



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#66)

Grace – God's undeserved kindness.

LIVING WITH A SINFUL NATURE (ALSO CALLED "THE FLESH").

- It is natural for us to love the sinful world and its values... *even though God prohibits such a love!*

Don't love the world and what it offers. Those who love the world don't have the Father's love in them.

1 John 2:15 (GW)

- It is natural to love sin, and (often) to deny that it is sin!

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WE'VE TALKED TO ALL OUR "EXPERTS" ...

THEY ALL AGREE THAT THE BIBLE IS WRONG!

AND THAT THE THINGS WE DO ARE NOT SIN!

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I WARNED YOU THAT IT IS SIN.

I TOLD YOU PLAINLY THAT IT IS SIN.

THERE IS NO WAY I CAN SAY IT CLEARER THAN THE WAY I DID!

YOU CANNOT CHOOSE A LIFE OF SIN.

AND STILL INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

I TOLD YOU PLAIN AND SIMPLE, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO GUESS!

ONE OF MANY CLEAR WARNINGS FOUND IN SCRIPTURE.

Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Cor. 6:9-10 (NIV)

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I THINK IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW FOR SURE!

OR MAYBE IT'S JUST PAUL'S OPINION.

OUR "EXPERTS" CLAIM THAT "SIN" IS AN OUTDATED CONCEPT USED TO CONTROL PEOPLE!

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I TOLD YOU THAT "WICKED" PEOPLE WILL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

I GAVE YOU EXAMPLES OF WHAT "WICKED" MEANS.

WHAT IS THERE TO NOT UNDERSTAND?

Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? ...

1 Cor. 6:9a (NIV)

"Born in sin."

This example might not be your exact "story line"; but each of us was born with a sin nature, and a tendency to excuse our own sin preferences.

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HOW DARE YOU TELL ME IT'S SIN!!!

KEEP YOUR OPINIONS TO YOURSELF!

AND I STILL DESERVE TO GO TO HEAVEN (IF THERE IS SUCH A PLACE)!

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GOD IS TOTALLY RIGHTEOUS if he lets each of us go our own way

We have all strayed like sheep. Each one of us has turned to go his own way, ...

Isaiah 53:6a (GW)

In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways.

Acts 14:16 (ESV)

This is our natural choice. And we will naturally reap the consequences of our choice.

But if God chooses to lead us to a different (= NOT natural) choice,

that is GRACE – pure and undeserved.

GRACE!

- An aspect of God's sovereign rule over all creation.
- We could also call it "undeserved kindness."

For you are saved by grace ... it is God's gift...

Ephesians 2:8 (CSB)

It's the only reason a person would be willing to endure the hardships that come with entering the kingdom of God.

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FROM LAST WEEK'S FOCUS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

"We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

Acts 14:22 (NIV)

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PEOPLE MAY LIKE THE IDEA OF "GOING TO HEAVEN"...
But most people *don't* accept the entry requirements.

The "hardships" may be...

- EXTERNAL** – due to opposition from the world – people who oppose what God's Word says.

When trouble or persecution comes along because of the word, he immediately falls away.
 Matthew 13:21 (ISV)
- INTERNAL** – due to struggles with one's own sin – our sinful nature or "flesh" that wants us to yield to the sin.

**The natural human response is to avoid hardships and pursue sin...
 And WE ALL WOULD DO THIS... except for God's GRACE.**

SCRIPTURE TELLS US A LOT ABOUT GRACE.

In the Old Testament: Other words tend to be used – such as "favor" and "gracious."

BECAUSE THIS IS TRUE...

The Lord is **gracious** and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.
 Psalm 145:8 (NIV)

THESE THINGS ARE TRUE.

The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.
 He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them.
 The Lord watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.
 Psalm 145:18-20 (NIV)

In the New Testament: The word "grace" is more common. Here, we discover that we need God's grace in all aspects of life, not just in salvation.

