

No Matter Who You Are. No Matter What You Have Done.
No Matter How Big Your Need.

THERE IS GRACE FOR YOU



40 ONE-MINUTE MEDITATIONS ABOUT GOD'S
FREE GIFT OF FORGIVENESS, FREEDOM AND FAVOR

Jimmy D. Brown

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*This book is for those who are already trusting in
Jesus and those who are not yet trusting Him.*

- If you are already trusting in Jesus, then everything in the coming pages is yours as a recipient of God's special grace for His family, so enjoy all that is yours as a gift.
- If you are not already trusting in Jesus, then much of what is in the coming pages is already yours through God's common grace, and everything can be yours if you want it.

Table Of Contents

Introduction: Grace For Every Moment	6
You Can't Look In Any Direction Without Seeing The Evidence	7
He's Been Working On Our Behalf Our Entire Lives	8
We Wouldn't Have It If He Didn't Give It	9
It's Not A Snack, It's An Endless Buffet	10
Grace Is All Around Us	11
Your Chapter In The Story Of Grace Is Unfolding	12
God Helps Those Who Can't Help Themselves	13
Someone Has To Pay For The Things Given To Us	14
He Exchanged His Perfect Life For Our Imperfect Ones	15
Rescued From Something For Something	16
From Start To Finish	17
Faith Is The Right Response To Grace	18
Grace Has Your Past, Present And Future Covered	19
Grace Is Already There And More Is On The Way	20
He Delights To Hear From You	21
God Loves To Be Generous	22
We Don't Deserve God's Help, But We Can Have It	23
He Will Make Us A Way	24
Grace Is Always Right On Time	25
God's Grace And God's Will Always Work Together For Our Good	26
He Rules For Our Good	27
All Is Forgiven, Now You Can...	28
Grace Isn't Opposed To Effort	29
You Are Never Helpless	30
We Will Not Be Sinless, But We Will Sin Less	31
Pursuing A Better Experience Of Grace	32

God Wants Us To Be Happy	33
We Just Have To Look	34
He Can Change Others Just Like He Changes Us	35
You Have Been Given Something To Use	36
You Are Defined By Who God Says You Are	37
We Are Who We Are Because Of Grace	38
Grace To Us, Glory To Him	39
We Will Not Stop Needing And God Will Not Stop Supplying	40
Every Step Of The Way	41
You Will Make It	42
The Best Is Always Yet To Come	43
You Will Either Receive The Grace Of God Or The Wrath Of God	44
God Is Honored In Us And We Are Happy In Him	45
We Are Not Meant To Stand Still	46
Closing: Where Do You Go From Here?	47
Appendix: Four Recommendations For Growing In Grace	49
Connecting With Me (Questions, Comments And More)	50

INTRODUCTION

Grace For Every Moment

*Grace is the unearned, undeserved free gift of
God's forgiveness, freedom and favor.*

My personal mission statement is: "I exist to know Jesus and make Him known so that God is honored in us and we are happy in Him." That's what I am after in everything I do ... an honored God and happy people. With that as my life's purpose, what do I most want people to know about Jesus that will enable them to find their happiness in God so that He is honored? Grace. It is the fountainhead from which everything else that is good springs forth and overflows into our lives. Every blessing received. Every burden lifted. Every benefit gained. Every single thing that God offers us now and forever by inviting us into life with Him is secured by Jesus and offered to us freely by grace.

No matter who you are. No matter what you've done. No matter how big your need. There is grace for you! God's grace is sufficient for every situation, every location, every imperfection, and every opposition. It. Will. Never. Run. Out. Even though there are moments when your sin, your struggles and your situation may get the best of you, if you are trusting in Jesus, it is simply impossible for you to out-sin, out-run, out-last, out-need, or out-hope God's grace. You will never find yourself in a place where God has not already plastered, "My grace is sufficient for you." (2 Corinthians 12:9-10, ESV Bible)

You can't afford it; but it's already paid for. You can't earn it; but it's freely given. You can't secure it; but it's always available to you. God's grace has countless implications and applications for everyday life and eternal life, ranging from getting good things to getting through bad things to getting to the best things. There is grace for you to have the life of real contentedness that you've always wanted. And that's just the beginning, for His grace will expand and extend throughout eternity. All you have to do is ... Want it. Ask for it. Receive it. Enjoy it. Live by it. Grace isn't about our doing or our deserving; it's about God giving us His gifts so that He is honored in us and we are happy in Him.

Let me share some of them with you...

MEDITATION ONE

You Can't Look In Any Direction Without Seeing The Evidence

What is going on in your life today? If something good is happening, it's by grace. If something bad is being handled, it's by grace. That sunset, steak and surprise text from your friend. That's by grace. The trial you're getting through and the trouble you got through. Yep, grace. Your ability, opportunity and community ... grace, grace, grace. The tears wiped away and the smiles of the day. Grace on top of grace. Beating hearts, peaceful sleep, acts of service, growing pains, friends that care, strength to continue, paid bills, lessons learned, fresh water, hugs. You can't look in any direction without seeing the evidence of God's grace.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

And the Word [Jesus] became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me [is greater than me], because he was before me.'") For from his fullness [superabundance] we have all [freely] received, grace upon grace [spiritual blessing upon spiritual blessing, gift piled on top of gift, good thing after good thing]. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ [if it is a good gift or knowledge of God and His ways, then it came from Him]. – John 1:14-17 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What did you read about grace today that you haven't considered before or in a long time?

