



The Grace of God

Someone said _____ is “God’s Redemption At Christ’s Expense.” I’m excited today to tell you what the grace of God can do in your _____. I believe you’ll get excited too. We know the Lord’s Way is the right way, and we search the Scriptures, because we want the Bible to lead us to the _____.

When people say salvation is a _____, some think it’s too good to be true. They figure they must _____ their way to heaven by doing some great thing. They can’t imagine God giving us His _____, the forgiveness of our sins, and a home in heaven.

Someone has taken the word “GRACE” and made the acrostic “God’s Redemption At Christ’s Expense.” This is a fairly _____ description of grace. The word grace (in Greek, *charis*) means “_____.” One who has the love, blessing and favor of another may be said to be in the “_____ graces” of his benefactor. The distinguishing factors of God’s grace are twofold: first, God’s grace is a gift and is not earned; and second, God’s grace is undeserved and unmerited. Usually we think of having to earn a _____ of favor with others, but God gives us his favor as a gift.

God accepts, and loves and blesses the person who _____ in His grace. In spite of one’s past, when a person is washed in the _____ of Jesus Christ, he stands in a right relationship and the favor of God. Even though we _____ to be punished for our sins, God graciously forgives us and no longer holds our transgressions against us. In Christ we become _____ creatures, transformed into children of God, and transferred into the kingdom of God. In Christ God hears our prayers and gives us every spiritual blessing. Living in God’s favor is a precious gift that we must never cheapen or ignore.

Our reading today comes from Titus 3:3-7.

You can’t earn God’s grace; it’s a gift. In Romans 4:4, Paul says “Now when a man _____, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but _____ God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.” Grace is not a _____ for our labors, a _____ for winning a competition, or an _____ for meritorious service. Grace is a gift. When a man can earn no wage, can win no prize, and deserves no award, yet receives a wondrous gift, he has been _____ unmerited favor and undeserved kindness. This is what God in his _____ has done for us through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:1:10 helps us to understand _____ God has loved us and saved us. Paul first describes what it means to be _____: he said, “And you were _____ 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 _____ of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.” Sin causes spiritual death and separation from God. Sin isn’t merely inappropriate; sin kills one spiritually.

However, God has a solution to _____. Verse 4, “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 _____ together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the

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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.” The most wonderful sections of the Bible begin with the word “_____.” We were spiritually dead, but that’s not the _____ of the story. God, rich in mercy and love, saved us by his grace.

Verses 8-10 explain, “For by grace you have been _____ through faith. And this is not your own doing; it’s the gift of God, not a result of _____, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should _____ in them.” We are saved by grace through faith. It takes _____. We’re not saved by grace alone or by faith alone, but by grace through faith. Grace reflects all that God does in our lives to bring us _____ to Him. Faith reflects our response of trust, love, and obedience to His grace.

God’s grace works through faith. God desires that we appreciate his great gift by responding in faith. Paul said, “For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, _____ to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, and He did it by the _____ of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:3-5). God chose to wash us and renew us as an _____ of loving kindness. How does He wash us?

This washing that regenerates and renews is when we are born again of water and the Spirit in _____. By faith, when we repent and are baptized, God washes us _____ from sin and causes us to be born again into His family. The faith that matters to God is a faith willing to trust God and _____ His teaching. In baptism we accept His _____ by obediently responding to Him. Galatians 3:26-27 says, “for in Christ Jesus you are all _____ of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have _____ Christ.”

The faith that saves is the one that responds to grace with an _____ faith. We’re sons of God by faith, but this is a faith that will _____ and be baptized. God causes us to be born again when we “put on Christ” in baptism. God grants _____ the blessings and favor that goes with being a Christian in baptism. What a great God we have! Baptism is not, as Paul said, some work we do to _____ salvation. It’s how we lovingly _____ Him in faith.

Obedience is not the _____ thing as earning. Let’s say I had a treasure worth \$100,000 hidden in my backyard, and I told you that I would give it to you, provided you go and _____ it up. Do you think that a _____ minutes of digging earned \$100,000 for you? You met a _____ for a gift by obeying my words. You didn’t earn the gift, you merely received it by _____ what I asked you to do. That’s how it is in salvation. We don’t earn salvation by repenting or being baptized; we merely _____ with God’s conditions for receiving the gift.

In Numbers 21, the children of Israel while wandering in the wilderness came to the land of Edom, where they grumbled and spoke against God, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to _____ in the wilderness? For there is no _____ and no _____, and we loathe this miserable food.” The Lord became angry and “sent fiery _____ among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. The people repented and confessed their _____. They asked Moses to intercede for them with God, and Moses asked God to remove the serpents.

