

## Grace of God III

# What Does the Grace of God Do For Us?

Fred R. Coulter—February 16, 1985

I would like to review just a little bit and to go over the meanings of grace again. The Greek word for *grace* is ‘charis,’ ‘charitos’ or ‘charite’—and it has the following meanings:

1. graciousness, attractiveness
2. thanks or gratitude
3. favor, grace, gracious care, or help or good will, the gracious intention of God
4. on the part of God the Father and Jesus Christ toward us or to us, the possession of Divine grace as a source of blessings for the believer
5. a store of grace that is to be dispensed, a state of grace, or that is standing in God’s grace, a deed of grace worked by God in Christ. A work of grace that grows more to more.

In discussing this the last time, it was also brought up that *grace is the forgiveness of sin*. That is not quite a correct definition of grace. Your sins are forgiven *because of* God’s grace. The *act of forgiveness* is the *result* of grace. Grace itself does not mean just the forgiveness of sin.

Otherwise, when you get to the openings of Paul where he said, ‘Grace be to you,’ is he saying ‘Your sins be forgiven to you?’ *or* Is he talking about something of a broader meaning and a broader sense? *We’ll see that it’s a broader meaning and broader sense!*

1-Peter 5:10 shows that God is the *God of all grace*. Then Jesus Christ is the only means by which the grace of God is mediated to men, through His birth, death, and resurrection and function as our High Priest in heaven. What God has done, and is still doing, for man in Jesus Christ His Son is God’s outstanding *act of grace*.

This ties in with the Scripture in John 14:6: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am **the** Way, and **the** Truth, and **the** Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.’” That narrows it down very, very specifically. Why is that so? The reason that is so, and the reason that God has it narrowed down into the being of Jesus Christ is *because no other being in all of the universe could qualify for that intermediary and for that sin sacrifice!* Only Jesus Christ! That’s why it is not going to be through Mohammed or Buddha or Confucius. It’s not going to be through any man or any movement. *It’s going to be through Jesus Christ and no other way!* God is

determined that that is the only way that it’s going to be.

6. God the Father is the source from which grace comes to man. Jesus Christ is the God ordained means by which the grace most effectively reaches man in his need.

We’re talking about *grace before salvation*. Could God be merciful to someone who is not called for salvation? *Sure He could!* Could God answer prayers of people who prayed in sincerity to God? *Yes, He will!* Especially if they believe that there would be an answer.

What would be one of the most important things that a person could do in time of crisis if they have neglected God *or* they have not really firmly believed in God but they somehow find themselves in a terrible straight and trouble? What would be the most pleasing thing they could do? Would it not be to call out to God? *Sure it would!* Do we not know of many cases of people who’ve been in circumstances like that? They’re not praying for salvation or eternal life. They were just trying to live a little longer. Maybe they’re just trying to prevent some catastrophe from coming on them, and they pray to God in belief and ask God to help them in those circumstances.

God’s graciousness and mercy is so great that even though He is not calling them for salvation He’ll hear their prayer. When people get like that what is one of the first things they admit? *‘Oh, I’ve been a miserable person!’* Is that not a type of repentance? *Sure it is!*

It is not a call to salvation necessarily, but that’s why that God, being no respecter of persons, will help people like that. What they do from then on becomes another situation. Obviously, there comes a time that if, after God has helped them and rescued them and has done certain things for them, they turn their backs on God and just walk out and slam the door and do whatever they want, maybe the next time they get in those circumstances they’re not going to get the help.

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

This is why it talks about in Galatians, that until Christ came we were kept under law. The Law was a schoolmaster or tutor to lead us to Christ. It’s the same thing with our children. They need the kind of

discipline that is by law. You do this and you'll get a reward. You do the other and you'll get a punishment. This brings them to a maturity of mind if it's consistent through their lifetime. When they get old enough they will be able to make the proper choices.

But without the rudimentary black and white righteousness and sin, good and evil to really formulate what they need, when they get older they will have no discernment between right and wrong if you don't. Little children cannot be treated as adults. You cannot sit down and reason with children as you do with adults. Their minds have not developed enough. We're beginning to see some of the results with our older children now. There are times when the best thing to say to children is *NO!* flat out, *Don't! Stop!* That is necessary. You wouldn't talk to an adult like that. You would say, 'Would you please...' Why? *Because they are old enough, they have comprehension enough!* The whole relationship is different.

So it is before God calls us—and in the process of calling us, too—that we get this concerning the Law and the commandments, and those are absolutely necessary, but the whole process is to put them in our mind and in our heart and our inward parts so that we, as led by the Holy Spirit, can live the right way of life. Exact same parallel with children.

The reason that we teach children that way when they are small, is so that when they grow up and they leave home they're going to have some kind of responsibility about themselves knowing what is right and what is wrong.

