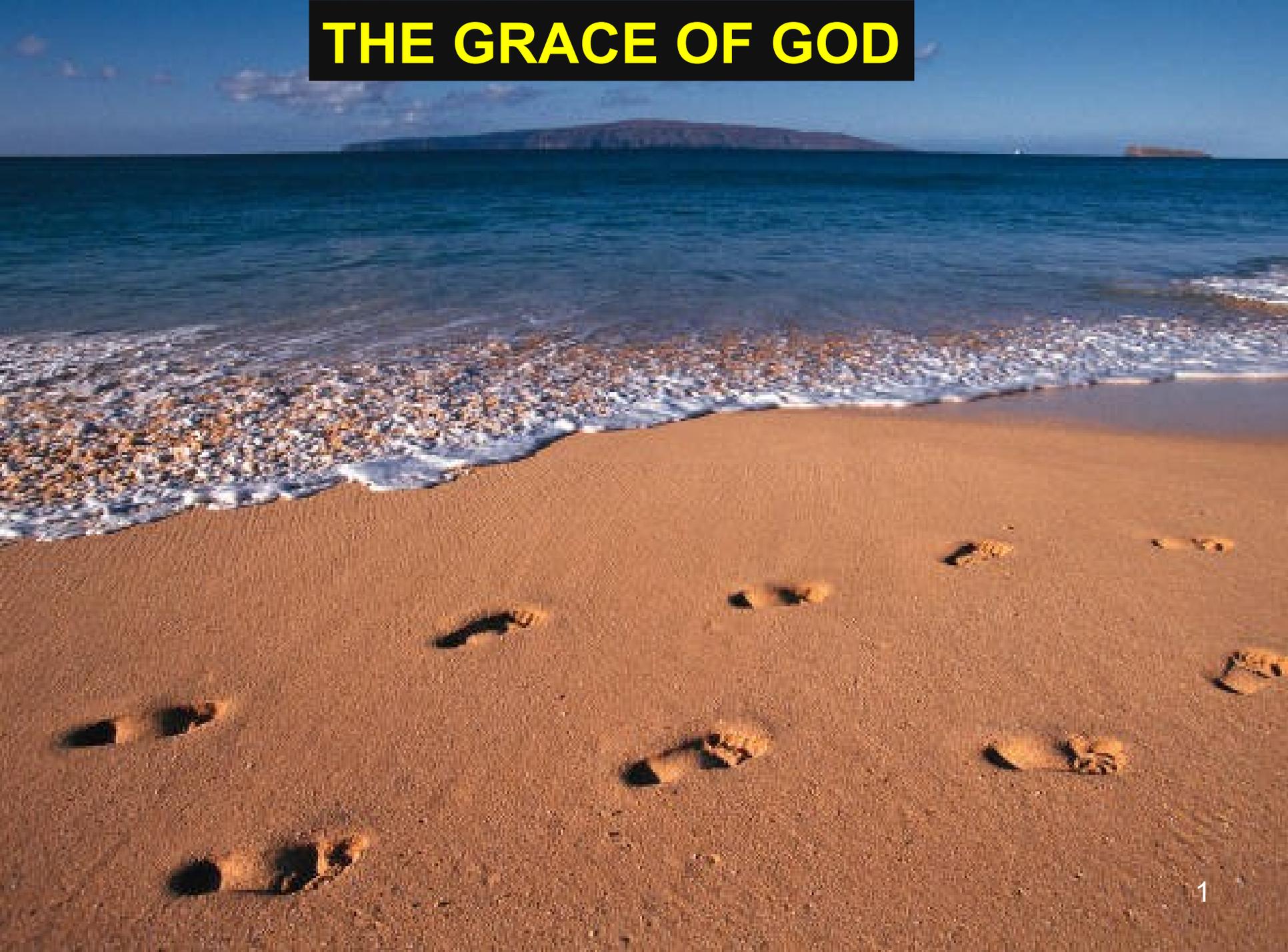


THE GRACE OF GOD



**THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTS 2:38;
WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND PEOPLE'S
RESPONSE TO THIS QUESTION.**

WHAT MUST WE DO?

**BECAUSE IF WHAT PETER SAID
FOR THEM TO DO SAVED PEOPLE
FROM THEIR SINS THEN!**

**THE SAME RESPONSE BY US
WILL SAVE US TODAY!**

WHAT MUST WE DO Acts 2:38;

The answer to **THIS QUESTION** is **IMPORTANT** because it is **HERE** at the very **BEGINNING** of the new family of God.

INSTEAD of finding UNITY
among Gods people
we find DISAGREEMENT!

PEOPLE CANNOT AGREE
on HOW to be SAVED.

**Instead of reading and listening
to the **WORD** of God.**

**People look to the traditions
and teachings of men and ignore
the message of Peter at Pentecost.**

**Many people today preach and teach that
salvation is an act of God,
out of His love, mercy, and grace;**

Man can do nothing to save himself.

We are

SAVED BY GRACE ALONE.

Many Today Teach That.

**MY SALVATION
From sin and its punishment.**

**IS ALL OF GOD
He is the
only active participant
in my salvation.**

**NONE OF ME.
I have no role or part –
no obedience or cooperation
of any kind.**

SAVED BY GRACE ALONE.

They say **Salvation** is **ALL** of **God**
and there is **NOTHING** man can do
to gain HIS salvation.

SAVED BY GRACE ALONE

The problem arises with a
misunderstanding of GRACE.

So let us **examine** what
GRACE is and is Not.

SAVED BY GRACE ALONE.

The GRACE of God is one of the most vital and fundamental and challenging themes for discussion.

Without it man would be doomed because of his sin.

But the bible speaks plainly that our God is a gracious God and a God of amazing Grace.

Ex 22:27; 34:6; Num 6:24-26;

Psa 86:15; 103:8; 111:4; 112:4; 116:5; 145:8;

Isa 33:2; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; 1 Cor 1:3-4;

Col 1:6; 2 Thess 1:12; 1Pet 2:3-5,10;

From the beginning, the creation of Adam to the final coming of Jesus, there has always been **grace & law from God, and faith in response to God.**
Grace does not eliminate law,
neither does law nullify grace.

If man would walk with God, he must walk according to law. (God's instructions).
Since we cannot walk perfectly,
then we must have faith in the grace of God.

The problem with the subject of **grace** develops out of **our desire to do our own thing**, which means in our religious behaviour, **we want to construct our own means of religious behaviour by which we would please God and save ourselves.**

The Jews were masters at this practice. **Because they honoured the law of God,** they established a host of other laws surrounding God's law in order to guarantee that the law of God was obeyed.

By the time Jesus arrived, **their religiosity had become so absurd** that they rejected the law of God in order to keep their self-imposed rules and regulations.

Galatians was written to blast the practice of binding where God had not bound.

The **revelation of God's grace** separates Christianity from all religions of the world. While the followers of man-made religions **seek favour from their gods through meritorious conduct.**

The Christian enjoys, through faith, a God who has offered His grace to all who would seek to come into His presence for eternity. God offers His grace, but His offer must be accepted by those who yearn for His presence.

He asks that **we accept** His offer of eternal dwelling with Him **through a faith** that responds to **His work of grace on the cross of His Son.**

God stands as a just and fair Creator because He has always offered a way of escape from the confines of our mortality.

Before the cross of Christ, those of faith waited in hope of the grace that would be revealed.

After the cross, we are moved by revealed grace to offer up ourselves to the One who offered Himself for us.

Grace is one of the most
IMPORTANT and GLORIOUS words
in scripture.

Someone said that

“**GRACE IS THE ROOT** and the church is the fruit.
Or, **GRACE IS THE SOIL** in which the church grows.”

2 Pet 3:18; “But grow in **grace** and **in the knowledge**
of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ.

To Him be glory now and to the day of eternity.”

And **Grace** is the only place where growth
in the knowledge of Christ is possible.
There is no spiritual growth OUTSIDE of GRACE.

The sad reality is that, almost from apostolic times
the subject of **GRACE** has been **A**
SOURCE OF CONSTANT CONFLICT AND DEBATE.

Remember Paul, **AT MILETUS**, Acts 20:28-30;
Paul met with the Elders of the Ephesian
congregation for the last time.

He issued a **CHILLING WARNING** concerning
a falling away from the faith, and its source.

He urged them to "**take heed** to the flock of God,
which **HE purchased with blood** that was His Own."

And he indicated the source of the apostasy.

"FROM AMONG YOUR OWN SELVES,
shall men rise speaking PERVERSE things
to draw away disciples after themselves"

IN other words the **departure from the Truth**
would **begin in the LEADERSHIP!**

You know, I am sure, that the Lord's plan for the Church was that there should be **a plurality of Elders, Pastors, & Bishops**, in every congregation.

BUT AFTER A VERY FEW YEARS, IF THE STORIES ABOUT THE SO-CALLED EARLY CHURCH FATHERS are to be believed.

The divine plan for Church government WAS rejected, and men were being appointed to the **office of SOLE BISHOP**, in congregations throughout the Roman Empire.

We are told that **MARK**, who in Acts 13:13; was the young man who deserted **PAUL** and **BARNABAS** on their **FIRST** Missionary journey, was appointed **BISHOP of ALEXANDRIA** in A.D. 43 to 63.

CLEMENT was a bishop in the N.T. sense i.e. as an Elder he served as an elder and bishop with two others **Linus** and **Cletus**.

So far the true office of elder and bishop was followed.

But before the end of the 1st Century **Solo Bishops** began to appear and by the 3rd Century the N.T. form of church government was being abandoned.

IGNATIUS 35-110 (ANTIOCH -Killed by Lions).

POLYCARP. WHO was probably the only Early Church Father to have had any contact with the Apostolic age, because he is SAID to have been born in 69 AD and to have **been a disciple of the apostle JOHN,** who appointed him **THE BISHOP OF SMRYNA.**

He was executed in the year 155 AD. who, when called upon to reject Christ, is reported to have said, **"86 years have I served Him and he has done me no wrong. How then shall I curse my King and my Saviour?" (Stabbed to Death).**

IRENÆUS. c138-200 **LYONS.**
TERTULLIAN. c160- 220 **HIPPO.**

CYPRIAN. c200- 258 **CARTHAGE** **Beheaded.**
LACTANTIUS. c240- 320
HILARY. c300-368 **POITERS.**

AMBROSE. c338-397 **MILAN.**
JEROME. c347-420 **JERUSALEM.**
AUGUSTINE. c354-430 **HIPPO.**

PELAGIUS. c390-418 Was a British-born ascetic moralist, who became well known throughout ancient Rome. He **opposed** the idea Of **predestination** and asserted a **strong version of the doctrine of free will.**

PELAGIUS was accused by **Augustine** of Hippo and others of denying the need for divine aid in performing good works.

MARTIN LUTHER. 1483 1546
JOHN CALVIN. 1509 1564

Huldrych Zwingli or **Ulrich Zwingli.** 1484 – 1531)
was a leader of the Reformation in Switzerland.

IF some of these **LEADERS** of the early churches could **so easily forsake the Teaching given by the apostles of the Lord Himself, and set out so clearly in the letters they wrote.**

We should NOT be too surprised when we find that they got other things wrong also.

In spite of Rome's great efforts to present the Early Fathers as almost perfect, superhuman- and almost divine beings- where Bible Teaching is concerned.

They were NOT always the exceptional teachers that they have been made out to be.

SO, WHAT ARE THE FACTS? because when we consider the facts it becomes easy to see where they failed to present the truth, and to understand why there was **so much division** in an age when **the UNITY of the N.T. Church should have been a reality.**

They were nearly all Pagans until Manhood and had very little understanding of the Old Testament and New Testament scriptures.

IF AUGUSTINE and his contemporaries had **REALLY** understood what Paul was writing about **CENTURIES OF ARGUMENT AND CONFLICT** might have been avoided.

“As he contended with **PELAGIUS**, Augustine wrote at least **11 books and pamphlets on GRACE**, and what Rome describes as **"A LIBRARY OF 20 BOOKS" on The Church.**

But he was mistaken about many of the things he taught. And often had to change his mind because, **he knew very little Greek** and relied upon the **LATIN translation of the Scripture.**”
(Farrar. Lives of the Fathers.)

Bishop WORDSWORTH, who was a distinguished scholar and Church Historian, made this statement:-

"If he had studied Paul **in the original Greek**, it is probable that **his opinions** on Predestination, Election and Reprobation (i.e. punishment) **would have been different** from what they were.")

WHERE DID ROME STAND?

DO YOU THINK THAT THE CHURCH OF ROME HAD LEARNED ANYTHING at all on the Doctrine of **Salvation by GRACE** from the **CENTURIES** of debate and argument that had raged among the **EARLY Church Fathers?**

Had **Augustine's** prolific writings **influenced** Rome's Official doctrine in any meaningful shape or form?

The answer can only be **NO!** And this is proved by the fact that, although **ROME** expressed support for the favoured **Augustine** and his **Doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God.**

Whilst his arch-opponent, **PELAGIUS**, was **condemned** because of his **denial of ORIGINAL SIN** and the **FALL**, and his apparent **discounting of the importance of GRACE**, his teaching was branded **heresy and he was excommunicated.**

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS NEVER OFFICIALLY ENDORSED THE DOCTRINE of SALVATION BY 'THE GRACE OF GOD...! without, AND APART FROM works of any kind.

While it expressed approval of the popular and greatly admired **AUGUSTINE**, the CHURCH - (i.e. **ROME!**) - never expressed approval of his teaching, or gave it official endorsement.

It was never accepted as the official doctrine of the Church of Rome, - and - something of immense significance, **NOT ONE** of the **20 CHURCH COUNCILS**, from the COUNCIL of NICEA in 325, to the VATICAN COUNCIL ever accepted it.

NOT ONE Church Council incorporated **Augustine's DOCTRINE OF GRACE** as an article of Faith, in any Creed or Confession that it formulated.

Augustine - is declared by the so-called
ROMAN CATHOLIC Church as **ONE OF
THE GREATEST INTELLECTS** that ever lived.

Who, because, of his influence in the
formulation of Roman Catholic Doctrine,
was **DECLARED A SAINT**,
naming him **FATHER of the Church**, He was
GRANTED the title of DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH.

DESCRIBED AS THE GREATEST of
only **FOUR** men given this distinction.

And **GIVEN THE NAME:-**

'DOCTOR GRATIE' = Doctor of Grace.

Here is a **Quotation** from the official
CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPAEDIC DICTIONARY.

"He became the greatest of the **LATIN DOCTORS**,
and **his teachings on 'GRACE, and the CHURCH'**
is profoundly influential still,
even outside of Catholicism."

Yet It never accepted what he taught, because
he said that man can do nothing towards his own
salvation, - **salvation is entirely by the Grace of God.**

Of course, when you consider **the fact that Rome has created a system in which forgiveness and salvation may be obtained through works of merit.**

**Not to put too fine a point on it:-
even by hard cash, you understand why
Salvation by Grace does not fit in very well!**

Roman Catholic Doctrine, **PURGATORY AN INTERMEDIATE STATE.**

According to Catholic doctrine, the soul of every individual goes at death to **PURGATORY**, which is the intermediate state between **EARTH AND HEAVEN**.

A state invented by the Vatican, as the state or place where **they all endure suffering for sins committed on Earth**, for which **they did not suffer ENOUGH** in this life.

“Even though their **sins** may have been **forgiven**, there **ALWAYS REMAINS** a **DEBT OF SUFFERING** which must be paid in the **FIRES OF PURGATORY** - **probably in ‘MATERIAL FIRE’** before they move on to Heaven.”
Says the "Catholic Encyclopaedic Dictionary."

That statement goes on to say that, whilst the sins may have been forgiven on Earth, -
"there is still left a debt of temporal punishment due to His justice inflicted probably **BY MATERIAL FIRE.**"

Remember! **EVERY soul** that has ever existed, goes to Purgatory, according to this doctrine.

Even though those sins may have been forgiven,
there remain a balance of suffering
which must be paid in Purgatory.

According to Roman Catholic doctrine,
"**Purgatory** is the place and state in which
souls suffer for a while and **are purged**
or cleansed after death on account of their sins,
before they go to Heaven."
"The Catholic Encyclopaedic Dictionary."

A certain St, CATHERINE OF GENOA is quoted as
saying:- "I do not believe it would be possible to find
any **JOY comparable to that of a soul in Purgatory**,
except the joy of the blessed in Paradise".
(The EASTERN Catholic Church
rejects this outrageous doctrine).

POSSIBLY it is not very widely understood
WHAT ROME ACTUALLY TEACHES ON
THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS
BY MEANS OF MERITORIOUS WORKS.

Because according to the doctrine of Rome,
a Roman Catholic can be **“BETTER”- MORE**
RIGHTEOUS- than God requires him to be.

So he can **possess a SURPLUS OF MERIT**
which may be applied to shorten the stay
of some poor soul that is suffering in PURGATORY.

It teaches that those in **Purgatory** can also be helped by people on earth, who have this **EXCESS of Goodness**, or who can afford to **BUY REMISSION** by paying for **MASSES** and other meritorious church services.

THIS DOCTRINE is known as the **DOCTRINE OF WORKS OF SUPEREROGATION** - and as you may well know, the dictionary defines **SUPEREROGATE** as 'to do more than is necessary.'

This is **SALVATION BY WORKS OF MERIT**, and we can imagine that poor souls who are said to be **SUFFERING IN THE FIRES of PURGATORY** would find it hard to reconcile this with **GRACE**.

AUGUSTINE AND PREDESTINATION.

AUGUSTINE went on to argue that **God's Grace** is not offered to all mankind, but only to the **Elect**.

In fact the truth is that he was a very **confused man**, because **initially**, he taught that because God foresees everything. He foresaw and foreknew that certain individuals would be worthy of salvation, **He then PREDESTINED them to be saved by Grace.**

Later, **BECAUSE** he had come to believe in the **TOTAL CORRUPTION OF HUMAN NATURE**, and **IN MAN'S INABILITY TO EVEN BELIEVE** the Gospel.

**God ALONE, OF HIS OWN WILL,
decides who shall be saved and who must be lost!**
Of course, this meant that **he had great difficulty**
with all those passages that clearly state
that God's Grace is extended to all mankind.

