

## Grace of God II

# The Grace of God in the New Testament

Fred R. Coulter—February 2, 1985

How many have this booklet, *Grace of God of the Bible*? This is one that I wrote when we first began Biblical [Church of God]. I would have to say that at this point now we've grown a lot in understanding concerning grace, but I think you're going to be very surprised as why, when we were in Worldwide Church of God, we did not learn about the grace of God, and I think you're going to be absolutely floored!

Let's just review concerning *The Grace of God in the Old Testament* {#2 this series}. In studying through concerning the Grace of God in the Bible, it dawned on me that this is an example of kind of a personal experience in how you feel when you grow in knowledge. Remember, the Bible says that you learn 'here a little and there a little; precept upon precept, and here a little and there a little.'

This is exactly what it is, and if you want to know how much this part of the Bible has been used by me all you have to do is look at the pages and you can almost see by the color, and that's from the hand, just over the years, my dirty fingers have left these little marks and the little bit of sweat in the palm of my hands. I've got it marked. I probably have a half a dozen different pens and different times I've made major insertions in it.

How many times have I preached sermons on the Sabbath? How many times have we gone back and gone over the story of Adam and Eve? I know that the Worldwide Church of God there's only one version you ever hear and that's the only sermon you ever hear from one person, so you don't want to go back to Gen. 1, 2, and 3, but it dawned on me that in Gen. 2 when God made the Sabbath, let's see what He did to it.

Genesis 2:1: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And by *the beginning of* the seventh day God finished His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day..." (vs 1-3).

Most people think it's a curse, but it's a blessing. He blessed the day. Why aren't people anxious to keep the day that God blessed? That's strange—isn't it? Sometimes things become so crystal clear that when you see it in it's proper light it's just amazing—isn't it? You would think since people would want a blessing from God that they

would want to keep the day He blessed. So, He blessed it.

Verse 3: "And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."

When you go through and read the rest of the account, the Sabbath Day was given while Adam and Eve were in a state of grace, because they were given permission to eat of all of the trees of the garden *including the Tree of Life*. You cannot eat of the Tree of Life unless you have a state of grace.

The Sabbath was given not only as a law, as we find in Exo. 20 and Deut. 5, but it was given to mankind as an act of grace. {see booklet: *Which Day is the True Christian Sabbath?*} Sabbath-keeping: Is it salvation *by works*? *or* Is it an *act of grace*? I think that when people read that they're going to be absolutely surprised that keeping the Sabbath is an *act of grace*. We will see that God has given us good works that He ordained that we should walk in and the Sabbath is one of those *good works*. You can go back and go over the Scriptures where it says in Isa. 58, 'If you will turn your foot from the Sabbath and call it a delight,' etc, etc.

Ephesians 2:10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them." Wasn't the Sabbath one of those things ordained that we should walk in? *Certainly!* Wherever you find Sabbath-breaking, just go back and re-read Ezek. 20. When they broke the Sabbath He said, 'How long refuse you to walk in My commandments?'

Go to Exo. 16:27-28<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>, where the fellow went out on the Sabbath to look for manna, and God said, 'How long refuse you to keep My commandments?' It's one of those good works, and it's a blessing. I can tell you that I know that from experience from the last three weeks sitting at home, that it is a blessing to keep the Sabbath and to assemble as God has said. There's just no two ways about it.

Let's see a reference to the Old Testament in 1-Peter 1; it's talking about the salvation and the grace that is given to us, and that even though the prophets of old were under the grace of God by their calling and their message, and their promise to be in the Kingdom of God, they didn't understand some of the things that we understand.

1-Peter 1:10: “Concerning which salvation the prophets who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you... [toward you; they didn’t understand it, but it was one of those things that God gave and they preached it] ...have diligently searched out and intently inquired, searching into what *way* and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ *which* was in them was indicating, testifying beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and these glories that would follow; to whom it was revealed that, not for themselves, but to us they were ministering these things, which now have been announced to you by those who have preached the Gospel... [glad tidings, KJV] ...to you by *the Holy Spirit...*” (vs 10-12).

We are going to see why it is called *the glad tidings*. We are going to see why we have been missing the joy of God’s salvation. *Partly because of our own sins, partly because of our own weakness and infirmity!* When you’re in pain and misery you can’t be jumping up and down for joy, that is true. I’m talking about the overall, why can’t you feel good about being a Christian kind of thing? Why do you have to go around with a guilty conscience all the time? The Catholics are the ones who make you have a guilty conscience, because the Catholics have turned the grace of God into justification by Catholic works, and they turned it into lasciviousness.