It's to lead us to Christ. That's why when we are led to Christ and we come under God's grace, *we do not have the liberty to go and live in sin.* Being under God's grace and blessing and mercy we have the liberty to have annulled 'the law of sin and death' within us in our standing before God. As long as we're in the flesh 'the law of sin and death' is going to be there. And the true day of redemption, if we understand it correctly, when you have repented and been baptized you *have been saved* from your past sins. While you're going God's way you *are being saved*. When Christ returns you *shall be saved* from flesh because you'll be changed to spirit.

The same way concerning the day of redemption. When you have repented and are baptized you have been redeemed—correct? While you are following Christ and walking in His way you are continually in a state of *being redeemed*. The New Testament refers to *the day of redemption*, which has to do with the resurrection. Redemption is not just a one-time act when you are baptized and

repented of your sins. It is the same as salvation; it is ongoing. Does not the sacrifice of Christ through the Grace of God have to redeem us or buy us back when we sin? *Yes!* So, it's an ongoing efficacious thing that God is doing.

8. One's acceptance with God is not something he can achieve by his own merit [by works], but is chosen, called, and made accepted, forgiven and blessed with the Holy Spirit of God, made an error of eternal life, made the son of God as a gracious undeserved gift from God the Father through Jesus Christ.

That really has a lot of meaning and I want to emphasize that again so that we can really bear down on that and it helps an awful lot.

I don't know how you have been since we have started through this series on *grace*, but I know that the more I study on it the more it helps me. It helps me an awful lot because then I look to God to give me the strength to overcome. I'm going to do the best I can, but I don't have to go around and just literally beat my head against a stonewall and to do it by *my* works.

It must be the working of Christ within me to overcome it. When we lay it at that doorstep, and when we bring it to Christ, and when we ask God's grace to be with us, to be upon us, it is something that happens in that state of grace that we are standing in, and it comes *to* us. That's why when we get into the blessings that are given, Paul opens the epistles and he said, 'Blessings from God the Father and grace and peace from our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.'

When you ask for a blessing do you not expect a blessing? *Sure you do!* When you ask for grace, should we not also expect grace? *Yes!* Should we not have that help, which is a gift, it's an undeserved thing? We can't find it within us. I think this has been the whole problem in overcoming. We've been looking to our resources within us for our own discipline that we work it up:

- we overcome a problem
- we go to God and say, 'God, I've overcome this problem'

—*it's the other way around!* We go to God and say, God:

- grant me Your grace
- grant me Your help
- grant me the strength
- lead me out of this overcoming

How do you overcome? *Overcoming is not a work that is human originated!* That's why in overcoming

sin we can have God lift from us, and why should we carry it around, we can have God lift from us that frustration and burden and vexation, which you've all experienced in trying to overcome something *by yourself*. There have been lust and temptations that you've had to fight, and you've fought them and you've gritted your teeth and you've asked God, 'Why does this continue?' *Very simple, you haven't put it under the grace of God and asked for God's grace through faith to lead you out of it.*

I hope that we understand that because I know for myself, I understand it more and I can be more relaxed, and I can be more relaxed around people. Why? *Because when you have God's grace and you know that God is going to do it then you don't have to be looking at other people with a view of judging them for something that they are doing—* which you may or may not like, or what you may or may not agree with, or what you may or may not think is sin. Just lifts that whole burden from you.

This is the atmosphere that has been lived under too long in the Churches of God, that you go into a congregation and once you come past the niceties and the introductions and the friendships and you start getting down into the human nature element of it, what do you find? *You find pickiness, the looking, the judging, the criticizing!* Why does that exist? *Because people are not pointed to the grace of God through faith and they too much want to overcome themselves without God!* When you strive to overcome so much on your own, what do you do? *You transfer that to other people in a sense that you're going to be critical of them for two reasons:*

- 1) because you're looking for faults
- 2) so you will feel better and can live with your own problem

Whereas, we need to just wipe the slate of all that and overcome with God's Spirit through grace.

1-John 5:1: "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ... [that's an ongoing sense] ...has been begotten from God... [or out from God the begettal has come] ...and everyone that loves Him [God the Father] Who begat also loves him who has been begotten by Him."

How do we then maintain the love? I think we've had some experience of that here. *We maintain the love for each other because we are not doing the things that I just mentioned that causes the problems!* We are not trying to live someone else's life. What we're trying to do is love God and live within His grace and love each other. That's the most encouraging thing that we can do. That's why in the time we've been here we haven't had any

internal strife. We haven't had any of those problems. If we continue in God's grace and in this kind of thing he's saying we won't have it. Not because we're better, but because Christ is greater than all.

Verse 2: "By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments.... [There is commandment-keeping right in it. Has to be!] ...For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. Now then, everyone who is begotten by God overcomes the world... [How do we overcome the world?] ...and this is the victory that overcomes the world—**our faith**" (vs 2-4).

