

# The True Grace of God

by Alan Martin

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*The true grace of God is a life-transforming power that produces righteousness and eternal life through Christ.*

**Scripture:** John 1:14

**Topics:** "Grace Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of grace as described in Acts 4:33. He questions whether grace means that God is kind to people even when they are doing poorly, or if it refers to a life of righteousness and obedience. The speaker emphasizes the need to understand and experience the true grace of God, which transforms the way someone lives. He refers to Romans 5:20-21 and John 1:14-17 to further explain this grace. The sermon concludes with a reflection on the hymn 'Amazing Grace' and the author John Newton.

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## Transcript

Lord, I confess again, it's better, it's better to be in you, Lord Jesus. Thank you, Father, that your house is in the Lord Jesus. All of your fullness dwells bodily in Christ.

That's where we want to dwell, Lord. The only place we've found where there's constant life, purity, power, self-control, kindness, humility, and meekness is in your Son. And when we live in Him, life is good, Lord.

Your yoke is easy. Your burden is light. It's the way of the transgressor that's hard, Lord.

It's living outside of you that's hard. But when we're near you, your nearness is our good. And we bless you for your wisdom and placing all of your fullness in a place in your Son who said anyone who's weary, anyone who's tired can come to Him.

And you give rest. You find rest for your soul. We're here, Lord, in the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus.

And what's what we want to find? We want to know your rest. We are tired of being angry. We are tired, Lord, of living in our flesh.

We want to live in your Spirit. We want to be abiding in Christ so that everything you have put in your Son, all of your fullness can flow into us and make us husbands and wives and parents and friends and brothers that are spiritual, inspired by heaven and not just the earth. We live above the tribulations and through the tribulations in this life by the power you've given us through the knowledge of your Son.

That's what we want. It is better. It is better to be in Christ than to have any of the riches.

I'd rather have Jesus than anything. And I know a lot of us here today can say with Paul, what things we did count gain, we consider lost compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus, our Lord. We count them rubbish compared to the revelation you've already shown us about yourself and our Lord.

We bless you for that. You know, most of you know Amazing Grace was written by John Newton. But do you know his other song? How tedious and tasteless the hours when Jesus no longer I see.

Sweet thoughts and sweet birds and sweet flowers have all lost their sweetness to me. The midsummer sun shines in vain. The fields strive in vain to look gay.

But when I'm happy in Him, December's as pleasant as May. His name yields the richest perfume and sweeter than honey His voice. His presence disperses my gloom and makes all within me rejoice.

Thus blessed with a sense of His love, a palace, a toy would appear. And prisons would palaces prove if Jesus would dwell with me there. O Lord, if I truly am Thine, if Thou art my strength and my song, then why do I languish in pine? And why are my winters so long? Disperse these dark clouds from my mind.

Thy soul-cheering presence restore. For take me unto Thee on high where winter and clouds are no more. You know, I mean, we need to give Him to that place.

We need to give me victory or take me home. Don't let me continue to blaspheme Your name by being a poor wretched Christian on the earth. Let me be an overcomer.

Let people see to the fruit of the Spirit, not the reflection of Adam. I don't want to look like Adam. I want to look like Christ.

Adam was the first forbearer. And it says, as each of us had borne the likeness of the first Adam, so shall we bear the likeness of the last Adam. We got sin, the law of sin and death from Grandpa Adam, Adam the first.

Thank you, Bunch. But the last Adam became our life-giving Spirit. And that's the one we want to dwell in.

You know, that's what, I've just been, I had a chance to meet with some college students this weekend. And we talked about what genuine grace is, what the true grace of God is. And, did I put my glasses somewhere? Is there, do you really know what the grace of God is? What is it? What is the grace of God? What is grace? Now, don't answer out loud.

Don't answer out loud. But, you know, have your answer right there. I want us to compare if your understanding of the grace of God is what the grace of God really is.

You know there's a true grace of God. If you want to check that out, turn to 1 Peter chapter 5. There's a true grace of God. He says that, that's what he says anyway in 1 Peter chapter 5. Because he says what he's written about.

You see this in 1 Peter chapter 5, find verse 12. He says, by Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I've written you briefly exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.

So if there's a true grace of God, what must that mean? If there is a true grace, there must be a counterfeit one out there. How do you know that your understanding of what the grace of God is, is the real thing? Well, you say it's obvious what the grace of God? How do most people identify the grace of God? Let's see, the grace of God is unmerited favor. Okay? Undeserved favor.

That's one of the ones that's said. I think all of us know what the unmerited part means. That's undeserved.

It's favor you don't deserve. But do you really understand what the favor is? God doing you a favor? You know what most people think the favor God has done for them? It's God just doesn't hold them accountable for being wretched sinners. That's how they see it.

That's the undeserved favor. God just forgives us. If that's all that grace is to you, you haven't seen it yet.

It's more than that. I want you to see a couple scriptures that show you it can't mean that if that's what it is. I'll show you.