Zechariah 3 talks about the time of the coming of Christ. This is one of the many parts. Isaiah is full of the prophecies of the grace of Christ, the crucifixion of Christ, and all the things having to do with what God was going to do with the grace of God that was to be given to us. Zechariah 3:8: “Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your fellows who sit before you; for they *are* men wondered at, for behold, I will bring forth My Servant the Branch!” That’s referring directly to Jesus Christ.

Zechariah 4:6: “Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, ‘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.’” How many times have we heard that preached, and yet, physical means were sought to bring about salvation. *No!* It’s by God’s Spirit.

Verse 7: “Who *are* you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel *you shall become* a plain; and he shall bring forth the Headstone [Christ] with shoutings, ‘Grace! Grace unto it!’” This was a direct reference of the tremendous *act of Grace of God* in sending Jesus Christ.

Even though God is a God of grace in the Old Testament and New Testament, He reveals that grace to us as individuals in the New Testament in a very profound way. {read Isa. 55:6-7; 61:1-3

(quoted in Luke 4 where it says ‘Come unto Me that are heavy laden and you can buy without money, and you can have bread without price’). Then Isa. 66:1-2.} Those are prophecies of the grace that God would give to individuals.

Now let’s get into *The Grace of God in the New Testament*. Remember that I had this where I showed you the number of Scriptures that were included in the literature in the Worldwide Church of God, and how that on one page they had one column and two thirds of another column type written page. I’ve gone back and analyzed every one of those and in the entire literature of the Worldwide Church of God they only use ten Scriptures referring to the *grace of God*. *Ten!* Now, is it any wonder that people in the Worldwide Church of God do not understand the grace of God?

There’s one thing that the grace of God does: *it sets you free!* Not free *to* sin, but it sets you free *from* sin, and it sets you free to where you have that direct contact with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Who is the only Mediator? *Jesus Christ!* It sets you free from control and manipulation by men. So therefore, whichever church wants to control people cannot preach the true Grace of God. They cannot do it.

Let me count the Scriptures: 39 in the booklet that was supposed to teach about grace had to do with either commandment-keeping only, or the fear of going into the Lake of Fire. That is really something! And yet, the most important thing that we need to do, and, though I heard it preached from the pulpit from time to time, 2-Peter 3 was not in any of the literature. It’s not here on the literature list. I was absolutely dumbfounded! I knew it was not too good, but I didn’t realize how bad. I don’t want anyone to take this as an attack on the Worldwide Church of God, but it shows an error in *their* teaching.

- Do we point out the errors of Protestants? *Sure we do!*
- Do we point out the errors of other doctrines? *Yes!*
- How do we point them out?
- Just by making fun of them? *No!*

We point them out by the Scriptures and whatever the Scriptures say that’s what we go by. Not just one or two but we take the whole thing. We’re going to go very thoroughly through the grace of God in the Bible.

2-Peter 3:17: “Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance, be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own

steadfastness; rather, **be growing in the grace and the knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ..." (vs 17-18)

In studying for this, there's part of it I'm going to have to omit concerning Jesus Christ until we get down toward the time of the Passover. We can answer the question for sure: Why are we to remember the death of Jesus Christ? Why is it that the Passover pictures His death and we are to, as it says in 1-Cor. 11, have a memorial of His death till He should come?

The Protestants would say, 'We celebrate His resurrection' with their so-called Easter. Why does God say we are to commemorate His death? We'll answer that before this Passover, and I think you're going to be absolutely amazed—I know I was in studying it—what God has done for us, and why we should remember His death even though we are saved by His life. We are to grow in the grace and the knowledge of God, and we should be doing that constantly. That's something we need to always continually look forward to.

I think as far as the group, *physically* we are perhaps one of the weakest groups you could ever find on the face of the earth. But *spiritually* let's hope that we can do as the Apostle Paul said, that God did many things with him as a *pattern for those who would believe afterwards*. We would have to say that with the sickness and the illness that the Apostle Paul had—I mean, there's just no two ways around it—God called him to preach the grace of God—didn't He? Yet, he himself was afflicted with at terrible eye disease, so bad that he even apologized that he may have appeared repulsive to the Galatians. Now, that's pretty bad!

Let me just give you an example. Have you ever seen someone who was disfigured so much you didn't want to, but the only thing you could do was stare at them? You felt real bad about staring at them, but it was so grotesque that was all you could do, just kind of out of shock and disbelief. Well, the Apostle Paul was much that way. What did they say to Jesus? '*If you be the Son of God get off this cross, then we'll believe you!*' I imagine there were a lot of people telling the Apostle Paul, 'When I see you healed then I will believe what you are saying.' Did God heal him? *No!* It's not based upon the physical condition alone. Here's one of the things that the Apostle Paul was an example for all of us in.