How are we saved? ***By grace have you been saved through faith!*** That's how you overcome! That's why if you really go to God with this attitude—in sincerity, repentance, love and understanding—God is going to begin to let this grace come to you in a more abundant way and you are going to see a lot of the problems, mental things and temptations begin fall away. They won't be rooted in there like the core of a carbuncle. If you've ever seen a carbuncle and the core, it's about as long as my little finger and goes about that deep and it is so sore, and there's nothing you can do.

Same way with human nature. *Human nature cannot overcome human nature!* It has to be God's Spirit, and it has to be *by faith*. Why not just place it before God? Ask for His grace and mercy, and His Spirit to *lead you* in it. Be happy and thankful in the grace of God. I guarantee you that if you have faith and believe in God, then those things will begin to melt away.

Just like a carbuncle, if you lance it and you get out the core there's going to be a little scar there. The problem, temptation or thought pattern may come back from time-to-time—which then you can easily identify it and again go to God and ask for repentance and forgiveness—but it's not going to be that just hanging in there in every thought and every moment. It's going to be like taking that core of that carbuncle out. That's how you can overcome with faith. It makes the job a whole lot easier.

For example, if a person has a hard time with swearing and cursing. Or maybe they used to swear and curse a lot before they were converted, and you can't isolate yourself from the world. You cannot go in orbit. So, you go out and work and what happens? *You find yourself around people who swear and curse!* What's the next thing that happens? *Mentally you start doing the same thing—correct?* You don't want to but you do. If you set about to say, 'I'm not going to do that again,' and you force yourself to not

do it, I guarantee you're going to continue doing it. Why? *Because you haven't laid it before God to let Him do it for you!*

If you have not experienced that kind of overcoming *through God's grace* then 'try it, you'll like it.' God will like it. It makes life a whole lot easier and happy and contented because you can give all the credit to God. That's why it says, 'By grace are you saved through faith, not of works lest any man should boast.' That's how we are saved. So that's very important for us to understand.

Have you ever wondered what it means to be spiritually minded? *To be spiritually minded is to be life and peace, but to be carnally minded is death!* Can you see the difference in overcoming? *A carnal mind cannot overcome a carnal mind!* Therefore, any works that we do as a human being cannot be sufficient.

What is our spiritual battle? *We war not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and authorities and wicked spirits in high places!* That's where all the sin comes from. That's why when you're driving down the road and every thing's nice, BAM! you get an evil thought come through your head. Where do you think it comes from? *Prince of the power of the air!* You're not going to overcome that with just your own mental efforts; *you need the power of God.* It's a spiritual battle. So, if we put all these things in that perspective and realize that it is the spiritual power of God, why life is going to be a whole lot better. Not that we'll be richer. Not that we'll have better things physically and materially, because that's not what we need. We may want it, but that's not what we need. We need to overcome and be led by God's Spirit.

9. The Grace of God is like an all encompassing umbrella, which includes:
- faith
  - salvation
  - mercy
  - redemption
  - justification
  - repentance
  - love
  - the laws
  - the commandments of god
  - forgiveness
  - blessings

It's an all-encompassing thing. Let's keep that in mind.

What does the grace of God do for us? I'm going to list nine things that the Grace of God does for us in a fantastic way, and gives us privileges, and blessings. Privilege is something that is given; it is a

gift. You don't earn a privilege; you earn a wage. Privilege is something that is given, so it is a gift.

Hebrews 2—here is the *act of grace* by God. We know and realize that it was God Himself Who came as a human being for one specific purpose, and it reveals a little bit about the overall plan of God.

Hebrews 2:5: "For *it is* not to *the* angels that He has placed in subjection the world that is to come... [the Kingdom of God as it comes on the earth] ...of which we are speaking. But in a certain place one fully testified, saying, 'What is man, that You are mindful of him, or *the* son of man, that You visit him? You did make him a little lower than *the* angels; You did crown him with glory and honor...'" (vs 5-7).

Is it not an honor and glory to be made in the image of God? *God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, male and female. Let Us make him after Our likeness.'* Then the whole thing of salvation is that we become like God, after the God kind. God gave us dominion over the earth; dominion over everything that is here. What one thing can we say that man has not been able to have dominion over, except his own sins? Mankind, sooner or later, because of being made in the similitude of God, given a creative mind, is able to do such fantastic things. We have been 'crowned with honor and glory.'

"...and You did set him over the works of Your hands; You did put all things in subjection under his feet." (vs 7-8). That is a prophetic as well as current statement. A lot of things that God says are current and prophetic. It is current because everything that is on the earth is under the hand of man, whether for good or whether for evil; whether we take care of ourselves, or whether we destroy the environment—it's under our hand. But also the word 'pantos' means *all things including the universe.* Man even in his fleshly form is on the brink of getting into the universe. If he were not limited by flesh, guess what would happen? *Yes, we would conquer other galaxies and go into the universe this very day.* It is prophetic in that that's what it will be.

"...For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering **the death...**" (vs 8-9).

