

A Trustworthy God: Trusting God's Grace

INTRODUCTION:

1. God and His grace being made known to the world is the central focus of Scripture.
2. It was first “hinted at” in the Garden of Eden in Gen. 3:15 when God promised through the descendant of woman to bruise the Serpent’s head and has played the major role in God’s dealings with mankind ever since.
3. Grace is defined in its most basic form as “God’s free, unearned, or unmerited favor.”
 - A. **BDAG** – “favor, grace, gracious care or help, goodwill...that which one grants to another, the action of one who volunteers to do something to which he is not bound”
 - B. **Vine** – “the friendly disposition from which the kindly act proceeds, graciousness, loving-kindness, goodwill generally”
4. Although I find myself using the first most basic of the definitions, the latter two are better in that they not only speak of the disposition of grace, but also of the action it produces.
 - A. For, the wonders of God’s grace can only be fully seen and appreciated by the actions it has produced in this world.
 - B. For those who would consider, it becomes quite evident that God’s grace is everything to this world and to us his sinful and ultimately helpless creatures.
 - C. For all that is good that you and I can hope for in this life is found in God’s grace.
5. So, what I want to do today is to, again, talk about our trustworthy God. And in particular I want to talk about trusting God’s grace. To do that let’s consider:
 - A. How the nature of God’s grace shows it can be trusted or counted on.
 - B. What trusting God’s grace means for one’s life.

DISCUSSION:

I. Why we can trust God’s grace

- A. We can trust God’s grace because it is *intentional*.
 1. Grace was planned before creation (1 Pet. 1:18-21 – “knowing that you were not **redeemed** with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,¹⁹ but **with precious blood**, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, **the blood of Christ**.²⁰ For **He was foreknown before the foundation of the world**, but has **appeared** in these last times **for the sake of you**²¹ who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”).
 - a. God was not surprised or “caught off guard” by mankind’s need for His grace.
 - b. The grace that redeems you from sin by the blood of Christ was *purposed* by God *before the world was created*.
 - i. Have you taken time to consider what it say about God and His amazing grace that He would determine to make such a sacrifice for you before He created you?
 - ii. It is like you as parents knowing that if you get a pet, you will have to *sacrifice your only child* to one day save that pet! **And yet you and your child still agree to get that pet!**
 - 1) That would be an incomprehensible amount of desire and love for a pet.
 - 2) But it does not remotely compare to the love and intentional grace of God seen in the creation of humanity.
 - 3) For, the Godhead choose to create us as beings free to love and obey Him or to rebel against Him knowing that our rebellion would require the sacrifice of Jesus the Son!
2. God not only predetermined but also revealed His intentional grace through the prophets (1 Peter 1:10-12 – “As to this salvation, **the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you** made careful searches and inquiries,¹¹ seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He **predicted the sufferings of Christ** and the **glories to follow**.¹² It was revealed to them that **they were not serving themselves, but**

- you**, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.”).
- a. Long before it was realized God sought to assure that His intended grace through the sufferings of Christ would be known and, therefore, received by all.
3. God’s intended grace was not just “good intentions.”
 - a. It has been rightly said that “the road to perdition is paved with good intentions!” But that would have never be more true than if God’s intended grace **had not been acted upon**.
 - b. But God did act in sending Jesus, the Word, God’s own Son, to bring us the fullness of grace (John 1:14-17 – “And the **Word became flesh**, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of **the only begotten** from the Father, **full of grace and truth**.¹⁵ John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’”¹⁶ For **of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace**.¹⁷ For the Law was given through Moses; **grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ**.”).
- B. You can trust God’s grace because it is offered to all.
 1. The good news is that God has given Jesus to save the **world**, not just the good people (John 3:16-17 – “For God so **loved the world**, that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes in Him** shall not perish, but have eternal life.¹⁷ For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that **the world might be saved through Him**.”).
 2. This grace is offered to even the *worst of sinners* (1 Tim. 1:12-16 – “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service,¹³ even though I was formerly a **blasphemer** and a **persecutor** and a **violent aggressor**. Yet I was shown **mercy** because I acted ignorantly in unbelief;¹⁴ and the **grace of our Lord** was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus.¹⁵ **It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners**, among whom **I am foremost of all**.¹⁶ Yet for this reason I found **mercy**, so that in me as the foremost, **Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life**.”).
 - a. So, you can trust God’s grace because it is intended for sinners—even the worst ones!
 - b. By saving the worst of sinners God is showing you and the world His perfect patience so that you and the world might be encouraged to receive His grace for eternal life!
 - C. I hope God’s wonderfully intentional grace offered to all helps you see that God can be trusted to give grace to save you!