Let's get the full story flow, 2-Corinthians 12:1: "Indeed, it is not expedient for me to boast. But I will come to visions and revelations of *the Lord*." It seems to me that we heard people boast about how many of this and that that they have done and published and printed and preached to, and

countries they went to, etc., etc. The Apostle Paul didn't. He did it out only out of foolishness.

Verse 2: "I know a man in Christ *who*, fourteen years ago, was caught up to *the* third heaven. (Whether *this man was* in *the* body, I do not know; or out of the body, I do not know—God knows)." This is when he was being taught directly by Jesus Christ and he was in such a condition that he didn't know whether he was in the body, whether he was out of the body, or what.

Verse 3: "Now, I know such a man (whether *taken up* in *the* body, or out of the body, I do not know—**God knows**), *and* that he was caught up to Paradise, and heard unutterable sayings, which a man is not permitted to speak" (vs 3-4). I'm sure a lot of those things he didn't understand. What language do they use at the throne of God? If anyone wants to speak in tongues let them try that on for size. The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. In other words the Holy Spirit translates it into whatever language God receives it in. Though God can understand all languages because God confounded the languages so He invented it.

Verse 5: "I will boast of such a one as this; but of myself I personally will not boast, except concerning my weaknesses. But even if I choose to boast, I shall not be a fool; for I will speak the Truth. However, I will forbear, lest anyone think of me above what he sees me *to be*, or what he hears from me. But in order that I might not be exalted by the abundance of the revelations, *there* was given to me a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me, so that I might not be exalted" (vs 5-7).

There are certain things that God does just to humble him. The messenger of Satan, some people say, was a demon. I don't think that it was a demon, I think it was just an affliction that Satan was allowed to put upon him like Satan did upon Job. But just as Job was afflicted he was not Satan possessed, nor was he bothered with a demon. I would have to conclude it would be exactly the same.

"...to buffet me, so that I might not be exalted.... [God allowed him to have that, actually caused it] ...I besought the Lord three times for this, that it might depart from me; but He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you...'" (vs 7-9). I think the longer we live the more we're going to see about the Grace of God, that that is the most sufficient thing we could have.

Why is that the most sufficient thing that we could have? *Because it doesn't matter what we are in the flesh! It doesn't matter who we are or what we*

*are in the flesh if we have the grace of God!* Is there anything greater than the grace of God? Can there possibly be anything greater? *No, there cannot be!*

That's why the Bible says when you compare physical things among physical things you're unwise, or compare yourself with others. You're unwise because you're not looking to the Spirit of God or the grace of God, which is all encompassing. That's what I can certainly say with us, the grace of God is going to have to be sufficient for us. God will take care of us physically in His own way and His own time as God sees that it's going to be. Sometimes God uses that as a tremendous example and witness to other people, because they will say, 'How can you believe in God when you suffer like that?' And you give the simple answer, *well, the grace of God is sufficient for me!*

We're all not going to live forever in the flesh, and yet somehow there's a strange quirk of human nature that we want to perpetuate the flesh forever and ever. It just doesn't work that way. It isn't going to.

Time marches on and we either weigh more or less, have more gray hair, or less hair. Our children get older. Like my wife was saying about Jonathan, in a year he is going to be going to Phoenix, and the chances of him coming home other than to visit after that is going to be very remote. He's a man. So is David; they are young men; they are not little babies any more. I mean, we can remember when they were born.

I remember when all of our children were born because I was there when they were born. I remember especially when David was born. Brought him out, put him on the table to clean him up, and there's Grandpa Henshaw and he said, 'Whoa! Look at that back! Look at that back!' David to this day has got a good strong back, and a good stand, and enjoys track and so forth. Now he's a man. He's going to be making his own way. He's going to be earning his own money. And at that point we can say, thank God. After all the cost and everything that goes into it. That's just part of life. We need to understand about the grace of God and let it be a sufficiency for us.

I have several definitions of grace and what it means and so forth. 'Charisma' means *the gift of God!*

- the *physical gifts* that God can give
- the *spiritual gifts* of God
  - ✓ chrisma
  - ✓ charismatos

Let's look at some Scriptures concerning that:

2-Corinthians 1:11: "While you also are laboring together for us by supplication *to God*, that the **gift** to us from many persons might be *the cause* of thanksgiving by many for us." The word *gift* you can see is 'charisma'—this is just the *physical gift of goods*. It's just a blessing, a gift. Refers to the *spiritual gifts*...

1-Peter 4:10: "*Let each one, according as he has received a gift from God...*" There are gifts of the Holy Spirit. There's another Greek word for gifts: 'dorea'—*gift of God*. When it talks about the *spiritual gifts* in 1-Cor. 12 it is 'dorea.' Here we are talking about a gift in the way of 'charisma.'