**1Tim 2:3-4; states:- "For this is good
and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour,
Who will have ALL MEN TO BE SAVED AND
TO COME TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH."**

Augustine was forced to claim that **the text
has been misunderstood and should read,
ALL KINDS OF MEN.**

**"IT IS THE WILL OF GOD THAT ALL KINDS OF MEN
SHOULD BE SAVED!"** And **these are the ELECT!**

In a desperate struggle to make this passage fit into his **Predestination theory**, **Augustine argued** that it **CANNOT** be the will of God that all men should be saved.

Because many people die **UNSAVED** and if it is the will of God that **ALL** should be saved, **no- one would lost.**

He even went so far as to claim that the obvious meaning of the text cannot be the true meaning, **because SO MANY BABIES DIE UNBAPTIZED.**

This could only mean one thing he said
“CHRIST DID NOT DIE FOR ALL MANKIND
BUT **ONLY FOR THOSE HE HAD
PREDESTINED TO BE SAVED.**”

These are the ones to whom God had given GRACE.
IF Augustine was right, and God determines
who shall be saved and who are to be lost.
**It must follow that those whom HE predestined
to be saved, CANNOT POSSIBLY BE LOST!**

But, when you start out along **THAT** road,
you must be prepared for where it takes you!

Others took up the struggle on both sides of the argument and it rumbled on a further millennium, **until the time of the Reformation.**

We do not have the time to follow the progress of this controversy; **we need only to say that the debate rumbled on through succeeding centuries.**

Until matters **came to a head** a thousand years later **in the time of MARTIN LUTHER.**

It is general considered that the **REFORMATION** began **IN GERMANY** when **Martin Luther** nailed his **Thesis of 95 points** to the **CASTLE CHURCH- door** at **WITTENBURG**, in **SAXONY** on **OCT 31st, 1517**.

It is not always recognized that behind that **CHURCH DOOR** there lay a source of great irritation to Luther, which prompted him to prepare that thesis.

The thesis did not, as is often supposed, relate to 95 doctrines concerning which he was at odds with Rome, and its title makes this clear.

It carries the heading, "**DISPUTATION of Dr. MARTIN LUTHER OF THE POWER AND EFFICACY OF INDULGENCES**".

Now an **INDULGENCE** was considered not only to be a **pardon for sins** committed, but also a **release from suffering in Purgatory**.

The **CASTLE CHURCH**, where Luther preached at **WITTENBURG**, lay under the authority of **FREDERICK the ELECTOR of SAXONY**.

In those days Saxony was a German State,
and **Frederick was a Prince**, who had the
right to vote in the appointment of the Emperor.

Therefore he had a great deal of influence;
a fact which was recognized by the **POPE** of ROME,
who, in **Luther's time**, was **LEO the 10th**.

Leo, was anxious to raise money
in order to build what we now know
as the Vatican Church, St Peter's of Rome.

For that purpose he had, **authorized a monk named JOHN TETZSEL** to travel through Europe **selling INDULGENCES**. Which, it was said, **would raise money for the maintenance of Church-buildings.**

This was how **Pope Leo disguised his real purpose in authorizing the sale of pardons.**

Now, an **Indulgence** is the **remission of punishment due because of sin**, and, what may surprise you is the fact that **indulgences are STILL available**, from the Church of Rome, and can be applied to **shorten the length of a soul's stay in PURGATORY.**

NOW FOR CENTURIES THE CHURCH OF ROME HAD been in the BUSINESS of **SELLING INDULGENCES**, even though it had **never been officially declared a DOCTRINE** of the Church.

They are **STILL** available today, and are **STILL claimed to shorten** the length of time that a soul suffers the **FIRES OF PURGATORY**.

In Martin Luther's time it is a documented fact that, both the **CURIA** and The **ARCHBISHOP OF MAINZ** were **heavily in debt** and owed a 'great deal' of money to a **GERMAN BANKING HOUSE**.

Therefore, as **TETZEL** travelled about **selling his INDULGENCES**, representatives of the **GERMAN BANK** went with him, to ensure that the Bank received its share of the money he took in!

So, Officially, **Pope LEO the 10th's PLAN** was to **raise money FOR THE MAINTENANCE of Church buildings**, but in reality he had a **SECRET AGENDA!** He was planning to **erect a monument to Peter in Rome**, in the form of a **GREAT CATHEDRAL-LIKE building**.

If, when the building was completed, **history linked his own name** with it as the originator of the plan, - **Pope Leo 10th, would not be displeased!**

BUT Luther's PATRON, ELECTOR FREDERICK,
was also quick to recognize the
money spinning opportunities presented by this
DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY AND INDULGENCES.

He had somehow amassed a vast **collection**
of **217,443 “holy bones”** and other **supposedly**
sacred relics, which he had arranged in rows
in his **CASTLE Church building.**

With the Pope's blessing he announced that **anyone**
who managed to **crawl on hands and knees** along
all the rows of these holy objects, would earn:-
A REMISSION of 127,799 years and 116 days
from the fires of Purgatory.

Providing of course, that
a generous DONATION was made towards
the upkeep of his Castle Church building!

Since in those days, Germany was
a Catholic country. People flocked to Wittenberg
in their thousands, from all over Germany,
to feast their eyes on these **GRACE-BESTOWING,**
SALVATION PROVIDING, HOLY OBJECTS.

In fact, IT BECAME EVEN BETTER FOR FREDERICK,
because in **1519 POPE LEO** granted
an increased indulgence of almost
2 MILLION YEARS off purgatory.

That is, about 100 years for every object in FREDDIE'S FRAUDULENT COLLECTION, because he wanted to ensure Frederick's support in the APPROACHING IMPERIAL ELECTION.

(We do not know to what extent Pope Leo personally benefited by this scam, because he died two years later, in -1521).

However, you will appreciate that WHEN LUTHER NAILED HIS THESIS TO THAT CHURCH-DOOR IN WITTENBERG he could have done nothing more harmful to the interests and reputation of his PATRON and PROTECTOR Frederick.

And in exposing the **fraudulent sale of indulgences**,
Luther was placing himself in real danger.

GERHART RITTER who wrote a definitive German
biography of Martin Luther, went so far as to say
that **Luther was naive** and did not **understand**
the implications of his action, or the **dangerous**
consequences that were likely to follow.

But that is almost impossible to believe.
It was rather a case of **Luther** being the
kind of man who did what he believed was right
regardless of the consequences.

Because when later he was **called before**
the **Church Council** accused of **heresy**
and **ordered to RECANT**, his famous words were.
**“HERE I STAND. I CAN DO NO OTHER.
GOD HELP ME.”**

AND as for **danger** to his life ; When **TETZEL**
threatened to **BURN HIM AT THE STAKE**,
Luther SCORNFULLY replied that Tetzel might
be better roasting Geese at his stake, because he
(Tetzel) knew more about that, than about theology.

NEVER THE LESS THE DANGER WAS REAL.
Not only was he acting **against** the interests
of **Prince Frederick** the Elector, his patron.

He was **opposing** his superiors in **Rome** by protesting against a practice which **declared** that **SALVATION COULD BE BOUGHT OR EARNED BY MERITORIOUS WORKS AS OPPOSED TO SALVATION BY GRACE.**

Remember **Luther** was working for the church and still acting under the Pope's authority.

The sound of those hammer blows on the Castle Church door in Wittenberg, **echoed, NOT ONLY THROUGHOUT GERMANY**, but also through the rest of Europe, as **the movement for REFORMATION** grew ever stronger.

The Roman Catholic church has **TWO AUTHORITIES** the **SCRIPTURES**, **AND THE CHURCH**, and of the two what the **CHURCH** teaches is the **GREATER** authority.

Martin Luther had challenged the idea of the **INFALLIBILITY** and **AUTHORITY OF ROME**.

The issue of **SALVATION** by **MERITORIOUS WORKS**.

As opposed to salvation by the **FREE GRACE OF GOD-**

NO BOLTS OF LIGHTNING FROM HEAVEN fell on the protestors, so they moved to challenge the Vatican on other matters.

LUTHER set down a series of
FIVE PRINCIPAL BIBLICAL DOCTRINES
which resulted in his break away from Rome.
They were principles with which
you and I would agree.

1. The full and final
AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.
Not **SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION.**

2. CHRIST the SOLE HEAD of the Church.

**3. SALVATION by GRACE through FAITH,
apart from (separate from) works of merit.**

**4. The PRIESTHOOD of ALL believers.
No division into CLERGY and LAITY.**

**5. The RESTORATION of the LORD' SUPPER,
instead of the MASS.**

If the **Reformation** had **proceeded along those lines** the state of the Christian World would be **very different today**.

BUT THE PROGRESS OF REFORMATION WAS HINDERED because a **YOUNGER REFORMER** in **SWITZERLAND**, -20 years **younger than LUTHER**.

JOHN CALVIN by name- came along and virtually **THREW OUT** the **teaching of Luther** and **established his own system**, which we know today as **CALVINISM**.

If you can remember the word '**TULIP**',
you can remember
the main **DOCTRINES** that Calvin taught

T - total inherited depravity.

This doesn't mean people are as bad as they can be.
It means that **sin** is in every part of one's being,
including the mind and will, **so that a man cannot
save himself. (born in Sin, based on original sin.)**

U - unconditional election.

God chooses to save people unconditionally;
that is, they are **not chosen** on the basis
of their own merit.) (**Predestination =**
You cannot even believe without the gift of faith.)

L - limited atonement.

The **sacrifice of Christ on the cross** was for the purpose of **saving the elect.**

**(Christ did not die to give
The opportunity of salvation for all.)**

I - irresistible Grace.

When **God has chosen** to save someone,
He will save them whether they
want to be saved or not. **(No personal choice.)**

P - Perseverance of the saints.

Those **people God chooses** cannot lose
their salvation; they will continue to believe.

If they fall away, it will be only for a time.

(Eternal Security cannot fall away.)

If you think **ABOUT** these points you will see that they represent the doctrine taught by **Augustine**.

YOU WILL ALSO UNDERSTAND WHY CALVIN CONSIDERED AUGUSTINE HIS TEACHER.

You will further understand why it was declared that **LUTHER and CALVIN did not get on well together."**

In fact, one writer has stated bluntly that **THEY WERE ENEMIES!** And if their **argument** over the **NATURE OF LORD'S SUPPER** is anything to go by, that may well be close to the truth!

Although **Luther** saw so many things so very clearly,
he still had enough of **Catholicism** about him
to believe that when thanks is given for **the BREAD**
and **GRAPE JUICE** at the Lord's Supper.

He believed that they are **miraculously changed**
to the **literal, physical flesh and blood of Christ.**
(TRANSUBSTANTIATION.)

**Also their methods of achieving
Reformation were very different:-**

LUTHER saw it being achieved along
a **SPIRITUAL ROUTE.**

CALVIN preferred to seek
Religious changes through POLITICS.

**In Roman Catholicism Religion and State
cannot be separated.**

**Sufficient to say that still today the world
of Christendom is divided THREE WAYS.**

**1. There is the Church which looks to Rome,
which still believes that SALVATION
may be obtained by WORKS of MERIT.**

**2. There are those bodies that embrace CALVINISM
(Presbyterians etc) who believe that the
death of Christ saves ONLY THE PREDESTINED -
THE ELECT who on being saved can NEVER be lost.**

**3. There are those who believe that
we are saved by responding
in PERSONAL FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE
TO the OFFER of GODS FREE GRACE.**

**Which has been revealed in and through
the SACRIFICE OF JESUS
ON OFFFER TO ALL MANKIND.**

**“I know nothing, except what everyone knows.
If there when **Grace dances, I should dance.**”**

W. H. AUDEN.

The story is told of a **prostitute**, she was homeless, sick, unable to buy food for her two-year-old daughter. Through sobs and tears, she said she had been renting out her daughter:-
two years old!

To men interested in kinky sex.

She made more renting out her daughter for an hour than she could earn on her own in a night. **She had to do it, she said, to support her own drug habit.**

When asked if she had ever thought of going to **“church”** a look of pure, naive shock crossed her face. **“Church!” she cried.**

**“Why would I ever go there?
I was already feeling terrible about myself.
They'd just make me feel worse.”**

What should strike us about this story is that women much like this prostitute **fled toward Jesus, not away from Him.**

**The worse a person felt about herself,
the more likely she saw Jesus as a refuge.
Have we lost that gift? Evidently the down-and-outs,
who flocked to Jesus when he lived on earth,
no longer feel welcome among His followers.
What has happened?**

Words are powerful and yet often change their meaning over the years.

Some tend to spoil, like old meat. Their meaning rots away. Consider the word "charity" for instance.

When the King James translators contemplated the highest form of love they settled on the word "charity" to convey it. Nowadays we hear the scornful protest, "I don't want your charity!"

Grace although much misunderstood still retains some of the glory of the original.

Reminding us that good things come not from our own efforts, but rather by the grace of God.

Even now in our secular world
we Can still catch a **glimpse of Grace.**

Many people "**say grace**" before meals,
acknowledging daily bread as **a gift** from God.

We are **grateful** of someone's kindness,
gratified by good news, **congratulated**
when successful, **gracious** in hosting friends. When
a person's service pleases us, we leave a **gratuity.**

A **composer of music** may add **grace notes**
to the score. Though not essential to the melody-
they are **gratuitous**, -these notes add
a flourish whose presence would be missed.

Some people would address royalty as **"Your grace."** Students at Oxford and Cambridge may **"receive a grace"** exempting them from certain academic requirements. Parliament declares an **"act of grace"** to pardon a criminal.

Sometimes If you sign up for twelve issues of a magazine, **you may receive a few extra copies** even after your subscription has expired.

These are **"grace issues,"** sent free of charge **(or, gratis)** to tempt you to re-subscribe.

Credit cards, car rental agencies, and mortgage companies likewise extend to customers an **undeserved "grace period."**

We also learn about a word from its **opposite**.
Newspapers speak of communism's
"fall from grace."

A phrase similarly applied to Jimmy Saville,
Rolf Harris, and some of our politicians.

We insult a person by pointing out the
lack of grace:- "You ingrate!" we say,
or worse, **"You're a disgrace!"**

A truly despicable person has **no "saving grace"**
about him. Some use the **root word grace** in
the phrase **persona non grata**: a person who offends
the U.S. government by some act of treachery
is officially proclaimed a **"person without grace."**

The many uses of the word in English convince us that **grace is indeed amazing.**

It **contains the essence of the gospel** as a drop of water can contain the image of the sun.

The world thirsts for grace in ways it does not even recognize; little wonder the hymn "**Amazing Grace**" edged its way onto the Top Ten charts two hundred years after composition.

Like **grace notes** in music though, the **state of grace proves fleeting.** The Berlin Wall falls in a night of euphoria; South African blacks queue up in long, exuberant lines to cast their first votes ever.

Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat shake hands
in the Rose **Garden**, for a moment, **grace descends**.

Eastern Europe sullenly settles
into the long task of rebuilding,
South Africa tries to figure out how to run a country,
Arafat dodges bullets and **Rabin** is felled by one.

Like a dying star, **grace dissipates**
in a final burst of pale light, and is then
engulfed by the black hole **ungrace**.

"The great Christian revolutions," said **H. Richard Niebuhr**, "come not by the discovery of something that was not known before. They happen when somebody takes radically something that was always there."

Sadly we sometimes find a **shortage of grace** within the church, an institution founded to proclaim, in Paul's phrase, **"the gospel of God's grace."**

Author **Stephen Brown** notes that a veterinarian can learn a lot about a dog owner he has never met just by observing the dog.

What does the world learn about God by watching us, His followers on earth?

Do they see in us a people full of grace, rejoicing in our salvation and our relationship with God.

“rejoicing and gladness” are not often the first images that come to mind when people think of “church.”

They think of a bunch of “holier-than-thou’s.”

They think of “church” as a place to go after you have cleaned up your act, not before.
They think of morality, not grace.

"Church!" said the prostitute,
"Why would I ever go there?
I was already feeling terrible about myself.
They'd just make me feel worse."

Such an attitude comes partly from a misconception, or bias, by outsiders. We see soup kitchens, homeless shelters, hospices, and prison ministries staffed by **believers** / volunteers **generous with grace.**

And yet the prostitute's comment stings because she has found a weak spot in the church.

Some of us seem so anxious about avoiding hell we forget to celebrate our journey toward heaven.

Others of us, rightly concerned about issues in a modern "culture war," neglect the church's mission as a haven of grace in this world of un-grace.

The disease **anorexia** is a direct **product of un-grace**:
Hold up the ideal? of beautiful skinny models
and teenage girls will starve themselves
to death **in an attempt to reach that ideal.**

India's caste system was so labyrinthine
that in the 1930s the British discovered
a new caste they had not encountered
in three centuries of presence there:-

Assigned the role of washing clothes for
the Untouchables, **these poor creatures believed**
they would contaminate higher castes by sight,
so they emerged only at night and
avoided all contact with other people.

The New York Times ran a series on **crime in modern Japan**. Why is it, they asked, that for every 100,000 citizens the United States imprisons 519, whereas Japan only imprisons 37?

In search of answers, the Times reporter interviewed a Japanese man who had just served a sentence for murder.

In the fifteen years he spent in prison, **he did not receive a single visitor.** After his release, his wife and son met with him, **only to tell him never to return to their village.**

Japanese society has found a way to harness the **power of un-grace**. A culture that values **"saving face"** has **no room for those who bring disgrace**.

His three daughters, now married, **refuse to see him**.
"I have **four grandchildren**, I think," the man said sadly; he has **never even seen pictures of them**.

Secular culture tells us a person must look good, feel good, and make good.

Graceless religion tells us we must follow the letter of the rules, and failure will bring eternal rejection.

Instead of studying more of Gods word because we want to know and appreciate God better.

We study to look for ways and means of binding on people rules and regulations that they can never keep.

Unaccepting parents:-

“Aren't you ashamed of yourself.”

Convince us

we will never meet their approval.