MEDITATION TWO

He's Been Working On Our Behalf Our Entire Lives

Every single good thing about who we are, what we do or what we have is the result of God's grace. It is all undeserved and unmerited. Yes... We may live wisely. We may be highly motivated. We may work hard. But none of this originates with us because God freely supplied the ability, opportunity, voracity and community to make all these things possible. He's been working on our behalf our entire lives! God. Is. Gracious. That's Who He is, and that's how He relates to us. This is good news because we do not have the fear, frustration, or futility that comes from depending on ourselves when we depend on Him. Rest in this today: grace has gotten us this far; grace will get us all the way home.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

And we know [have absolute confidence] that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all [so we can receive eternal life, go to heaven], how will he not also with him graciously give us all things [what we need now in everyday life until we get to heaven]? – Romans 8:28, 32 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What stood out to you most from today's reading about grace? Why?

MEDITATION THREE

We Wouldn't Have It If He Didn't Give It

Grace is the forgiveness, freedom and favor of God given freely to us. It is forgiveness... God is just and cannot simply ignore our sin; He is also the Justifier Who sent Jesus to be punished in our place in order to pardon us. It is freedom... Sin's controlling, enslaving influence in us has been broken, and we are empowered not to sin as we live by God's indwelling Spirit. It is favor ... Every good thing in our lives is a gift from heaven that would not be ours apart from Him. This grace is unlimited and unending, so even as we stumble in our faith, there will always be... More forgiveness. More freedom. More favor.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son [as an act of grace], that whoever believes in him [trusts in Him for Who He is] should not perish but have eternal life [sins forgiven and pleasure in heaven with God forever]. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him [by His perfect life, atoning death and victory over the grave]. Whoever believes in him is not condemned [convicted and sentenced to hell for personal sin], but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God [the only One who can rescue]. – John 3:16-18 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What did you learn about grace today that you found helpful or meaningful?

MEDITATION FOUR

It's Not A Snack, It's An Endless Buffet

By grace, God serves up an endless buffet of soul-nourishing, soul-delighting blessings for those who trust in Jesus. This includes: forgiveness, friendship, freedom, wisdom, power, peace, purpose, joy, hope, security, rest, justice, thankfulness, assurance, deliverance, guidance, significance, endurance, comfort, companionship, care, courage, transformation, satisfaction, love and life. And this is not a complete list! The countless implications and applications of the benefits that are ours by grace are staggering and extend from now until eternity. We need not settle for morsels when we can indulge in a feast. When we have Jesus, we can also have the life we've always wanted.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us [given us every good thing] in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us [picked us to be in His family] in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as [His own] sons [and daughters] through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace [unearned favor], with which he has blessed us in the Beloved [Jesus]. – Ephesians 1:3-6 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

How does what you read in today's message about grace make you feel?

MEDITATION FIVE

Grace Is All Around Us

The practicality of grace can get lost in the technicality of its meaning. We know grace is God's "unmerited favor" toward us, but that's very generalized. What does it specifically look like in everyday life? It looks like: forgiveness during failures, peace during storms, hope during trials, comfort during heartaches, joy during suffering, guidance during uncertainty, rest during busyness, strength during temptation, blessing during good times, help during bad times, and so much more. But even that is not as pin-point accurate as grace really is, for it shows up in countless minutiae within each of those categories. Grace is all around us.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope [encouraging and empowering us to keep going] through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them [keeping us faithfully on course knowing good things are in our future] in every good work and word. - 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

Which part of today's reading spoke to you the most? How did it affect you?

MEDITATION SIX

Your Chapter In The Story Of Grace Is Unfolding

The biblical story is about a God of grace sending His Son to people in need of grace to rescue them from sin by grace so we can be welcomed into His family to live by grace and serve as ambassadors who tell others about His grace so they might also experience His grace. This beautiful narrative is one in which God repeatedly reaches down to and out for an undeserving people who repeatedly push against and away from Him. Where sin abounds, grace abounds even more! When you trust in Jesus, you can know this: Your chapter in the story is unfolding, and its end has already been written. God's love and favor are yours now and forevermore.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

[God] saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works [things we do] but because of his own purpose and grace [things He does], which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested [made known] through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel [the good news of what God has done for us through Jesus] ... – 2 Timothy 1:9-10 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What are your thoughts about what you read today about grace?

MEDITATION SEVEN

God Helps Those Who Can't Help Themselves

Nothing and everything. If you don't understand both of these aspects of grace, you don't understand grace. As sinful people, we can do nothing to meet God's standards, avoid God's wrath, deserve God's blessing, earn God's forgiveness, or enter God's heaven. But God did everything by sending Jesus to forgive us, free us and favor us so we can enjoy a rich and restored relationship with Him forever. We don't buy from, bargain with or bribe God for what He does for us; we receive it freely by faith. This is the reality of grace: God doesn't help those who help themselves. He helps those who cannot help themselves.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God [fail to meet the standards], and are justified [made right with God and granted eternal life] by his grace as a [undeserved and unearned] gift through the redemption [payment for our sin] that is in [provided by] Christ Jesus ... to be received by faith. – Romans 3:23-24, 25b (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

How did today's reading correct or confirm your understanding of grace?

MEDITATION EIGHT

Someone Has To Pay For The Things Given To Us

Nothing is free. When a gift is received, someone had to first secure it. Someone had to cover the cost. Someone had to pay. You and I are grace recipients who are gifted divine blessings. These are... Gifts, not wages. Free to us, not earned by us. Heaven-sent, not earth-generated. But let's never, no never, lose sight of this truth: they came at a staggeringly high cost. Someone had to pay, and that Someone was Jesus. Praise be to Him! Except for what He did on the cross, sinners like you and me would get nothing but judgment. Instead, we get every good thing God has purposed for us. We get it all because Jesus paid for it all.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ [His astonishing generosity and kindness], that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor [left heaven to humbly live, suffer, die and rise], so that you by his poverty might become rich [abundantly blessed]. – 2 Corinthians 8:9 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What is your biggest takeaway from today's reading about grace?