"...*be using it to serve the others as good stewards of the Grace of God which manifests itself in various ways*" (v 10). We're going to see quite a few instances where we have the grace of God, which here is 'charitos' and 'charisma'—both of those.

Verse 11: "If anyone speaks, *let it be* as the words of God; if anyone serves, *let it be* as from *the* strength which God supplies; so that in everything, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ to Whom is the glory and the power into the ages of eternity. Amen."

Romans 1:11: "For I am longing to see you, so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift... [Here 'charisma' is referring to a *spiritual gift*. What is one of the most important spiritual gifts that can be imparted to someone? *The understanding of God's grace! The understanding of God's Word!*] ...in order that you may be established."

2-Timothy 1:6, where the Apostle Paul says: "For this reason, I admonish you to stir up **the gift** of God... ['tau charisma'] ...that is in you by the laying on of my hands.... [This obviously was with the ordination for the ministry. There are certain gifts that are imparted at that time.] ...For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness" (vs 6-7).

Romans 5:15: "But *should* not the free gift be even as the offense *was*?.... [The receiving of the gift of grace comes from the same word 'charisma.' We receive the Grace of God 'charis' or 'charite' or 'charitos'—either one, but we get the free gift.] ...For if by the transgression of the one man many died, how much more did the Grace of God, and the gift of grace... ['dorea'—the other word for gift.] ...which *is* by the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many?"

Let's look at the word 'charis' or 'charitos'—which we have the English word *charity*.

Here are the meanings of the definition of the word 'charis' or 'charitos':

1. graciousness, attractiveness, pleasantness
2. thanks or gratitude
3. favor, grace, gracious care, or help of goodwill

A broad definition means *the gracious intention of God*. What God is doing for us is really a fantastic thing.

4. on the part of God and Christ to us the possession of Divine grace as a source of blessings for the believer

We're going to go through this very thoroughly, and since so few people have really had the grace of God expounded, we're going to go through every Scripture. I know it's going to take a little while to do it. It may prolong the series in the book of John, but there are certain needs that we have and especially with the Passover coming up we are going to really be benefited when we understand this very thoroughly.

It really helps you in your relationship with God. I guarantee one thing, that if everyday you put your life under the grace of God and thank God for His goodness and His grace, you're going to have a much better day; you're not going to have to be overcoming and working on yourself. I've heard many ministers get up there and say, that you have to just beat the flesh and work on yourself—pray an hour and study an hour—in the most hateful way. So you do it.

At Ambassador College the students, when I was there, would be hours in the prayer booth. Every little thing was regimented because we were doing it rather than letting God do it for us. I mean we accomplished certain things. We did accomplish. You can do certain things that way. But you end up with a *salvation by works* because it's what *you* do rather than what Christ *in you* does. When you put yourself under the grace of God what Christ *in you* does then is accomplished without having to just beat the flesh. You try it. What's that old saying, 'Try it you'll like it.'

5. A store of grace that is dispensed

Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? MAY IT NEVER BE!...." (vs 1-2). That shows that you can draw on that store of grace when you sin. But you don't go out and sin so that more grace can come.

6. a state of grace or standing in God's grace
7. a deed of grace

For example: God the Father sending Jesus Christ with His death and resurrection and so forth.

8. a work of grace

We're going to see that there are works of grace. That's almost contradictory—isn't it? God's work *in us* is a work of grace—isn't it?

- if we're called by grace
- if we are saved by grace
- if we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus

then it is *God's work* in us which is a *work of grace*.

9. A work of grace that grows from more to more.

That's an interesting definition—isn't it? It grows from more to more. God is called *the God of all grace*. Let's talk a little bit about humility, because there's a false humility, too. I heard someone give a sermon recently on humility. Again, we must all make ourselves humble.

- What is the most humble act you can do?
- Is it that you make yourself humble and weak?
- Is it that you take a very contrite position?

I was watching this TV report on AIDS, there wasn't one man there that had a man's voice, even including the straight guys who were there just interviewing. And the society has been so feminized that a man can't speak as a man anymore, because everybody's offended. Should we all speak humbly and softly?

- Does that make us humble?
- What makes a person humble?
- What is the most humiliating act you can do?
- *Repentance and standing in God's grace!*

*That is true humility*; not something you put on; not something that you do or work up. I mean, a person can work up *superficial* humility out of vanity. I think maybe in the case of the poverty vow, that's a *superficial* case of humility out of vanity. 'Oh, we have given up everything.' But we lust after it all.