**We live in an atmosphere
choked with the fumes of un-grace.
Grace comes from outside,
as a gift and not an achievement.**

**How easily it vanishes from
our dog-eat-dog, survival-of-the-fittest,
look-out-for-number-one world.**

**The agnostic actor W. C. Fields was caught in his
dressing room reading a Bible. Embarrassed, Fields
snapped the book shut and explained, "Just looking
for loopholes." Probably, he was looking for grace.**

**Tragically, Historically, religious people
have struggled with the idea of Grace.**

**The teaching of the Scriptures on both Grace
and the Church is so clear that it is amazing
that anyone should fail to understand it!**

**The 'GOSPEL' is GOOD NEWS!
It is good news of the GRACE OF GOD.**

Is salvation of the Lord?

Certainly, no one could be saved without the sacrifice of His son for man's salvation.

Are we saved by grace? YES!

No one can or will be saved without God's grace!

Is there something for us to do?

We have to respond to God's grace by accepting salvation on Gods terms.

Rom 3:24; "We are "Justified FREELY

by

His GRACE."

**Rom 5:2; "BY FAITH we have ACCESS
INTO THIS GRACE in which we stand."**

**Rom 5:15; "MUCH MORE the GRACE OF GOD,
and the GIFT of GRACE"**

Rom 5:17; "the ABUNDANCE of GRACE."

**Eph 2: 8-10; "For by GRACE you are saved,
through faith"**

Eph 2:7; "The EXCEEDING RICHES of His grace

Jas 4:6; "He gives MORE grace."

Literally "A greater grace."

1Pet 5:10; “The GOD of ALL GRACE.”

1Pet 4:10; The MANIFOLD GRACE of God.”

(“POIKILOS.”)

**1Pet 5:12; “This is the TRUE GRACE of God,
in which you STAND”.**

**The word 'STAND' is an IMPERATIVE:-
NOT a Request - a Suggestion,
or Appeal or Proposition.**

It is AN ORDER... A COMMAND! STAND!

2 Pet 3:18; “ ‘GROW’ in Grace and in the knowledge.”

**1 Peter 1:3; God has given to us
"ALL THINGS that pertain to LIFE and GODLINESS."
It is because God has provided us with everything
necessary to Establish us, Strengthen us
and Settle us, that by His grace,
we are able to obey His command.**

**2 Pet 1:5-8; "ADD to your faith."
"IN your faith supply" EPICHOREGAEO.**

**Theologians sometimes speak about the
'SPHERICAL BALANCE ' in the life of Christ.
When they wish to draw attention to the fact
that His life was a perfectly rounded life.**

In which apparently **conflicting and contrasting characteristics** were brought together in **perfect harmony and balance**.

For example: - in the Lord, humility and confidence went hand in hand. HE could say:-

"I am meek and lowly in heart", and yet

He never expressed a doubt on any subject, always **He spoke with complete confidence and assurance.**

These are qualities rarely found in the people we know.

It is difficult to be meek and knowledgeable at the same time.

Again; **HE hated sin** - but **was able to love the sinner** - and this, too, is something which we find extremely difficult to do.

We are lopsided creatures!

Well developed in certain aspects of our characters, woefully lacking in others.

It is the function of the Grace of God not only to enable and empower us to find and **accept salvation** but also to help us **to develop mature, rounded Christ like characters.**

Deliverance from our sin problem has always been **by grace through faith**. There is **no other means** by which mortal man can possibly be saved from the confines of his mortality.

Because there is **no possible way to obey perfectly any system of law from God, or to meritoriously atone for one sin through good works,** salvation will always be by God's grace.

Subtract our obedient faith from the picture, and there can never be any reception of the free gift of grace.

“It is through the obedience of faith that we have access into God's wonderful grace, wherein we stand and have confidence of our salvation. So through faith we thank "God for His indescribable gift." (2 Cor 9:15;)

Grace is the love of God who reached out to His creation through the cross of His incarnate Son.

If we delete the cross, there is no grace.

If we ignore Jesus, there is no grace.

Jesus Christ as the crucified Servant of God is the very illustration of God's grace toward man.

Paul's emphasis on grace was certainly intended by the Holy Spirit. In his life **before the waters of baptism** in Damascus, **Paul was breathing murderous threats against the church.** (Acts 9:1;)

But after his cleansing by the grace of God through the blood of Christ, 1Jn 1:7; in the waters of baptism. Acts 22:16;

Who else would be the obvious choice to reveal the wonderful grace of God? If grace could save Paul the chief of sinners, then it can save anyone.

Paul **did not teach** that **grace** covers the sin of the saint to the point that it does not make any difference what one believes or how he behaves.

Paul always **maintained** an inseparable connection between **grace and obedience**.

He always taught that **obedience** was **a manifestation of faith**, **not** a meritorious effort to **justify one's self** in response to the cross.

Paul says in 1 Cor 15:14; the gospel was the revelation of Jesus' death for our sins and His resurrection for our hope.

This was an act of grace on the part of God, not law. This was the grace of God revealed at / in the cross.

Obedience to the gospel does not refer to obedience to another system of law whereby one would seek to justify himself before God.

**Obedience to the gospel is joining with Jesus on the cross, in the tomb, and in His resurrection.
(See Rom 6:3-6;)**

Our obedience to the gospel is a response to the grace of God that was revealed on the cross over two thousand years ago. (Tit 2:11;)

That Jesus died for our sins is the "truth and essence of the gospel."

Col 1:5; Gal 2:5,14;.

Somewhere between the extremes and misunderstandings concerning grace. There must be a simple understanding of God's grace that is so important and central to Christian faith.

GRACE - Undeserved acceptance
and love received from another.

Especially the characteristic attitude of God
in providing salvation for sinners.

For Christians, the word "grace"
is virtually synonymous with the gospel of
God's gift of unmerited salvation in Jesus Christ.

To express this, the New Testament writers
used the Greek word **CHARIS**, which had
a long previous history in secular Greek.

Related to the word for joy or pleasure,
CHARIS originally referred to something
delightful or attractive in a person,
Something which brought pleasure to others.

From this it came to have the idea of a **favour** or **kindness** done to another or of a **gift** which brought pleasure to another.

Viewed from the standpoint of the recipient, it was used to refer to the thankfulness felt for a gift or favour.

These meanings also appear in the biblical use of **CHARIS**, but only in the New Testament does it come to have the familiar sense which "**GRACE**" means for **Christians**.

Grace in the Old Testament - No one word in the Hebrew Old Testament is equivalent to the New Testament use of **charis** for **God's unmerited gift of salvation**.

The translators of the Greek Old Testament characteristically translated the Hebrew word **CHANAN / CHEN** as **CHARIS**, and the King James Version likewise often translates this as "**grace**" or "**favour**" or "**mercy.**"

The Hebrew verb **CHANAN** occurs some **56 times** in the Old Testament and refers to the kind turning of one person to another in an **act of assistance**, such as **aid to the poor.** (Prov 14:31;)

In the Psalms it is frequently used to call upon the **gracious assistance of God in times of need.** (Psa. 4:1; 6:2; 25:16; 31:9; 86:3; 86:16; 123:3;)

In other instances **God is said to make one attractive or favourable in the eyes of another.**

(Gen 39:21; Exod 3:21; 11:3; 12:36;).

It is the latter meaning of "**favour**" which the noun **CHEN** especially conveys.

Of its **70 occurrences** in the Old Testament, **43** are in the stereotyped expression "**to find favour/grace in the eyes / sight of another.**"

Most commonly this expression refers to persons seeking or obtaining the favour of another.

Jacob from Esau. —Gen. 32:5; 33:8;

Joseph from Potiphar. —Gen. 39:14;

Ruth from Boaz. —Ruth 2:2,10;

Esther from Ahasuerus. -Esther 2:17;

More rarely it refers to a person
Receiving God's special favour.

Noah. -Gen. 6:8; **Moses.** -Exod 33:12-19;
Gideon. - Judg 6:17;

In none of these instances, however, is there
any emphasis on the **recipient's lack of merit**
as in the New Testament concept of "**grace.**"

Closest to this idea are the few passages in
the prophets which refer to **God's gracious favour**
to Israel in **delivering** her from captivity and
restoring the nation. (Jer. 31:2; Zech. 4:7; 12:10;)

Other Hebrew words convey the idea of God's grace, such as **racham / rachamim** ("mercy") and **chesed**. ("steadfast covenant love.")

These words are often combined with **chen** to refer to the **one merciful, loving, gracious God**. (Ex 34:6; Neh 9:17; Psa 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2;)

Together they convey something of the New Testament sense of God's grace, but even then **they lack the sense of this being an unmerited favour of God**. To be sure, the idea that **Israel did not deserve God's mercy and love** is found in the Old Testament. (Deut. 7:7-10; 9:4-6;).

God promised David that He would not remove His love from David's successor, even though the successor sinned.

(2 Sam 7:14-16;)

The entire Book of Jonah deals with God's merciful concern to save.

From the human perspective, the **divine grace is **a power which under girds** the present life.**

God's grace abides in us. (2 Cor 9:14;)

We stand in it. (Rom 5:2;).

Our calling, our witness, our works are all based on the power of God's grace in our lives. (2 Thess 1:11-12;)

Paul sharply **rejected any perversion of the gospel** which failed to recognize that the **true experience of God's grace changes our life in the direction of righteousness.**

(Rom 6:1,14-15;)

Grace never gives freedom to sin.

Paul's own experience had shown him a new power of the **divine grace** active in his ministry in spite of His human weakness. (2 Cor 12:9;)

In fact, **all who experience God's grace have gifts of grace for ministry and service.**
(Rom 12:6; Eph 4:7;).

So pervasive was Paul's sense of God's grace that he always referred to it in the opening or closing of his letters. His usual **salutation** includes a wish for "**grace**" and "**peace**" upon his readers.
(Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3;)

Here Paul played upon the normal word of salutation in Greek letters (**CHAIREIN-JOY**).
CHARIS has a similar sound,
but a world of difference.

For the Christian, a reminder of **God's grace** in their lives **is the richest word of greeting and the fullest source of joy.**

**The actual virtue of Grace is ascribed
to every one of the Godhead.**

God. Tit 2:11;

Christ. 2 Cor 13:14;

Holy Spirit. Heb 10:29;

**Most of us feel that we may understand **the subject
of Grace**. Yet, when we have to explain what it is,
we might have some difficulty explaining Grace.**

GRACE: ITS MEANING IN THE SCRIPTURES.

One problem of misunderstanding **the doctrine of Grace** is assuming that the word "**Grace**" possesses only one meaning.

Often, we will learn one definition for a word, then we will assume that this definition applies wherever that word appears.

This often leads to religious error.

The word for **Grace** in the Greek is **CHARIS**.

This word is found at least 163 times in the Bible.

Found in **39** verses of the **Old Testament**

Found in **124** verses of the **New Testament**

used by Paul around 100 times.

Thayer, and other Lexicographers usually will present **six primary meanings** for the word "**charis**"

Charis is translated.

Favour. (6 times) e.g. Luke 1:30;

Thanks. (5 times) e.g. 2 Corinthians 9:15;

Credit. (3 times) e.g. Luke 6:32;

Commendable. (2 times) e.g. 1 Peter 2:20;

Gift. (2 times) e.g. Romans 4:4;

**Charis is translated by 14 other words once,
including
*benefit, blessing, and gracious gift.***

So with this word **“grace.”**

It's helpful to notice how the word is translated in addition to **“grace”**, because it helps us understand the word.

There are three levels of use

- 1) **Every day street level usage.**
- 2) **The Emperors Goodness.**
- 3) **The Holy Spirit's use.**

Depending upon the context,
we can learn **the meaning** the writer
had in mind for the word **Grace "charis."**

Proper Meaning.

**All words have a proper meaning,
or what we know as the common meaning.**

**This is the way that the word was commonly
understood during its time of usage.**

**Thayer says that Grace is "that which affords joy,
pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness."**

(Thayer, p. 665).

Before it became a powerful Christian word, it was an important word in the vocabulary of Hellenistic Greek, commonly used throughout the Roman Empire in N.T. times.

Not only was it the virtually required form of polite greeting - as we see from Paul's own letters, it was such an important word that it was used in virtually every department of life and culture.

ART, MEDICINE, ATHLETICS, LITERATURE.- In every sphere of human activity. CHARIS expressed a sense of beauty of form, and sound and behaviour.

BUT it also acquired a **deeper significance**, when it was used to describe **AN ACT OF KINDNESS OR GOODNESS, GENEROSITY THAT LOOKED FOR NO RECOMPENSE - NO PAYMENT.**

Used in this context, it described **SOMETHING that is freely given**, because it **springs from the essential goodness of the giver himself.**

For this reason, **'Charis'** was used to describe what people regard as a **GODLIKE- generosity.**
The **magnanimous benevolence** which the **EMPEROR** showed towards his subjects.

Of course, **most Bible scholars** no doubt recognize that **this definition** has a **Christian sound**, which brings to mind the **Grace of God Himself**.

But, **THERE IS A VITAL AND RADICAL DIFFERENCE** between this **Pagan definition** of Charis, noble as it certainly is, and the **SCRIPTURAL** use of the word.

The reason is that, in Greek society,
this MAGNANIMOUS unmerited,
undeserved act of kindness.

This act of goodness which
neither desires nor seeks recognition
or recompense, was only bestowed
on a FRIEND and never an ENEMY!

YOU LOVED your friends- and **HATED** your enemies!

You see how different this is in Christianity!

Paul wrote, in Rom 5; “Scarcely for a righteous man would one die. Perhaps for a good man one would even dare to die.”

**“BUT GOD commends,
(recommends, extends,)
HIS love towards us in that while
We were still sinners, Christ died for us.”**

**The fact is that this is a concept which the
ANCIENT GREEKS COULD NOT UNDERSTAND.**

**It was an idea foreign
to both their nature and their culture.**

CHARIS SHOWN TO AN ENEMY?

IT DIDN'T HAPPEN!

**And it didn't happen BECAUSE IT WAS
QUITE LITERALLY UNTHINKABLE !**

LISTEN TO WHAT 1 JOHN 3:1; says.

**"Behold what manner of love
the Father has bestowed upon us, that
WE should be called the sons of God...!"**

That phrase **MANNER OF LOVE** comes from a Greek word **POTAPOS** that could be translated perfectly accurately as:-

**“FROM WHAT NATION, RACE OR TRIBE’
WHAT FOREIGN KIND OF LOVE
the Father has bestowed.”**

The **ENGLISH** translation of **POTAPOS** would be the word **'EXOTIC'** which also means **'FROM OUTSIDE... FROM A FOREIGN COUNTRY!'**

Well, the **CHRISTIAN CONCEPT OF CHARIS** would, to the Greeks, certainly be regarded as foreign! It would be **UNTHINKABLE**.

When the **Holy Spirit** inspired the New Testament writers, on several occasions He took familiar Greek words and invested them with new meanings.

Meanings which would never have occurred to the unspiritual, unregenerate Greek mind:-
Just look at one other example:-
take the word **AGAPE**.

AGAPEO is a word which took on a new deeper meaning when used by the writers of the New Testament letters.

The **PAGAN Greek** mind would NEVER have used it to speak of **the Love of God**.

Ancient Philosophers longed to believe that the **ONE** who **created all things** was **a loving God**, but they could never be sure.

The gods in whom the ancient world believed were gods who possessed human passions and human weaknesses - jealous gods, envious gods. –

Down right cruel gods but **never the kind of loving God revealed in the N.T. Scriptures**.

This is why, when **Paul** arrived **in Athens** for the first time, coming down from Thessalonica in the North and entering the Agora, where the many altars can still be seen, he spoke of the God **“whom you ignorantly worship.”**

The Athenian fear of the gods was such that, among the many altars to the many gods, Paul found that they had **dedicated an altar to the UNKNOWN GOD.**

Just in case they had overlooked one....
and **just in case** he was more powerful
than the gods they thought they knew.

**IF ONLY THOSE EARLY FATHERS
HAD KNOWN THE SCRIPTURES!**

IF ONLY **AUGUSTINE HAD BEEN ABLE TO READ
ROMANS IN THE LANGUAGE PAUL USED.**

IF ONLY **CALVIN HAD BETTER
UNDERSTOOD THE WORD OF GOD.**

Rom 5:9-19; “Scarcely for a righteous man would one die. Perhaps for a good man, one would even dare to die. But God commends his love towards us in that whilst we were yet sinners Christ died for us.”

Eph 2:8-10; “For by **GRACE** have you been saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, **it is the gift of God**, not of works lest any man should boast for **we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus** unto **good works** which God has before ordained that **we should walk in them.**”

We cannot possibly speak about **Grace** without listening to what Paul has to say in his letters - notably to the ROMAN and the EPHESIAN believers about the **GLORY OF GRACE.**

A good example of the proper meaning of **Grace** comes from a comment made about the way **Jesus spoke**.

"And all bore Him witness, and wondered at **the gracious words** which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, is not this Joseph's son?"
(Luke 4:22).

Jesus' words had a sweet, refreshing quality about them.

**This was unusual for someone
who was just a carpenter's son.
People delighted in the way Jesus spoke,
and the words that He used.**

**Graciousness should be the
characteristic of the Christian's speech.**

**This is Paul's admonition: "Let no corrupt
communication proceed out of your mouth,
but **that which is good to the use of edifying,**
that it may minister grace unto the hearers."
(Eph. 4:29).**

We sing a hymn in which the hymn writer extols the glories of Grace!

**"Grace, it is a charming sound,
melodious to our ears."**

Those words were **written in 1740** by **PHILLIP DODDERIDGE**. Famous preacher, (he preached in Northamptonshire) and, biblical scholar.

He was very **familiar** with the Greek word **Charis, Grace** and he certainly **spoke the truth** when he described it as '**charming.**'

**Our speech should not be harsh.
It should be able to edify others.**

In **Col 4:6**, we find a further admonition about our speech: "Let your **speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt**, that you may **know how you ought to answer every man.**"

Besides the **manner of our speech** Paul now adds that we have **it seasoned with experience.**
In such a manner **we shall know how we should answer every man.**

The **next way** that "**charis**" is used in scripture is to convey the idea of "**goodwill, loving-kindness, favour.**"

Some writers of the New Testament use this meaning for Grace either at the beginning or ending of their letters.

They would invoke the spiritual blessings of God upon those to whom they were writing.