If you have your Greek Interlinear you can take a look at that statement and you will notice that *it is not just death.* It is **the death.** When it talks about death in relationship to a Christian and a relationship to salvation it is talking about **the death.**

What is the ultimate death? *The second death in the Lake of Fire!* And from that there is no resurrection.

Since Jesus Christ was God Who took on human form and He was the Son of God, and He's called in some places in the New Testament the Son of man and that actually refers back to Dan. 3 & 7, which is saying God Himself. We find in Titus 2 & 3 that Jesus Christ is called *the great God* and our Savior Jesus Christ. When He died that was *the death*. You can't have any greater death than the death of God. That's greater than just a human death because of the significance of Jesus Christ.

"...on account of suffering the death, in order that **by the grace** ['charitee'] **of God** ... [the *act of grace* in having Christ come and live, die and be resurrected] ...He Himself might **taste death for everyone**" (v 9). Notice that the definite article 'the' in the Greek is not there. You go back to the place that we just referred to before and it is called 'tou thanatoo'—which is *the death*. You come down here and it says, "...He Himself might taste death for everyone." So therefore, as it is applied to each of us it is applied to our own death. That is a fantastic thing.

Let's go through the book of Romans in a little more detail, and let's see the sequence of things as they come along. As I study—and I try and study New Testament Greek everyday—that's helping me be able to understand more and put it together. In Rom. 5 we see the whole sequence of events and how great that it is. When we come to take the Passover this year let's hope that we can have a greater insight into the death of Jesus Christ and what He has done.

Romans 5:1. "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom we also have access by faith **into this grace in which we stand...**" (vs 1-2). We're standing in this grace. It is a condition. It is the very basis of the relationship that we have with God. It is with grace.

It's very interesting that you get into some of these other Scriptures and when it says that we can come before the Father with boldness, that actually means that *we have access into the presence of God the Father*. And that can only be done through Christ and through grace because *no man* can come before God and live. But we have, *spiritually*, access to God the Father through this grace in which we are standing.

"...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God.... [not what we can do; not in how great we are, but in the hope of the glory of God] ...And not only *this*, but we also boast in

tribulations..." (vs 2-3).

I've often wondered, and through the years I think I'm beginning to understand a little more now, how you can be happy in a trial. I have yet to meet someone who's in a terrible trial that is happy, saying, 'Great, I've got another trial. That's marvelous. Hooray! Thank you God.' *No!* We're to pray, 'Deliver us from temptation.' Why can we boast in trials or tribulations? *Because:*

1. God *will deliver* us from them!
2. He *will teach us* something with it of lasting, eternal, spiritual value!

*That's why!* That's why it says that 'we boast in tribulations.' I think Paul wrote this after he was an apostle for some 20 years so he didn't come by it right away. When he was struck down off the horse on his way to Damascus he wasn't very happy. He was not boasting in that trial.

"...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance..." (v 3). In other words, that trial coming through its full circuit is working out endurance. The *King James* says 'patience,' but it's *endurance*—patience and endurance are very synonymous.

"...and endurance *brings forth* character..." (v 4). God is testing us with these things. That's why we can boast in a trial. Many times people will think of a trial that will come, 'God, if you send this trial, I am ready.' That's boasting and God isn't going to send that trial; another one is going to come that you don't think of. The major trials that occur other than your knowledge of your own stupidity ahead of time, come as a total surprise. Isn't that true? *Yes!* But we can be thankful for it because God is testing us and proving us.

"...and character *brings forth* hope.... [Once we rely on God we can have more hope.] ...And the hope *of God* never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us. For even when we were without strength, at the appointed time **Christ died for the ungodly**" (vs 4-6). That's a tremendous thing to do, and I think that we're going to grasp a more full significance of this as we get down toward the Passover time.

Verse 7: "For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man. But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Christ also had to do that in faith. Did Christ have faith? *Yes, He had faith!* He had to die in faith knowing, as He told His apostles there on the Passover night, '*Blessed are those who believe* on the things that you say

about Me.’ And remember Jesus said, ‘I pray for not only these, but *those that shall believe* on Me through their word.’ Christ had to die in faith knowing that His sacrifice would be in perpetuity for all time, for all ages of all mankind.

I don’t know how many have been watching the series, *Shogun* on TV. If you’ve watched part of it, whatever, it’s a pretty bloody movie showing Japan. They were lopping off heads, and stabbing, and committing suicide, and the only penalty for breaking a law was death or crucifixion. That is the letter of the law! I don’t know if that’s the impression you got from it, but boy I sure did. I thought I wouldn’t want to live there. You talk about women’s liberation, a woman in Japan was nothing; just worth no more than a piece of paper that a man could chattel her with. If he didn’t like his wife he had the right to kill her. The sacrifice of Christ is going to have to apply to those lives, too. *Yes, it is! Christ died for the ungodly.* If we were without sin we would not need Christ. That’s why it says:

1-John 1:8: “If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.” That’s why we need a Savior. That’s tremendous what He did.

