Grace Changes Everything

What is grace?

- God's unmerited favor, not earned or deserved – Eph. 2:8-9
- God's grace is understood through His divine power and provision –
  - His Power: Eph. 3:7; 2 Cor. 12:9
  - His Provision: Heb. 4:16;

Question to ponder: Is favor with man more important than the grace of God?

How do grace and favor work together?

- Grace is what brings us into relationship with God while favor in many cases is the tangible evidence
  - Favor flows because of God's grace – Psalm 16:11
- God's grace is unconditional while favor can often be the result of obedience and relationship

Grace is God's Prerogative

- Grace did not originate with man but God
- God is not obligated to explain why He extends grace –
- Grace demonstrates the mercy and love of God towards us – Romans 5:1-8

A lack of grace could indicate the opposition of God

James 4:6

God's Grace has made me who I am

- His grace saved me – Eph. 2:4-5, 8
- His grace forgives and redeems me – Eph. 1:7
- His grace frees me – Rom. 6:12-14
- His grace focuses me – Gal. 2:19-21
- His grace redefines me – 1 Cor. 15:9-10
- His grace repurposed me – Acts 20:24
- His grace sustains me – 2 Cor. 12:9
- His grace sanctifies me – Rom. 12:1-2
- His grace justifies me – Rom. 3:24
- His grace builds me – Acts 20:32

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Lesson 2: Sustaining Grace

Key Scripture: 2 Corinthians 12:9

What is sustaining Grace?

- God's power that keeps us in the midst of challenges and situations and propels us forward in spite of them.
- Saving grace brings us to relationship with God while sustaining grace keeps us in relationship when things get tough

What does it mean to be sustained? Psalm 91

- Means you have been established
- Means something has or is attempting to cause me to leave where I have been established
- Means the power of the circumstances is not greater than the power of the One keeping you in the midst of it
- Means He keeps you in spite of the situation
  - Paul kept the thorn but the thorn couldn't keep Paul – 2 Cor. 12:9
- Means I have His Peace in the midst of it all – Phil. 4:6-7
- Means I have hope and expectation – Rom. 8:18; Eph. 3:20

Question to ponder: Is it possible to have more and yet not be sustained?

Phil. 4:11-13

How do I walk in sustaining grace?

- Walk with the Sustainer – Psa. 55:22; Heb. 4:16
- Walk in faith and refuse to fear – Isa. 41:10
- Pray – 1 Thes. 5:17
- Confess God's ability in your weakness – Psa. 73:26; Isa. 40:29
- Get in The Word –
- Praise God in spite of it all – 1 Thes. 5:18
- Worship God based upon your relationship and not your situation – Col. 3:2
- Realize that God is growing me while He is sustaining me – James 1:2-4

Closing Scripture: Jude 24-25

Lesson 3: Graceful Speech

Key Scripture: Col. 4:6

Our Words Matter

- They are indicative of our hearts – Psa. 19:14; Col. 3:5-8; Mat. 15:2-11

It is often easier to speak of something you have experienced

Titus 2:11-14

It is more difficult to speak by something or someone you don't know

Rom. 5:1-2

Question to Ponder:

How can you experience His Grace and not speak by it?

God is calling us to speak by His Grace

Col. 4:2-6

Gracious speech does not exclude us from correction and rebuke

Jude 1:1-25

Key Principles to Graceful Speech

- Your speech tells us of your heart – Col. 3:15-16
- Speak the truth in love – Eph. 4:15; Pro. 12:22
- Your tone matters as much as your words – Pro. 14:29; Pro. 15:1
- Speak for edification and not offence – James. 3:2; Eph. 4:29
- Speak governed by the Holy Spirit – Luke 12:11-12
- Speak by wisdom – Ecc. 10:12; Pro. 10:19
- Your speech should be seasoned with salt
  - Stopping corruption instead of spreading it further – 1 Pet. 3:10; Eph. 4:29
- Speak humbly – Pro. 16:24
- Bless instead of cursing – Rom. 12:14

Lesson 4: Applying the Lessons of Grace

Key Scripture: Col. 4:6

God expects us to get understanding and then apply it by faith – Pro. 4:7

Our faith gives us access into the grace – Rom. 5:1-2

- This lets us know that we are able to walk in the gifts God has given us by His grace –
  - We are His workmanship – Eph. 2:10

What does it mean to walk in grace?

- Accepting His forgiveness
  - Confessing that I am no longer condemned – Rom. 6:14
  - Confessing that God can and still wants to use me – 2 Tim. 1:9
  - Confessing my identity comes from Christ – Rom. 3:21-22
  - Confessing His worthiness is why I am able to be forgiven – 2 Cor. 5:21
  - Allow restoration to work in my life – 1 John 1:9

- Extending forgiveness to others – Mat. 6:14-15; Mat. 18:21-35
- Speaking by grace – Col. 4:6

Question to Ponder:
Does your compassion for others come close to the compassion you want God to have for you?

- Using your grace-given gifts to serve others – 1 Pet. 4:8-10; Rom. 12:6-8
  - We don't get to determine the gift and likewise don't get to determine who needs the gift – Phil. 2:5-8; Acts 9:10-19

  - Not merely those you like but those who have nothing to give you in return or even hate you. – Matt. 10:5-8; Isa. 55:1; John 1:16

- Recognize that grace is there for you when you need it – Heb. 4:15-16, 2 Cor. 12:7-10