1-Peter 5:5: "In the same manner, *you* younger men... [That is not necessarily referring to younger elders vs elders; that means younger people in age.] ...be subject to *the* older men; and all *of you* be subject to one another, being clothed with humility... [How do you do that? How do you bind on, or put on humility?] ...because God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble. Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God..." (vs 5-6).

You submit yourself completely to God. That is the most humbling thing you can do. That doesn't necessarily make you humble before people, because you are humble to God. Look at the example of Moses. He was called the meekest man

on the face of the earth, but how did he treat those who rebelled against him? *He prayed to God and then he stood up and told them what they were: a pack of sinners.*

What did he do when he first saw all the Israelites sinning when he came down off the mount? *In anger he threw down the Ten Commandments that God wrote with His own hand!* Then he had the humility to ask God to spare them. He had the humility when God said, 'Hey, I'll fulfill My promise through you. You're of Abraham's seed, I'll destroy them and I'll fulfill it through them.' Moses said, 'No, God, please. If You're going to do that, blot my name out of the book of Life.' God said, 'Okay, I won't do that but I will do with whom I have to do with whom.' He spared them because Moses was humble. But he sure didn't appear humble before the people. They came up and said, 'Who are you to take all this to yourself?' So, *the most humbling thing you can do is submit yourself to God!*

Verse 6: "Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time; casting all your cares upon Him... [That's how you put yourself under the grace of God] ...because He cares for you. Be sober! Be vigilant! For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour. Whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in the world. Now, may **the God of all grace...**" (vs 6-10). That's why we need to come to God.

I think we can safely say that the difference between a religion of men and the Truth of God is when the people are pointed to the Grace of God to trust in God and have that relationship with God *vs* trust in a man or trust in an organization, or trust in numbers or trust in past works or whatever.

"Now, may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while, Himself perfect you, establish, strengthen, *and* settle *you*. To Him *be* the glory and the power into the ages of eternity. Amen. By Silvanus, a faithful brother to you, as I reckon, I have written *to you* briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is *the* true Grace of God in which you stand" (vs 10-12).

(go to the next track)

I want to ask you: What is the Gospel? *Everyone would unanimously answer, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God—correct? Well, we're going to see that there are two parts to that:*

- 1) The Gospel of the Kingdom of God

- 2) The Gospel of the Grace of God and our Lord Jesus Christ

Which one is more important? *Since they're stated together they are both important!* You're going to be amazed; we're going to learn some new things. Acts 20 is where Paul came to Miletus and he called for the elders at Ephesus and had them come down and Paul was preaching to them. After Paul got the elders of the Church of Ephesus down there:

Acts 20:18: "And when they had come to him, he said to them, 'You know how, from the first day I came to Asia, *and* all the time I was with you, I served the Lord with all humility and *with* many tears and temptations, which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; *and* how I did not keep back anything that was profitable, *but* preached to you, and taught you publicly and from house-to-house" (vs 18-20).

This is not going from house-to-house banging on the doors like the Jehovah Witnesses do. They always descend on our place on the Sabbath. There was a whole gang of about 20 out there on the street corner, and I think it was the last Sabbath I came up here. I drove out there and I said, 'Please don't go to this house over here.' Cause they come around and bang on the door every Sabbath. It doesn't mean that. He taught them publicly, he taught them in the Church, and in different houses, from house-to-house wherever the people were.

Verse 21: "Earnestly testifying, both to *the* Jews and *the* Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now behold, I am bound in the spirit, *and* am going to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall happen to me there; except that the Holy Spirit fully testifies in every city, saying that bonds and tribulations await me. But I myself do not take any *of these* things into account, nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify the Gospel [glad tidings] of the Grace of God" (vs 21-24). The glad tidings!

Why is it called the 'glad tidings' of the grace of God, or the Gospel of the Grace of God? *Because one of the most profound things that can happen to an individual in the grace of God is to not have sin imputed to him!* Even though 'the law of sin and death' is still in us, God does not look to that law of sin and death that causes us, when we sin, to serve the flesh. That's fantastic when we really understand that.

In other words, if we sin a sin that is a sin not unto death, as John said there in 1-John 5:16<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>, God is going to forgive that. A sin unto death

is the *unpardonable sin*. We can have the confidence in coming to God and claiming that grace because *we stand* in that grace. That's why there needs to be the joy of the salvation of God, and the happiness and the faith in the assurance that that is so. If God, Who put 'the law of sin and death' in us, condemns us because it is there, then we have no hope. Every time we do some little thing that we don't want to do, or maybe even some major thing that we don't really want to do or we're sorry we've done it, if God condemns us for that and beats us over the head all the time there's no hope for anybody. There is no hope of salvation for anyone. That's why we need the grace of God.