Romans 2:9 “Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” How is that? *That is by grace!* He gets into all the rest of it. Rom. 6 & 7 he’s talking about grace.

### **What Does the Grace of God Do For Us?**

#### **1. Christ died for all by the Grace of God**

All—not just some, not just for the Jews, but *all*. There are some wretched societies that are going to need an awful lot of salvation. They need an awful lot of help.

I don’t know if you read in the paper about the native society in New Caledonia? Sometimes it’s good to get your paper and read sections E, F & G, just before you get to the classified ads. The *San Jose` Mercury* has ‘E’ section, and they give little reports and some of them are very revealing. They wouldn’t dare put it on the front page.

How many saw the movie, *Sky Above and Mud Beneath?* They showed the natives in New Guinea. When I first saw that, it must have been about 1971, and I thought, ‘Boy, this is kind of a bad movie, to show all these naked natives going around.’ Then it told a little bit about the country they live in. They live in this jungle area. They don’t have hardly any flat land. The mountains go straight up. It rains almost 300-inches a year. With that heat

and that humidity I know why they go around naked. They couldn’t possibly keep a stitch of clothing on because it would just rot. All the do-gooder missionaries came storming down there, ‘Let’s dress these natives.’ Next thing you know the clothes all mildewed right off their back; too much rain.

When I saw that I thought: Why did God put some people in an area like that? There’s no clean food, there’s no clean fish. If they go in the ocean there are these sea snakes that will bite you. Their greatest delight for a dinner is a nice fat, big grubby termite about the size of a thermos bottle, which they relish. They can’t grow any food because there’s no flat land. When I first saw that I thought: God is kind of unfair to these people. Look at us; we’re sitting here; we have all of this and we don’t have to worry about that. I just sort of lodged that in the back of my mind.

One other thing that they had. The only meat that they could have, they would shoot a monkey or a baboon; or eat a slug, a snail or a lizard. The only domestic animals they had were pigs. The women would suckle the pigs on their own breasts. That was a great possession. That’s why they did it. What can you tame in the jungle? So, they tamed pigs, and I thought, how gross. It showed this right on the film. I thought: Sky above, mud beneath,’ that is true. You have the ‘sky above, it’s raining, and all you have is mud underneath.

In this article I read about New Guinea and New Caledonia. Do you know what they do to the young boys? At seven years old they separate them from their mothers. They can no longer talk to a woman after that time and they put them through an enforced sodomy regime until 18-years-old! Of all the despicable, horrible things that you can do.

Therefore, I would have to conclude God is just in giving them that kind of environment and society to live in. Of course, they used to be cannibals and brain eaters, and warriors and fighters, and things like this; just horrible, wicked, despicable people. Those people are also going to be covered under the blood and sacrifice of Jesus Christ at the *second resurrection*, because God is not calling, nor can He, them today in that condition. They worship demons. They worship Satan.

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Perhaps someone would die for a good person, but *Christ died for the ungodly!* That time of the second resurrection is going to be so absolutely fantastic. Can you imagine what a fantastic thing that it’s going to be for people who’ve been in circumstances like that? To be reared in a society like those in New Guinea and

New Caledonia? To be reared in a society as was shown on this thing *Shogun*? Can you imagine what it's going to be like? The last thing that you remember before dying was a big sword coming down on the back of your neck. Satan is going to be removed, and I think God is gracious and generous in doing that for them. That is so fantastic it is just marvelous, and not only what God is going to do for us.

## 2. We are put into a special category with Jesus Christ—we are called *friends*

To be in a special category where you are called *the friend of Jesus Christ*. I'm sure that all of us have acquaintances. I'm sure that all of us have relatives. Are all your relatives your friends? *No!* They may be relatives, but they sure may not be friends. A friend is a special relationship that brings you in closeness. Christ, being *our friend*, then has a vested interest in seeing us into the Kingdom of God. That's why the whole psychology of 'beating' people into overcoming, and 'beating' them into the Kingdom of God defeats the whole purpose. *Christ is our friend!* How many times have we viewed Christ as almost our enemy? *That is not right!*

Here's what Jesus says in John 15:12: "This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you." That means that we have to give a whole lot more latitude and leeway then—doesn't it? It means that we have to understand and love each other even more because of what Christ has done for us and is doing for them.

You know why there is a lack of love when there should be love? It just occurred to me just now. *They don't understand that Christ is our friend* and it is put in such a way that 'I want to be in the Kingdom of God, but I don't know about you. And since I want to be there I'm going to make sure I get there, and I hope you get there.' It never comes across! It doesn't work!

Whereas, if we consider ourselves with this commandment to love each other as Christ loves us, v 13: "No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends." People may lay their lives down to be burned, 'For if we burn our bodies and don't have love it hasn't profited anything' (Rom. 13). They may do it for the publicity, they may do it for whatever, but they're not doing it for love. But, if you lay your life down for your friend:

- A friend is not going to cheat you—is he?
- A friend is not going to stab you in the back when you're not looking—is he?
- A friend is going to defend you—isn't that right?
- A friend is going to help you.