**They were seeking the goodness that
God gives to those that are His children.**

**This is similar to our greetings toward others
when we wish them well.**

**In a similar way, this meaning implies the
"kindness which they do not deserve."**

This is how most people understand Grace.

The context of **Eph. 2:4-9**; is a classic text that expresses this meaning.

We also have the **"GOODWILL"** of God working through His children under this meaning.

It is **His favour** toward us, leading us by His providence, to those things that are best for us.

Paul uses this aspect of Grace when he wrote:-

"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

(1 Cor. 15:10;)

Paul points out that we must accept this grace. We must **use** what God has given to us, so that God might receive the glory.

Each of us are beneficiaries of this Grace. Our **spiritual growth** is dependent upon **how we use the goodness and favour** of God in our lives.

How great it would be to say as Paul did, that **what God has done for us is "not in vain."**

What Is Due By Grace.

**Following in line with the previous meaning,
we now can say that grace is:-**

**"THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF ONE GOVERNED
BY THE POWER OF DIVINE GRACE."**

(Thayer, p. 666, cf. Rom. 5:2; 1 Peter 5:12;)

**Whenever we accept the goodness
and favour of God, we can begin
to receive the benefits of God's grace.**

It is also the "token or proof of grace."

"And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that you might have a **second benefit."**

(2 Cor 1:15; the word "benefit" is charis.)

**"Thanks is another meaning for "CHARIS."
(for benefits, services, favours)." Thayer, p. 666.**

Paul uses this idea when writing to Timothy:

"I thank (charis) God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembered you in my prayers night and day." (2 Tim 1:3;)

Thayer's definitions were used because he is accepted more universally than some newer lexicons.

Depending upon which lexicon you use, the break down of meanings might vary a little. **The sense of the word however, is the same.**

CONTEXT should always govern our understanding for the word "**charis.**"
When this is done, then error in interpretation can be avoided.

The most common understanding of **"Grace"**

is: **"the unmerited favour
and love of God toward man."**

How would you define "grace"?

**" Undeserved acceptance and love received
from another, especially the characteristic
attitude of God in providing salvation for sinners.
God's grace is something we can never repay."**

"For Christians, the word **"grace" is virtually
synonymous (the same as) with the gospel of
God's gift of unmerited salvation in Jesus Christ."**

Holman Bible Dictionary

This is correct, yet many interpret this to mean that **man does nothing to receive the benefits of Grace.**

The word “**grace.**”

A couple of **key points** in this definition.

Undeserved acceptance.

If it were **deserved**, it wouldn't be
A **gift**, it would be **payment of a debt.**

The **GRACE** of God
is one of the **most vital** and **fundamental**
and **challenging themes** for discussion.
Without grace man would be **doomed.**

It is God's nature to want to save us

2 Pet 3:9; "The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

Whenever the word "**grace**" is used in a religious context, the thought of "**God's unmerited favour**" comes to mind. The way that this is interpreted varies according to different religious philosophies.

The **doctrine of Grace** is usually understood as the way one obtains salvation.

Salvation free from works.

The central text used to support this view is **Eph 2:4-10;.**

Ephesians 2:4-10; “But **because** of His **great love** for us God, who is rich in mercy, **made us alive** with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions (sins) it is **by grace** you have been saved. And God **raised us up** with Christ and **seated us with Him in the heavenly realms** in Christ Jesus,”

“7 in order that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of **His grace**, expressed in **His kindness** to us in **Christ Jesus**. For it is by **grace** you have been saved, **through faith** and this **not from yourselves**, it is the **gift of God**”

“9 not by works, so that no one can boast. For **we are God’s workmanship**, created **in Christ Jesus to do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

This passage represents:-

- 1) Two sides of Salvation! - Human and Divine.**
- 2) Two elements of salvation! -Grace and Faith.**
- 3) Two aspects of salvation! - Positive and negative.**
By Grace Through Faith; But not of Works.

**In order to understand passages like
Eph 2:4-10; we first need to discuss
God's mercy and justice.**

**Recall the suggestion that “*GRACE is
God giving us what we don't deserve.*”
" By contrast, *MERCY is
God NOT giving us what we do deserve.*”**

**“God’s justice demands the just penalty
be paid for our sin.” – Romans 6:23;**

**“ Yet God’s nature demands
that He cannot extend grace
without satisfying His justice!**

God’s mercy and justice.

Why not take the concept one step farther.

Why can’t God just offer an amnesty?

**" If God offers us amnesty instead of justice,
it would undermine the entire
social and moral order."**

**Just as God has bound Himself
to consistency in the laws of nature, He must also be
consistent with the application of moral law.**

**God HAS to extend both GRACE and MERCY
in ways that are CONSISTENT
with His JUSTICE.
Romans 3:19-31;**

God's Grace Is Universally Available but not Universally Accepted!

**“For the grace of God has been revealed,
bringing salvation to all people.” Titus 2:11;**

Rom 5:15; **“And what a difference between our sin
and God's generous gift of forgiveness. For this one
man, Adam, brought death to many through his sin.**

**But this other man, Jesus Christ, brought
forgiveness to many through God's bountiful gift.”**

Titus 2:11;
Rom 5:15; (v12.)
Matt 7:13-14;
2 Cor 5:14-15;

God's Grace Is Universally Available but not Universally Accepted!

“You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose the easy way. But the **gateway to life is small, and the road is narrow, and only a few ever find it.**”

Matt 7:13-14;.

“Whatever we do, it is because Christ's love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for everyone, we also believe that **we have all died to the old life we used to live.**”

“He died for everyone **so that those who receive His new life will no longer live to please themselves. Instead, they will live to please Christ, who died and was raised for them.**” 2 Cor 5:14-15;

Our need for justification!
What is justification, and why
Should we be interested in it?

In order for us to be justified,
what do we need?

Mercy?

Is that enough?

Paul wrote that we have been
“justified freely by His grace...”
Let’s look further into Romans 3:24;.

“...justified freely...” The thought begins in v 22;

“There is no difference, 23 for **all have sinned**
and fall short of the glory of God,

24 and are **justified FREELY by His grace THROUGH**
the **REDEMPTION** that came **by CHRIST JESUS.**”

So that’s the full thought, but let’s center in on v 24;

“...and are **justified freely by His grace**
THROUGH the redemption
that came **by Christ Jesus.**”

“...justified freely...”

Neatly sandwiched in between “**justified**”
and “**by His grace**” is the adverb “**freely.**”

The word literally means

“**gratuitously**”, or “**without a cause.**”

“...justified freely...”

This is where the problem usually comes many people understand from this phrase that our **salvation is a free gift** there is **nothing we need do.**

God has done it all!

But that passage is not saying our **justification** or **salvation** itself is **free** but the statement is **QUALIFIED BY through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.** It has been made **freely** available.

“...justified freely...” Back in Ephesians 2:4-10;
“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God not by works so that no one can boast.”

Remember “grace” CHARIS – is the “gift.”

Taking all the verses where "**charis**" occurs, and viewing **grace** in its broadest meaning, the following statement can be made regarding **Grace**.

The **Grace** of God is seen in **the sacrifice of His son** on our behalf and **His mercy and favour** is seen in the **time** that God has **extended** to us.

To **respond** to **HIS GRACE** we have a **period of time**, by which we have **opportunity** to **redeem ourselves** from our sins.

By appreciating and taking hold of the offer of Grace which God has made available to us through the sacrificial Blood of His son.

This **time period** is given so that we might be **redeemed from our debt of sin**. Our debt is **due**, yet **God extends the payment period** to allow us to obtain redemption.

If we do not take the opportunity **to redeem ourselves** within our lifetime, **by taking advantage of God's grace**, then we shall suffer **the consequences of our sin**.

We see this principle used in modern banking.

Our loan is a debt that is due every month.

The day arrives, and we do not have the means to pay off that debt. The bank extends to us a short period of **time in which we can redeem our debt without suffering any consequences.**

If we do not redeem that debt within this **"grace period,"** then we shall suffer the consequences.

God has granted to each of us time. Time in which we can redeem ourselves from our debt of sin. **God has given His Son** as the **MEANS** by which we might **REDEEM** ourselves. (cf. John 3:16;)

When Christ returns **that will be the end of Grace** for all time.

There will be no more time extended for us to be redeemed by God's Grace.

Peter expresses this nature of **Grace** when he penned the following words:-

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering toward us, **not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."**

(2 Peter 3:9;)

Paul gives a similar warning to those who heard him in Athens. (Acts 17:30-31;)

“The **times of ignorance** God overlooked, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent, because,”

“He has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness **by a man** whom He has appointed; & of this He has given assurance by raising Him from the dead.”

Surprisingly the word **"grace"** does not occur in **Matthew or Mark**. The **concept is there**, in Jesus' ministry to sinners and outcasts, in His healing ministry, and in such teachings as the parable of the labourers in the vineyard. (**Matt 20:1-8;**).

Luke, however, made extensive use of **charis** in both his writings. Sometimes he used it with basically **secular meanings**, such as **"credit or benefit."** (Luke 6:32-34; NAS)

as **"thanks."** (Luke 17:9;), or as **"attractiveness in speech."** (Luke 4:22;).

The familiar Old Testament idea of **"favour"** appears a number of times, sometimes referring to the favour of one human to another. (Acts 2:47; 7:10; 24:27; 25:3,9; Luke 2:52;) Sometimes to **God's favour** bestowed on individuals. (Luke 1:28-30; 2:40; Acts 7:46).

Reminiscent of Paul are the references in Acts which refer to salvation or to the gospel as **"grace."** (Acts 11:23; 13:43; 18:27; 20:24, 32;)

Also like Paul are those places where **grace** is described as an **enabling power** in the ministries of various Christians. (Acts 4:33; 6:8 NAS; 14:26; 15:40;).

Grace only occurs **three times** in **John's Gospel**,
all in the prologue. (ch. 1).

Grace is equated with **truth**. (1:14;),
Its **gift nature** is emphasized. (1:16; NTV),
It is set **in antithesis** to the law of Moses. (1:17;)

In the rest of John's writings **grace occurs**,
only **three times**, all in benedictions.
(2 John 3; Rev. 1:4; 22:21;)

References to **grace** in the other New Testament
writings do not extend beyond the Meanings
found in the Pauline epistles and Luke-Acts.
Secular meanings of **charis** occur, such as
"gratitude" Heb 12:28; and **"credit."** 1 Pet 2:19-20;

Grace is connected with **God's mercy**. (Heb 4:16;)
And with the **atoning death of Christ**. (Heb 2:9;)

It is **virtually equated** with the **gospel**. (1 Pet 5:10;)
And with **salvation**. (1 Pet 1:10,13;).

It is seen as a power which strengthens life. (Heb 13:9;)

Holds up those who are persecuted. (1 Pet 5:10;)

Grants gifts for Christian service. (1 Pet 4:10;)

God's grace can be spurned. (Heb 10:29; 12:14-15;)
Or turned into a perverted gospel promising
freedom to sin without judgment. (Jude 4;)

Above all, **grace** is the hallmark of the Christian experience and thus a frequent component in benedictions. (Heb 13:25; 1 Pet 1:2; 2 Pet 1:2;)

Jonah and the wicked Ninevites, and Hosea powerfully conveys **God's undeserved mercy and grace** with the image of the prophet's love for the faithless Gomer.

Grace in the New Testament:- The Pauline letters employ the word **charis** and its related forms **twice as frequently** as the rest of the New Testament writings combined.

Paul sometimes employed the word with its more secular meanings. He urged his readers to **make their speech "gracious" or "attractive"** (Col 4:6; Eph 4:29), and referred to his visit to Corinth as a **"grace"** which would bring them pleasure / "benefit." (2 Cor 1:15;)

The idea of **gift** also appears, especially in reference to his collection for the Jerusalem saints. (1 Cor 16:3; 2 Cor 8:1,4,6-7,19;)

Often he used **charis** to mean **thanks**, as in the **thanksgiving** over a meal. (1 Cor 10:30;)
Or in **songs of praise**. (Col 3:16;)

Paul came to see a sharp difference between law and grace. **Law is the way of self-help, of earning one's own salvation.**

Grace is God's way of salvation, totally unearned, because God has done through Jesus what we could never achieve for ourselves. (Rom 3:24; 4:4; 11:6; Eph 2:8;)

Grace is appropriated by faith in what God has done in Christ. (Rom 4:16;)
It is through Christ's atoning work on the cross that God's grace comes to us, setting us free from the bondage of sin. (Rom 3:24-31;)

For Paul, **grace** is practically
synonymous with the gospel.

Grace brings salvation. (Eph 2:5-8).

Grace brings eternal life. (Rom 5:21; Titus 3:7;)

**To share in the gospel
is to be a partaker of grace.**

(Phil 1:7; Col 1:6;)

In Christ Jesus God's grace is open to all people.
(Titus 2:11; compare 2 Cor 4:15;)

**But the experience of God's grace
is conditional upon human response.**

It can be rejected or accepted.

(2 Cor 6:1; Gal 1:6; 5:4;)

**Christ is the Propitiation who breaks
the reign of sin and brings life and
acceptance with God through divine grace.**

(Rom 5:15-17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10;

**God's grace is so bound up with Christ that Paul
could speak of the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

(2 Cor 8:9; 2 Tim 2:1;)

**It was in and through the beloved Son
that God's grace
came supremely to mankind.**

(1 Cor 1:4; Eph 1:6-7; compare 2 Tim 1:9;)

He was an apostle solely because of God's grace.

(Rom 1:5;) His entire ministry and teaching were due to that **divine grace.**

Rom 12:3; 15:15; 1 Cor 3:10; 2Cor 1:12; Gal 2:9; Eph 3:2,7-8;

Paul had too profound a sense of human sin to believe that a person could ever earn God's acceptance. (Rom. 3:23;)

As a Pharisee, he had sought to do that by fulfilling the Law of Moses. Now he understood, by divine revelation, that it was not a matter of earning God's acceptance but rather of COMING to ACCEPT GOD'S ACCEPTANCE of him through Jesus Christ.

Frequently he used the set expression **"Thanks"**
"charis to God." (Rom 6:17; 7:25; 1 Cor 15:57;
2 Cor 2:14; 8:16; 9:15; 1 Tim 1:12; 2 Tim 1:3;)

We can understand that **for Paul**
this common Greek phrase carried
a much deeper understanding. It was
precisely **his experience Of God's grace** that
led to **his profound sense of thanksgiving.**

Paul's sense of **God's grace**
owed much to his experience of being
turned from the persecutor of the church
to Christ's missionary to the Gentiles.
(1 Cor 15:9-10; 1 Tim 1:12-14;)

**THE GRACE OF GOD IS WHAT
WE RECEIVE THROUGH CHRIST.**

**We can define the meaning of Grace,
yet never really know
all that Grace actually consists of.**

We KNOW that it is the favour of God.

**We KNOW that it is something
that we have not deserved.**

**We KNOW that it possesses the opportunities
for our salvation and redemption from sin.**

We NEED to KNOW what Grace embraces.
(what is involved in God's Grace.)

**Without Christ Jesus, we would
NOT have access to the Grace of God.**

**The Grace of God comes
THROUGH Jesus Christ sacrifice
that He made on the cross.**

**Without HIS sacrifice who could ever
know or receive the Grace of God.**

**A fact that ALL agree on is that we CANNOT
by ourselves or through our own means
obtain the GRACE (favour) of God.**

Man cannot forgive HIMSELF of his sins.
No **WORK** done by man **can ever remove one sin,**
or gain eternal salvation. By our Sin we have
dug a whole so deep for ourselves that we cannot
get out of it by ourselves through our own efforts.

WE NEED HELP!

**This was the point that Paul was making
in that most famous verse.**

Eph 2:8; "For by grace are ye saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves: **it is the gift of God:-"**
It is **by God's GRACE that WE ARE SAVED.**

It is **not** by anything that **we** have done or could do. **We would not even know how to obtain access to Grace if God had not revealed it through His word the Bible.**

Paul tells us that it is the **"GIFT OF GOD."** If we **KNOW** what the **"gift of God"** is, then we shall know:- **How** we can obtain **ACCESS TO** the **BENEFITS OF** the **GRACE OF GOD.**

The GIFT OF GOD was JESUS CHRIST. THROUGH CHRIST, God has shown His love, favour and mercy toward humanity. Through CHRIST we have the hope of salvation.

We see this from the **words of Jesus** to the woman at the well in Samaria. (**John 4:10;**)

"Jesus answered and said unto her, **If you KNEW the GIFT of God**, and who it is that says to you, give me to drink; you would have **asked of Him**, and **He would** have given you **living water.**"

Peter Said "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that **by the name of Jesus Christ** of Nazareth, whom you crucified, **whom God raised from the dead**, even **by Him** does this man stand here before you whole. **This is the stone** which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. **Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is NONE OTHER NAME** under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:10-12;

Some would **LIMIT** this **Grace of God** only to those who were **ELECTED** (chosen) to salvation. Those who are **ELECTED**, or the "**ELECT**," refers to a doctrine that teaches that **a select few were elected to salvation before the world was created.**

This is contrary (opposite) to the teaching, scheme (plan) of God's redemption for humanity.

The offer of God's grace, which comes **THROUGH Jesus Christ is extended to **ALL**, **NOT** just to a select few.**

Paul taught in **Titus 2:11**; that:-
"the Grace of God brings salvation."
We all agree with this statement.
Yet, Paul continues by saying,
"has appeared to ALL men."

This Grace is not limited.
It has **appeared** so that **ALL men**
might **have an opportunity for salvation.**

The word **"appeared"** means,
"to become visible,"
or **"to be seen."**

How did God's Grace "appear" to all men?

It has appeared through the birth, life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Although the Grace of God has appeared to all men, this does NOT imply that ALL men are saved.

It means that ALL possess an OPPORTUNITY to take advantage of the gift of God, which is Jesus Christ.

Our salvation comes through our faith in Him, when WE DO what we need TO DO in order to gain ACCESS to God's Grace.