That's why he said, v 24: "...and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify **the Gospel of the Grace of God**.... [that's really tremendous] ...And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom of God, will see my face no more" (vs 24-25). There it is together.

He preached the Kingdom of God, but the Kingdom of God must preach the grace of God. How we missed that for years is amazing. I mean, we're going to see so many things that have been missed for so long it's going to be incredible. That's why there are so many misunderstandings that come along.

I will tell you another thing: *That's why people, when things don't go right, become so disillusioned*, because they blame themselves for everything that happens. When you blame yourself for something that happens and you don't think that God is going to help you out, and you carry that guilt around with you, it's a terrible burden to carry. There have been too many people put into that position. I have been there; you have been there; others are there. We need to understand about the grace of God and what He's doing more than anything else.

10. Jesus Christ is the only means by which the grace of God is mediated to men

Can you think of a Scripture that says that? *Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.'* He is the **only means**, and it's through His birth, death and resurrection. What God has done and still does for man in Jesus Christ His Son is God's outstanding act of grace.

This sermon is based upon John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life." And how that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world; of course, that's in God's time.

11. God the Father is the source from which grace comes to man

What's a Scripture that verifies that? *'None can come to the Me. Christ said of Himself, except the Father draw him.'* That's the first act of grace. Do you believe that God has called you? If you *believe* and *know* that God has called you then be confident and happy in that grace that God has given, that God the Father the Supreme Being of the whole universe reached down and called you. He didn't call you because you were righteous. He didn't call anybody because they were righteous, because the Bible says, **'There is none righteous, there is none that does good, no not one.'** God calls us because He calls us, and we virtually have no say-so about it.

Look at Paul. He was trooping off on the horses or donkeys, whatever they were on, going over to Damascus and he was trudging along and probably figuring what he was going to do to string up those Christians and BAM! he got knocked off the horse. Did Paul have anything to say about his calling? *Not a thing!* It doesn't happen that dramatically to everybody, believe me, but it happens to us nevertheless. That is tremendous! God is the Source from which grace comes to mankind.

12. Jesus Christ is the God ordained means by which the grace most effectively reaches man in his need

We are going to see that we have need. Grace is quite the reverse of a reward for good conduct. Bill Cosby did the Noah one. I forget the whole sequence, but I remember this where Bill Cosby says, 'I've been good! I've been good!' And that's the way most people view things. You do something 'good' and God is supposed to recognize the good that you do. Salvation by works is *doing good things to make God recognize what you've done* that is good. But that's impossible because in *the law of sin and death* you cannot truly, aside from God, do a Godly act.

We can do good things in the community. We can be upstanding in the community. That's in the community level. That's on an individual level. But as far as God is concerned it's the same difference as between not stealing to pick up the goods, and lusting.

There are a lot of people who have never stolen. But I'm sure would love to have had the opportunity, and to have gotten away with it, because it's there; the lust is there! *or* It could be of adultery, or it could be of other things.

13. Grace is quite the reverse of a reward for good conduct.

*It is rather a means of rescuing man from his own deep failure.* That's why we need the grace of God. We can be successful in the world—can't we? Even Jesus said a man can gain the whole world, but what is the profit if he loses his soul. We're talking about *spiritual failure* that human beings cannot measure up to the righteousness of God on their own.

14. Rescuing him from his own deep failure and harm and helplessness to overcome it alone.

I tell you try to overcome something alone and by your own works, it is futile. How many have ever done that? I've heard it preached, too: 'You work on that sin and you overcome that sin.' That's the wrong advice. You go pray for God's grace and mercy and pray for God's gift with Christ in you that you can overcome. It's a totally different situation because you beat the flesh to overcome if you do it yourself, and you get absolutely frustrated.

A good example of that is you can do it to a certain extent but for example someone who's an absolute confirmed alcoholic cannot stop and cannot help themselves, and though they resolve—though they hate it, though they detest it—they are completely helpless. It's the same way spiritually. We cannot save ourselves. If we can save ourselves by our good works we wouldn't need Jesus Christ. That's why Gal. 3 says, 'If there were a law which would give life then truly salvation would come through a law.' But it has to come from God through His grace.

15. Obedience to the law to gain acceptance with God equals under law for justification.

One's acceptance with God is not something we can achieve by his own merits or works, but is chosen and called and made accepted, forgiven, blessed with the Holy Spirit of God, made heir of eternal life, made sons of God as a gracious undeserved gift from God the Father through Jesus Christ. That's what the grace of God has in the way of meaning.

Now I'm going to read to you the first part of the book, *The Grace of God In The New Testament* that I wrote about five years ago now.

