the riches of His grace. . . which He lavished upon us.”***  
Eph 1:3,7,8

Wow! We have been made rich. At our fingertips there are great spiritual and temporal blessings waiting to be accessed by the child of God. It is up to us to go into the presence of Jesus Christ and receive these great blessings.

Years ago as immigrants from Europe began to stream into the United States, a family booked passage on a ship bound for the USA. Having used all of their money to obtain passage, the family brought along a bag of peanuts as their food supply for the journey. Morning, noon, and night the father doled out a helping of peanuts to his family.

One day while passing the ships galley where a wonderful hot meal for the ships passengers was being prepared, the father could not help but smell the savory aromas of the cooking foods. He ventured in and asked, “How much would just one of these wonderful meals served here cost for a family like mine?” The reply shocked him! “Why sir, when you booked passage and bought your ticket, the price of all the meals and all other benefits of the voyage were included in your ticket. All you and your family must do is come in and enjoy. *It is all paid for already.*”

Is this not how we live as followers of Jesus Christ? We are living on bags of peanuts in every area of our lives when Jesus Christ has lost all, given all, became poor so that we might be made rich. By grace, there is a host of heavenly and earthly blessings awaiting the child of God if we would simply come into the banquet hall of grace and partake. We do not have to live like beggars any longer.

### ***Let's look at a few of the great riches we have in Christ by grace. . .***

- Ø ***Complete forgiveness of Sins*** (Ephesians 1.6-7) – Most believers live with a guilt-ridden conscience and never come into the true reality of their sins being forgiven. One of the first blessings of His grace is that He completely removes our sins from before Him through forgiveness and casts them into a sea of forgetfulness. I think he even puts up a sign which says, “No fishing allowed.” We must receive His full forgiveness by faith in His grace today.
- Ø ***Complete victory over the power of sin in our lives*** (Romans 6.14) – There is good news through His grace. We can live free from the power of sin over our lives. Many of us are caught in a cycle of sin and confess, sin and confess, and feel like absolute failures before God. By the power of His grace, we

can live free from the cycle of sin and live a holy life in Jesus Christ. It is not by our trying harder, it is by the power of His grace at work within us. Holiness and victory are grace gifts from God Himself!

- Ø *Fellowship with the Father and Jesus Christ* (1 John 1.1-3) – One of the great benefits of the life of grace is intimacy with God. We don't have to live a life of seeing only tiny glimpses of Him and His love. In the great storehouse of God called grace, a life of intimate fellowship with both the Father and the Son of God are ours. In fact, we can know a life of intimate fellowship with the Holy Spirit as well. As long as we are trying to be good enough to earn anything, we will never enter in, but learning to approach and draw near to Him by grace, we can move into a life of communion with God.
- Ø *Financial Provision for daily life and a generous lifestyle of giving* (2 Corinthians 9.6-11) – Wow! What a promise. In this passage, Paul calls God's abundant financial provision and God's outpouring of temporal provision to us grace. He says that God is able to make all grace (money in this instance) abound to us so that we will have plenty to live on and an abundance for every good deed.
- Ø *A life of complete victory in the area of our emotions* (Galatians 5.21-22) – Many believers are slaves to their emotions. At times they find victory, but very often they are slaves to the up and downs of life. In the package of divine gifts called grace given to us in Jesus Christ, we can know complete victory in the area of our emotions. No matter what the circumstances life throws at us, we can respond with peace, patience, love, joy, peace, etc. Child of God, you do not have to be a slave any longer. Learn to access His divine grace for your life today and claim the emotional victory that is yours in Christ.

We have only looked at a few of the great riches that lie within Jesus Christ for the child of God, but the Bible is full of many more promises and blessings the Father *has already provided* for us by His great grace. It is all free. It all came with the price of the ticket. When Jesus died, He cried, "*It is finished!*" The great purchase has been made, now come and receive all of this divine life that you need to completely overcome in this world and then live in the next.

