

Saved by Grace Alone

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Titus 2:11-15 “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, 14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good deeds. 15 These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.” NASB

Here the Apostle Paul gives a good description of the working of the grace of God in the lives of believers. It brings salvation to all men and is a power in the lives of God's professed people while we wait for the second coming of Christ.

The following is a commentary on Titus 2:11-15

Titus 2:11 “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men”

The grace of God brings salvation to all men, not just a select few, not to just one nation. God does not show favoritism but regards all people equally. This grace is not just for the Christian world either but has been offered since sin entered the world. Speaking of the plan of salvation that God put into operation Paul writes:

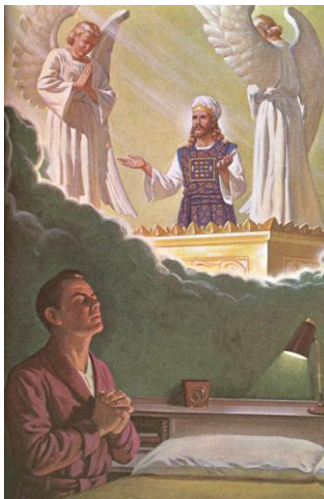
2 Tim 1:9 “He is the one who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not based on our works but on his own purpose and grace, granted to us in Christ Jesus before time began,” NET

In the days of Noah the world was so evil that God destroyed it by a flood. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and because of that mercy Noah and his family were spared the destruction that came on the rest of the world. Also Israel in the wilderness and Moses himself were spared by the grace of God.

Genesis 6:7-8 “So the Lord said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.” But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” NKJV.

Jeremiah 31:2 “Thus says the LORD, “The people who survived the sword Found grace in the wilderness – Israel, when it went to find its rest.” NKJV

Exodus 33:17 “Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will also do this that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name.” NKJV



From these verses we understand that the grace of God that brings salvation has been with us since sin entered the world and was granted us from eternity past. Noah, Moses and ancient Israel during the forty years wandering in the wilderness, all were under the grace of God. This same grace is available to us.

Hebrews 4:14-16 “Therefore since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest 15incapable of sympathizing with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way just as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help.” NET

In this world we live in God's kingdom of grace. We do not live in the visible literal kingdom of God yet. When we need God's grace we are told to confidently come to the throne of grace. We receive grace from Jesus our high priest. We do not need any earthly priest because for the Christian Jesus Christ Himself is our priest. The grace of God that we need comes directly from God to us through Jesus Christ. We do not obtain grace from the performance of religious ceremonies and we cannot buy it.

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Titus 2:12 “instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age”

Grace instructs us to live a godly life, to deny worldliness, and to live righteously in this present ungodly world. However there has always been certain false christians who think that God's grace covers their wilful sin and allows them to live as they please.

Jude 4 “For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.” NIV

According to Jude – the Lord's brother, there were some people who became christians but who were false christians. These people didn't accept God's moral code and thought that the grace of God was a license to live immoral lives. False christian's who live like this deny Christ by their works. God's grace is not a license to sin but is a transforming power to instruct us to live godly in this present age.

Titus 3:3 “For we too were once foolish, disobedient, misled, enslaved to various passions and desires, spending our lives in evil and envy, hateful and hating one another.” NET

Here Paul is describing the condition of natural man without the grace of God. Full of evil passions and desires. However a person who has been transformed by the grace of God is to live a different life.

Instructions for Christian Living

Ephesians 4:17-24 “So I say this, and insist in the Lord, that you no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, being alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardness of their hearts. 19 Because they are callous, they have given themselves over to indecency for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

20 But you did not learn about Christ like this, 21 if indeed you heard about him and were taught in him, just as the truth is in Jesus. 22 You were taught with reference to your former way of life to lay aside the old man who is being corrupted in accordance with deceitful desires, 23 to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and to put on the new man who has been created in God's image—in righteousness and holiness that comes from truth.” NET

Ephesians 4:29-32 “You must let no unwholesome word come out of your mouth, but only what is beneficial for the building up of the one in need, that it would give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 You must put away all bitterness, anger, wrath, quarreling, and slanderous talk—indeed all malice. 32 Instead, be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you.” NET

Paul's Conversion

The study of the former life and conversion of the Apostle Paul, the author of this letter to Titus, is an interesting example of the inward working of the grace of God. Paul who was also known as Saul of Tarsus was extremely zealous in his persecution of the early church.