MEDITATION NINE

He Exchanged His Perfect Life For Our Imperfect Ones

If you think you can simply be a “good person” to get into heaven when you die, then you have grossly underestimated what God requires for entrance. Something we need to understand is this: our standards may be low enough that we can meet them, but God’s are high enough that we never will. As sinners, the best we can do does not measure up. The good news is this: We don’t have to because Jesus already did on behalf of all who put their trust in Him. Jesus lived for us. Jesus died for us. Someday we will be accepted into heaven by grace through faith in this: He exchanged His perfect life for our imperfect ones.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ [His representatives], God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he [graciously] made him to be sin [be judged in our place] who knew no sin [He is perfect], so that in him we [who are imperfect sinners] might become the righteousness of God [made acceptable in His sight and receive all of the blessings of knowing Him]. - 2 Corinthians 5:20–21 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today’s Reflection Question...

In your own words, what is the overall message about grace from today’s reading?

MEDITATION TEN

Rescued From Something For Something

What does it mean to be “saved” by grace? It means to be rescued from something for something. From sin, for righteousness. From Satan, for God. From punishment, for reward. From death, for life. From hell, for heaven. From wrath, for joy. From brokenness, for glory. We must be rescued because we are incapable of reversing the curse on mankind caused by our sin. God is undoing all of the horrible things that sin has done and replacing them all with good things, beautiful things, joyful things, perfect things, eternal things. All of this is by grace, which means... The only requirement for salvation is sincerely asking for it.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind [refusing to live as God intends, prioritizing other things over Him, making a total mess of things, completely incapable of rescuing ourselves]. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus [completely and eternally reversing all the bad that our sin caused and replacing it with all that is good]. - Ephesians 2:1–7 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What do you sense God is saying to you through today's reading about grace?

MEDITATION ELEVEN

From Start To Finish

Salvation is received, not achieved. We cannot do anything to deserve it or earn it, not even acts of obedience or righteousness. God does it all... The Father wills it. The Son secures it. The Holy Spirit administers it. What a gift! What a God! He doesn't help those who help themselves; He helps those who cannot help themselves. From start to finish, it's all by grace... Chosen. Called. Converted. Completed. Someday every genuine believer will be fully and forever delivered from the presence of sin into the presence of God. Not because we are able to keep the law, but because Jesus is able to keep us.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law [made right with God through human effort or goodness] but through faith in Jesus Christ [trusting in what He has done to forgive and restore us], so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified [declared free of the guilt and penalty for personal sin]. I do not nullify [ignore or treat as unnecessary] the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law [perfectly living out God's commands, without sin], then Christ died for no purpose. - Galatians 2:16, 21 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

How has today's reading about grace given you new hope, peace or joy?

MEDITATION TWELVE

Faith Is The Right Response To Grace

Grace has two sides, a giving side and a receiving side. God gives. We receive. How do we receive God's grace? By faith. Faith is the only appropriate response to the grace of God for it is the only response that appropriates the grace of God. We must believe in order to receive. The gracious pardon, power and provision that God freely offers us must be received by faith in order for us to personally experience it. We are included in it when we trust that because of His grace given to us in Christ, our sins are forgiven, and our future is secured. We live by faith in Him and look to Him in faith for everything we need, confident that His grace will deliver it.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

For by grace you have been saved through faith [God mercifully drawing you to believe in Jesus]. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works [your own effort to be a good person], so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus [given new identities and new lives] for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them [living the good life which He planned for us]. - Ephesians 2:8-10 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What would it look like for you to live out what you learned about grace today?

MEDITATION THIRTEEN

Grace Has Your Past, Present And Future Covered

It's not just about your past. It's not just about your future. It's also about your present. Our sinful separation from God is behind us, and our face-to-face fellowship with Him is ahead of us; in between the two is the nowness of everyday life. And grace is there. The way that God works in our lives is very practical for the right here, right now moments of our lives. You will not face a single situation today, good or bad, self-induced or involuntary, hard or easy, quick or lasting, anticipated or unexpected, that God has not provided for. Take heart! No matter what is happening on the inside or the outside, grace will always come alongside to help.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son [paying our sin debt and paying for our every blessing] but gave him up for us all [so we might be united to God and live forever in heaven with Him], how will he not also with him graciously give us all things [that we need until we get to heaven]? – Romans 8:31-32 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What good news do you see in today's reading about grace?

MEDITATION FOURTEEN

Grace Is Already There And More Is On The Way

Faith in God's future grace destroys fear, frustration, anxiety, worry, jealousy, envy, vanity, idolatry, insecurity, doubt, selfishness and worldliness in the present. When we trust in all that God has promised to do for us, give to us and be for us, it rids us of what is robbing us of real joy in Jesus. Belief that God knows best, does what is best and will give us what is best moment-by-moment for the rest of our lives sustains us when we have to give up something we want or go through something we don't want. No matter what happens today, let us be sure to praise God and let us be sure of this: Grace is already there and more is on the way.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

To this end [to experience full joy in Jesus when He returns] we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling [made to fit your place in His kingdom] and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you [by what you do], and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ [He will graciously provide all you need]. - 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

How would your life be different if you truly believed what you read about grace today?