**GRACE IS . . .**

***#3 Grace is the divine working of God in the human heart to conform the life to Christ and bring true holiness in the life of the believer.***

Many today want to pervert and cheapen the message of grace saying that because God is so gracious and forgiveness is free, I can live as close to the world and as near like the rest of the world as I want and still be living in His grace. That is a fantasy. It is a lie from the Enemy of our souls. He would love to pervert the grace of God into a license to free living, sin, and worldliness. Listen to what God's word has to say about God's grace and personal holiness:

***What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?*** Romans 6:1-2

Paul smashes this kind of thinking from the start. Grace in no way gives one liberty to live like the world or be controlled by sin. In fact, it provides the full motivation and power to live victoriously and joyfully holy in every area of our lives. The Apostle John also confronted this kind of thinking when he said:

***Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*** I John 2:15

A worldly lifestyle and being bound in sin is a sign of one of several things –

- Ø We are not truly a believer in Jesus Christ and have only played with religion. The power of God is in no way working within us to perfect true holiness.
- Ø We may be converted to Jesus but we remain carnal in our desires and mindsets. This is a very dangerous place to live. We should repent and give our lives fully to follow Jesus Christ.
- Ø We are a true child of God, but we have never discovered the power of His grace to free us and conform us to the image of Jesus Christ and we are trying to do everything in our own power by vain religious works.

In Titus 2, God gives us an amazing promise about the power of His grace working within our hearts and lives as a force for holiness and true righteousness when He says,

***“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. 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 glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.” Titus 2:11-14***

The grace of God is clearly portrayed here as the divine working of God Himself in our hearts turning us away from ungodliness, sin, and worldly passions and turning us to holy living in our daily lives. Many earnest Christians as they get further into the Christian life, discover that they do not have the power to live like Jesus or for Him. They become frustrated and defeated in their faith and quickly lose the fire.

The answer is not greater will power, the answer is accessing the sanctifying power of God’s grace. Jesus was a man with passions just like ours and yet through the power of the Holy Spirit lived a life of absolute joyful holiness unto the Father and was unstained by this world. That same grace and divine life He lived with is open to you and I today. In fact, Paul goes on to say in verse 14 above that the power released in Jesus’ redeeming work will free us completely from **ALL** wickedness and purify us to be a people wholly in love with God and eager to do His works upon the earth! That is truly good news to the hungry soul.

## **GRACE IS . . .**

### ***#4 The working of God in a human life to set him apart and equip him for effective service.***

A fourth aspect of the life of grace is the power of God working within the human heart to free us from living for ourselves and both motivate and empower us to live a life of fruitful service to God. As we closed the last thought, the final thought in the above passage is that by the working of God’s grace within us, we would become a people completely owned by the Lord who are filled with eagerness for the works of Christ. The true work of grace within us is not that we can live a worldly life and still go to heaven, but rather that we can be absolutely transformed by God’s grace and power and live for the Father fully like Jesus!

Many of us as we advance in the Christian walk discover this growing desire and urging to lay down our lives in service to God and men. It seems to come up from within us and we quickly begin a life of working for God in the saving and discipling of souls around us. This is the work of grace in the human heart motivating and empowering us to join God in His work in the lives of others.

The most crippling power to the believer today is bondage to self. In our societies, we find the mottos –

- Ø *Live for self!*
- Ø *Please your self at all cost! You deserve to be happy.*

These sound wonderful, but the bottom line is that anyone that begins to focus on self or live to please or satisfy themselves will ultimately come under the control of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Self is the great door

that opens the floodgate of evil into our lives. Living for your own self brings the deepest forms of bondage known to most Christians today.

There is good news! Within the great storehouses of God's grace, there is a grace of freedom from self and absolute surrender to Christ and His work upon the earth. God's great power will enter your heart and transform it into a heart and life like His Sons.