Paul teaches that we “**ALL have sinned** and come short of God's glory.” (Rom 3:23;)

**As such, we are in our sins
and in need of salvation.**

**Our salvation can come
only through Jesus Christ.**

Jn 14:6; 1 Thess 5:9-10; Acts 4:12; 2 Thess 2:14;
“**Jesus said** unto him, **I am the way, the truth, and
the life: no man comes to the Father but by me.**”

To receive the benefits of the Grace that God offers, we must go to Christ.

The Grace of God has come by (or through) the Death & RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ.

The fact that Jesus Christ died is significant.

But if that is ALL He did, then we have NO hope (NO access) to God's Grace.

It was through the RESURRECTION of JESUS CHRIST that God's Grace became effective.

Peter in 1 Pet 1:3; says it well:-

"All honour to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is by His boundless mercy that God has given us the privilege of being born again.

Now we live with a wonderful expectation BECAUSE Jesus Christ rose again from the dead."

Without the DEATH, BURIAL and RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ, we ALL would be WITHOUT any HOPE or SALVATION.

Grace, as it relates to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, is a theme that Paul develops in his letter to the Romans.

Paul **proved** that **all are guilty of sin**, and that by **one man's disobedience sin came into this world**. In chapter five this theme is well developed.

Paul **also noted** that it was by **one man's obedience** that **all have the hope of salvation**.

This theme is summed up in one verse. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Rom 5:19;)

In chapter six, we see that when we are baptized into Christ, **we are baptized into the likeness of Christ's death, burial and resurrection**.

In this act we realize
the true **significance of God's Grace.**
Before Christ came into this world
to be our sacrifice for sins,
we were dead in our sins.

Christ did not come because
we were so good or great.

He came because we were sinners and
if we continued in our sin we would PERISH.

Whenever we think about the Grace of God,
we must understand this fact.

This is what makes Grace = Grace.

**We were dead in our sins,
but through Christ we can be made alive.**

The key is "through Christ."

**This helps us to understand Paul's statement:
"Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened
us together with Christ, (by grace you are saved;)."**

(Eph 2:5;)

**The parenthetical clause explains
the idea of Grace being through Christ.**

The GIFT of God is Jesus Christ.

The GRACE of God is Jesus Christ.

**The Gift of the GRACE of God is FOUND
through OUR ACCEPTANCE of Jesus Christ.**

**Through Christ,
and His death, burial and resurrection,
we have access to the Grace of God.**

Remember **Peter's** simple, yet profound statement about the **Grace of God:-**

"Neither is there salvation in any other:-
for there is **NO other name** under heaven
given among men,
THROUGH which we must be saved."
(Acts 4:12)

WE ARE NOT SAVED BY GRACE ALONE.

The difficulty most people have with the doctrine of Grace is **assuming** that **we are saved by Grace alone!**

The doctrine of "**Salvation by Grace Alone**" cannot be found in the Scriptures.

Not one verse can be found in all the scriptures **that teaches** that one is saved solely by Grace.

GRACE is God's part in our Salvation.
WE have to respond by **ACCEPTING** the Gift of Grace.

If we are saved by GRACE ALONE:

**Then what about Faith? / What about Repentance?
/ What about the Blood of Christ.**

**Any time someone declares that we are saved
"solely" by one thing "alone",
then they exclude all other things.**

**Grace is only one component to our salvation.
Its presence, alone, cannot save.**

**We are also saved by the
PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL.**

**Without the preaching of the Gospel of Christ,
how could anyone know what Christ
has done for their salvation?**

**The rationale of such a doctrine
fails with simple logic.**

**The scriptures teach that we are saved
by a combination of several principles.**

No one component exclusively saves.

**We are saved when we combine
ALL of the essential components
that are outlined in the New Testament.**

**Only then, can we
access / obtain / salvation.**

We ARE saved by GRACE.

Our principal text proves this fact.

**Salvation comes through the Gift of God
which was the sacrifice of His Son.**

**Through the shed blood
and the resurrection of Christ
we now have hope.**

**If saved by Grace ALONE
ALL WILL BE SAVED.**

Because God wants no one to perish.

Tit 2:11-14;

God's grace is UNLIMITED in its outreach

Heb 2:9; Jn 3:16; 17:20-21; 6:33; 1 Jn 2:1-2;

Matt 28:18-20; 11:28-30; Mk 16:15-16;

Lk 24:45-49; Jn 20:23; Acts 10:34-35,43;

Rev 22:17;

“For God so Loved the World.”

These passages show that there is **no such FALSE doctrine** in the bible **as LIMITED ATONEMENT:-** that is the idea that **God has decided** who is going to be saved.

They say it is not up to you to choose salvation, **God will choose some and reject others.**

The **Bible teaches that** **God's outreach is for everyone and it is personal, dealing with the individual.**
2 Cor 12:9; 1 Cor 15:10;

Let's identify the REAL ISSUES:

Am I required to do anything to be saved?

Does grace exclude all works on my part?

How does God save us by His grace?

**We will endeavour
to answer these questions!**

What Is the Issue?

Is salvation of God?

“Salvation is of the Lord”
(Jonah 2:9;)

Are we saved by grace?

“By grace you have been saved”
(Ephesians 2:8;)

Does Man have a part to play?

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles,

Brethren, **what shall we do?**” Acts 2:37;



Does God require anything of man?

In the Sermon on the Mount,
Jesus said “**only those**
who **DO THE WILL OF MY FATHER.**”

At the end of the same sermon, He said “**only those**
who **heard these things** and **DID THEM** would profit.”

When the rich young ruler came to Jesus
asking about eternal life,

he wanted to know what TO DO?

Why weren't these people
told to **do NOTHING?**

Because God has done everything?

Is Anything Required of Man?

Matthew 7:21; “he who **DOES** the will of my Father in heaven.”

Matthew 7:24-27;

“whoever **hears** these sayings of mine and **DOES** them.”

Mark 10:17;

“Good Teacher, **WHAT SHALL I DO** that I may inherit eternal life?”



Is Anything Required of Man?

Acts 2:37-38;

- "What shall we DO?"

Acts 9:6;

"Lord, what do you want me to DO?"

Acts 16:30;

"Sirs, what must I DO to be saved?"

What did those Jews ask
on the Day of Pentecost?

What did Saul ask on the road to Damascus?

What did the Philippian jailer ask Paul?

Why weren't these people
told to "DO NOTHING?"



**God's grace is ACTIVE not passive,
Everything** in the scheme of man's
redemption is affected by **Grace.**

That is one of the reasons
Peter in 1 Pet 5:10; speaks of
"The God of all Grace."

Here are some passages that
Speak of the grace of God.

**CHRIST:- Rom 5:15; Eph 2:7;
2 Tim 1:9-10; Jn 1:17;**

“There is no comparison between the free gift & the offence. If death came to many through the offence of one man, how much greater an effect the grace of God has had, coming to so many and so plentifully as a free gift through the one man Jesus Christ!”

2 Tim 1:9; “It is God who saved us and chose us to live a holy life. He did this not because we deserved it, but because that was His plan long before the world began, to show His love and kindness to us through Christ Jesus.”

**The BIBLE:- Acts 14:3; 20:24,32;
Eph 3:1-11; Rom 6:14;**

14:3; “Therefore they stayed a considerable time there speaking boldly in the Lord, who testified to the word of His grace, giving signs and wonders through their hands.”

“For sin will not have lordship over you; for you are not under law, but under grace.”

The HOPE of Heaven:-

1 Pet 1:9-10,13; 2 Thess 2:16;

**1Pet 1:9; “while you are securing
as the outcome of your faith
the salvation of your souls.”**

**2 Thess 2:16; “Now may our Lord Jesus
Christ himself, and God our Father,
who loved us and gave us eternal comfort
and good hope through grace.”**

Paul taught that the Corinthians were saved by the preaching of the gospel.

**"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand; By which also you are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you believed in vain."
(1 Cor 15:1-2;)**

15:3; "I passed on to you right from the first what had been told to me, that Christ died for our sins just as the Scriptures said He would,"

Paul preached the gospel. They received, responded to, obeyed that gospel message. They were currently faithful to that gospel.

Paul clearly says,
"by which also you are saved."

Saved by what?

The GOSPEL that they had responded to.

**We are also saved by our response,
our obedience to that gospel message.**

**Paul's letter to the Romans begins
and ends with the idea of obedience.**

**From the beginning to the end
of that letter **obedience is stressed.****

Rom 1:5; 16:26;

Paul suggest that we either obey sin, which yields death, or we obey righteousness, which yields eternal life.

“Don't you realise that you can choose your own master? You can choose sin (with death) or else obedience (with acquittal).

The one to whom you offer yourself- he will take you and be your master and you will be his slave.”

“Thank God that though you once chose to be slaves of sin, now you have obeyed with all your heart the teaching to which God has committed you.” Rom. 6:16-17;

(The form of doctrine was the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, cf. vs. 3-6;).

We are saved by our faith in Christ. (Eph 2:8;)

We are saved by our repentance. (2 Cor 7:10;)

We are saved by the combination of several principles.

The ultimate or climatic principle that saves us is the Blood of Christ. Without the shedding of His blood, and His resurrection from the dead, we could not have any salvation.

It is through the shed blood of Christ that we have redemption.

Eph. 1:7; "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace;"

Rev. 1:5; "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood."

**When we are saved by Grace,
it is a gift from God.**

**Because Grace is a gift, SOME believe that we
do not earn that gift by any action on our part.**

**This is true, yet we need to know
what is implied by the idea of a gift.
I have a gift for you. I want you to have
this gift, it is yours free of charge.**

**Yet, as long as I am in possession of that gift,
YOU cannot receive the benefits of that gift.**

**Before a gift can be of any value to anyone,
that person must take possession of the gift.**

**Without possession,
a gift does not possess any value
to the one for whom it was intended.
Possession is the key.**

In Salvation **THROUGH FAITH**

the same idea is found. Jn 3:16,36;
20:30-31; 8:21,24; Acts 10:43; 16:31; Rom 5:1;

John 3:16; "For **God so loved** the world, that **He gave His only Son**, that **whoever believes** in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:36; "Whoever **believes** in the Son has eternal life; **whoever does not obey the Son** shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

Biblical definitions of faith are found in

Heb 11:1-6; Rom 4:20-22;

“You can never please God without faith, without depending on Him. Anyone who wants to come to God **must believe that there is a God and that He rewards those who sincerely look for Him.”**

Rom 4:20 “Yet, *looking* toward the promise of God, he did not doubt through unbelief, but **became empowered through faith, giving glory to God.”**

Thayer says that there are three inherent ideas in faith.

1. CONVICTION.

2. TRUST

3. OBEDIENCE

and sums these up like this:-

"A conviction full of joyful trust, that Jesus Christ is the Messiah - divinely appointed author of salvation in the kingdom of God, CONJOINED with OBEDIENCE to Christ."

"We are accounted righteous before God ONLY for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, BY FAITH, and not for our own works or deserving's. wherefore, that we are justified by FAITH ONLY is a MOST WHOLESOME doctrine and VERY FULL OF COMFORT" Thayer

It may be wholesome and FULL OF COMFORT but IT IS FALSE- and NOT FOUND IN THE SCRIPTURES!

**If saved by GRACE ALONE
HOW is Faith involved?**

**If we were saved by FAITH ONLY
we would be saved before
becoming children of God?**

Jn 1:11-12; Gal 3:26-27;

Before calling on the Lord, or repenting?

Rom 10:13-17; Acts 22:16;

Without confessing Christ?

Jn 12:42;

When we are no better than demons?

Jam 2:19;

**The Bible teaches that the
FAITH THAT SAVES is a FAITH THAT OBEYS.**

Heb 11:4,7,8,19-20; Gal 5:6; Rom 1:5; 16:26;

**As everything on the divine side of redemption
was accomplished through GRACE so everything
on the human side of redemption must be
done by and based on our Faith. Heb 11:6;**

**Heb 11:6; And without faith it is impossible
to be well pleasing to God; for he who comes
to God must believe that He is and that
He is a rewarder of those who seek after Him.**

Faith must lead to:-

Repentance. Acts 17:3; Lk 13:3;

Confessing Christ. Rom 10:9-10;

Being baptised into Christ. Acts 10:48;
Rom 6:1-6;

**Obedience in each of these is still
salvation by faith,
because faith is the reason
for doing each of these things.**

**Grace results in the Coming of Christ,
the Bible, the Church, and Hope of heaven.**

**None of these can be eliminated
from the divine plan of salvation.**

REPENTANCE IS A CHANGE OF ATTITUDE ABOUT SIN AND A TURNING BACK TO GOD.

Grace is not a free ticket!



“ What then shall we say? Shall we persist in sin that grace may abound? **Of course not!** How can we who died to sin yet live in it?”

Rom 6:1-2;

**So with the response of Faith.
Repentance, confession and baptism,
and living a faithful life,
cannot be eliminated from man's side
of salvation. **God's stipulations** must be met.**

ILLS:- A Father wanted his son to go to college but the son would not go so the father told him he had opened a bank account with 10,000 in His name the only stipulation was that **the cheques must be made out to some university.**

God has made out an account with our name on it in heaven, but we need to follow His instructions to access the account.

Eph 2:8; “For by **grace** are you **saved** through **faith**; *and that **not of yourselves**: it is the gift of God.*”

In the sense that **Man did not originate, plan, prepare or perfect it. Nor in the sense that man can earn or work for it.**

It is the **GIFT** of God. a. The giver –God. b. The **Gift-Salvation** through the death /resurrection of Jesus.

The getters. – man.

- all those **who claim that which is offered.**

Just because salvation is a gift does not mean that it is an UNCONDITIONAL one.

WE need to ACCESS the gift.

**Coal is a gift from God but
we still need to dig for it.**

**The food we eat is a gift from God but
we still need to plant it
and nurture it and harvest it.**

Matt 6:11;

**Josh 6:2; Jericho was a gift from God - but
they still had to meet the conditions,
march around the wall for 7 days
seven times on the seventh
and blow the trumpet and shout.**

Does Grace Exclude ALL Works?

We are to pray for
our **DAILY BREAD**.
(Matt 6:11;),

Exclude?

But we must
WORK for it.
(2 Thess 3:10;)

Paul said all those
on the ship would
be saved with him.
(Acts 27:24;)

Exclude?

But they **HAD TO**
STAY on the ship.
(Acts 27:31;)

God told Joshua
that Jericho had
been given to them.
(Josh 6:2;)

Exclude?

But they still had
to **WALK** around
the walls.
(Josh 6:2-5,20;)

Does Grace Exclude ALL Works?

Peter told the elders at Jerusalem that Gentiles would be saved in the same manner as the Jews.
(Acts 15:11;)

Exclude?



But they also had to OBEY.
(Acts 10:34-35;)

**Grace and Works
Are Not Mutually Exclusive.**

**Eph 2:9; “not from works,
that no one should boast.”**

Tit 3:5; 2 Tim 1:9;

The bible mentions several kinds of works!

Works of God. Jn 6:28-29; Acts 2:11;

Works of darkness. Rom 13:12; Eph 5:11;

Works of the law. Gal 2:16;

Works of the flesh. Gal 5:19-21;

Works of wickedness. Col 1:21;

Dead works. Heb 6:1,9,14;

Works that perfect faith. Jam 2:22; 1 Thess 1:3;

Works of merit. Eph 2:9; Rev 14:13; 22:12;

Does Grace Exclude ALL Works?

Not of Works.
(Eph 2:9;)

Justified by Works.
(Jam 2:24;)

Works of the Devil. 1Jn 3:8;
Works of darkness. Eph 5:11;
Works of the flesh. Gal 5:19;
Works of the Law of Moses.
Gal 2:16;

Works of God.
(Matt 21:25;)
(John 6:28-29;)

Faith Is a Work! Jn 6:28-29;
Grace does not exclude faith. Eph 2:8;
Therefore, grace does not exclude ALL works
Grace INCLUDES the WORKS that God
gives us to accomplish. (Jam 2:14-26;)

In actual fact it would be more logical to say that **faith and repentance** should NOT be **excluded under a WORKS concept** because **they are something the individual does.**

Whereas **baptism** is something that **is done to you. (you are passive not active.)**

You do **your own believing, and repenting,** but you **cannot do your own baptising.**

**When Paul says that salvation is not of works-
He does not mean that
all works are excluded Because:-**

Faith is said to be a work. John 6:28-29;
“Therefore they said to him, What should **WE do**,
in order that **WE may work** the works of God?
Jesus answered them, “This is **the work** of God,
that **YOU believe in Him** whom He has sent.”

Repentance is a work. Matt 12:41; Jonah 3:10;
“The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment
with this generation and condemn it, **for they**
repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold,
someone greater than Jonah is here.”

When Paul says **Not of Works** he is referring to the idea of **works of MERIT**, He has said already that salvation is **NOT of yourselves, you cannot earn it**, there is **nothing that you can do** that will put God under obligation or debt to you. Lk 17:10;

This is obviously not referring to acts of obedience.. **but a false idea of being able to work your way to heaven.**

Like those who were building the tower of Babel if they had been able build that high they could have said that **they worked there way to heaven by their own ingenuity and skill.**

Salvation by Grace Through Faith.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith” (Eph.2:8;)

FAITH!

Working Faith (Jas 2:22;) (Gal 5:6;)

“FAITH ONLY”

**“Faith without works
is dead.” (Jas.2:20;)**

*“We have access by
faith into this grace”
(Rom.5:1;)*

GRACE!

**“Not by faith only.”
(Jas.2:24;)**

Salvation is by Grace—through FAITH!

This faith is Bible faith, an obedient faith.

Rom 1:5; 16:26;

We work with God's grace by following His will!

Our faith allows us to access God's grace. Rom 5:1;

FAITH ALONE cannot save.

The doctrine of FAITH ALONE

just means MENTAL ASSENT!

Or acknowledgement that Grace is available.

The principle of saved by grace through faith is seen in the Old Testament.

Heb 11:7; “By faith Noah, being warned by God of things not yet seen, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house ...”

Noah and his family were to be given the blessing of not suffering the impending destruction that God was bringing upon the earth and all humanity.

The promise of Noah's deliverance from the imminent destruction was an offer of grace.

The destruction was coming, but Noah could not have delivered himself without following the instructions of God in order to benefit from the grace offer, because he feared God, through his obedience of faith he prepared the ark.