Acts 8:3 “But Saul was trying to destroy the church; entering one house after another, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.” NET

Acts 9:1-2 “Meanwhile Saul, still breathing out threats to murder the Lord's disciples, went to the high priest 2 and requested letters from him to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, either men or women, he could bring them as prisoners to Jerusalem.” NET

Before Paul became a disciple of Jesus he was zealous to kill and imprison any person who believed differently than he did. While travelling to Damascus he was given a vision of Jesus from heaven which converted him to

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Christianity. After his conversion on the Damascus road he preached to the Jews in Damascus that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah but soon discovered the same evil spirit shown to him.

Acts 9:22-23 “Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and [baffled the Jews](#) living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah. **23** After many days had gone by, there was a [conspiracy among the Jews to kill him](#),” NIV

And again when Saul returned to Jerusalem the Hellenistic Jews tried to kill him.

Acts 9:28 “So he was staying with them, associating openly with them in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord. **29** He was speaking and debating with the Greek-speaking Jews, [but they were trying to kill him](#).” NET

It is a sad part of sinful human nature to want to kill anyone who does not believe the same as we do. First we try to show people where they are wrong and if that doesn't work we become angry and violent. That anger can lead to wanting to kill the other person. Saul and the Jews were full of this evil spirit but after his transformation by the grace of God Saul's attitude changed.

2 Tim 2:24-26 “And [the Lord's slave must not engage in heated disputes](#) but be kind toward all, an apt teacher, patient, **25** correcting opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God will grant them repentance and then knowledge of the truth **26** and they will come to their senses and escape the devil's trap where they are held captive to do his will.” NET

Grace to preach the Gospel

Ephesians 3:7 “ I became a servant of this gospel according to the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the exercise of his power.” NET

1 Cor 15:9-10 “For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. **10** But [by the grace of God I am what I am](#), and his grace to me has not been in vain. [In fact, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God with me](#).” NET

Paul says that the grace of God made him the hard working apostle that he was. This grace was a transforming agent that gave him humility and the desire to further the gospel.

Acts 4:33-34 “With [great power](#) the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and [great grace was on them all](#). **34** For there was **no** one needy among them, because those who were owners of land or houses were selling them and bringing the proceeds from the sales **35** and placing them at the apostles' feet. The proceeds were distributed to each, as anyone had need.” NET

Acts 6:8 “Now Stephen, [full of grace and power](#), was performing great wonders and miraculous signs among the people.”

Note that the grace of God powerfully worked in the minds of the believers so that they not only preached about the resurrection of Christ but they also laboured for the needs of the people.

While at a church council at Jerusalem

Galatians 2:8-10 “(for he who empowered Peter for his apostleship to the circumcised [Jews] [also empowered me for my apostleship to the Gentiles](#)) **9** and when James, Cephas, and John, who had a reputation as pillars, recognized [the grace that had been given to me](#), they gave to Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we would go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. **10** They requested only that we remember the poor, the very thing I also was eager to do.” NET

Paul travelled to the first church council held at Jerusalem where he meets the other apostles. They recognise the grace of God given to him to preach the gospel to the non Jewish world while Peter, James and John went to preach the gospel to the Jews. The Christian leaders asked Paul to continue to remember the poor while preaching the gospel. Something that he says he was eager to do. This attitude by Paul is a big transformation from the man who wanted to drag off to prison any person who became a christian.

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Titus 2:13 “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus”

The second coming of Christ the 'blessed hope'. Paul instructs Timothy and all Christians to live godly lives while waiting for that great event.

1 Tim 6:10-15 “For the love of money is the root of all evils. Some people in reaching for it have strayed from the faith and stabbed themselves with many pains. 11 But you, as a person dedicated to God, keep away from all that. Instead pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, endurance, and gentleness. 12 Compete well for the faith and lay hold of that eternal life you were called for and made your good confession for in the presence of many witnesses. 13 I charge you before God who gives life to all things and Christ Jesus who made his good confession before Pontius Pilate, 14 to obey this command without fault or failure until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ 15 —whose appearing the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, will reveal at the right time.” NET

Titus 2:14 “who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed”

Paul here tells us that one of the main purposes of the grace of God is to redeem us from every lawless deed. The greek word translated 'lawless deed' is (gk: Anomia) it means transgression of the law. Therefore to be a wilful lawbreaker is to act contrary to the gospel. In his letter to the Roman church Paul compares law and grace showing that the spirit and the grace of God leads to obedience to the law of God.

Galatians 5:18. “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”NET

Romans 6:14-16. “14 For sin will have no mastery over you, because you are not under law but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Absolutely not! 16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or obedience resulting in righteousness? NET

Notice the Apostle Paul’s parallel from Galatians 5:18 and Romans 6:14-16.

