

Grace

God is love.

Because He is love, all He does is a result of His Love for us

He only ever does what is good for us

Evil occurs because we reject God's will and place ourselves out of God's love and protection

Trials occur because He loves us and is doing all He can do either to mature us or bring us back to him

His Grace (Graciousness) is the expression of this Love

And it is because His mercies are new every morning, that we are not destroyed but lovingly brought back to God.

God is complete in Himself and does not need us. He brought us into existence not His sake but for ours so that we could enjoy a relationship with him, as well as all the delights He has prepared for us in eternity.

But His Grace began even before this when He prepared a path for us to walk in before creation had even occurred.

In essence, Grace is God doing something for us that He does not need too as it is not a reward of service or faith. It is an act resulting solely out of His Love for us and benefits us in some way.

Grace is God expressing his Love to us even though we did not know we needed it and/or do not deserve it. All God does is an expression of His grace towards us. After all He does not need to do anything for us.

God's Grace, mercy and compassion are inseparable from His Love as they are its natural expression towards us.

His Love graces with what we need without our knowing we need it or without having done anything to deserve it. His Mercy allows us to fail

and not be destroyed. His Compassion means He treats us as His children and overlooks our failures.

His whole attitude is toward what is best for us.

Redemption is God's Grace in action. He did not need to do it but His Love drove Him to die for us even though He was not really required to do this.

Calvary and all it entails is His Grace. All His Mercy is epitomised in Calvary and through all that Jesus did there for us.

Grace is the free and unmerited favour or beneficence of God. In other words, God does something good for us without requiring us to do something for Him and often without our knowing we needed the thing done for us or even knowing the thing has been done for us. It is God giving us the things we don't deserve like Jesus, eternal life, salvation, redemption, a place in heaven, The Holy Spirit, keeping us alive, providing all we need to live and serve Him and prepare us to be in heaven with Him forever!.

God, in His Love for us, looks down and sees we have a need. He does not have to meet that need but does so out of love for us. This action is His Grace, a result of His favour towards us. He asks nothing on our part except thankfulness.

This is grace in its simplicity. Most who talk about Grace talk about its outworking and not what it is.

It is because of grace we can know God exists, His requirements of us and what He has done for us and because of this knowledge we are able to love and worship Him.

Without God's revelation of Himself to us we could only assume that He existed and what He was like, but God loves us more than we can imagine and as a result of this Love reveals to us all we need to know about Himself and His requirements (Duet 29:29).

What God's Grace has done!

God brought us into existence before we knew what that was, giving us life and purpose. He has sustained us until now and will do so through eternity. It was out of His Love for us that He did this and continues to do so.

His Love caused Him to send Jesus to earth to communicate directly with us to teach us what God required of us then sacrificed Jesus to meet all the spiritual consequences of our sin as well as to remove the barrier between God and us.

His next act of Grace was to have The Holy Spirit strive with our spirit so that we would appreciate what God had done for us, offered us as well as what He has rescued us from and so we would then leave the kingdom of darkness, follow Jesus and join The Kingdom of the Father as an appreciative citizen of His Love for us. Until we appreciate what the kingdom of darkness is and its effects on a person we will not really appreciate His Kingdom of Light and life, and the freedom He has given us from our former bondages. It is only after the darkness can you see the light more clearly.

This is why it is hard for people raised in Christian families to really appreciate God's Love and deliverance until they see the effects of the kingdom of Satan on people.

He placed His presence in us to protect our spirit and mark us as belonging to God.

Out of His Love for us God gave us gifts to help us in our battles with the kingdom of darkness and so we could also do His work as a servant of His. He gives us only the gifts we needed along with His delegated Authority (through His Son), as these are all that is needed for us to serve Him spiritually in the work He has chosen for us. He also provides our physical needs to sustain us in our serving Him (Matt 6:32-34).

He matures us through His plan for our life. Suffering is a part of His Grace and is designed to either:

Mature us for greater service and rewards, or

Guide us back to a correct relationship with Jesus.