Sin separates all men from God. (Isa 59:1-2;)

Because all men exist in a state of condemnation through sin, there must be a way of pardon from sin.

Sin demands justice and judgment.

In order for God to remain just in view of the fact that all sin, He offers mercy and grace.

**In order for Noah to believe and build,
there first had to be
the revelation of God's grace.**

And in the revelation, Noah had to be told how he and his family could access the grace (salvation) of God. Saving grace, therefore, must be based on the following conditions!

1. An announcement must be made.

The impending action on the part of God must be announced to those to whom it will affect.

In the case of Noah, God announced, "I will destroy them from the earth." (Gen 6:13;)

2. Instructions must be given.

Instructions must be given as to **how one can access the grace of God.** God said to Noah,

"Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood." Gen 6:14;

3. Obedient faith moves one to accept the offer of God.

Obedient faith gave Noah

the opportunity to access God's offer.

"Noah prepared an ark." Heb 11:7;

Noah was **saved by Grace through Faith**
after he obeyed by building an ark.

Noah's family would **never** have been saved
from the flood if **Noah had never acted on his faith.**

Faith alone would have left him without
a prepared ark for the salvation of his family.

The **offer of salvation** from the flood was
through grace, but the **acceptance of the offer**
demanded that **Noah obediently prepare the ark.**

**Israel was saved by grace
accessed by obedient faith. Num 21:4-9;**

The Israelites were in a moment of rebellion against the leadership of Moses. They complained, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no bread, nor is there any water; and our soul loathes this miserable bread." (Num 21:5;)

As punishment of the people for their rebellion, "The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people" Num 21:6;. The biting serpents brought the desired result. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned ..." Num 21:7;.

The Lord heard their pleas. He then **commanded Moses** to "make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole."

Num 21:8;

In order for the people **to obtain healing (grace) from God's offer**, there was a condition.

"And it will come to pass that everyone who is bitten, **when he looks on it**, he will live." (Nm 21:8;)

It was **grace** that provided the **opportunity** for healing.

However, **the condition** was their **faith** had to **obey** by making them **go to a point to look upon** the brass serpent **for healing**.

The people must have faith that what is provided by God will accomplish the desired forgiveness.

The fact that we are saved by **grace through faith** is not the question, but **HOW** we are saved is what must be determined.

Grace through faith means there is a divine side (grace) and a human side (faith) to our salvation.

What was **required on the divine side (the cross)** was **revealed to man** without any obligation on the part of God to save man. **It was an act of grace.**

Though **man was a sinner** Rom 5:8; the **grace of God was revealed on the cross.** Tit 2:11;

The revelation of **God's grace** was **not based on any act of merit** on our part.

Not of mans own righteousness that put God in debt to pay man with the cross.

Grace was a free gift. Grace gives us access to salvation in Jesus that we could never earn or pay for by ourselves in any way.

Nevertheless, it was a free gift that demanded requirements on the part of those who wanted the benefits of grace before these benefits could be realized (our salvation).

The case of the **cleansing (healing) of Naaman of his leprosy**. in 2 Kings 5; Clearly illustrates **how God works through His grace** that is offered to all men today.

The case shows **the offer of the gift, but also the conditions that are placed on those who would enjoy the rewards of the gift.**

Elisha said to Naaman, "**Go and wash in the Jordan seven times and your flesh will come again to you and you will be clean.**"
(2 Kg 5:10;)

Naaman's reaction to the instructions for his cleansing was fury. (2 Kg 5:11).
He was furious because he did not agree with God's conditions for his healing.

He possibly thought that **there should be no conditions** to receive the blessing of cleansing. **He argued**, "Behold, I thought he will surely come out to me and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God and strike his hand over the place and cure the leprosy." (2 Kg 5:11;)

His pride moved him to reason that **there should be no conditions for the free gift of healing**. From what he said, **Naaman wanted to establish his own conditions**, which is the mistake many make in reference to **God's offer of grace** today.

In his fury, Naaman then turned to **offering an alternative to** dipping in the muddy Jordan River. "Are not Abanah and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" (2 Kg 5:12;)

Naaman's mistake was to think that **his cleansing** was in the **power of the water**. He thus tried to change the water and still receive the blessing.

He failed to understand that his healing would be given by the **grace of God**, **not by any powers in the water**.
If he wanted to be healed,
he had to follow the required instructions.

**When Naaman dipped in the right water
in the right way, according
to the instructions of God, it was then
he knew that God means what He says
and says what He means
in reference to receiving His blessings.**

**The cleansing of Naaman was strictly
by the grace of God accessed by
Naaman's faithful obedience to Gods commands.**

**There was no possible way for Naaman
to cleanse himself from leprosy.
It was not within his own power
to bless himself with healing.**

The actual cleansing therefore, was by God's grace.

When his faith eventually moved him to follow the instructions of God, then the free gift of cleansing was realized.

He was healed "by grace through faith."

His dipping seven times in the Jordan was the expression of his obedient faith in order that he be blessed with the grace of being healed.

Naaman's faith in receiving the healing that would come from the grace of God first showed itself when he heard that there was someone in Samaria who could possibly heal him. (2 Kg 5:5;)

His faith did not "save" him from his leprosy until it was connected with what God required of him in obedience.

His faith only brought him to act upon knowledge of what would be required of him to receive the grace of healing.

Heb 11:30; Jericho Fell by Grace through Faith after they had obeyed by marching round the walls.

Since our salvation is by grace through faith, our faith is of no consequence until it moves us to do all that God requires of us to receive the blessing of His grace. We cannot add to the conditions that God requires, neither can we subtract from them.

**When we compare these different examples
We see that Noah was saved by grace
because of his obedient faith in response to God's
instructions concerning the building of the ark.**

**The rebellious Israelites who were bitten by snakes
that brought death, were healed by grace
when they, by faith, looked upon
the serpent of brass that was made by Moses.**

**Heb 11:30; Jericho Fell by Grace through Faith
after they had obeyed by marching round the walls.**

Naaman was saved by grace.

**When in faithful obedience he finally did what was
asked of him, by trusting in God to cleanse him
As he dipped 7 times in the waters of Jordan.**

Access by Faith Into This Grace!

“Not of yourselves;

it is the gift of God” (Eph.2:8;)

BY The Israelites looked at the
FAITH bronze serpent (Num.21:8-9;)

“lived.”

“not by faith only” (Jam. 2:24;)

BY The Israelites marched
FAITH around Jericho (Heb.11:30;)

“the walls fell.”

“not by faith only” (Jam. 2:24;)

GRACE!

BY Naaman dipped 7 times in the
FAITH Jordan river (2 Ki. 5:10-14;)

“clean.”

“not by faith only” (Jam. 2:24;)

BY The blind man washed in the
FAITH pool of Siloam (Jn.9:7;)

“seeing.”

“not by faith only” (Jam. 2:24;)

In all the examples, **GRACE** and **FAITH** are consistently carried out in order to bring man back again **into a reconciled relationship with God:-**

We see God making an offer to bless us. Our FAITH gives us ACCESS to GOD'S GRACE. Through grace, God offers reconciliation and life.

John 3:16; "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

Mark 16:15-16; And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone, everywhere. Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned.

The offer is communicated to those whom God seeks to bless. God communicates His offer to man through words of revelation.

Rom 10:17; “faith comes from listening to this message of good news—the Good News about Christ.”

There must be faith that we will realize the effect of the offer of grace. Man must have faith in what God has freely offered, for without faith man will not respond to accept God's blessing.

Men must respond with obedience.

Through **obedience of faith** Rom 1:5; 16:26;

man must comply with all that

**God would require of us to receive
the free gift that comes through a grace offer.**

**Faithful Obedience leads to reaping
the benefits of the offered blessing.**

**Upon obedience to the conditions to receive the
free gift of grace, man reaps the blessings of grace.**

**This is the way it has always been since
the beginning of time, and this is the way
it will always be until Jesus returns. 1 Cor 15:24;
“After that the end will come when he will
turn the Kingdom over to God the Father,
having put down all enemies of every kind.”**

Any theology, therefore, that changes this simple description as to how God works with man **always distorts the purpose of the cross** and brings into question **the sufficiency of the grace of God.**

There could have been no person more qualified to write for human posterity the **two most precious books** in the Bible **on the subject of grace** than the one, who at the time of his death, still confessed that he was the **"chief of sinners"** 1 Tim 1:12-17;

In Galatians the Spirit, through Paul, wrote against **those who were seeking to make Christianity a system of legal performance** by which men might attempt to **justify themselves before God through law-keeping.**

In Romans, the Spirit went right to the point to identify the nature of Christianity **by contrasting grace** with the Jews' efforts **to justify themselves through self imposed law**. If **we understand the point of Romans**, then **God will truly motivate us**.

Grace in Romans is the defining principle upon which Christianity is built, and thus, the principle that **establishes the difference between Christianity and all man-made religions**.

The principle of Christianity is GRACE, and thus, if we thoroughly understand **the revelation of grace through the suffering Son on the cross**. Then “we know whom we have believed and is able to keep us until that great day when He is again revealed from heaven.” **Rom 8: 28-39; 2 Tim 1:12;.**

The truth, about Grace is that "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Rom 5:6;
We come face-to-face with God's love & grace at our worst moments not our best, and that amazing grace saved a wretch like me.

In a day when Paul "a Pharisee of the Pharisees" who had daily thanked God he was not a Gentile, a slave, or woman – ended up writing these revolutionary words:- Gal 3:26-29;

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Jesus' death, Paul said, broke down the temple barriers, dismantling the dividing walls of hostility that had separated whole categories of people.

Grace had found a way!

Today, when **tribalism** sparks **massacres** in Africa, when **nations** redraw **boundaries** based on **ethnic background**, when **racism** in the U S A **mocks** their nation's **great ideals**, when **minorities** and **splinter groups** lobby for **their rights**.

There is no more powerful message than **the gospel of Jesus Christ**. He died and Rose again to break down the walls separating us from each other, and from God, **They have been demolished**.

**We are all sinners / oddballs,
but through His grace God loves us anyway.**

The **parents** of a **homosexual** called Mel White who were believers, were being interviewed on TV.

They were asked

“you know what other Christians are saying about your son, **they say he is an abomination.**

What do you think about that?”

“Well,” the mother answered in a sweet, quavery voice,

**“he may be an abomination,
but he's still our pride and joy.”**

**This is a heartrending definition of grace.
In some ways we are all abominations to God.
All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**

**Yet somehow, against all reason,
God loves us no matter
what state He finds us in.**

**Grace declares that we are still
God's pride and joy.**

**Rom 6:1; This does not give us licence to stay that
way because He expects that one of the benefits
of our understanding grace is that we will
want to change into the likeness of His son.**

**Grace traced back to its theological roots,
includes an element of self-sacrifice, a cost.**

Helmut Thielicke wrote:- **Jesus** gained the power to love harlots, bullies, and ruffians.

Jesus was able to do this only because

He saw through the filth and crust of degeneration.

His eye caught the divine original which is hidden in every way- in every man!...

First and foremost Jesus gives us new eyes....

Anyone who thinks about grace

must confront its apparent loopholes.

In **W. H. Auden's poem "For the Time Being"** says:-

" King Herod shrewdly grasps the logical consequences of grace:-

"Every crook will argue:- 'I like committing crimes.

God likes forgiving them.

Really the world is admirably arranged!"

Strangely, God is closer to **sinners** than to **"saints."**

As one lecturer in spirituality explains it.

"God in heaven holds each person by a string."

"When you sin, you cut the string.

**Then God ties it up again, making a knot,
thereby bringing you a little closer to Him."**

**"Again and again
your sins cut the string, and with each further knot
God keeps drawing you closer and closer."**

Grace has a principle,

"Hate the sin but love the sinner."

Which is more easily preached than practiced.

If we Christians could simply recover that practice,
modelled so exquisitely by Jesus,
we would go a long way toward fulfilling
our calling as **dispensers of God's grace.**

The musical version of **Les Miserables** follows
its original source, Victor Hugo's sprawling novel
telling **the story of Jean Valjean**, a French prisoner
hounded and ultimately **transformed by forgiveness.**

After serving a nineteen-year term of hard labour for the crime of stealing bread, **Jean Valjean gradually hardened into a tough convict. No one could beat him in a fistfight. No one could break his will.**

After his release. Convicts in those days had to carry identity cards, however, and no innkeeper would let a dangerous felon spend the night.

For four days he wandered the village roads, seeking shelter against the weather, until finally a kindly bishop had mercy on him.

That night **Jean Valjean** lay still, in an over comfortable bed until the bishop and his sister drifted off to sleep. **He rose from his bed, rummaged through the cupboard for the family silver,** and crept off into the darkness.

The next morning three policemen knocked on the bishop's door, with **Valjean** in tow. They had caught the convict in flight **with the purloined silver,** and were **ready** to put the scoundrel **in chains for life.**

The **bishop responded** in a way that no one, **especially Jean Valjean,** expected.

"So here you are!" he cried to **Valjean.**

"I'm delighted to see you. **Had you forgotten that I gave you the candlesticks as well?**

They're silver like the rest, and worth a good 200 francs. **Did you forget to take them?"**

Jean **Valjean's** eyes had widened.

He was now **staring** at the old man with **an expression no words can convey.**

Valjean was no thief, **the bishop** assured the gendarmes. **"This silver was my gift to him."**

When the gendarmes withdrew, the bishop gave the candlesticks to his guest, now speechless and trembling.

"Do not forget, do not ever forget," said the bishop.

"That you have promised me to use the money to make yourself an honest man."

The power of the bishop's act,
defying every human instinct for revenge,
changed **Jean Valjean's** life forever.

A naked encounter with forgiveness,
especially since he had never repented,
melted the granite defences of his soul.

He kept the candlesticks **as a precious
memento of grace** and dedicated himself
from then on to helping others in need.

**Forgiveness-undeserved, unearned,
can cut the cords and let the
oppressive burden of guilt roll away.**

**The New Testament shows a resurrected Jesus
leading Peter by the hand through
a three-fold ritual of forgiveness. Peter need not
go through life with the guilty, hangdog look
of one who has betrayed the Son of God.**

Forgiveness breaks the cycle of blame
and loosens the stranglehold of guilt.
It accomplishes these two things through
a remarkable linkage, **placing the forgiver
on the same side as the party who did the wrong.**

In 1987 an IRA bomb went off in a small town west of Belfast, amid a group of Protestants who had gathered to honour the war dead on Veteran's Day. **Eleven people died / sixty-three others wounded.**

What made this act of terrorism stand out from so many others was the response of one of the wounded, **Gordon Wilson**, a devout Methodist who had emigrated north from the Irish Republic to work as a draper.

The bomb buried **Wilson and his twenty-year-old daughter** under five feet of concrete and brick.

"Daddy, I love you very much,"
were the last words **Marie** spoke, grasping her father's hand as they waited for the rescuers.

She suffered severe spinal and brain injuries,
and died a few hours later in the hospital.

A newspaper later proclaimed!

"No one remembers what the politicians
had to say at that time. **No one who heard
Gordon Wilson will ever forget what he confessed.**

His **grace** towered over the miserable
justifications of the bombers."

Speaking from his hospital bed, **Wilson said.**

"I have lost my daughter, but I bear no grudge.
Bitter talk is not going to bring **Marie Wilson**
back to life. **I shall pray, tonight and every night,
that God will forgive them.**"

Great Russian writers have had an impact on world literature as they strived to come to terms with **the Sermon on the Mount**. Struggling to understand and apply **Gods Grace** to their lives.

The ethical ideals Tolstoy encountered in the Gospels attracted him like a flame, though his failure to live up to those ideals ultimately consumed him.

For instance, after reading Jesus' command to the rich man to give away everything, **Tolstoy** decided to free serfs, give away his copyrights, and dispose of his vast estate.

**He wore peasant clothes, made his own shoes,
and began working in the fields.**

**His wife, Sonya, seeing the family's financial
security about to vaporize, protested petulantly
until he made some concessions.**

**In an attempt to reach perfection he kept devising
new lists of rules. He gave up hunting, smoking,
drinking, and meat. He drafted
"Rules for developing the emotional will.
Rules for developing lofty feelings
and eliminating base ones."**

**Yet he could never achieve the self-discipline
necessary to keep the rules. More than once, Tolstoy
took a public vow of chastity
and asked for separate bedrooms.**

He could never keep the vow for long, and much to his shame, Sonya's sixteen pregnancies broadcast to the world that inability.

Tolstoy's philosophy of non violence, lifted directly from **the Sermon on the Mount**, had an impact that long outlived him, in ideological descendants like **Gandhi** and **Martin Luther King Jr.**

For **every Gandhi** stirred by such high-minded ideals, there is a critic or biographer repelled by how miserably **Tolstoy himself failed** to meet those ideals. Frankly, **he failed to practice what he preached.**

A man willing to free his serfs and give away his possessions in simple obedience to Christ's command is not easy to dismiss. **If only he could live up to those ideals! if only WE could live up to them.**

To his critics **Tolstoy** replied, **Don't judge God's holy ideals** by my inability to meet them. **Don't judge Christ by** those of us who **Imperfectly** bear His name.

As we read Tolstoy's religious writings. The X-ray vision into the human heart that made him a great novelist also made him a tortured believer. Like a spawning salmon, he fought upstream all his life, in the end collapsing from moral exhaustion.

With crystalline clarity **Tolstoy** could see his own inadequacy in the light of God's Ideal. But **he could not take the further step of trusting God's grace to overcome that inadequacy.**

Where **Tolstoy** worked out ascetic schemes for self-improvement. **Fyodor Dostoevsky** periodically squandered his health and fortune on alcohol and gambling. **Dostoevsky got many things wrong, but he got one thing right:-**

His novels communicate **grace and forgiveness** with a Tolstoyan force.

Early in his life, **Dostoevsky** underwent a **virtual resurrection**. He had been arrested for belonging to a group judged treasonous by **Tsar Nicholas Ist.**

Who, to impress upon the young parlour radicals the gravity of their errors, sentenced them to death and staged a mock execution.

The conspirators were dressed in white death gowns and led to a public square where a firing squad awaited them.

Blindfolded, robed in white burial shrouds, hands bound tightly behind them, they were paraded before a gawking crowd and then tied to posts.