MEDITATION FIFTEEN

He Delights To Hear From You

You are not bothering God when you ask Him for more grace. He isn't too busy or too disinterested. He doesn't need to put something more important on hold to help you. Listen... There is no sin so big that God won't forgive it and no sin so small that God will ignore it. There is no stronghold so powerful that God can't break it and no stronghold so flimsy that God wants you to get free on your own. There is no problem so significant that God won't handle it and no problem so petty that God doesn't care about it. He does trillions of things at once in sustaining the universe. And one of His favorites is hearing from and helping you.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Do not be anxious [worried, fearful] about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving [grateful for what He has done and for what He will do] let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God [an inner calm that comes from resting in His gracious care], which surpasses all understanding [not based on your circumstances, but in God's control of them], will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. And my God will [graciously] supply every need of yours according to his [inexhaustible] riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. - Philippians 4:6-7, 19-20 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

How do you want to live differently in light of what you learned today about grace?

MEDITATION SIXTEEN

God Loves To Be Generous

Sometimes God gives to us before we ask and sometimes because we ask. While God does countless gracious things for us, in us and through us without us requesting them or even realizing them, there are some things He does only as a response to us humbly asking Him. To be sure, we don't pray to get what we want to build our own kingdoms; we pray to get what we need to live for His. Still, God loves to be seen as generous, loves for us to appeal to His generosity, and loves to give generously to us because He loves us. This won't always be in the way you want or expect, but it will always be what is for your best. So... Pray often, celebrating the grace already given to you and requesting the grace that is yet to come.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

If you then, who are evil [imperfect sinner], know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven [perfect in every way] give good things [what God knows will be for our ultimate good] to those who ask him! – Matthew 7:11 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

In what area of your life do you need to ask God for His gracious help and trust He will give it?

MEDITATION SEVENTEEN

We Don't Deserve God's Help, But We Can Have It

There are two errors we often make when we consider asking Jesus for help. We either feel confident that we can ask Him for help because we've been "good," or we feel hesitant to ask Him for help because we've been "bad." Both of those ideas twist God's kingdom into a meritocracy in which we submit our requests (or not) based on our deeds. The truth is we don't deserve God's gracious help. But because of what Jesus did on the cross, we can have it as a gift on the basis of His goodness, not ours. Trust in Him and confidently ask for His help today knowing this... It's not what you do for Him that is worthy of His help; it's what Jesus has done for you.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence [because of the merit of Jesus] draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace [secured by Jesus, given to us] to help in time of need. – Hebrews 4:15-16 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

How does today's reading give you more confidence to turn to God for needed grace?

MEDITATION EIGHTEEN

He Will Make Us A Way

While grace is available to us all the time, we do not experience its every benefit all the time. We often miss out on blessings that could be ours. Why? Because of sin-created barriers. We don't think we need God's help, don't remember to ask for God's help, don't believe God will send help, and/or refuse the help that He sends. But here is good news: He welcomes us to come back to Him. Therefore, let us... Acknowledge our need for His help, ask for His help, anticipate His help, accept His help, act by His help, and adore Him for His help. When we do, we can be sure of this: Jesus, our great Barrier-Remover will not push us away; He will make us a way.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

But he gives more [and more and more] grace [so we can live in loving and joyful obedience to His plans for us]. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud [thinking we do not need God and do not need to live in God's ways] but gives grace [over and over] to the humble [who turn away from self to Him]." Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. - James 4:6-7 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What do you need to start doing or stop doing by God's gracious help?

MEDITATION NINETEEN

Grace Is Always Right On Time

It never arrives too early. It never arrives too late. Grace is always right on time. God's unmerited favor for undeserving people like you and me is both customized to fit what we need and calculated to arrive when we need it. Neither the size of the trial nor the strength of the temptation will ever be a match for the well-timed help that God sends in the many moments that are too much for us to handle alone. When you feel like giving in to temptation or giving up in a trial, that's when you can know for certain that grace is there. In your time of need, God will ensure that you have what you need. Our timing is rarely perfect; His always is.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence [certain that Jesus understands our situation and will help us through it] draw near to the throne of grace [by praying for help], that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need [at the moment we are tested or tempted]. -Hebrews 4:15-16 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What part of today's reading about grace is most encouraging to you right now? Why?

MEDITATION TWENTY

God's Grace And God's Will Always Work Together For Our Good

God's grace is always in harmony with God's will. That means that although He will do for us what is good for us, it will often be in ways that are different than what we expected, desired or requested. Grace always fit two things: what we need and what God wants. It will serve both our particulars and His purposes, ensuring that our needs are cared for and His plans are carried out. Know this: God is wisely superintending the entire cosmos while intimately attending to you and me. Let us praise Him for Who He is! Let us praise Him for what He does! We don't have to understand how God is working it all out for good; we just need to trust that He is.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

And we know [with great certainty] that for those who love God all things work together for good [because He graciously makes this happen], for those who are called according to his purpose [He has a good plan for us and everything He allows into our lives]. – Romans 8:28 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What did you discover about God and how He relates to us by grace in today's reading?

MEDITATION TWENTY-ONE

He Rules For Our Good

God's grace will call us to submit to God's authority. From the moment we put our faith in Jesus, we will begin a lifelong journey where we yield more and more control to Him as we trust Him more fully in more areas of our lives. For genuine believers, there will be an immediate, increasing, imperfect reception of the new life of joyful obedience and rejection of the old life of sinful disobedience. We will stand by His grace when we get it right and fall into His grace when we get it wrong. Whatever happens today, let us strive to gladly obey Jesus knowing this... He rules for our good as we submit to His rule over our lives.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly [more and more... informing your decisions, guiding your life], teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God [grateful for all that God graciously does for you]. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus [in submission to His better ways], giving thanks to God the Father through him. - Colossians 3:15-17 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What do you think God wants you believe, do, or say as a response to today's message?

MEDITATION TWENTY-TWO

All Is Forgiven, Now You Can...