To understand the *Grace of God* as revealed in the New Testament is to comprehend one of the most wonderful attributes of God; and is the *key* to a deep, personal relationship between God the Father and every Christian, through Jesus Christ.

The Grace of God expresses the *greatness of his love* and the *richness* of His mercy! To live within and under the Grace of God

is to experience and appreciate the *fantastic* love of God and His merciful kindness.

Contrary to religious speculations, grace is not just a theological tenant or topic of argument; drawing denominational battle lines; in fact, the Grace of God means *life itself!* Without grace there would be *no salvation, no Christianity! No eternal life!*

Indeed, *grace is the foundation of true Christianity.* The New Testament reveals that God the Father's *grace* is an *all encompassing* quality.

The Grace of God has tremendous meaning to those who really understand it. Through, Jesus Christ, God's gift of *grace* is granted so we may spiritually *grow up unto Him*, Jesus Christ—the Son of God—Who is the Head of God's Church, in all things.

The *Scriptural Truth* is that God the Father, through His GRACE and salvation, will share His eternal life, existence and glory with all human beings who *truly* love Him with *all* their hearts, and minds and beings.

The potential of our destiny to become the literal sons of God through the Grace of God is the *most incredible* and least understood Truths of the Bible. The Apostle John wrote, "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is" (1-John 3:1-2).

This is why Peter was inspired to admonish us to *grow in the grace* and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "Rather, be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and into *the* day of eternity. Amen." (2-Peter 3:18). ***Grace is based on love***

Love is the basis for the relationship and fellowship between God the Father, Jesus Christ and the person who has been called to salvation. ***God is Love!*** "The one who does not love does not know God because



God is love. In this way the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this act is the love—not that we loved God; rather, that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also are duty-bound to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. Yet, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and His own love is perfected in us.” (1-John 4:8-12).

Our relationship with God *must* be based on love! “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.” This is the first commandment” (Mark 12:30). Love is the foundation of grace and without this foundation there is *nothing!*

As such then, *grace* is the primary quality or attribute; the first extension or expression of *God’s love*. Therefore, *grace* is the primary quality and function of the spiritual relationship and the fellowship between God the Father and the person He calls through Jesus Christ.

Now let’s see a couple examples of God’s grace in intervening in our lives. The salvation that was given needs to be stated this way:

- the first one to receive the grace of God in the events leading up to the birth of Jesus Christ was Zacharias and Elisabeth his wife, with the birth of John the Baptist.
- the very next one to receive direct grace and favor was Mary.

Luke 1:28: “And after coming to her, the angel said, ‘Hail, you who are highly favored!...’” If you look at that long Greek word ‘favored one’ you will see ‘charitee’. It is ‘kacharitee o mene’ is the way you pronounce that long word. Do you see ‘charitee’ right in there?

“...The Lord is with you; blessed are you among women.’ But when she saw him, she was greatly perplexed at his message, and was considering what kind of salutation this might be. Then the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found grace with God... [It’s the exact same thing. Noah found grace. Exact same thing. Mary found grace with God.] ...and behold, you shall conceive in your womb and give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Jesus’” (vs 28-31).

Direct message from God. Mary found

grace. Why did she need to find grace? Contrary to the Catholic doctrine of the ‘immaculate conception,’ there had to be two immaculate conceptions for the Catholic doctrine.

- 1) for Mary, as the Catholics believe so she would not receive the stain of Adams sin on her soul
- 2) the immaculate conception of Jesus Christ

Well, the fact is Jesus did have *the law of sin and death* in Him. He did receive that from His mother Mary, as part of His physical inheritance, otherwise He could not have died. And one other thing as to why the death of Jesus was so profound was because He didn’t have the law of sin and death in Him, just as a person, *He bore in His body our sins!* So, I’ve given you a couple things to think about to understand more about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Here is a tremendous verse that ought to just really bring you a lot of peace of mind and happiness and joy. That’s aside from the daily frustrations we have to go through in this life. Ephesians 1:5: “Having predestinated us for sonship... [‘huiiothesian’—which means *sonship*] ...to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will, to the praise of the glory of His grace... [‘cheritous’—God’s grace] ...wherein He made us objects [recipients] of His grace in the Beloved Son” (vs 5-6). You think about that! We have been made the *objects* of God’s grace. Once we are called through God’s grace we are the *objects* of God’s grace.

We have a little thing in language called the object of the preposition—correct? That is the one that receives the action. We are receiving the action of God’s grace. We are the objects of that grace in Jesus Christ. That is mind-boggling when you really think of it and really put that together! We are recipients. We are made “...objects [recipients] of His grace in the Beloved Son.”