Turn to Luke chapter 2. Luke chapter 2 and someone find verse 40 and if you don't mind, read it nice and loudly for us. Oh, I mean, so Christ was being forgiven for his sins as a child. Can't mean that.

We know he never sinned. So what is grace here? What? Does your definition of grace fit this? Christ had the undeserved favor of his Father? No, that's not what grace... We need to know this kind of grace. We need to know the kind of grace that was on Christ as a child.

Matter of fact, look in John 1. John chapter 1. Flip there. Someone read again in a very nice loud voice. John chapter 1 verses 14 through 17.

So this grace is not talking about something undeserved. Christ was full of this grace. This grace that you and I need to understand.

This true grace of God. Christ was full of. He was full of this grace.

It was upon him as a child. He came into the world full of this grace. In the book of Acts, the early Christians lived under this.

Turn to Acts chapter 4 verse 33. Acts 4 verse 33. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

And great grace was upon them all. Now in your definition of grace, would that mean, oh they were doing pretty bad and God was being nice to them anyway? You think that's what the author of Acts was trying to describe? Or was he saying they were living in such a way. Such victorious life.

In such righteousness. And in such obedience that it was evident a great grace was upon them. See that's the grace we need to know about.

That's the grace we need to experience. That's the true grace of God. A grace that transforms the way someone lives.

Let's look in Romans chapter 5. This is the grace that Paul is talking about. Find verse 20 with me and I'll let someone again. If you'll read nice and loudly.

Romans chapter 5 verses 20 and 21. Sin reigned in death because what did sin make us? I like everyone to answer this. All of you are supposed to have experience in this you know.

All have. So what did sin make us? What does grace make us? Look right here in the verse. Just as sin reigned in death, what does grace reign in? Righteousness.

If you have the true grace of God in you, what is it supposed to be reigning and producing? And what's the result of grace reigning in righteousness? Eternal life. Is that the grace you know? Is it a grace that is producing the righteousness of God in you? That's what Paul told Timothy to be strong in. But before we go there, do you realize this is a grace you can receive in vain? Turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 6. 2 Corinthians chapter 6. Someone read, if you would, verse 1. Nice and loudly.

2 Corinthians chapter 6 verse 1. Paul was pleading with who? Who is Paul writing to? The Corinthians obviously. But what were these? Were these Christians? He's pleading with people already Christians not to receive God's grace in vain. You know what receiving God's grace in vain is? Receiving God's grace in vain is claiming you're forgiven for your sins without having a transformed life.

Claiming you're going to go to heaven just because of Christ's blood when it's not changed your life. Let me ask you a question. A very serious question.

What do you base the fact that the blood of Jesus Christ is going to forgive you of your sins for? How do you know? How do you know that the blood of Jesus Christ is going to forgive you of your sins? How do you know? Give me an answer. Someone tell me. What? The Bible says so.

The Bible also says you'll have victory over sin. So how do you know you've got forgiveness if you don't have victory? That's right. But do you see what I'm saying, Kenny? People claim, I know I'm forgiven.

I know the blood of Jesus Christ takes care of this. By faith. Because the Bible says so.

The Bible also says that when Christ comes to live in you, you're a new creature. Old things are passed away. Old things have become new.

If that's not happening, I doubt you've been forgiven. You don't have a real faith. If the faith to forgive you changes you, you're probably forgiven.

This is the real grace of God. The real grace of God does something. Turn to Titus chapter 2. You'll see what it does.

What Paul told Titus it would do. Titus chapter 2. Someone read. You're at verse 11.

Nicodemus, Titus 2. Chapter 2, verse 11. And verse 12 too. Okay.

The grace of God that brings salvation. Just what I said. The real grace of God.

The kind, the true grace that actually saves men. Teaches something. This grace teaches something.

What does it teach? It teaches men and women. Everyone who receives this grace. Are taught to deny ungodliness.

And worldly lust. And to live soberly, righteously, and godly. In this present age.

Even in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation. Those who receive God's abundant provision of grace. They shine like stars.

What's the thing about stars? How does a star shine when it's surrounded by total darkness? Where does it get its light from? Within. His power and the power emanates from it. Is Christ living in you? Is the power of God in you emanating from within? In righteousness.

In godliness. In soberness. When Christ is in you.

See, who came full of grace and truth? Jesus Christ is the one full of grace and truth. So where must you and I get this grace from? From Him. It says it is of His fullness we have all received grace.

For grace. Now you know what else? You can receive a grace from a doctrine. You can be a Calvinist and have a Calvinist grace.

You can have that kind of grace. You can have an Arminian type of grace. A grace that you chose by your free will.

But you know what? Either one. A Calvinist grace or an Arminian grace. If it's not a life transforming grace that is evidenced by Christ in you reigning in righteousness.

All you have is a systematic theology. You have religion. You have a form of godliness that denies the power of godliness.

Godliness is not a concept. It's a reality. And it changes the way a man talks.

And it changes the way a man relates to his wife. And it changes the way a wife relates to her husband. And it changes the way parents relate to their children.