When we receive God's grace, every sin we have committed, are committing and will commit are all forgiven. Fully. Freely. Forever. That doesn't mean we can knowingly and willfully continue sinning with no remorse or repentance. True grace is not "All is forgiven, now you can freely wallow in sin." True grace is, "All is forgiven, now you can firmly withstand sin." Jesus did not pick us up just so we would run back to the same thing that knocked us down. He supplies grace that is both pardon for sin and power not to sin. Therefore... We rely on His grace as we strive for holiness, and we rest in His grace when we need forgiveness.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin [practice sin without making any effort so stop] that grace may abound [so God will give more forgiveness]? By no means! How can we who died to sin [been set free from its power] still live in it [let it rule us]? Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life [habitually - though imperfectly - strive to live holy, happy lives]. – Romans 6:1-2, 4b (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What adjustments do you need to make to your life because of what you read today?

MEDITATION TWENTY-THREE

Grace Isn't Opposed To Effort

Grace is not cruise control. Ours is not a set it and forget it relationship in which God does all the work, and we do none of it. He does all of the things that only He can do and enables us to do all of the things that He purposes for us to do. How do we respond to grace? We. Work. Hard. We work hard to be who God called us to be and do what God has called us to do in Christ, relying on His power and provision every step of the way. Learn this: Grace isn't opposed to effort; it's opposed to trying to earn what we've been freely given. We don't work hard to receive God's grace; we work hard because we have already received it.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain [it changed my life]. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them [I made an effort to live this new life I was given], though it was not I, but the grace of God [His unmerited favor that helped, motivated and blessed me to do so] that is with me. – 1 Corinthians 15:10 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

How does today's message about grace relate to your home life, work life and play life?

MEDITATION TWENTY-FOUR

You Are Never Helpless

Every day there is a tug-of-war for control of your thoughts, feelings, motives, attitudes, words and actions, pulling you in the opposing directions of what sin entices you into and what God invites you into. Because of grace, the war is not yours alone to fight! Look to Jesus for help and look for His help to arrive in your time of temptation as a way to leave it, the power to say “no” to it, a divine removal of it, the arrival of someone to help you through it, and / or a promise of something worth waiting for that is better than it. Glory to the God Who is bigger than your biggest need! Take heart... You are never helpless against temptation as long as there is a throne of grace for you to run to for help.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then [because Jesus understands our temptation] with confidence draw near to the throne of grace [by praying to God for strength], that we may receive mercy [when we fail] and find grace to help [to say “no” to temptation] in time of need. -Hebrews 4:15-16 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What area of your life is your biggest struggle? How does today's message speak to it?

MEDITATION TWENTY-FIVE

We Will Not Be Sinless, But We Will Sin Less

One of the evidences that you have received God's pardon for your sin is that you are relying on God's power to fight against your sin. Forgiveness and freedom are two inseparable aspects of grace. You don't get one without the other. Our rate and depth of spiritual growth will vary by person and season, but one thing every genuine Christian has in common is this: sin no longer holds the same appeal or power as it once did. We once loved it, but we grow to hate it. We once gave in to it, but we grow to fight against it. We once preferred it, but we grow to replace it with the better way, the fuller experience, the greater delight found in our glorious Savior. Though we will not be sinless, we will sin less because of this... Our relationship with sin changes because of our relationship with Jesus.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body [say no to temptation], to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members [body and mind] to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you [it is not your master], since you are not under law but under grace [forgiven and free]. But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart [because you love God and trust that His way is better] to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness [as He helps you live a new life that He has planned for you]. – Romans 6:12-14, 17-18 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What most caught your attention from today's reading about grace? Why?

MEDITATION TWENTY-SIX

Pursuing A Better Experience Of Grace

There are certain rhythms of grace that will help us better experience the forgiveness, freedom and favor of God. These habits, disciplines and practices help us remember, rejoice in, respond to, and rely on God's generosity toward us in Christ. While there are many of them, there are four basic steps that give birth to the rest of them: Pray. Read the Bible. Respond to what God tells you. Help others do the same. This is how we better experience all that God means for us to have, as a means for us to better enjoy God Himself. The best way to dive into and delight in the fountainhead of grace is to walk daily with the Giver of grace, knowing this: The steps we take with Him always lead us to the right place.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand [that people distort what God says], take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. But grow [mature, progress] in the grace and knowledge [personally knowing] of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ [by praying, reading the Bible, following]. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. - 2 Peter 3:17-18 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What did you learn about grace today that you plan to act on?

MEDITATION TWENTY-SEVEN

God Wants Us To Be Happy

God wants us to be happy. When He tells us in the Bible to do, say, correct, believe, feel, think or share something, it is not to take away our happiness, but rather it is to take away the things that are in the way of our full and lasting happiness in Him. We must trust that God is after our happiness, that He knows best how to bring about our happiness, and that what He tells us in the Bible is designed to lead us into happiness. It is God's grace at work when He tells us what to do, gives us power to do it, and delights us in Himself as we do it. Doing what God tells us is not always easy, popular or instantly gratifying. But loving obedience is always for good, always better in the end than sin, and always the best option for making us truly, ultimately, and eternally happy in Him.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin [ruled over by a destructive master, unable to be free from sin's power and consequences] have become obedient [doing what God wants] from the heart [willingly, joyfully, lovingly] to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having [graciously] been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness [now controlled by new desires and a new master which are for your good]. - Romans 6:17-18 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

How do you feel about what you read about grace in today's message?