» GRACE IS:

- ✓ **The basis for SALVATION**, as we come to Jesus and accept the truth – John 1:14, 17; Ephesians 2:5,8; 2 Timothy 1:9.
- ✓ **The basis for LIFE**, as the Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10:29) enables us to experience grace, and to display grace in our interactions with others – Colossians 4:6; Romans 12:6; 2 Corinthians 8:6; 9:8; 12:9; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Peter 3:18; 1 Peter 4:10.

★ **THIS GRACE IS UNDESERVED!!!** ★
 By me... by you... by them... by all.

★ GOD IS TOTALLY RIGHTEOUS ★

- ✓ If he offers us grace.
- ✓ If he doesn't offer it.

- If he leaves us to our natural ways... He is righteous.
- If he opens our eyes to a new way... He is righteous.

*Either way, he is righteous;
 for it is WE who chose to rebel against God...
 not him against us.*

Because of our sin and rebellion, God has NO obligation toward us – absolutely none, except judgment.

★ GRACE IS TOTALLY UNDESERVED!!! ★
(NOBODY IS AUTOMATICALLY ENTITLED TO IT.)

- But when it is present, it will affect how we live.
 - ✓ What we do. ✓ What we say.
- And these effects begin NOW, not just in eternity!

For the **grace** of God that brings salvation ... **teaches** us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives **in this present age**, ...
 Titus 2:11-12 (NIV)

We do not deserve this glorious privilege!

"I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds."
 Hebrews 10:16b (NIV)

In the book of Acts,
GRACE is EVERYWHERE!

❖ Directly or indirectly;
 even when the word "grace" is not present!

The Good News itself is an expression of GRACE!

... the message of his **grace**...
 Acts 14:3b (CSB)

[Paul's goal] ...to testify to the good news of God's **grace**.
 Acts 20:24 (NET)

... the word of [God's] **grace**...
 Acts 20:32b (NLT)

**When people tell others the Good News...
That's a display of God's GRACE!**

And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great **grace** was upon them all.
Acts 4:33 (ESV)

[Paul and Barnabas] sailed back to Antioch where they had been commended to the **grace** of God for the work they had now completed.
Acts 14:26b (CSB)

Stephen, a man full of God's **grace** and power, ...
Acts 6:8a (NLT)

Paul chose Silas, and the believers sent them off [on another journey], entrusting them to the Lord's **grace**.
Acts 15:40 (NLT)

**When people are saved...
That's a display of God's GRACE!**

... those who by **grace** had believed.
Acts 18:27b (NIV)

IT APPLIES EQUALLY TO JEWS AND GENTILES!
"... we believe that we are saved through the **grace** of the Lord Jesus in the same way they are."
Acts 15:11b (CSB)

But GRACE doesn't stop at salvation!

**The spiritual growth that occurs in a saved person's life...
That also is a display of God's GRACE!**

... Paul and Barnabas... urged them, "By God's **grace**, remain faithful."
Acts 13:43b (NLT)

When [Barnabas] arrived and saw the evidence of the **grace** of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.
Acts 11:23 (NIV)

... the word of [God's] **grace**—his message that is able to build you up and give you an inheritance with all those he has set apart for himself.
Acts 20:32b (NLT)

So the question is...

Is God's GRACE at work in YOUR life?
(Or are you still clinging to your old ways?)

ENTERING THE KINGDOM OF GOD does result in hardship – external or internal (and the internal often seems worse).

- ✓ We may feel as though we're in a war against ourselves.
- ✓ We may have more defeats than we want to admit.

BUT THESE FACTS LEAVE US WITH A MISSION!

Our MISSION!

ENCOURAGE each other to do what Scripture tells us to do!

We need to focus on our response to God's Word.
{ Since our RESPONSIBILITY to do so is genuine. }

Then PRAISE GOD for every victory we have! { Since his GRACE is also genuine! }

Credits

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