II. What trusting God’s grace means for you and me

- A. Trusting God’s grace means **salvation from sin!** (Eph. 2:5-9 – “But God, being **rich in mercy**, because of His **great love** with which He loved us,⁵ even when we were **dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)**,⁶ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,⁷ **so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus**.⁸ **For by grace you have been saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”).
 1. God’s grace can and will save even those who are “dead in sin,” raising them up to life with Jesus.
 2. In addition to that God also **seats us** with Christ in dignity in heavenly places **to show to all** the surpassing riches of His grace toward us in Christ so that all might desire His grace.
 3. He has made his saving grace readily available to all through the simplicity of preaching the gospel (1 Cor. 1:18-21 – “For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.¹⁹ For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside.”²⁰ Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did

not come to know God, God was well-pleased **through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.**")

- a. You do not have to search the myriads of books written by the worldly wise to learn of it.
 - b. You do not have to climb a mountain or swim across the sea to receive it.
 - c. Instead, grace is offered to you and to all through the simple message of Christ and your willingness to believe.
4. All that God has done in Christ pleads with you to trust His grace to **save you!**
- B. Trusting God's grace means **transformation of life.**
1. God's plan of grace is about **transforming sinners into saints.**
 - a. Through the blood of Christ God *justifies* sinners, turning those who are tainted and scarred by sin into those who are pure and holy and acceptable before God and man.
 - b. God provides sinners this justification as a gift (Rom. 3:21-25 – "But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the **righteousness of God** through **faith** in Jesus Christ **for all those who believe**; for there is no distinction; ²³ for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ **being justified** as a **gift by His grace** through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a **propitiation in His blood** through faith...").
 - c. No matter your sin God's grace to justify is strong enough to transform you from your former self in sin into His righteous child able to inherit His kingdom (1 Cor. 6:9-11 – "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither **fornicators**, nor **idolaters**, nor **adulterers**, nor **effeminate**, nor **homosexuals**, ¹⁰ nor **thieves**, nor the **covetous**, nor **drunkards**, nor **revilers**, nor **swindlers**, will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ **Such were some of you**; but you were **washed**, but you were **sanctified**, but you were **justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.").
 2. This transformation is seen in the life of Paul.
 - a. It was seen in his apostleship (1 Cor. 15:9-10 – "For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ **But by the grace of God I am what I am**, and **His grace** toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but **the grace of God with me.**").
 - b. It was seen in his ability to preach salvation to the Gentiles by the **gospel** of which he was "made a minister, **according to the gift of God's grace** which was given to me according to the working of His power. ⁸ **To me**, the very least of all saints, **this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ**" (Eph. 3:7-8).
 - c. So, Paul understood that everything about his transformed life was owed to God's grace, as is true of our lives as well.
 3. So, like God did for Paul, to trust God's grace means He can take you and me, ones dead in our sin and ready to be condemned, and transform our lives into righteousness that shines the light of salvation to this lost world.
- C. Trusting God's grace means help to **successfully navigate** this life.
1. His grace supplies us with what we need to **face life's difficulties.**
 - a. I understand that life can be hard. And for you it might even be harder than for others.
 - b. And I understand how the difficulties of life can cause you to wonder about God's grace for you to live life successfully.
 - c. Paul faced such questions concerning his sufferings, and particularly those related to his **thorn in the flesh** (2 Corinthians 12:8-10 – "Concerning this [thorn] I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. ⁹ And He has said to me, "**My grace is sufficient for you**, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, **so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.** ¹⁰ Therefore I am well

- content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; **for when I am weak, then I am strong.**").
- d. Never believe that weaknesses, infirmities, and pain mean that God has rejected you.
 - e. Instead, as Paul learned, know that in weakness, difficulties, and suffering are where God's grace will often shine the brightest, showing to the world the great strength of grace in Christ and faith to the world.
2. God's grace supplies what we need **to live righteously.**
 - a. Of course, a righteous life must begin with forgiveness (Eph. 1:7-8 – "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the **forgiveness of our trespasses**, according to the riches of His **grace**⁸ which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight").
 - b. Forgiveness must be followed by instruction. And God's grace provide that (Titus 2:11-14 – "For the **grace of God** has appeared, **bringing salvation** to all men,¹² **instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly** in the present age,¹³ looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,¹⁴ who gave Himself for us to **redeem us from every lawless deed**, and to **purify for Himself** a people for His own possession, **zealous for good deeds.**").
 - c. God pleads with you to confidently seek His grace to help you be what He wants you to be! (Heb. 4:14-16 – "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.¹⁶ **Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace**, so that we may **receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**").
 - d. By God's grace we are not only made free of our sin, but provided the instruction and help we need for living a righteous life before God!
 3. God's grace through his word supplies what we need to receive the inheritance of eternal life.
 - a. Paul stated this when talking to the Ephesians elders whom he had warned about the challenges of life as a servant of God (Acts 20:32 – "And now I commend you to **God** and to the **word of His grace**, which is able to **build you up** and to **give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.**").
 - b. Therefore, when Satan and the world try to...
 - i. Tear you down, know that you can trust God's word of grace to build you up!
 - ii. Sow the seed of doubt, you can trust God's word of grace to give you the inheritance of eternal life God has promised to His people!

CONCLUSION:

1. I hope I have shown that you can trust God and His grace to...
 - A. Save you from your sins.
 - B. Transform your life.
 - C. Help you successfully navigate this life to receive eternal life.
2. So, with that in mind, as Paul warned and exhorted the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 6:1-2, I want to warn and exhort you "**not to receive the grace of God in vain.**"
 - A. For, it is offered to you **today**, right now, in this very gospel message you are hearing.
 - B. And you do not have tomorrow! For, as Paul said to the Corinthians, "now is **THE ACCEPTABLE TIME,**" behold, now is **THE DAY OF SALVATION.**"
3. So, will you receive God's grace today to save you from your sins, to begin the transformation of your life, and to live in the grace of God that will get you through this life to receive eternal life in the end?
4. Will you come to Christ today in F-R-C-Bp?