At the very last instant, as the order, "Ready, aim!" was heard and rifles were cocked and lifted upward. A horseman galloped up with a pre-arranged message from the Tsar:- "he would mercifully commute their sentences to hard labour."

Dostoevsky never recovered from this experience. He had peered into the jaws of death, and from that moment **life became for him precious** beyond all calculation. **"Now my life will change,"** he said; **"I shall be born again in a new form."**

Dostoevsky pored over the New Testament during his confinement.

After ten years he emerged from exile with unshakable Christian convictions.

Dostoevsky's liberal view of the inherent goodness in humanity shattered in collision with the granitic evil he found in his cellmates.

Yet over time he also glimpsed the image of God in even the lowest of prisoners.

From Tolstoy we learn the need to look inside, to the kingdom of God that is within us. We see how miserably we fail the high ideals of the gospel.

But from Dostoevsky We learn the full extent of grace. Not only the kingdom of God is within us; The Holy Spirit Himself dwells there.

"Where sin increased, grace increased all the more." is how Paul expressed it in Romans.

**"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus!":-
That message, Leo Tolstoy never fully grasped.**

In recent years we have seen the **message of grace** in the film **Forrest Gump**.

It is about a boy with a low IQ who speaks in platitudes handed down from his mother.

This dimwit rescues his buddies in Vietnam.
Remains faithful to his girl Jenny despite her unfaithfulness.

Stays true to himself and his child,
and lives as though he genuinely
does not know he is the butt of every joke.

A magical scene of a **feather** opens and ends the film, a **note of grace** so light no one knows where it might land.

Forrest Gump was to recent times what **The Idiot** was to **Dostoevsky's era**, and it provoked similar reactions.

Many thought it naive, ridiculous, manipulative.

Others, however, saw in it a rumour of grace that made a sharp relief against the **violent un-grace** of **Pulp Fiction** and **Natural Born Killers**.

As a result, **Forrest Gump** became one of the most successful films of its time.
The world starves for grace.

Grace is absolute, inflexible, all-encompassing.

It extends even to the people who nailed Jesus to the cross: **"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."**

Were among the last words Jesus spoke on earth.

When we look at the **Sermon on the Mount** the message of grace gusts through the entire speech.

It begins with the Beatitudes.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek; **blessed** are the desperate-and it moves toward the disciples Prayer:-

"Forgive us our debts/ deliver us from the evil one."

Jesus began this great sermon with gentle words for those in need and continued on with a prayer that has formed a model for all twelve-step groups.

"One day at a time," say the alcoholics in **AA**;

"Give us this day our daily bread,"
say the Christians.

Grace is for the desperate, the needy, the broken, those who cannot make it on their own.

Grace is for all of us.

Jesus gave these words not to burden us, but to tell us what God is like. The **character of God** is the **under text of the Sermon on the Mount.**

Why should we love our enemies?

Because our clement Father causes
His sun to rise on the evil and the good.

Why be perfect? Because God is perfect.

Why store up treasures in heaven?

Because the Father lives there
and will lavishly reward us.

Why live without fear and worry?

Because the same God who clothes the lilies & the
grass of the field has promised to take care of us.

Why pray?

If an earthly father gives his son bread or fish, how much more will the Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him.

Jesus did not proclaim the **Sermon on the Mount** so that we would, Tolstoy-like, **furrow our brows in despair over our failure to achieve perfection.**

He gave it to impart to us **God's Ideal** toward which we should never stop striving, but also **to show that none of us will ever reach that Ideal.**

**The Sermon on the Mount forces us
to recognize the great distance
between God and us.**

**The worst tragedy would be to turn the
Sermon on the Mount into another form of legalism;
It should rather put an end to all legalism.**

**Legalism like the Pharisees will always fail.
Not because it is too strict but
because it is not strict enough.**

Thunderously, inarguably, the Sermon on the Mount proves that before God we all stand on level ground: Murderers and temper-throwers, adulterers and lusters, thieves and coveters.

We are all desperate, and that is in fact the only state appropriate to a human being who wants to know God.

Having fallen from the absolute Ideal, we have nowhere to land but In the safety net of God's wonderful grace.

If SAVED by God's GRACE ONLY

We need no Saviour,

no blood, no H.S., no Gospel:-

GRACE ONLY results in NO SALVATION.

**Grace was "MADE KNOWN" in Christ. Acts 4:12;
through:- Shedding of His blood. Eph 1:7;**

**Holy Spirit-revealed God's mind. 1Cor 2:9-13;
The gospel-God's power to save. Rom 1:16;**

By Grace You Have Been Saved. Eph 2:8;

GRACE ONLY
arrangement
of unmerited
favour Alone.

~~No Saviour~~
~~No Blood~~
~~No H.S.~~
No Gospel



~~No
Salvation~~

OR...

GRACE
arrangement
of unmerited
favour shown
in

Christ

Blood

H.S.

Holy Spirit
Gospel



**“It Is
the Gift
of
God.”**
Eph 2:9;

If **SAVED** by **FAITH ONLY**, there's no need for:-

God's love. 1 Cor 13:1-3;

REPENTANCE. ACTS 17:30;

Confession. Matt 10:32-33; Rom 10:10;

**Faithful Obedience to the Gospel
of Salvation through Christ puts us
into a position where we can access
the "GRACE OF GOD" that saves us!**

Saved Through Faith (Eph 2:8;)

FAITH ONLY
arrangement
of trust and
confidence.

~~No Love for God
No Repentance
No Confession~~

GRACE.
No access by
faith only.
(Jam 2:24;)

OR...

FAITH
arrangement
of trust and
confidence
shown in

Believe

Repent

Confess

Baptized

GRACE.
“we have
access by faith
into this grace.”
(Rom 5:1;)

Access by Faith Into This Grace. Rom 5:2;

εἰς = “into / for”

FAITH.

Believe.

“believe to ..

...the saving
of the soul.”

Heb 10:39;

“Working
through
Love.”

Gal 5:6;

Repent.

“repentance
leading to...

...salvation.”

2 Cor 7:10;

“And by
works faith
was made
perfect.”

Jas 2:22;

Confess.

“confession is
made unto...

...salvation.”

(Rom.10:10;)

the remission
of sins.”

Be Baptized.

“baptized for...

Acts 2:38;

GRACE.

Our obedience to God in
REPENTANCE, CONFESSION & BAPTISM
manifests (shows) our faith in God's grace:-
That He will cleanse us from our sins.

We are not cleansed by our
REPENTANCE, CONFESSION & Water BAPTISM.

But by our obedience.

(our acceptance of God's terms.)

**Gives us access through these terms
to the blood of Christ!**

Eph 1:7; 2:12-16; Rom 3:24-25; 6:1-7;

Col 1:13-14; 2:11-13; Rev 1:5; 1John 1:7;

Jam 2:22; When James talks about Works that perfect faith he is talking about our obedience to God's will.

Not because we have to but because we want to.

Not all Works and Grace are antagonistic for in 1 Cor 15:10; Grace and works of labour are found in the same passage.

“but what I am now, I am through the grace of God, and the grace which was given to me has not been wasted. Indeed, I have worked harder than all the others, not I, but the grace of God which is with me.”

So what is our conclusion what can we learn from this statement salvation by Grace through Faith.

The passage was written to the Ephesians.

Paul says that “they are saved by Grace through faith.” HOW?

Eph 1:3; They heard.

Eph 1:13; They believed.

Acts 19; They repented.

Acts 19; They were baptised.

Paul now encourages them to continue faithful unto death.

**Most of the passages we have looked at so far
have dealt with the alien sinner,
but God's grace is also found to be
continuing
in the life of the saints - Christians.**

Paul said 2 Cor 12:9; NOTE the following.

My Grace	- it is divine.
IS	- it is positive.
Sufficient	- It is adequate.
For you.	- It is personal.

CHRIST IS THE AUTHOR OF OUR SALVATION.

He has provided for all humanity
the gift of Grace. **It is free for the taking..**

But, in reality, **NO ONE** can **RECEIVE**
the **BENEFITS** of that **GIFT.**

UNTIL they TAKE POSSESSION OF THAT GIFT.

POSSESSION OCCURS when
WE OBEY JESUS CHRIST.

Only then can we take possession of that gift.

**WHEN WE RECEIVE THE GIFT OF GRACE.
BY OUR FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE,
JESUS through Grace BECOMES
THE AUTHOR OF OUR SALVATION.**

**Until that moment, Jesus is not our Saviour.
"And being made perfect, He became the author
of eternal salvation unto all them **that obey Him.**"
(Heb. 5:9).**

**WE MUST REALISE THAT WE ARE NOW UNDER
THIS PERIOD OF GRACE.**

**All who have, or will ever live
after the resurrection of Jesus Christ
are living under this period of Grace.**

We all have a debt of sin that is due.

We are worthy of spiritual death.

**Yet God, through Christ has given to us a time
period in which we can redeem our debt of sin.**

When we think back to the garden of Eden God provided all of man's needs.

9. "Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."



1. Provided abundant good food!



2. Perpetuated physical life!



3. Symbolized covenant of Spiritual life!

Our debt is our own sins.

Man's desperate need!

**Man died both Physically and Spiritually
as a consequence of sin.**

**Gen 2:17; "You will surely die:-
Three Curses!**

Gen 3:17-19; Ground cursed:- Yield sparingly.

Gen 3:22-24; Body cursed:- Physical death entered.

Gen 3:8; Soul cursed:- Lost fellowship with God.

Our debt is our own sins.

We still suffer **two of the **consequences**
of Adam's sin at birth!**

**Gen 3:17-19; Ground cursed:- Yield sparingly.
Gen 3:22-24; Body cursed:- Physical death.**

Our debt is our own sins.

**We suffer the third curse when we CHOOSE to sin.
Isa 59:2; Soul cursed:- Lose fellowship with God.**

**“But your sins have made a separation
between you and your God, And your sins
have hidden {His} face from you
so that He does not hear.”**

Our debt is our own sins.

**We suffer the third curse when we CHOOSE to sin.
Ezekiel 18:20; Fellowship with God lost.**

"The person who sins will die.

**The son will not bear the punishment
for the father's iniquity, nor will the father
bear the punishment for the son's iniquity;
The righteousness of the righteous will
be upon himself, and the wickedness
of the wicked will be upon himself."**

**Rom 3:23; "For all have sinned
and come short of the Glory of God."**

Our debt is our own sins.

Our own good works cannot save us!

Adam's one sin condemned him:-

He was not exonerated by his good

A mile runner who steps of the bounds of the tracks will be disqualified despite all the steps he took within the bounds of the tracks.

Every sin we commit condemns us despite our good works.

Good works.



Even 1 sin stands against our Good works.

**God's supreme gift of grace promises
free & full pardon from sin as a gift!**

**Gen 3:15; God will send the seed of woman
to defeat Satan.**

**Gen 12:3; God will send the seed of Abram
to bless men of all nations!**

**God's supreme gift of grace promises
free & full pardon from sin as a gift!**

**Lev 17:11; The law of Moses:-
Animal sacrifices, emphasizes,
sin brings death, demands pardon!**

**“For the life of the flesh is in the blood:-
and I have given it to you upon the altar
to make an atonement for your souls:-
for it is
the blood that makes an atonement for the soul.**



**God's supreme gift of grace promises
free & full pardon from sin as a gift!**

**Jer 31:31-34; "I will make a new Covenant,
I will remember their sin no more."**

**Isa 53:5-6; The Saviour is to offer
a perfect and final sacrifice for sins.**

"But he was wounded for our transgressions,

he was bruised for our iniquities:

the chastisement of our peace was upon him;

and with his stripes we are healed "

"All we like sheep have gone astray;

we have turned every one to his own way;

and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us

**God's supreme gift of grace:-
Jesus Christ, Perfect and final sacrifice**

Rom 5:6-10; "Christ Died for us."



Truly Amazing Grace.

God's supreme gift of grace:- Jesus Christ, Perfect and final sacrifice!

**As I have said before all down through
the ages man has struggled to get **the
concept of grace the balance of grace correct.****

**We swing between the Idea of all of Grace
therefore nothing we need to do.**

**Then go to the other extreme where we focus
on some sort of saved by works system and
penalizing each other because we not think
and see things in exactly the same way.**

God's supreme gift of grace:-

We begin to major on the minors and emphasize what the Bible does not emphasize and expect people to conform to our image instead of the image of Christ.

Every Christian needs to be aware of this and guard against it.

I am obviously speaking of those who are in Christ.

What is it that we emphasis when we are speaking to people about our faith.

God's supreme gift of grace:-

For example when we speak to people about Acts chapter 2.

What is our emphasis? where is our focus?.

Do we highlight Acts 2:1-4;

Where the Holy Spirit comes into the world as Jesus promised and empowered the Apostles to be witness of and for Christ?

We should emphasise this:-

We live in the age of the Spirit as He convicts the world of sin and encourages us into the righteousness of God in Christ.

God's supreme gift of grace:-
Or do we highlight and speak about

Acts 2:38;

Baptism and the forgiveness of our sins?

We should emphasise this:-

Our baptism is our faith response to the grace of God and is even a clear command of Jesus in Matt 28:19-20;

**BUT is this where God lays the Emphasis?
Is this where the Holy Spirit lays the emphasis?
Is this where Peter lays the emphasis in Acts 2?**

God's supreme gift of grace:-

The emphasis in Acts 2 is the same emphasis that God has been stressing from the time man sinned.

God's grace is seen

in the death burial and resurrection

Jesus making possible mans redemption and restoration of fellowship with God.

God's supreme gift of grace:-

**32. "This Jesus God raised up again,
to which we are all witnesses."**

**33. "Therefore having been exalted to the
right hand of God, and having received from
the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit,
He has poured forth this
which you both see and hear."**

**36. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know
for certain that God has made Him both Lord
and Christ- this Jesus whom you crucified."**

God's supreme gift of grace:-

**All down through the Old Testament
the message has gone forth
the KING is COMING HE WILL
ESTABLISH AN everlasting kingdom!**

**John the baptiser came preparing the way
for the KING and HIS KINGDOM!**

**Peter on Pentecost states THIS JESUS
WHOM YOU CRUCIFIED! GOD HAS MADE HIM
both LORD and CHRIST.
JESUS is KING SEATED
AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD!**

God's supreme gift of grace:-

The EMPHASIS is on the GRACE of GOD!

v32 WHOM GOD RAISED UP!

(In the Resurrection of Jesus.)

The EMPHASIS is on the

RESULT OF THAT GRACE!

v32 EXALTED AT THE RIGHT HAND!

(Jesus is reigning now as King.)

Paul later writing **Romans** begins

With Rom 1:1-5;

4. “who was **declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead**, according to the Spirit of holiness, **Jesus Christ our Lord.**”

Paul again in **1 Cor 1:1-15**; 3. “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that **Christ died** for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4. and that **He was buried**, and that **He was raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures.”

14. “If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, your faith also is in vain.”

God's supreme gift of grace:-

Rev 1:4; “John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,”

5. “and from **Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.** To Him who loves us and released us from our sins **by His blood.**”

6. “and **He** has made us to be **a kingdom, priests** to His God and Father- **to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever.**

Amen.”

God's supreme gift of grace:-

Paul again in 1 Cor 2:2; says:-

2. "For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

What is our emphasis when we speak to people is it CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED?

Is it CHRIST IS RESURRECTED?

Is it CHRIST IS KING IN OUR LIVES?

OR is it you need to be baptised?

You need to believe this or that?

You need to do this or that?

God's supreme gift of grace:-
All of the things we speak about
may be important.

Yet if our emphasis is on
God's grace as demonstrated in the
death burial and resurrection of Jesus.

If our emphasis is on Jesus Christ
as KING in OUR LIVES
and we wish to live to serve HIM!
live in a loving relationship with HIM!

God's supreme gift of grace:-

**Then all the other things
we may speak about will fall into place.**

**Not because we want people to conform
to our image, our will and our thinking.**

**But because if we lift Jesus up
People will want to be conformed
to His image, His will and His thinking.**

SALVATION by GRACE through FAITH.



Conditions for receiving Grace.
Provisional Unconditional.
Reception Conditional.



Rom 5:8; “While we were yet sinners
Christ died for us.”
Provisional Unconditional.

Eph 2:8; “By **GRACE** you are saved
THROUGH faith.”
Reception Unconditional.

God’s grace is provided for ALL men:-
Each one of us chooses to receive or reject it.

SALVATION by GRACE through FAITH.

Conditions for receiving Grace.

Provisional Unconditional.

Reception Conditional.

**Illustration of Grace
being received conditionally.**

Money received two ways:-



Unconditionally:-

Money give without regard to your will.

Conditionally:-

You choose to accept or reject it.

SALVATION by GRACE through FAITH.

Conditions for receiving Grace.

Provisional Unconditional.

Reception Conditional.



**Illustration of Grace
being received conditionally.**

**Unconditional offer to save a drowning man.
Rescue received two ways:-**

Unconditionally:-

Money give without regard to his will.

Conditionally:-

He chooses to accept or reject it.

SALVATION by GRACE through FAITH.

Conditions for receiving Grace.

**Illustration of Grace
being received conditionally.**

Land offered unconditionally.

Gen 12:1;

Land received two ways:-



Unconditionally:-

Lord bring the land to me.

Conditionally:-

**Gen 12:4; “So Abram departed,
as the Lord had spoken to him.”**



SALVATION by GRACE through FAITH.

Conditions for receiving Grace.

Illustration of Grace
being received conditionally.

Jericho offered unconditionally.

Joshua 6:2;

Jericho received two ways:-

Unconditionally:-

Lord I will sit and wait.

Conditionally:-

Josh 6:3-5; “Go round Jericho,
Priests blow trumpets, people shout.”



SALVATION by GRACE through FAITH.

Conditions for receiving Grace.

**Illustration of Grace
being received conditionally.**

**Naaman offered healing. 2
Kings 5:1-14;
Healing received two ways:-**



**Unconditionally:-
Lord I will sit and wait.**

Conditionally:-



**“But Elisha sent a messenger out to him with this message:
"Go and wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River. Then
your skin will be restored, and you will be healed of leprosy.”**

Our debt is our own sins.