Under Law	Led by the Spirit
Under Law	Under Grace
slaves	slaves
sin (the transgression of the law)	obedience
death	righteousness - (immortality)

It can be seen here easily that for Paul to be under law is to be a slave of sin that leads to eternal death. To be under grace is to be a slave of obedience to the law that leads to righteousness - the opposite of death. A person who is saved by grace will be redeemed from every lawless deed, meaning that he will cease to willfully sin and will obey God's law. From the right hand column we clearly see the Holy Spirit, the Grace of God and obedience to the law of God are inseparable. As a loaf of bread is made of yeast and flour so Grace is made of mercy and the Holy Spirit. Just as you cannot separate the yeast and flour in bread to you cannot separate mercy and the Holy Spirit in Grace.

Matthew 13:40-43 “As the poisonous weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom everything that causes sin as well as all lawbreakers. 42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” NET

Righteousness – the promises of God. And Justification – a declaration of innocence by God. Are given to us through the grace of God alone. The law cannot give us anything because the law is only an educator not a saviour. The law teaches us what sin is and condemns those who transgress the law. If you as a Christian are asked why you obey the law you can simply answer: I keep the law of God because im under Grace. Paul is clear that God will justify by His grace only those who by that same grace become slaves of obedience.

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Titus 2:14 “and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good deeds.”

It is interesting how many times the bible tells us that the followers of God must do good works. This is not an option but is a command of God.

Eph 2:8-10 “For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 it is not from works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are his creative work, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we can do them.” NET

The performance of good works by a Christian is an evidence of the inward working of the grace of God. Just in the same manner that a fruit tree grows fruit. These works are our duty as Christians and are demanded by God. Our works do not earn our salvation. Being saved will always only be due to God's mercy.

Titus 2:7 “In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.” NASB

In writing to the Christian minister Titus, Paul encourages him to be an example to other Christians in the performance of good works, pure doctrine, and sound speech. This will put our opponents to shame as they will not be able to find anything bad to say about us.

Titus 3:1 “Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work. 2 They must not slander anyone, but be peaceable, gentle, showing complete courtesy to all people.” NET

Titus 3:8 “This saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on such truths, so that those who have placed their faith in God may be intent on engaging in good works. These things are good and beneficial for all people..” NET

Titus 3:13-14 “Make every effort to help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way; make sure they have what they need. 14 Here is another way that our people can learn to engage in good works to meet pressing needs and so not be unfruitful.” NET

1 Tim 6:17-18 “Command those who are rich in this world's goods not to be haughty or to set their hope on riches, which are uncertain, but on God who richly provides us with all things for our enjoyment. 18 Tell them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, to be generous givers, sharing with others.” NET

Heb 10:23-24 “And let us hold unwaveringly to the hope that we confess, for the one who made the promise is trustworthy. 24 And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works,” NET

Titus 1:16 “They profess to know God but with their deeds they deny him, since they are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for any good deed.” NASB

While the performance of good works are an evidence of our transformation by the grace of God the performance of bad deeds or works are an evidence that a person has not been converted and is devoid of the grace of God. Being zealous of good works is not a “works trip” as some people call it. Doing good works is what we are commanded by God to do. The prophet Isaiah gives instruction as to what good works are.

Isaiah 58:6-11 “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? 8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. 9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. “If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, 10 and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. 11 The Lord will guide you always;...” NIV

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According to the prophet Isaiah good works consists in looking after the needs of our fellow man. Making sure they have food and clothing. Do not oppress anyone nor falsely accuse them with malicious talk. We should treat others the way we would want to be treated if we had to live life as they live it.

Titus 3:4-7 “But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” NASB

Salvation is given to mankind on the basis of God's mercy not on any merit of good works that we may do. This process of salvation from sin and its consequences is done through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit who transforms and renews our minds so that we desire to do good works for the benefit of our fellow man. Grace does not replace God's law rather it gives us the desire and enables us to obey God's law. It is necessary that we focus on being filled with the Spirit of God first to give us the desire to do that which is good. Then we are justified by His grace. That is - we have the acceptance of God the record of our sins removed and we are made heirs of eternal life.

Titus 2:15 “These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.” NASB

Here are other verses of the Bible that teach the concept that the grace of God involves more than just God's mercy or unmerited favour but also the Holy Spirit .