Jesus said, v 14: "**You are My friends**... [That's quite a statement—isn't it?] (But also notice that it's conditional): ...if you do whatever I command you." Like anything else, a friendship has a close, intimate, understood set of rules. There are rules for conduct that are not close and intimate. One of them is that when you go to the airport you have to go through this machine to see if you have any metal. You must do it, that's it. What are the rules of friendship?

- trust
  - loyalty
  - love
  - protection
  - dedication
- all of those things!

- Does Christ love us? *Yes!*
- Does He protect us? *Yes!*
- Does He defend us? *Yes!*
- Does He watch out for us? *Yes!*

We don't want to lower the relationship with Jesus Christ to, on the human plane, become sloppy in the relationship by saying, 'Oh well, Jesus is my friend.' But we need to uphold it in honor and love and esteem. Jesus said, 'If you continue practicing what I command you...'—there are conditions. If you have a friend who deliberately lies to you, what happens? *He is no longer your friend!* If you've ever had that happen you drop that friend! Why? *Because he couldn't be trusted!* Christ won't lie to us, and we are under this grace of God. That's a tremendous thing for Christ to say that *you are My friends!*

## 3. Not only are we friends, but we are also relatives—we are *brothers!*

That's bringing everything real close together. Hebrews 2:10: "Because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Jesus, although He was perfect, was *perfected*. Jesus was not offered as a sacrifice when He was twelve. But He was offered as a sacrifice after He finished His ministry and He was some 33-½-years-old. He was *perfected!* And I'm sure God's understanding was perfected in the human experience.

Verse 11: "For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." We are the brothers of Christ. 'Brethren' includes more than just the male gender. That means those who are of the Family of God.

Verse 12: "Saying, 'I will declare Your name to **My brethren**... [that is Jesus will declare

the name of God the Father to *My brethren*, those that are in the Church] ...in *the midst of the Church* I will sing praise to You.'.... [Then it goes one step further showing we are also the children]: And again, 'I will be trusting in Him.' And again, 'Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me'" (vs 12-13).

#### 4. Children of God

Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father'" (vs 14-15). That's all a part of the Family of God, and we're getting into the thing of the children of God/the sons of God—children of God. We're right there with it. Sons of God/the children of God where we can call "Abba, Father."

In the societies that we are talking about here, it is completely indiscrete to call someone not of your family by an endearing term like daddy or mommy, so forth. Even the German language to this day carries that through. When you meet someone on a formal basis, you do not use terms of endearment to them. It is very formal. It is very straightforward. Here, not only are we the friends of Jesus Christ, not only are we the brothers of Christ, we are also of the Family of God and we can call God our Father in an intimate way, Abba, which means Daddy. and that means that *the formal barriers have been broken down* for the Family of God. We still honor God, love God, respect God, but we can have that close intimate relationship with Him. That's what the grace of God does for us.

I want you to notice the word for sons of God—'huio'—which in the singular is 'huios.' That 'ui' is pronounced *we*. The 'sons of God' can refer—'son' can refer to the male gender distinctly. It can also refer to male and female.

There are two words for "*children* but the main one I want to cover is called 'tekna'—either gender, male or female—called the children of God.

1-John 3:1: Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the **children** ['tekna'] 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..." (vs 1-2).

I don't want to get into a lot of theological discussions and things like that. ***We are the children of God!*** When a mother is carrying a child it is called a child, yet, it is not yet born. Likewise, we are called the children of God because we have the

begettal of God's Holy Spirit, but we have not yet entered into the Kingdom of God because the resurrection has not taken place. But God calls the things that are not as though they were (Rom. 4), because He told Abraham, 'Your seed shall be as the stars.' They weren't yet, but He said they would be. God calls the things that are not as though they are. That's why *we are the children of God*, but it will be a concrete fact at the resurrection in a spiritual sense.

Verse 2: "Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be... [The implication is *as the children of God to the fullest extent*.] ...but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is." We are the children of God.

#### 5. Sonship

We enter into this sonship. It is not an adoption in the sense of the way that people think of adoption. Adoption is taking someone that is not your offspring without your seed. However, until we receive the Spirit of God as the seed of God, we are not truly His children. Once we have received that then we are His children because we have the seed of God in us.

#### 6. Daughters of God

2-Corinthians 6:16: "And what agreement is *there between* a temple of God and idols? For you are a temple of *the* living God, exactly as God said: 'I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be **My people**.'" It's interesting, the way you pronounce that word for *people* is 'laos.' We have a word today of a nation that is called Laos. Be interesting to try and trace that derivation back.

Verse 17: "'Therefore, come out from the midst of them and be separate,' says *the* Lord, 'and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you; and I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be **My sons and daughters**,' says *the* Lord Almighty" (vs 17-18). Here the word 'huio'—in this case plural it is 'huios'—refers to the male gender exclusively. Then we have the *daughters*—'thugaters.' I think where we get the name Agatha, also from the Greek word 'good.' It's not too good of a sounding name in English. You think of someone called Agatha, it's not the best sounding name, but in the Greek it means *good*. 'Horaios' means *beautiful*.

