

Establishing a Firm Foundation



GOD
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Lesson Six: Grace Defined

I. INTRODUCTORY DEFINITIONS

A. Primary Scripture – John 1:11-17

He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’” For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

B. You Begin and End in Grace

The word grace is used 150 times in the New Testament – primarily in the epistles. It is used as a salutation – “*Grace and peace be unto you.*” And it is used as a closing – “*The grace of God be with you.*” The lesson in the Gospel is that you begin with grace and make sure you end with the grace of God.

C. New Testament Terms

There are two Greek words for “grace.” “**Charis**” is grace in general terms, while “**charisma**” is grace in the specific or grace made manifest.

D. Old Testament Term

The Hebrew word for “grace” is “**chen ratson.**” This term means beauty or attractiveness. People, a congregation or a person in the grace of God is “attractive.” If we have the truth without the grace of God we won’t attract anyone to our message.

E. To Have Favor With

The Hebrew root word means “favor.” Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Grace relates to the way we look at people. It all starts with the way God looks at us. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. God can look at us and we are attractive to Him and have found favor in His sight.

1. **Numbers 6:24-26**

*The LORD bless you, and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you;
The LORD lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.'*

Before and after the word gracious is the word face. When you are in His face (presence) you receive His grace!

F. After Grace Comes Peace

Without grace there can be no peace. In the New Testament salutations, peace always comes after grace.

II. GRACE VERSUS WORKS

A. Defining Works

“Works” are the things we do to try to obtain righteousness and God’s favor apart from Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

B. Another Look at Grace

Whatever you earn is not by or of “grace.” Religious people have the most difficulty with this.

Romans 11:5-6

In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

C. Just God and Savior

When you ask for or give counsel, don’t merely ask for justice – ask for grace.

Isaiah 45:21

*Declare and set forth your case;
Indeed, let them consult together.
Who has announced this from of old?
Who has long since declared it?
Is it not I, the LORD?
And there is no other God besides Me,
A righteous God and a Savior;
There is none except Me.*

D. Christ is the End of the Law

Christ Jesus fulfilled the law! Through Jesus comes both grace and truth.

Romans 10:4

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

III. THREE REQUIREMENTS TO RECEIVE GRACE

A. Humble Yourself

We are to humble ourselves before both God and man (see James 4:6-7, I Peter 5:5-6, Proverbs 3:34).

B. Stop Working and Believe

The wages of sin is death. Each man apart from Christ receives his just reward. But use your credit in faith and receive the reward of grace instead (see Romans 4:4-5).

C. Receive Christ

All grace is in Jesus Christ! To the degree you embrace and receive Christ, you receive grace (see John 1:12,17).

IV. BENEFITS OF GRACE

A. Surrounded by a Shield – Psalm 5:12

*For it is You who blesses the righteous man,
O LORD, You surround him with favor as with a shield.*

B. Cloud of the Latter Rain – Proverbs 16:15

*In the light of a king's face is life,
And his favor is like a cloud with the spring rain.*

C. Grace Is Our Tutor – Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

D. His Grace Is Enough – II Corinthians 12:9

And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

V. APOSTLE PAUL'S SECRET

A. Taken from Ephesians 3:7-8

...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. To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ.

1. "I am the least." Therefore he trusted God openly in all circumstances for grace.
2. I was made a minister according to grace.

B. Taken from I Corinthians 15:10

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.

Great fruitfulness came through Paul's life as he ministered in and through the grace of God.

VI. THREE THINGS TO DO WITH GRACE

A. Speak Grace – Ephesians 4:29-32

Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

B. Pray for Grace – Zechariah 12:10

I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

C. Shout Grace! – Zechariah 4:6-7

Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts. 'What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" "

VII. RECEIVE GRACE!

A. Come Boldly – Hebrews 4:14-16

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

B. The Measure of Christ's Gift – Ephesians 4:7

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

C. Closing Thought

The will of God will never place you where the grace of God cannot keep you.

Reflective Questions

Lesson Six: Grace Defined

Answers to these questions can be found in the back of the study guide.

Fill in the blank

1. God gives the right to become children of God to those who _____ Him.
2. The lesson of the New Testament is that you must _____ with grace and make sure you _____ with the grace of God.
3. _____ are the things we do to try to obtain righteousness and God's favor apart from Christ.

Multiple Choice: Choose the best answer from the list below:

A. earn B. tutor C. give D. salvation

4. Whatever you _____ is not by or of grace.
5. Grace is your _____.

True or False

6. If we have the truth without the grace of God we won't attract anyone to our message. _____
7. To the degree you embrace and receive Christ, you receive grace. _____

Short Answer

8. What must you do to receive grace and what does God want us to do with grace?

Scripture Memorization

9. Write out and memorize Titus 2:11-14.

Reflection and Prayer

10. Grace relates to the way we look at people. It all starts with how God looks at us. Reflect on how you view others. Is this the same way you feel God views you? Ask Jesus to reveal His grace to you so you can extend grace to others.

Answers to the Reflective Questions

Lesson Six

1. receive
2. begin; end
3. Works
4. A – earn
5. B – tutor
6. True
7. True
8. Humble yourself, stop working and believe, receive Christ; Speak grace, pray for grace, shout grace