He nurtures us and develops us (as well as protecting us from His enemy) until we understand our relationship with Him and what it means and thus desire an intimate relationship with Him and His Son. He does allow the enemy limited and controlled access to us for the purpose of maturity and growth as a follower of His.

Every breath we take, we take because He allows us and supports us.

Everything we do is done because he prepares us for it and helps us to do it.

Finally, He will accept us, after our death, and take us to the Place He has prepared for us where we will dwell with Him and know Him for ever in a relationship of Love, in a place that will see no more pain and suffering, forever in His presence.

All these He has done out of His Loving Grace as we did not know we needed these things.

How can we doubt His Love and Grace after all that He has done for us? We should be thankful for what He has done, as ungratefulness, thanklessness or complaining about our circumstances dishonours Him, His Love and His Grace and calls into question His love for us.

Grace is the act of God taking a personal interest in our lives, providing all we need for every aspect of our existence and being - even though we do nothing to deserve it or know we need it. Our obedience is a response to God's Love. To merit Grace would bring in legalism - that God's provision was a result of something He was bound to give us. There are rewards for obedience, but God does not have to give these as

He is our maker, owner and ruler and so does not need to reward us for obedience or our love toward Him, but He is love and chooses to do so.

In a sense rewards are a sign of His grace but are not an act of Grace as they are for service and not done with expectation of reward or service by us.

The Grace of our God is shown by His providing for the wicked as well as the righteous. God gives both classes of people (and there are only two as there is no such thing as a fence sitter) all they need to know Him and to meet His requirements. But the wicked reject the control of God and reap the results of abusing and rejecting His Grace, as do the righteous when they also do this (its called disobedience or rebellion and is a form of idolatry by placing our will before that of God's).

The Grace of God is also shown in that He risks our rejecting Him as He removes the things of the world from our life and deals with things in our life that need correcting, replacing them with those things He wants us to have and use while maturing and discipling us through suffering, either physical, emotional or mentally. Punishment is also His Grace as He uses it to try and turn us from our incorrect ways towards His Perfect Plan for our life!

Grace is a natural outcome of God's Love, as is His Graciousness. Grace and graciousness should be a natural part of our life's expression of God in us and will be if His Love is in us.

Each member of the Godhead expresses His Grace differently.

The Father, in sending Jesus, in providing our physical and spiritual needs, in ordering the circumstances of our life for The Holy Spirit to use to guide us into the maturity required of our relationship with Him and Jesus.

The Holy Spirit as His presence is in those who respond to Him and guides, empowers and matures them to the image of Jesus.

The Lord Jesus, in giving up all He had in heaven and coming to earth as one of us to teach us about The Father, His Kingdom and The Holy Spirit, then dying to make possible what He had taught us about our roles, responsibilities relationships and rewards in The Kingdom, as well as sending The Holy Spirit to help us to keep these properly. It is with awe that we mention the Grace of Jesus to call us friend as well as step brother or stepsister!

As the song says

It is Grace that has brought us thus far and it is Grace that will carry us home.

Thankfulness

Our response to God's Grace should be thankfulness in all things as His Love and Grace are behind what happens to us as God is in complete control of all that happens to us and uses them for our benefit now and in the eternity to come.

Not to accept what God allows to happen to us and complain about it is to call his Love into question as well as to imply He made a mistake and that He is not perfect.

If we could see things as God sees them then we would always rejoice and never complain.

According to your degree of trust in God's Love, Control, Purposes and Plans for you will be your thankfulness for and acceptance of what He allows to happen to you!

Law and Grace

In Acts 15 a dispute arose over whether it was necessary for the gentiles to follow the requirements of The Mosaic Law. The area of circumcision was the issue as to a Jew it was necessary for identification with the Jewish Religion and thus with God. Verse 5 states it more clearly.