***For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and He died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.*** 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

God tells us that when Jesus Christ died, He released a tremendous power to free us from living for ourselves and to both motivate and empower us to live for Him. It enters our lives as a pure gift of grace and we can not earn this or ever deserve it. It is truly one of the riches of His grace for us. Not only can we be freed from living for ourselves, but verse 14 above tells us that our entire lives can be filled and come under the control of the power of the love of Christ. Paul said, "*The love of Christ controls us. . .*" The word **controls** means that it becomes the force in our lives which both restrains the way we live and motivates the way we live. We can literally be placed in the straight jacket of God's love for this world!

Paul describes his own incredible formation into a man whom God used mightily as the activity and power of God's grace at work within him when he said:

***“. . .of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. 8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ. . . 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. . .*** Eph 3:7-8 & 1 Cor 15:10

Paul speaking of his calling into the work of Christ, he calls it a gift of God's grace and then proceeds to speak of that grace forming him, changing him, equipping him into a man who was usable by God. Even as he began to serve and work with great power together with the Lord, Paul says that it was not he, but the grace of God within him doing the work.

In every area of our lives and in every arena we could ever have need, God has already freely provided to give us all we need for life and victory. He truly is the **God of ALL grace!**

### **Grace & Works**

Before we move on in our journey into God's grace, we must pause at the thought of grace and works. Most Christians today and many unbelievers as they come to Christ stumble over the grace of God. There are so many who try to come to God through good works. The problem with coming to Him through our own attempts to be good enough (works) is that we are trying to earn something, and if we are earning, salvation or any other gift of God is not free. The very nature of grace is that it is free and cannot in any way be earned.

"For grace to be grace, it must be free. If one must do something to earn it, then it is not grace, but works. If someone gives you the title and keys to his car and turns around and walks away and you never see him again, then you have received a free gift. But if that person says to you, "You must wash and wax this car if you want me to give it to you," then it was not free, but you had to earn it. Grace is free, and salvation is by grace, through faith. Paul states this principle more clearly when he says," (AB Simpson)

***And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. (Rom 11:6)***

The entire book of Galatians was written to a people who had heard the gospel of God's grace, that is, that they could be forgiven, be declared completely right before Him, and enter a loving relationship with Him entirely as a free gift offered them by God Himself through Jesus Christ and His Cross. These Galatians had responded to

the good news and received Christ and His gracious gift by faith and faith alone. Others had come in and begin to preach another gospel – faith + religious works makes you right with God. It made sense to the Galatians. Surely, they had to do something to prove themselves right with God. Surely, they had to take their growth in holiness and devotion into their own hands now to grow in God. Paul's response was sharp and strong:

*2 This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh (works)? . . . 5.1 It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. 2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision (trusting in a life of good works), Christ will be of no benefit to you. . . 4 You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. . . . 7 You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion {did} not {come} from Him who calls you. Gal 3:2-3 Gal 5:1-8*

Here are some stinging comments from the Apostle Paul about going back under a law filled, dead works oriented lifestyle. . .

- Ø If you began by simple grace through faith, why are you now trying to do it in the power of your flesh?
- Ø Christ set you free completely! Why are you going back under legalism and bondage?
- Ø If you choose to live under a system of law, Christ will be no benefit to you.
- Ø You will be cut off from Christ and His life-giving flow. You will entirely leave the life of grace!

We cannot mix a legalistic mentality and the grace of God. We must begin by grace and walk every day of our life in this wonderful realm of God's grace gifts to us in Jesus Christ. If we try to approach any area of our lives with a *I can earn something by my good works or I can do enough or be good enough for God to bless me* then we have left the life of grace and have begun to live on the basis of works. The root of approaching and obtaining from God in this manner is **pride**. It is the attitude that there is something good enough in me to please Him. I can do it. I am good enough! Be sure what you will get from God with this attitude,

*But He gives a greater grace. Therefore {it} says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."*  
James 4:6

Those who truly move forward into the victorious, grace-filled life and enjoy all the riches of Christ are those who are filled with a certain kind of humility toward God – the kind of humility of heart that realizes that *I have nothing to offer; there is no good thing in me; I must have Him do all if I am to succeed or truly walk with Him*. It is the humility of knowing that we have nothing, He has everything we need, and we must come to Him to receive all that He so generously provides.