MEDITATION TWENTY-EIGHT

We Just Have To Look

Contentment increases when your awareness of grace does. The more you recognize what God has done, is doing and will do for you as a free and undeserved gift, the more you will be grateful for what you have and not grumble over what you do not have. Praising will replace pouting. Worshipping will replace whining. Celebrating will replace complaining. God is worthy! So... To nurture this contentment, we should regularly look back at God's faithfulness to us in Christ and look forward to God's promises to us in Christ. Today, let us rejoice over past grace and request future grace, knowing that God has always and will always give to us what is best for us. We don't have to look very hard to appreciate all that we are given; we just have to look.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content [satisfied with all that God graciously does for me, gives to me, is for me]. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things [I am ready for anything God has planned for me] through him [Jesus] who strengthens me [gives me inner strength and inner peace]. - Philippians 4:11-13 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

Which sentence from today's reading about grace most spoke to you? Why?

MEDITATION TWENTY-NINE

He Can Change Others Just Like He Changes Us

Because the need for grace is great, and the supply of grace is even greater, we who have experienced it ourselves should extend it to others. We want others to come to trust and treasure God like we do, and there is no better way to accomplish this than by a “show and tell” demonstration of what God has done for us in Christ. We show others the same kind of undeserved forgiveness and favor by letting go of the natural desire to get even with offenders and letting God produce His supernatural desire in us to be a blessing to those in our lives. We tell others about the availability of the grace of God that has changed us and can change them as well. Our everyday testimony for God’s grace is treating others like He treats us.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Be kind to one another [helpful in what you say and do], tenderhearted [compassionate and understanding], forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you [remembering and modeling the way in which God graciously deals with your sins]. – Ephesians 4:32 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today’s Reflection Question...

What is your initial reaction to what you read today about grace?

MEDITATION THIRTY

You Have Been Given Something To Use

God helps us help one another by giving spiritual gifts of His grace to every person in His family. We don't earn these spiritual abilities; they are gifts. They aren't all the same; they come in various forms. We don't let them gather dust; we use them. They aren't to be used selfishly; they are to be used to bless others. We don't use them to bless others so we are praised; we do so that Jesus may receive the glory. Therefore... We should strive to live full and fruitful lives serving the people in our lives "right here, right now" with the resources we have been entrusted to steward. Do your part today knowing this: One way God shows grace to us is through others; one way God shows grace to others is through us.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins [it forgives the bad of others and gives to the good of others]. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift [a spiritual ability or talent given by God], use it to serve one another [in the way that God intends], as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. - 1 Peter 4:8–11 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What is your biggest lesson learned from today's message about grace?

MEDITATION THIRTY-ONE

You Are Defined By Who God Says You Are

To receive God's grace is to be so radically changed that nothing will ever be the same again. Not your past, because your sin no longer convicts you. Not your present, because your sin no longer controls you. Not your future, because your sin no longer condemns you. When you trust in Jesus, God graciously remakes everything about who you were, who you are and who you will become. You are given a new identity in Christ, a growing similarity to Christ, and a joy-filled destiny with Christ. Grace. Changes. Everything. You are not defined by who the world says you are; you are defined by who God says you are.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ [joined to Him by faith], he is a new creation [a completely new person]. The old has passed away [the former sinful life apart from God]; behold, the new has come [new identity, new purpose, new eternal destination]. All this is from God [as a gracious act and gift], who through Christ reconciled us to himself [brought us together] and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself [by forgiving our sins, transforming our lives, restoring us to His favor], not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. - 2 Corinthians 5:17-19 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

How did today's reading change how you understand grace?

MEDITATION THIRTY-TWO

We Are Who We Are Because Of Grace

We were made in God's image to bring glory to Him, but we all sin and fall short of God's glory which distorts His image in us. Jesus came to display the perfect image of God and glorify Him in ways we did not, and then die in our place to atone for our sin. When we put our faith in Him, He begins restoring the image of God in us so we can bring Him glory. This is what grace does for us: It takes people who don't look and act much like God and transforms us into people who do. Undeserving sinners are remade into joy-filled, purpose-driven, difference-making, love-giving image-bearers of our glorious God. We are who we are because of grace.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices [turned away from the former life of sin apart from God] and have put on the new self [become a new person because of faith in Jesus], which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator [graciously being changed to look more like God's character]. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all [we are all equal in Jesus]. - Colossians 3:9-11 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What is the main point about grace from today's reading? Why is it important?

MEDITATION THIRTY-THREE

Grace To Us, Glory To Him

We require it. We request it. We receive it. We rely on it. But let's be clear about it... Grace isn't given because we are great, but because God is. The grace of God testifies to the glory of God. When it is received and rightly understood, it results in worship for the One who gives it. It should prompt in us as receivers a celebration of Him and commendation of Him as a generous, powerful, wise, good, rich, holy and loving God. Those who think they merit what they receive have little praise for God; those who know everything they have is a gift have much praise for God. Today, as He gives grace to us, let us give glory to Him.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

For it is all for your sake [these things that have happened], so that as grace [unmerited blessings of God] extends to more and more people it may increase [spread wider, grow bigger] thanksgiving, to the glory of God [resulting in praise and gratitude for Him]. - 2 Corinthians 4:15 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What do you think God is showing you from what you read today about grace?

MEDITATION THIRTY-FOUR

We Will Not Stop Needing And God Will Not Stop Supplying

There are no grace graduates. None of us get to the point where we no longer need God's provision. We aren't who we used to be, but our transformation isn't complete. We've been fruitful, but our good work isn't finished. We've come a long way, but our journey home isn't over. We don't move on from grace; we move on because of grace! So, let us confidently call on God for help to joyfully live out His plans, live for what matters most, live with our circumstances and live in this world, not as independent people, but as His grace-dependent people. Until the very end... We will not stop needing. God will not stop supplying.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

And God is able [through many means] to make all grace abound to you [as what you have is depleted, it will be replenished], so that having all sufficiency [everything you need] in all things at all times [for every circumstance and need], you may abound in every good work. - 2 Corinthians 9:8 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

Why should today's grace message give you greater hope and confidence about your future?