Ephesians 4:7,11-12 “But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.... 11 And he himself gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, that is, to build up the body of Christ,” NET

Here we find that Paul is mentioning the gifts of the Spirit that Christ gave the church for the purpose of building it up. Note that it was grace that was given to each person and that the gift of the spirit came with the grace.

Rom 12:4-8 “For just as in one body we have many members, and not all the members serve the same function, 5 so we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually we are members who belong to one another. 6 And we have different gifts according to the grace given to us.

If the gift is prophecy, that individual must use it in proportion to his faith. 7 If it is service, he must serve; if it is teaching, he must teach; 8 if it is exhortation, he must exhort; if it is contributing, he must do so with sincerity; if it is leadership, he must do so with diligence; if it is showing mercy, he must do so with cheerfulness.” NET

Here in Romans Paul essentially says the same thing that gifts were given to church members according to the grace given. In 1 Corinthians 12:11 Paul tell us that it is the Spirit that gives spiritual gifts as he determines.

1 Corinth 12:4-11 “Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are different ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are different results, but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. 7 To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the benefit of all. 8 For one person is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, and another the message of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another performance of miracles, to another prophecy, and to another discernment of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 It is one and the same Spirit, distributing as he decides to each person, who produces all these things.” NET

Clearly Paul equates the Spirit of God and the Grace of God as being the same.

Heb 10 :29 “How much greater punishment do you think that person deserves who has contempt for the Son of God, and profanes the blood of the covenant that made him holy, and insults the Spirit of grace?” NET

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Heb 12:15 “See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God, that no one be like a bitter root springing up and causing trouble, and through it many become defiled.” NET

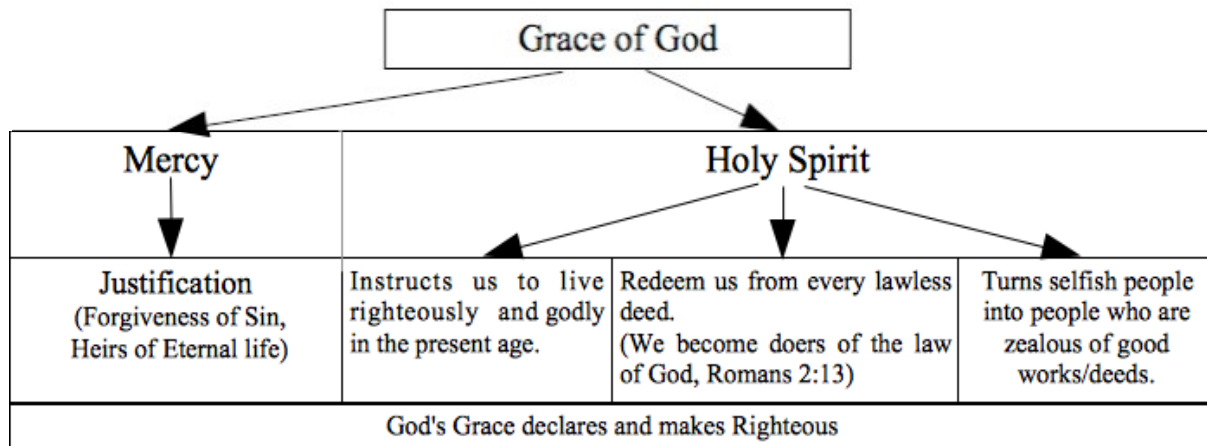
Heb 13:9 “Do not be carried away by all sorts of strange teachings. For it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not ritual meals, which have never benefited those who participated in them.” NET

Here in the book of Hebrews God's grace is called the Spirit of grace and can be insulted which indicates that the Holy Spirit is meant. This grace is able to eradicate defiling roots of bitterness and is capable of strengthening the minds and hearts of God's people. Paul's famous statement in 2 Corinthians 7-10 regarding what he called his “thorn in the flesh” is indicative of the grace of God.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 “even because of the extraordinary character of the revelations. Therefore, so that I would not become arrogant, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to trouble me—so that I would not become arrogant. 8 I asked the Lord three times about this, that it would depart from me. 9 But he said to me, “My grace is enough for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” So then, I will boast most gladly about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may reside in me. 10 Therefore I am content with weaknesses, with insults, with troubles, with persecutions and difficulties for the sake of Christ, for whenever I am weak, then I am strong. NET

Here Paul quotes the resurrected Lord whom he saw in vision. Jesus says:- “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” God's grace is likened to God's power. Grace is linked to suffering, power to live a Christian life of good works, strength and desire to obey the law of God and to do the work of the ministry.

Titus 2:11-14



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