## Learning to Access and Receive the Graces of God

As we close up our discussion of the grace of God, we have to come down to the final conclusion: **SO HOW DO YOU LIVE A LIFE FILLED WITH THE GRACE OF GOD?** It's one thing to hear some fine sounding arguments about the amazing heart of grace God has for us and all of these wonderful riches in Christ, but how does it really work? For our conclusion we must again turn to His word.

*So then, in the same way you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him,*  
*Colossians 2:6*

Paul gives us a simple principle of life in Christ – *The same way you entered this life that is how you live it out successfully every day!* So how did we begin the Christian life?

**For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, {it is} the gift of God;** Eph 2:8

The simple principle of life in Christ is. . .you can't do anything, He freely offers everything as a free gift of grace and you must see it and receive it by faith – ***By grace - through faith!*** We must learn to receive everything at the Throne of Grace. The key is a life of receiving – receiving faith and then corresponding obedience. By faith we come into the great storehouse of God's grace and receive by faith and make our own that particular work of grace in our lives.

***17 ... much more those who receive the abundance of grace . . . will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ . . . 16 For of His fulness we have all received, and grace upon grace.***  
*Romans 5:17 & John 1:16*

The picture these two scriptures paint for us is a life that learns to come to God and receive. A life of seeing what we need in the vast treasure-house of Jesus Christ and going there to receive it. We reign (live victoriously) in life through receiving. He truly is a mighty ocean of all the riches of God and they are all available to every child in mighty waves of grace. In the John 1 verse, the picture is of men and women coming to Jesus Christ and receiving wave after wave after wave of His grace into their lives bringing them into His own fullness.

### **The Throne of Grace**

***16 Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.*** Hebrews 4:16

For those who are learning to access God's grace, His throne is called the *Throne of Grace*. It is from Him, in Him, and in His presence alone that we find and receive the grace of God. By learning to come to God, see the vast riches of the victorious, abundant Christian life in Christ and then receiving it by faith at His throne is the true road to the blessings of God.

For the child of God who is still trying to earn and work for what He gets from God, the throne of God is always a place of begging or judgment. To many believers the life of prayer, fasting, obedience is a drudgery and chore, but to those who are learning to come to Him for daily grace, a greater grace, these wonderful disciplines become a doorway into the storehouse of God Himself.

*So how do you receive?* One last scripture will give us a clue to two important activities for access into this life of grace.

***“. . . let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God*** Hebrews 6:1

- Ø Repentance from dead works = a life of seeing that all, yes all, of my works apart from His grace and enlivening power are useless to either bring me to God or to enable me to walk with Him and please Him. This does not mean you stop everything you are doing, but rather it is a major change of mind of **WHY** you are doing it. Two men might be praying side by side and one is connecting

to this great throne by faith and the other is going through a religious exercise to be good enough to earn God's blessing.

None of your own works will produce any righteousness in you or in anyone else. The two major works you begin to engage in is the work of faith (aggressive believing) and the work of surrender and obedience. Many of us may have to turn away from a religious life of trying to strive and earn from God. We must come to God entirely on the basis of the grace of God.

- Ø Faith toward God = An aggressive going before God daily to receive from Him those many graces offered us in Jesus Christ Himself. Faith is like a set of eyes which enable me to see things offered me in the spiritual realm with God and it is also like a spiritual hand that enables me to reach out and receive these grace gifts and then draw them down into my life or circumstances. By faith and faith alone do we receive and walk with God.

I am not speaking about some passive life of waiting around hoping God will do something for you. I am speaking about a very aggressive life of going before God in prayer, study, fasting, etc. in order to receive that divine gift you need. It is the hidden life of prayer and faith that becomes the key of receiving. Then we simply live out in obedience and service what we have received in secret.

At His throne there awaits for each of us the vast riches of Jesus Christ. Why don't you access that throne today? The grace of God is calling for you. . .Child of God come and be made rich!