"...you shall be My sons and daughters,' says *the* Lord Almighty" (v 18).

2-Corinthians 7:1: "Now then, beloved, since we have these promises, we should purge ourselves from every defilement of *the* flesh and *the* spirit, perfecting Holiness in *the* fear of God." We



went through how to do that. That is through the grace of God.

### 7. Joint heirs with Christ

Not only did Christ die for us, not only are we called

- the *friends* of Jesus Christ
- the *brothers* of Jesus Christ
- the *sons* of God
- the *children* of God
- the *daughters* of God

but we are also

- *joint heirs!*

When you get into heirs and inheritance it starts getting a little legal sounding—doesn't it? The Bible says there is *one* Lawgiver. Therefore, God is legal; because of law He's got to be legal. Don't think in terms of laws of the land or attorneys, or judges in that sense, because that will cloud your thinking in this particular case. Why don't you study this through because I don't believe that anyone outside of the first resurrection is a joint-heir.

Romans 8:16: "The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God... [there it is, children—'teknon theos'] ...Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs..." What is one of the main things that the whole prophecy of Israel hinges on? *Not only just on Christ*, that is one main promise or the promise of grace. *There is the promise of the birthright!* The birthright is by *inheritance*; it is a legal thing.

When someone dies they leave a will and they say, 'I give so and so such and such,' and so forth. Christ died and the *part of the will* was that we become heirs. If you're someone's offspring and they die, you are entitled to part of what they own legally. Because God has brought us into this relationship, God has entitled us, if we continue in the things that He has said, if we continue in the grace of God, we will be heirs.

Verse 17: "Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him."

- What did Jesus Christ inherit? *He inherited the universe!*
- Who owns the universe? *God does!*

Didn't God say:

- The earth is Mine and the fullness thereof.
- All gold is Mine, and all silver is Mine.
- *Yes, He did!*

He let's us use it, but who owns it? *God does!*

If we are to inherit it, it's not just some will-

of-the-wisp thing. *It is an inheritance!* We are going to co-own with Christ everything that He owns. Just let that sink in for just a minute! Think on that!

Let's look at it another way: Why is it—and it's motivated out of greed in many cases—that a woman will want to marry a rich man, or a man will want to marry a rich woman? In the case of tremendous avarice and greed, there's even murder that has been known to take place to *do in* either the husband or the wife *to inherit what they have!*

We've almost gone full circle to the first place we began in Heb. 2 of God has put all things in subjection under Him, and it was Jesus. Hebrews 1:1 is the lead-in to it: "God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things..." (vs 1-2). If Christ is an heir of all things—it didn't say the heir of air. It's not just something out here in space that is nothing. It is the heir of *all things*.

It really shows the ridiculousness of being materialistic. It shows the ridiculousness of just striving after the fleshly things to have them for the sake of having them because Christians are going to have the best of everything through Christ, appointed heir of all things. That's everything that there is in the universe we will co-own.

But there are going to be rules for using it. The rules are that the Church is to be subject to Christ as the wife is to her husband. That's how we inherit it through then that marriage of the Church in Christ. We become joint-heirs. Let that sink in for a minute! How rich are you? Don't try and calculate it in dollars because I don't know what unit of value that God uses for what He's created. But it talks about, in Eph. 3, the riches of the grace and glory of God.

I'll tell you one thing. When we are clothed upon with our spiritual tabernacle, as it says there in 2-Cor. 5, it's not going to be an ill-fitted warehouse suit, I will guarantee that. When God says that we have the right, and it's going to be a property right in New Jerusalem and in the universe, we will own part of that. Not to use as any way we want—not to destroy, not to sin—but to use it for the glory of God and what God has planned. And I'll tell you this much, if God has planned what He has for human beings on the earth at this point, we're going to have to have a spiritual mind to comprehend what God's plan is going to be when we are the sons of God. Like Paul said, looking through the glass darkly we can get a glimpse of it, but when the fullness of that comes in that's going to be something.

I've often wondered what kind of vehicle God is going to say, 'This is yours,' and you just take off wherever you want to go. Won't have to be stuck in some car behind the traffic. I got stuck last night in a traffic jam. I was all through at 5 o'clock, but I was in Redwood City, so I was on my way home and I got stuck in a traffic jam that began all the way from Mountain Home clear down south of San Jose. And it was just a creepy crawly all the way. You know, that's a good time to think what kind of a vehicle is God going to give us in the Kingdom of God. Angels will be our servants. That's going to be absolutely amazing! We're going to have to get use to it.

### 8. God is our Father

That's what the Grace of God does for us. God is our Father

### 9. Christ is going to marry the Church

I'll just summarize it with this verse, Ephesians 5:32: "This is a great mystery; but I am speaking in respect to Christ and the Church."