MEDITATION THIRTY-FIVE

Every Step Of The Way

All of God's gracious actions toward us are designed to lead us toward Him. He means for us to respond to His gifts not by seeking more gifts, but by seeking Jesus ... to know, trust, honor, enjoy, worship and love Him as we follow Him. Grace enables and encourages us to take steps with Jesus. When we do, we grow in our relationship with Him as we go with Him wherever He leads to do whatever He says. God woos us with His kindness along the way because He wants us to be together every step in this life until we are with Him forever in the life to come. Certainly, we will take mis-steps along the way, but Jesus will never let us lose our way.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

But whatever gain I had [accomplishments], I counted as loss for the sake of Christ [everything combined together isn't as delightful as knowing Jesus]. Indeed, I count everything as loss [worthless] because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord [deeply and intimately experiencing His loving, glorious presence in my life]. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish [garbage], in order that I may gain Christ. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on [enabled by God's grace] toward the goal for the [heavenly] prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. - Philippians 3:7-8,13-14 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

As a response to grace, what do you need to start and stop doing to better relate to Jesus?

MEDITATION THIRTY-SIX

You Will Make It

There's only one reason we persevere through the trials, troubles and tragedies of life in this broken world: grace. We are given the strength, encouragement and provision we need to keep going when the going gets tough. God is always graciously working in us, working behind the scenes for us, and working all things out for the good of us. Call on Him. Count on Him. Collapse on Him. When He does not give you grace to escape problems, He will give you grace to endure them. You will keep going. You will get to the other side. You will make it through. This is our hope in Jesus... When the time is right, God will bring our hurting to an end and give us happiness without end.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Casting all your anxieties on him [trust all of your worries and concerns to God], because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful [cautious at all times]. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood [other Christ-followers] throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. -1 Peter 5:7-10 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

For what circumstances in your life did you most need to hear today's message of grace?

MEDITATION THIRTY-SEVEN

The Best Is Always Yet To Come

For all who trust in Jesus, there is a glorious eternity ahead in which bad things will be eliminated, good things will be perfected, and the best things will be unveiled. We have an eternity with Him that... Never gets stale. Never gets boring. Never gets routine. Never gets unappealing. Never gets finished. There will always be more to discover and enjoy from the immeasurable riches of God's grace towards us in Christ Jesus. We get to be in His glorious presence where there is fullness of joy and pleasure forevermore! Don't live for this day; live for that day. Don't be discouraged by this day; be encouraged by that day. Take hope in this every day: For those who are trusting in Jesus, the best is always yet to come.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

Even when we were dead in our trespasses, [God] made us alive together with Christ—by grace [as a gift, not because of human effort or merit] you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages [all throughout eternity] he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness [joy after joy, pleasure after pleasure... forever] toward us in Christ Jesus. - Ephesians 2:5–7 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

How should you view life differently because of what you read about grace today?

MEDITATION THIRTY-EIGHT

You Will Either Receive The Grace Of God Or The Wrath Of God

You will either receive the grace of God for your sin or the wrath of God for your sin. There is no third option. By nature and choice, we sin against God by regularly preferring things over Him and refusing to obey Him, which condemns us to hell. The only remedy is personally receiving the free forgiveness available by faith in what Jesus has done for us, which ushers us into heaven. You get to choose between continuing in sin and continuing with Jesus. Whether you embrace this as the best news ever or dismiss it as foolishness, this is true: You need grace, and you can have grace. To reject it is to perish forever; to receive it is to have pleasure forever.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

For the wages [earned by our disobedience] of sin is death [eternal separation from God to experience His wrath in hell], but the free gift [graciously given to be received by faith] of God is eternal life [joy and pleasure forever in heaven] in Christ Jesus our Lord. - Romans 6:23 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

Does today's message about grace cause relief and rejoicing for you? Why or why not?

MEDITATION THIRTY-NINE

God Is Honored In Us And We Are Happy In Him

The goal of grace is to unite us to God so that He is honored in us and we are happy in Him. Grace makes it possible for us to personally know God and enjoy Him, along with all of the good gifts that He purposes to give us now and forever. He doesn't give us what we think will make us happy; He gives us what He knows will make us happy ... Himself. Because of the grace of God, we get the God of grace! Therefore, the point of grace is to point us to God, so that we will be satisfied by Him, and He will be glorified by us. God gets the eternal praise that He's always deserved, and we get the eternal pleasure that we've always desired.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

As it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored [praised, glorified] in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ [to experience and show how wonderful Jesus is], and to die is gain [compared to all we lose on earth in death, being in heaven with Jesus is joyful gain]. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better [being with Him in heaven is far more pleasurable than anything on earth]. - Philippians 1:20–23 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What did today's message teach you about the purpose of grace? How do you feel about this?

MEDITATION FORTY

We Are Not Meant To Stand Still

There is a three-word description that summarizes what happens from the moment we put our faith in Jesus until the moment we come face-to-face with Him: grow in grace. We are not meant to stay the same or stand still, but to progress in our experience of grace for the rest of our lives. There are countless observations, implications and applications that flow from God's grace to us, and we have the delightful duty of discovery. Day by day, we are to prize, prioritize and pursue intimacy with Jesus. For progress does not come from fixing ourselves, but fixing our eyes on Him. This is how we grow: we set out to know.

FOR MORE ENCOURAGEMENT...

But grow [mature, progress] in the grace and knowledge [personally knowing] of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ [by praying, reading the Bible, following]. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. - 2 Peter 3:18 (ESV Bible, bracketed words added by author for clarity)

Today's Reflection Question...

What do you think God wants you to do next to respond to today's message about grace?