Act 15:5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Phar-

*isees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circum-
cise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.*

The counsel in Jerusalem deliberated and Peter stated that there was no difference between Jew and Gentile.

*Act 15:8-9 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them
witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;
and put no difference between us and them, purifying their
hearts by faith.*

Peter then stated that the Jews could not keep The Law so why should they expect the Gentiles to keep The Law.

*Act 15:10-11 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a
yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fath-
ers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through
the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even
as they.*

The conclusion was sent to the Gentiles as follows:

*Act 15:28-29 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to
us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary
things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and
from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication:
from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.
Fare ye well.*

The Gentiles were already doing what Jesus required and the above reply was a reinforcement to stay away from the religious practices of the day so they would not have Jesus identified with these practices.

God's Grace has freed us from the burden of The Law!

The next passage to examine is as follows:

*Col 2:14-16 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances
that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it*

out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

The ordinances against us were contained in The Law as these were the only ones God had given to mankind at that time. Jesus negated their effect on us at the cross so that we were no longer affected by the legal requirements contained in them. As a result the dietary and religious requirements of the Law were no longer applicable to us as we are now under God's Grace and He alone is our guide now in these things through His holy spirit (based on the principles revealed by Jesus in The Bible). He even gave Peter dreams to show the dietary laws were no longer in force.

Next the rules of men are examined as found in church and denominational guidelines as well as interpretations of The Bible which have no Biblical content to support them.

Col 2:20-22 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

The rules of man are not of eternal significance, neither are they incorrect application of The Bible, as they have no have no Biblical basis. These rules of men will all pass away. They actually result in legalism so that Grace is suppressed or done away with and the people placed in bondage of some degree.

Grace is not a licence to sin but a reminder that Jesus has dealt with the consequences of sin so that we no longer have to kill innocent animals to die in our place or follow rules and regulations to be acceptable to

God. God's Grace accepts us as we are and builds on that.

It is by His Grace we are able to be saved through faith and not anything we have to do except accept Jesus for who He is as Lord and Saviour and then for what He has done and obey Him out of love and thankfulness.

The Burden of The Law

Mat 11:28-30

Various renditions of this passage are as follows:

(KJV) Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

MSG) "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest.

Mat 11:29-30

(KJV) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

The burden Jesus was talking about was the law and that which Satan put on them through it. People struggled under the burden of it and Jesus was offering them a new way to relate to God based on his teachings (light) that would free them from this. So Jesus was offering the life He offers to all based on God's Grace and Love which is opposite to the burdens of The Law.

A part of this is the giving to Jesus of our problems of following Him (trials) so that we don't carry them ourselves and so that they can be dealt with By Him on our behalf.

Remember that the Law of Love fulfils the requirements of the law.

Rewards

Rewards might be the only thing we earn but even then these are a result of His Grace. A King does not have to reward a person for doing properly what they are supposed to do.

Believing God is a rewarder is also a requirement of faith. If we did not believe there was a reward that made the Christian life worth living, then we would not try as hard to live it as we should.

Blessings

A blessing is a benefit. It is a sign of His Grace towards you. It may be prophesied as coming or having occurred. As God is the giver of every good gift or thing mankind can only ask God to bless or declare it is coming or has occurred.

If a man is to provide the blessings then God will provide it to him to give as part of the stewardship that man has of the things of God.

If it is for services rendered then it is payment for service and not a Blessing. Blessings are part of God's Grace and when we bless another as God instructs us to bless them we are showing the Grace of God.

An example is where God says: "I will bless them that bless you"

A person has been blessed by another person and God says He will bless the giver of that person blessing even though He does not need too.

All true blessings come from God and a man can only ask God to release blessings. Remember it says every good and perfect gift comes from The Father and true blessings are perfect gifts from God.

God's Blessings

Luk 11:11-13 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more

shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

My mentor, and myself would quote the first two verses and say to God “where is the blessings you promised?” Until Jesus rebuked Him and said this verse refers to the Holy Spirit you have already. By keeping on quoting it you are saying you have not received the Holy Spirit yet. Why was the Holy Spirit referred to here and not blessings?