And then the LORD said to Moses, “You make a fiery serpent, and you set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, when he _____ at it, he will live.” Moses made a bronze serpent, he set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked

to the bronze serpent, he _____ (Numbers 21:8-9). All they had to do was look by _____ on the serpent. They didn't earn their healing, but they did have to _____ with God's instructions. Obeying is not the same as earning. Obedience is an act of faith and trust that God will keep his _____.

In John 9, Jesus encountered a man who was born _____. Jesus wanted to heal this man and show the power of God, so He spat on the ground, He made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes, and said to him, "You go _____ in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went away and he washed, and came back _____" (John 9:6-7). Who would argue that washing in a pool is the same as earning our eyesight? The man earned nothing, but he _____ strongly enough to do what Jesus told him to do. Faith is not merely accepting what God says, it's trusting enough to _____ exactly what the Lord asks us to do!

Let me make it very clear that the Bible does not teach that _____ is how we earn salvation. The Bible does teach baptism is _____ to salvation—just as looking on the brass serpent was necessary; just as washing in the pool of Siloam was necessary.

God _____ us to see if we really love Him and believe in Him. These tests are God's conditions, not ours. He _____ them to us. When we meet God's conditions, we say to Him, "We trust You enough to _____ Your will. We know that You will _____ Your promises." God's grace is so wonderful, and we must never _____ it or presume upon it. People presume on God's grace by _____ the conditions or by setting those conditions aside. They presume God will bless them even if they _____ to respond rightly to Him.

Some people think the grace of God means _____ can respond to Him any way that _____ want. They think grace has _____ conditions. Do you think the blind man would have argued about doing things his own way, if he really wanted to see? Do you think the Israelites would have argued with Moses about looking at the serpent? Why then does anyone _____ about repentance or baptism? Wouldn't it be better to trust God and obey?

The New Testament contains the _____ covenant of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This new covenant contains what God _____ His people and what God _____ of His people. In this covenant God is the benefactor who gives more to us than we can ever repay. If we _____ our blessings, they include salvation, forgiveness of sin, eternal life, the right to pray, and sonship. If we lived for thousands of years, we could _____ repay God for what He's done for us. God doesn't _____ repayment. He expects love, loyalty, and faithful obedience from His children.

Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will _____ My commandments" (John 14:15). In verse 23 Jesus said, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My _____; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him." Faithful obedience is not legalism or works righteousness or anything else but _____. Paul said, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith _____ through love" (Galatians 5:6). When we love the Lord and want to _____ Him, we're willing to do everything He asks and do it the way that He wants it done. We won't argue with Him about it. So, when the Lord asks us to believe, we're willing to trust Him and His Word completely. When the Lord asks us to _____ of our sins, love turns us away from sin that offends God. We couldn't imagine continuing to _____ the God who has been so good to us and blessed us. When Jesus asks us to _____ Him before others, we will gladly say to the world that Jesus is the Son of God. He is Lord and Christ!

When Jesus says to us in Mark 16:16, "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be _____," we believe Him. We're baptized because we trust, we love, and we want to please God. The

Bible says, “Therefore we have been _____ with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in _____ of life” (Romans 6:4). If the baptism of the New Testament is immersion, and it is, then I will be immersed without question so as to please God.

Acts 2:38 _____ us to “be baptized.” That command is in the passive voice not the active. The active voice is used when the subject performs an _____, but the passive voice is used when the subject is being acted _____ by someone else. In baptism God is _____ in saving us; and we are _____, receiving God’s grace and forgiveness. Let God’s grace work on you in _____. Let God cleanse your soul, bury you and raise you with Christ, give you newness of life, add you to His _____. God does all this when we’re baptized into Christ and His death.

Some say, “You don’t have to be baptized to be saved!” But they miss the point. God works His grace on us _____ baptism into Christ. If you love Christ Jesus, and I know you do, let Him _____ you through the washing that regenerates. God gives you that washing in baptism.

God gives laws for our _____, not to punish or enslave us. He doesn’t dream up foolish laws just to _____ that He’s in charge. No! God gives us laws to _____ us from troubles in life. Even God’s _____ are gracious to us. As a loving parent God cares and is concerned about our _____. Psalm 103:13 says, “Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who _____ Him.” Everything God does He does to favor and bless us. When we understand that we’ll see God more clearly.

Titus 2:11-14 says, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to _____ ungodliness and worldly desires and to _____ sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, _____ for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to _____ for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.” God wants to bless you richly by guiding you with His Word! Let Him.

Where are you in your life? Do you have a close, loving, peaceful relationship with God? Are you at peace in your soul? God hasn’t left you; it may be that you have left God. You can draw close to Him again by trusting in Him and obeying His Word. Believe in the Lord Jesus, repent of your sins, step out and confess Him before others, and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2: 38). It may be that as a Christian brother or sister you’ve wandered away from God and the church and need to come back home. Let God’s grace back into your life.