CLOSING

Where Do You Go From Here?

Grace is God's answer to the question of how sinners like you and me could ever be welcomed into His presence, His family and His blessing. Then, grace poses a question for us to answer: Will you receive it? The gospel of grace is only good news if it is true, if you are included in it, and if you believe it. It IS true. You CAN be included. DO you believe? You can have it all if you trust that Jesus is Who the Bible says He is, that Jesus did what the Bible says He did, and that Jesus will deliver all the Bible says He will. Grace leads us to put our faith in Jesus.

Putting our faith in Jesus means trusting that He came to live the perfect life you should have lived, die in your place to atone for your sinful imperfections, and restore the broken relationship between you and God so you can have real life with Him. It includes accepting that there is nothing you can do through your own efforts to earn or deserve or add to or take away from what Jesus did as an act of His grace to secure your forgiveness and freedom from sin. Finally, it includes walking away from your old life of doing things your own way to walk with Jesus in newness of life because you trust that what He offers is better. When that happens for us... God doesn't just give us different lives; He makes us into different people.

We're given... New identities. New desires. New lives. New futures. Christians have a faith in Jesus that is demonstrated by loving obedience, though imperfectly executed. That means there is grace to help us get this right, and there is grace to help us when we get this wrong. Our entire spiritual journey is one in which we rely on grace to take steps of faith in living as God intends for us, and in which we rest in that same grace when we take mis-steps knowing that God won't give up on us. Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith, and we can be sure of this: God will finish what He starts in us.

Has He started that good work in you? How can you and I know that we have received God's grace? There are two really good indicators that your faith in Him is genuine: you have a growing hatred for sin and a growing love for Jesus. You don't just want to be free from the consequences of sin, but sin itself. You don't just want to have the blessings of God, but God Himself. There is a desire that begins growing inside of you to experience all that God has for you in this world and the one to come. You believe in Jesus for the first time, and then you believe in Him more fully over time. We believe. We grow. That's how we know.

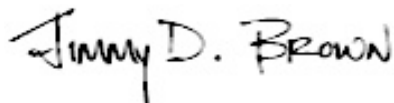
So... Where do you go from here? What is your next step? Step One is to welcome Jesus into your life for Who He is: Savior, Provider, Counselor, Leader, King, Treasure. If you have never repented of your sinful life apart from Him and received the life that comes with Him, then by faith, ask God for this right now. If you really mean it in your heart, He will give it to you. Step Two onward is to grow in grace. Step after step, you let Jesus be Who He is ... *for you*. You seek to know Him, follow Him and enjoy Him, letting His peace, hope and joy rule in your heart as He rules your life for your good.

What you'll discover about life with Jesus is this... The better you know Him, the longer you follow Him, the more you obey Him and the greater you enjoy Him, the deeper you will experience all the blessings and benefits of God's grace. He will be honored in you and you will be happy in Him. And that's what grace is all about. God and sinner reconciled so that... God receives the full and lasting worship He's always deserved, and you receive the full and lasting happiness you've always desired. It starts now, grows over time, and will extend into eternity where it will explode into unhindered, unbridled, uninterrupted mingling of praise and pleasure forevermore.

Remember this...

*To gain all that the world has to offer yet not have Jesus is to have nothing at all.
To gain all that Jesus has to offer yet not have the world is to have everything.*

All for Him,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jimmy D. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

APPENDIX

Four Recommendations For Growing In Grace

There are four things that I recommend you do next to “*grow in grace*” and experience all that God means for you to enjoy and do as a follower of Jesus...

1. *Start taking the four basic steps of walking with Jesus: Pray. Read the Bible. Respond to what God tells you. Help others do the same.* These four rhythms will directly influence for good everything about your life so that you are happy and God is honored.
2. *Join and participate in a gospel community.* God intends for you and me to regularly gather with other followers so we can encourage and equip each other to keep taking steps. There is no substitute for a gathering of the Christian community.
3. *Find someone farther along in his or her spiritual journey to serve as a spiritual mentor that you meet with on a regular basis.* This should be someone who clearly loves Jesus and can help you establish and deepen gospel-centered rhythms for growing in grace.
4. *Read my Finish Line Faith daily devotions.* These are grace-saturated, will take about 1-minute each day to read, and should help you take the four basic steps mentioned earlier. You can read them online or subscribe for free email delivery at FinishLineFaith.com, and/or follow via social media at [Facebook.com/FinishLineFaith/](https://www.facebook.com/FinishLineFaith/).

The forty meditations included in this book are ridiculously inadequate in exploring or explaining God's grace. They are too brief, and they are too few. The purpose of this book is not to tell you all about the grace of God, but rather to tell you that there is much for you to explore and experience yourself.

My hope and prayer is that God uses this book in your life simply to “*whet your appetite*” so that you will close it up very much hungry to learn and enjoy all that He has for you in Christ as you move forward in a life of grace. May He create and satisfy such a desire in us all so that He is honored in us and we are happy in Him. Amen.

Connecting With Me

If you have questions about completing any of the four previously mentioned recommendations, or if you have any other questions about life with Jesus, please reach out to me by using the *Contact* form at the bottom of the page at ThereIsGraceForYou.com (making sure you enter your email address correctly). I will personally reply back to you, usually within 24 hours (excluding holidays or weekends).

Other Connections

- Social media (personal page): www.Facebook.com/thejimmydbrown/
- Daily devotions: www.FinishLineFaith.com or www.Facebook.com/FinishLineFaith/
- Travel / mission vlog (with my wife, Paula): www.TheMissionAmerica.com

*If this book has been helpful to you, please reach out and let me know.
And please pass this book on to other people who may, by the grace of God, be helped too.*