Verse 7: “In Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” You just think upon that for a minute! How rich is God’s grace? Why did the Apostle Paul say, ‘What? Shall we sin that grace may abound? God forbid!’ God’s grace abounds more than we have ever comprehended or understood, and

- we stand in that grace
- we are recipients of that grace
- we are objects of that grace

That is a tremendous thing. You talk about mentally and spiritually helping you approach God, that should help an awful lot.

It will help us in our relationship with each other. It will help us overcome the greatest sins that Christians do unto another: Judging one another and judging one another's hearts. That's why Jesus said, 'Judge not lest you be judged' when you judge to condemnation. Isn't that what has happened to everyone of us? We've been judged to condemnation by others in the name of Christ when we ought to have it understood we are the recipients of the Grace of God, so therefore, who are we to judge the servant of God? If you are all under God's grace and His servants then to judge you to condemnation is to judge a servant of God. I'm not referring to just ministers. Do you serve God? *If you serve God you are a servant of God!* You may not be a minister but you are a servant of Him.

You see how that just clears the air? It just clears the air. Therefore, we don't have to snoop in people's lives. When you understand that, isn't it ridiculous how many grilling sessions that people had to go through, ministers coming over to their house and wanting to know what was going on? 'What were you doing? I heard this.' Then we'd get tongues plowing into everybody's lives. Can you see what happens when a whole church bases their doctrine of salvation on ten Scriptures, when there are literally 151 to tell us about the grace of God. That the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is the Gospel of Grace which Paul put ahead of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Let's keep all of these things in perspective.

Ephesians 2:4: "But God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For you have been saved by grace.*)" (vs 4-5). This Greek word here is 'sodezo menoi'—which means *having been saved*. Right now we are in a state of *having been saved* from the 'prince of the power of the air,' and saved from the penalty of death from our sins. So, in that sense we *have been saved*, but we are in the *process of being saved*, if we stand in the grace, and we *shall be saved* at the resurrection. By grace you have been saved. (1-Cor. 15).

Verse 6: "And He has raised *us* up together and has caused *us* to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages that *are* coming..." (vs 6-7). That's when we are going to sit down on those thrones: 'And I saw thrones and they that sat on them...' (Rev. 20:4). That's when we will be there in the heavenlies.

"...He might show the exceeding riches of His grace..." (v 7). That's a phrase I really want to understand. I can tell you this right now, I have a sense and a feeling for it but I don't fully comprehend the "...riches of His grace..."

- How rich is God?
- How great is His grace?
- How fantastic is His mercy?

We can only understand that as we grow in grace and knowledge. I think we understand it to a certain degree but that's what I want to work on and understand more.

"...in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God... [The saving the faith and the calling, every bit of it's from God.] ...not of works, so that no one may boast" (vs 7-9). If there were a law that we could keep perfectly, which would be the key that would compel God to give us His grace, just think of the boasting that there would be when a person finally did it. God doesn't want anyone boasting.

Verse 10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them."

This is such a fundamental thing that I think is going to help us all grow closer to God and each other and have more love for God and each other when we understand how God has treated us. He hasn't dealt with us after our sin. You know 'the wages of sin is death.' He hasn't dealt with us after our sins and we can be thankful for that.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 2:1-3
- 2) Ephesians 2:10
- 3) 1 Peter 1:10-12
- 4) Zechariah 3:8
- 5) Zechariah 4:6
- 6) 1 Peter 3:17-18
- 7) 2 Corinthians 12:1-9
- 8) 2 Corinthians 1:11
- 9) 1 Peter 4:10-11
- 10) Romans 1:11
- 11) 2 Timothy 1:6-7
- 12) Romans 5:15
- 13) Romans 6:1-2
- 14) 1 Peter 5:5-12
- 15) Acts 20:18-25

- 16) John 3:16
- 17) 1 John 3:1-2
- 18) 2 Peter 3:18
- 19) 1 John 4:8-12
- 20) Mark 12:30
- 21) Luke 1:28-31
- 22) Ephesians 1:5-7
- 23) Ephesians 2:4-10

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 1; 3
- Exodus 20
- Deuteronomy 5
- Ezekiel 20
- Exodus 16:27-28
- Isaiah 55:6-7; 61:1-3
- Luke 4
- Isaiah 66:1-2
- 1 Corinthians 11
- 1 John 5:16
- Galatians 3
- 1 Corinthians 15
- Revelation 20:4

Also referenced:

- Book: *Grace of God in the New Testament* by Fred R. Coulter
- Booklet: *Which Day is the True Christian Sabbath?* by Fred R. Coulter
- Sermon Series: *The Holy Sabbath*