The reward for **unforgiven sin** is **spiritual death**. "For the wages of sin is death."
(Rom. 6:23).

We do not have to pay that debt if we accept the Grace of God. "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
(Rom 6:23b).

The gift of God, which is Christ Jesus and the Grace that comes THROUGH HIM, is eternal life.

God's love for us has been extended to us by this gift of Grace.

A wooden cross is shown against a white background. The cross is made of two wooden beams, one vertical and one horizontal. Numerous small, white, rectangular paper strips are attached to the cross with black pins. The strips are arranged in rows along the length of both the vertical and horizontal beams. The text 'My Debt Col 2:13-14;' is displayed in a yellow font on a black rectangular background to the right of the cross.

**My Debt
Col 2:13-14;**

12. “You were buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the power of God, who raised Him from the dead.”

13. “And even when you were dead in transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He brought you to life along with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions.”

14. “obliterating the bond against us, with its legal claims, which was opposed to us, He also removed it from our midst, nailing it to the cross.”

**“I have written this short letter to you
with the help of Silas, whom
I consider a faithful brother.
My purpose in writing is to encourage you
and assure you that
the grace of God is with you
no matter what happens.”
1 Peter 5:12;**

The “True Grace of God” In 1 Peter includes:-

Obedience in our lives. – 1:13-16;

Abstaining from fleshly lusts. – 2:11-16;

Submitting to civil government. – 2:13-17;

Marriage responsibilities. – 3:1-7;

Putting away worldliness. – 4:1-3;

Abstaining from idolatry. – 4:3;

Deep love for our brethren. – 4:8;

Extending hospitality. – 4:9;

**God has given to each of us
an opportunity to redeem our debt of sin.
Now is the time for our salvation.
No one is exempt from this debt of sin.
(cf. Rom. 5:12 -14;)**

**If, in this life, we reject this opportunity
to receive the benefits of God's saving Grace,
then we have the wrath of God
to look forward to in that day.**

**Paul says in Col 3:6; that:-
"On account of these
the wrath of God is coming
on those who are disobedient."**

**THIS WILL BE THE LAST OPPORTUNITY
GIVEN TO HUMANITY FOR SALVATION.**

There are **some doctrines** that imply that God will grant **a second period of Grace** for those who failed to take advantage of God's Grace during their lifetime.

**This is not even hinted at
in the New Testament.
If we fail to accept this grace,
during our lives, 2 Cor 6:2;
then we do not have
any other opportunities.**

In the parable of the fig tree (Luke 13:6-9) our Lord teaches us that we are now living in the last time.

"He spoke also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard."

"Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why waste the ground?"

"And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that you shall cut it down."

**For three years the lord of this vineyard
sought fruit from the fig tree.
Each year there was no fruit.**

**The fig tree represents God's grace.
The three years represent time
in which God provided opportunities
for people to accept Him.**

The first year was the **age of the Fathers**, or the **star light age**. God's will was revealed, but not in full.

Some accepted what was given,
but many failed to produce fruit.

They rejected God and turned
to idols instead of the living God.

The second age was that of the Law **the Mosaic age**.
In this period of time, God presented His law
and gave His people guidance by that Law.

He also sent them prophets to guide them.
More knowledge of God was revealed, yet God's
people still **failed to produce** meaningful fruit.
We could call this the moon light age.

The third age was the time when our Lord Jesus Christ ministered the gospel upon this earth.

God sent His only begotten Son to reveal God and His word. Yet, they would not hear the Son.

They crucified Him:- **again rejecting God.**

They failed to produce fruit, even when the sun light of God's word was the brightest.

Today is time for **us to accept the Grace of God.**

If we do not accept this Grace, then we will be rejected by Him.

The **Third year** of this parable is the **age of the Holy Spirit**. This is the time when the Holy Spirit would reveal all truth.

If all truth would be revealed, then no more could be expected.

Now is the time for our salvation:-
not some time yet to come.

We are now living under this age of the Holy Spirit, which is the time that God has provided His Grace.

When We die, then the period of Grace has ended for us.

**OUR SALVATION IS NOT BY
THE WORKS OF THE LAW.**

"We are saved by Grace and not works." Eph 2:9;
This statement is prompted by Paul's words:
"Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Many interpret this verse to say
we are saved by Grace, apart from works.
Some believe that this verse means that we cannot
do any work to obtain the benefits of Grace.

This is true if we are talking about
man's works apart from God's word.
**Man can do nothing by or through himself
to obtain salvation.**

That is why we are dependent upon the Grace of God for our salvation.

What did Paul have in mind by the word "works?" Did he have in mind the actions we must perform through obedience to the Gospel, or did he have in mind the works associated with the Law of Moses?

This verse does not refer to the actions or works we do when obeying and responding to the commands of God.

**There are certain works necessary
to be pleasing before God.
Once, Christ was asked a question
regarding this type of work.**

**"Then said they unto him, What shall we do,
that we might work the works of God?
Jesus answered and said unto them,
This is the work of God, that you believe on him
whom he hath sent." (John 6:28-29;)**

**This text teaches that belief in God is a work
that is necessary for one's salvation.
Not all works, then,
were included by Paul's statement.**

The works that Paul had in mind were the works under the Old Testament Law. All scholars are in agreement with this interpretation.

The context of this verse supports this understanding. No one could be justified under the works of the Old Law, or the Law of Moses.

Rom. 3:20; "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Rom. 11:6; "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

Gal. 2:16; "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

**This does not mean that the
Old Testament Law was useless.**

It had its place in the scheme of man's redemption.

**It was the Guardian for Israel
to bring them to Christ (cf. Gal 3:24;)**

**Yet, this Law of works could not justify anyone.
When Christ died upon the cross, He took away the
binding force of that Law of works. (cf. Col 2:24;)**

**It had to be removed so that we could come
under the Grace that is through Christ.
(cf. Rom 7:1-4;)**

Paul is still thinking of the essential part that the law did play in the plan of God. In the Greek world there was a household servant called the **paidagogos.**

He was not the schoolmaster. He was usually an old and trusted slave who had been long in the family and whose character was high.

He was in charge of the child's moral welfare and it was his duty to see that he acquired the qualities essential to true manhood.

He had one particular duty; every day he had to take the child to and from school. He had little to do with the actual teaching of the child, but it was his duty to take him in safety to the school and deliver him to the teacher.

That -said Paul- was like the function of the law. It was there to lead a man to Christ. It could not take him into Christ's presence, but it could take him into a position where he himself might enter.

It was the function of the law to bring a man to Christ by showing him that by himself he was utterly unable to keep it.

But once a man had come to Christ he **no longer needed the law, for now he was dependent not on law but on grace.**

The context of Eph 2:1-9; refers to this freedom we now have in Christ.

We CANNOT be justified BY OUR OWN WORKS OR THOSE OF THE LAW.

Our justification comes BY the GRACE OF GOD THROUGH THE DEATH BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

When we OBEY the gospel, we are only doing what God commands. This is a work that is acceptable to God.

CAN ONE FALL FROM GRACE?

Is it possible for someone, who has been saved by God's Grace, to fall from Grace?

This is a vital question.

**This issue is not about the
EFFECTIVENESS of God's Grace.**

**The real question is:
"Does God's Grace
ONCE AND FOR ALL TIME
save an individual?"**

To be more specific, the question can be summed up by a familiar statement:

**"Once saved by Grace,
always saved by Grace."**

**Can an individual so sin as to lose
their salvation that comes by God's Grace?**

The scriptures are very plain about this issue.
Paul gives us the answer to this question.

**"Christ is become of no effect unto you,
those of you who want to be
justified by the law;
YOU ARE FALLEN FROM GRACE." (Gal 5:4;)**

To seek justification by the Law of Works
(the Old Testament Law),
AFTER you have **been saved by Grace**,
is to **FALL** from **Grace**.

**To fall from Grace
is to lose the benefits of Grace.**

**NO ONE CAN SEPARATE US FROM
GOD'S GRACE EXCEPT OURSELVES.**

**Peter gives a very stern warning about
going back to our former sinful condition.**

**"For if AFTER they have escaped
the pollutions of the world
through the knowledge of the Lord
and Saviour Jesus Christ.**

**They are again entangled therein,
and overcome, the latter end
is worse with them than the beginning."**

**"For it had been better for them
not to have known the way of righteousness,
than, AFTER they have known it,
to turn from the holy commandment
delivered unto them." 2 Peter 2:20-21;**

**"For it is IMPOSSIBLE for those
who were once enlightened,
and have tasted of the heavenly gift,
and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit,
And have tasted the good word of God,
and the powers of the world to come."**

**IF THEY SHALL FALL AWAY,
to renew them again unto repentance;
seeing they crucify
to themselves the Son of God afresh,
and put Him to an open shame."**

(Heb 6:4-6;)

**This was written
to those who were Christians.
They had not yet fallen away.**

**They were warned that if they continued
in their present state of affairs,
they could reach a point
where it would be impossible to return.**

THEY WOULD NOT REPENT OF THEIR SINS.

**We too, must heed this warning,
or we could fall to a point of no forgiveness.**

**There are many verses that show that the child of
God possesses the possibility of falling from Grace.**

There is the parable of the sown seed,
where Jesus talks about the seed
that started, but later was choked out
because of the cares and riches of this world.
(cf. Matt 13;)

There is Paul's warning to the young man
Timothy that **in the latter times**
some would depart the faith.
(2 Tim 3:1-9;)

Such verses teach that men
can and **would** depart from God's Grace.
If we depart we can only blame ourselves
- not God, for our departure.

CONCLUSION!

As we have seen, the Grace of God is the gift of Christ and His Sacrifice on the cross.

Christ died that all might be saved,
but salvation is not free from
our taking responsibility for our salvation.

JESUS our LORD even warns against false hope.
Just calling upon His name will not be
enough. We must DO the will of the Father
which is in heaven.

"Not every one that say's unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but **he that does the will of My Father** which is in heaven. **Matt 7:21;**

What is God's grace sufficient to do.

- 1. 2 Cor 12:9; Sustain us in trial.**
- 2. 1 Cor 10:13; Deliver us in temptation.**
- 3. Jer 10:23; Isa 58:11; Guide us in life.**

- 4. Provide for us in distress. Heb 13:5-6;**
- 5. Comfort us in sorrow. 2 Cor 1:3-4;**
- 6. Save us in death. 2 Tim 4:6-8; Acts 7:56-60;**
- 7. Jam 1:12; Give us a crown in heaven.**

**We need to realize that God's grace
is sufficient for every Christian.**

**Young Christian, working Christian,
tempted Christian, suffering Christian,
and dying Christian.**

Therefore - Why do you worry?

- share it with your father.

- Why do you complain?

- things will be better one day.

- Why do you doubt?

**- think it through believe
in Him it does work.**

When Were We Saved by Grace Through Faith?

Ephesians 2:5-10;

“Even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...”

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

When Were We Saved by Grace Through Faith?

Colossians 2:12-13;

“Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”

“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all your

We are Saved by Grace Through Faith
through our baptism we
have access to Christ's Blood!

Faith in the Working of God.

“In baptism... raised... through faith in the working of God” (Eph 2:8;)

Faith in...

Baptism.

“Buried with Him.”

Baptism manifests our faith in God’s power to cleanse us from all our sins. Through the blood of Christ. (Jam 2:18;)

GRACE.

The Working of God.

Raised with Him.

Made alive together with Him.

Forgiven.

How Do We “Receive” God’s Gift?

John 1:11-13; “To **them** (as many as received Him)
He gave the **right to become children of God.**”

To **those** who:-1) **Believe** in His name.

2) Were **born... of God.**

By “Believing” and being “Born of God”

Born of God. = Born again - of **water** and the **Spirit**.

(John 3:3-5;)

Born of the Spirit. = Begotten or **born** through the **Word**. (Jam 1:18; 1Pet 1:22-23;)

Born of Water:-

Water Baptism in His name.

(Acts 10:47;)

Born of the Spirit.:-

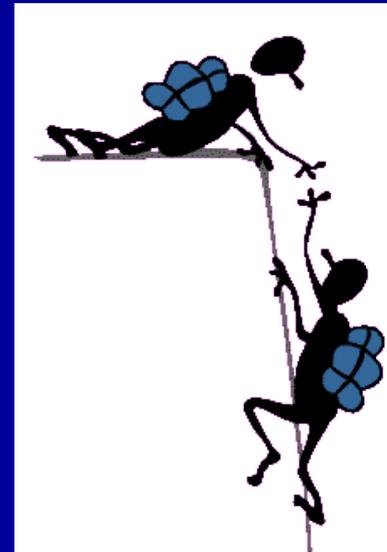
Born in response to **the Spirit’s teaching**.

1 Cor 12:13;

Result:- Newness of life. (Rom 6:4;)

Made **sons** of God.

(Gal 3:26-27;)

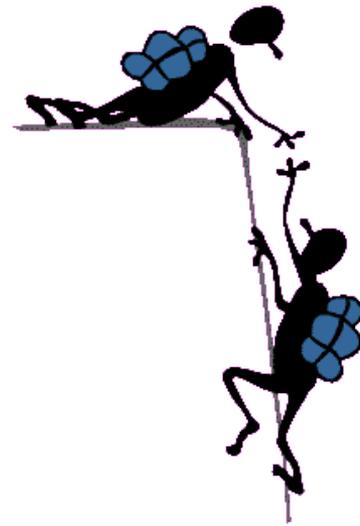


God, by His grace, provided what man could not provide for himself.

God by grace, **provided a Saviour** as a **REMEDY** for sin. (John 3:16;)

The **Saviour died** and **sent the Holy Spirit.**
(John 16:7-13; Acts 1:8;)

Holy Spirit revealed the gospel.
(1 Cor 2:9-13;)



The Gospel message touches the heart of man, convicting him of sin. (Jam.1:21;)

BELIEF changes man's heart to **REPENT**,
CONFESS, and be **BAPTIZED**.

The blood of His Son washes away our sins.
(Acts 22:16;).

The Saviour adds us to His body the church.
(Acts 2:47;)

How Are We Saved? The Bible Says:-

Provision has been made:-

Blood of Christ. - Col.1:20; 1Pet 1:18ff

Shed for all. - Heb.2:9; Rom 6:10;

Message given. - Titus 2:11-14; 1Pet 1:22;ff

Response Necessary by Us:-

Hear the gospel. - John 6:44-45; Mk 16:15;

Believe the gospel. - Mk.16:16; John 3:16;

Repent of our sins. – Lk 13:3; Acts 2:38;

Confess our faith. – Rom 10:10;

Be baptized. - Acts 22:16; Rom 6:3-7;

Remain faithful unto death. – Rev 2:10;

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;”

ospel Ena

orinthians 15:3-4

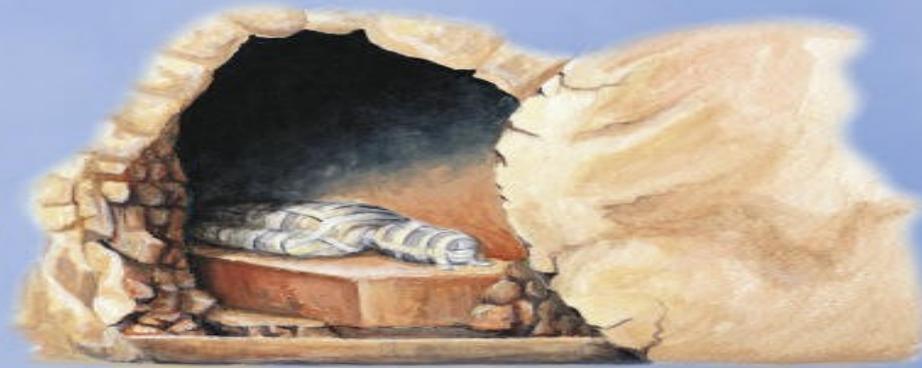
Jesus the Christ
, Burial and Resurrection
for the Sins of Man

“and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”



Death

“And that he was buried.”



Burial



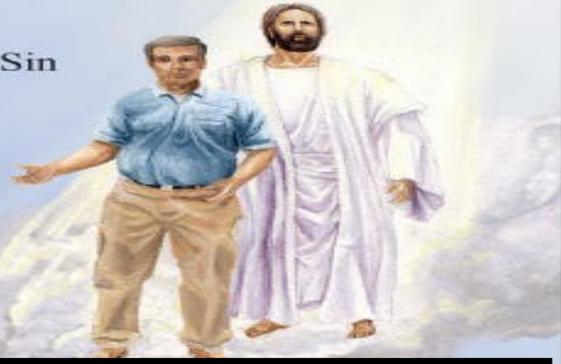
Resurrection

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?”

“that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father;”

Gospel
in Bapt
(Obeying Th
Romans

In Baptism
We Repent of Sin and Die to Sin
We are Buried in Water for the Remissions of Sin
We are Raised to Walk in a New Life



“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death.”

“even so we also should walk in newness of life.”



Dead to Sin



Buried in Water

Resurrected
to a New Life



Conclusion:-Provision had been made.

Everyone who hears the gospel has the opportunity to respond to God's loving and saving grace!

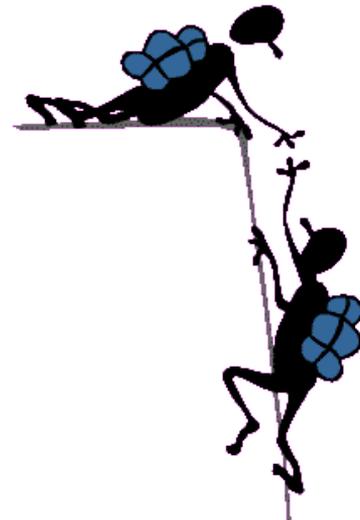
God did His Part.

Jesus did His part.

The **Holy Spirit** did His part.

Have we done ours?

Why not answer the grace of God by obeying the gospel today?



**Remember we will never be able
to thank God enough
for all **His Love and Grace!**
Be thankful. **1 Cor 15:10;****

Saved by His wonderful grace.

THE GRACE OF GOD?

Prepared by
Graeme Morrison

graemestudy@gmail.com

www.graemebibleresources.com

**Next in the series:-
THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTS 2.**