Because God had already promised these all throughout the Old Testament and did not need to restate these promises. They were known to the Jews. Here was given the promise of something better. The Holy Spirit (God Himself) living in them.

So when you ask God where the blessings are, quote His promises but not that verse.

Why does God withhold His blessings?

He has the right to as King, but does not do so carelessly or frivolously. Normally there are four reasons:

You are out of His perfect will for you so He cannot bless you as He wants (usually because of unrepented sin, unforgiveness or bitterness).

He is withholding it to mature you or so you will appreciate it more later

The person who was suppose to bless you is not listening to God so they are not doing what God wants them to do for you.

You will not use the blessing at the moment as He desires you to use it.

Another reason you do not see God’s blessing is that you are not spiritually aware enough to recognize it. Remember, God blesses you in so many ways before you even look for them:

You have life

A relationship with Him

Heaven is your Home

The Holy Spirit is in you

God meets all the needs that you don't realize you require to exist.

God also said to me we do not understand what it means to have The king's favour. When kings had absolute power, the king's favour meant you prospered in the kingdom. So if we are in a proper relationship with God He will prosper us in line with prosperity as it is given in His Kingdom and not as the world sees it. The world is the kingdom of His enemy so He will not prosper us in a way to benefit His enemy.

This means we need to look for God's prosperity in accordance with the principles of His Kingdom which have to do with eternal rewards and meeting your needs to live and serve Him there and not to have a party, wealth or a good time. He does promise to meet our needs to do His work. But all rewards of value are in His Kingdom and not on earth.

Blessings and their financing

When you Bless a person you are only giving out of the abundance God has given you above what you need to survive and do His work, not the abundance over luxuries you do not need. You are only a steward of what you have and blessing another is giving them the stewardship of something you were once steward over. This has to be after providing for the needs of your family. I repeat needs and not luxuries.

1 Chron 29:14 But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.

This giving is not sacrificial as you use what is given for your family to survive as God wants them too. It is given out of the abundance of

what God has given you above what you need to live.

This means that sacrificial giving is out of the things your family needs to live. This is unscriptural.

1 Tom 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

God looks at the heart and not the sacrifice. He looks at the reason for giving not the gift. His sacrifice is not from the deprivation of worldly goods but of the selfish desires and pleasure as give your self to Him for His purposes. He does not need things as He owns them all. He desires us. That is how we bless God by being a living sacrifice.

Ps 51: 16-17 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

When we give to another we should be only doing what God tells us because if it is not the Will of God it may actually do harm to the other person and remove a chance for God to bless them and you.

Many give out of guilt and thus actually harm the receiver who relies on their giving and not God to provide. Hence the Western world has done great disservice to the poorer countries making them rely on their giving rather than the countries own supply of good or helping them to become self sufficient and thus making these countries vulnerable when the west can no longer give to them. They have, by this, made these countries rely on the western and not of their country and thus these

people are not prepared to survive in the disasters and famines that are to come. Instead of learning to rely on God, they rely on the West and thus God cannot do His work of miraculous provision in their country. I am not talking about disasters but normal events that cause hardship or problems in a country.

This wrong giving also deprives the poor in the West from receiving aid they should have from the churches and so the Love of God is not shown as it should, even to people in their own church let alone other churches.

Emergency or disaster relief are different but even then it should not come out of what you need to keep and feed your family and should also be guided by The Holy Spirit.

By this wrongful giving to these poor countries Satan has robbed many of blessings both in the West and in these poorer countries and along with needs for the structure to maintain denominationalism has tied up much money that could have helped the poor, the needy and brought many to Jesus.

When you bless make certain it is what God wants in the manner God wants.

God is Love thus His nature is to bless. But we must place ourselves in a position to be able to be blessed by God which means we must work at the relationship we have with Him so He can meet our needs and bless us.