Verse 22: "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church; and He is the Savior of the body. For even as the Church is subject to Christ, in the same way also let wives be subject to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; so that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it with the washing of water by the Word; that He might present it to Himself as the glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be Holy and without blame" (vs 22-27). The only way that can be done is through the Grace of God.

Verse 28: "In the same way, husbands are duty-bound to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself; for no man has ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord does the Church. For **we are members of His body**—of His flesh and of His bones" (vs 28-30). That is, just like Eve was created out of one of the ribs of Adam, so the Church has been created out of the innermost being of Christ. That's what the analogy is then.

Verse 31: "For this reason shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh." It's going to be that we are joined in one Spirit with the Lord. It's going to be a spiritual and practical relationship for all eternity.

Let's talk about some of the things

concerning the Grace of God and the riches of His grace, and the tremendous thing that God is doing. I'll just have to admit to you today that from Eph. 5:14-21 is my favorite the part in all of the Bible. I perhaps have given more sermons ending up here and coming to this than any other. And yet, through all the times that I have, I never cease to gain more from it, to have more feeling and more understanding of it every time I do.

Ephesians 3:14: "For this cause... [of God's plan] ...I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named... [the family of angels and the family of men on the earth who are going to be in the Family of God] ...that He may grant you, according to **the riches of His glory...**" (vs 14-16). That's quite a statement. How much can God give us? *He's already said we're going to inherit the universe with Christ!* That's not just some poetic statement. That means "...the riches of His glory..."

"...to be strengthened with power... ['dunamis/dunamai'] ...by His Spirit in the inner man..."(v 16)—or person. How can you best be strengthened with the Spirit of God internally? *You can by living in that state of grace*, because God is more willing abundantly to give us of His Spirit and to pour out His grace to us.

Verse 17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts in faith." In other words, that we come so close to God, and the Spirit of God that it's actually like Christ living in us, living in our heart. What does it say? *Out of the abundance the heart the mouth speaks!* If Christ is established in our heart and in our very being then it's not going to have to be that we live by the letter of the Law. We live by the grace of God. That's what he's talking about here.

Verse 17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; and that being rooted and grounded in love, you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ..." (vs 17-19). If we really come to that point through God's grace, to understand how much Christ loved us, does love us, and is loving us, that makes the whole relationship with God a much more tremendous thing. And God is more willing and able to give those things to us.

"...being rooted and grounded in love, you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height..." (v 18). That's why it says there, and when I first read back in Heb. 6, 'Leaving aside the principles of Christ let's go on to perfection' I

thought: What on earth is he talking about? I think I can understand a little more now. We're not putting Christ aside. We're going beyond baptism and laying on of hands, and those rudimentary things that begins us walking on this path of grace so that we can come to this point to comprehend with all the saints what is *the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the plan of God*. That's a four dimensional thing. That can only be with the Spirit of God. We can only comprehend it through His grace.

Verse 19: And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge; so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." That's quite a statement, to be filled with all the fullness of God. If you will look at the words, it is very redundant the way it is said there, but to "...be filled with all the fullness of God" has got to then refer to the resurrection when this will be accomplished.

Verse 20: "Now to Him Who is able... [Has the power. Christ and God the Father have the power.] ...to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think..." That's really something—isn't it? All that we ask or think! The very greatest and magnanimous, wonderful, greatest thought we can possibly comprehend, God is able to do exceedingly above that.

This tells me that to enter into the Kingdom of God as a son of God, to be a Spirit being, is going to be so utterly fantastic that the human mind cannot comprehend it. I think it would be like taking a 100-watt bulb and screwing it into a socket, that when you threw the switch, would have 10-million volts of power. You threw the switch and it would go BLEWIE!—nothing left. I think that's a good comparison to what our minds are able to comprehend with what God would give us. But we're to grow in that.

"...so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God, now to Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us, to Him *be* glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen" (vs 19-21).

I hope that we can really begin to grasp and comprehend and understand the grace of God to it's fullest extent. I think we can comprehend more fully what Paul said. ***'What? Shall we sin that grace may abound? God forbid!'***

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 14:6
- 2) 1 John 5:1-4
- 3) Hebrews 2:5-9
- 4) Romans 5:1-7
- 5) 1 John 1:8
- 6) Romans 5:9
- 7) John 15:12-14
- 8) Hebrews 2:10-13
- 9) Romans 8:14-15
- 10) 1 John 3:1-2
- 11) 2 Corinthians 6:16-18
- 12) 2 Corinthians 7:1
- 13) Romans 8:16-17
- 14) Hebrews 1:1-2
- 15) Ephesians 5:32, 22-31
- 16) Ephesians 3:14-19, 18-20, 19-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Peter 5:10
- Daniel 3; 7
- Titus 2; 3
- Romans 6; 7; 13; 4
- 2 Corinthians 5
- Hebrews 6