It affects a man's job. It affects a man's neighborhood. It affects a man's neighbor.

It's beautiful. And it's evidence that someone's been born from above. And the fruit of the Spirit is in them transforming their life.

This is the genuine grace of God. This is the only kind of grace that saves men. Is that the kind you have? Again, I ask you.

If you're basing the fact that your sins are forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ solely upon the Word. And you do not have the experience of overcoming sin and temptation. Tell me how you really know you really have assurance you're going to heaven.

I'll tell you, deep down inside, you don't. You may deceive yourself into thinking you do. You know how you find real assurance? You want real assurance that you know.

That you know you receive genuine grace? Turn to 2 Peter. Chapter 1. 2 Peter 1. Find with me verse 8. Someone read, if you will, just verse 8. 2 Peter 1:8. Nice and loud. If you possess these things.

What things? What things are we supposed to possess to keep us from being ineffective and unproductive, unfruitful? Okay, yeah. Back before it says, Being diligent to add to your faith virtue. To virtue, knowledge.

To knowledge, self-control. Self-control, perseverance. Perseverance, godliness.

To godliness, brotherly kindness. And brotherly kindness, love. So if you have, if your faith really includes, if you're adding to your faith.

Virtue, knowledge, godliness, self-control, perseverance. Brotherly kindness and love. If these things are in you and abounding.

You won't be ineffective and unproductive. Now the key, the good thing about not being ineffective and unproductive is. Our Lord Jesus Christ says that the Father cuts off every branch in me that does not bear fruit.

So if you're bearing, if these things are causing you to be effective and productive in your faith. You're not going to be cut off. Instead, how does the Father treat the branches that are bearing fruit? He prunes them so that they would even be more fruitful.

Okay, now follow me to the next verse. Will someone read verse 9? Hmm. Well, could this be a Christian? Can you be a Christian without having your old sins purged? No? You mean it's possible for a Christian to be blind and without sight? And having really forgotten the whole purpose of what Christ came to do? Sure it is.

Alright, now. Someone read verse 10, nice and loud. Hmm.

Hmm. Do we want assurance that we'll never fall? How does Peter say we get really good assurance that we'll never fall? Yeah. But how do we make our calling and election sure? Doing these things.

When you know a person who's being filled with knowledge and virtue and self-control and perseverance and godliness and brotherly kindness and love. A person being filled with those knows where those things come from. They know Christ is in them.

Reigning in righteousness. And that kind of person, what kind of entrance does a person doing these things have in verse 11? Hmm. Someone read it.

Verse 11. 2 Peter 1 11. Amen.

Isn't that what you look forward to? Now, here according to Peter, the way you can look forward to a grand entrance to heaven is not going there knowing, well, gee, I know I was a dirty rotten sinner, but the blood of Jesus Christ covered all my sin. That's not the assurance he's talking about here. He's talking about a person.

He just got through in his first letter, he wrote what the real grace of God was. In his first letter, he talks about the real grace of God is a person so full of the love of Christ that when people curse them, what do they do? They bless. And when people do wrong to them, what do they do? They do good back.

That's what the real grace of God does. And when you're experiencing these things, you're going to stand before the Lord Jesus Christ and he's going to look at you, he's going to reward you according to what you have done with the grace he's given you and say to you, well done. God's not a liar.

God is not going to say well done to someone who's not done well. If you do these things, you shall never fall. And you'll receive a rich entrance into the kingdom of heaven because you've done well.

You've received real, genuine, life transforming grace. You've been made a new creature. Old things have legitimately passed away.

All things have legitimately become new. And there will be many, many people who say unto me, Lord, Lord. And I shall say to them plainly in that day, depart from me ye... Okay, why is he saying to them, why is he telling them to depart? What did they work? What is he going to say to the people who by his grace have worked righteousness? The truth of the gospel.

This is the true gospel. The true gospel is one that the grace of God teaches man to say no to ungodliness and worldly lusts and live soberly, righteously and godly because the living Jesus Christ in them by the power of the Holy Spirit has totally changed the way they live. The real gospel.

Every other gospel that does not say Jesus is Lord is not the right gospel. Is Jesus Lord over your anger? Is Jesus Lord over depression? Is Jesus Lord, Lord enough to produce self-control in your life? You know it says of Christ in John chapter 1, He came to His own, but His own received Him not. But to all who received Him, He gave something.

What did He give? Power to become the sons of God. You know what that is? Grace. Grace is the power to become sons of God.

Grace is God sharing His life with you. And all power in heaven and earth is given unto Christ. And in His power being shared with you, you're no longer slaves to sin.

You've been set free. And His power in you begins a transforming work. And part of our job in coming together and encouraging one another is to build the conduit for that power.

What's a conduit? Maybe I should say a conductor? What does a conductor do? It carries. If God is all-powerful, and if this power, this grace of God is available for us in Christ, what's the conduit? How does it get from Christ into us? Yes, by grace have you been saved through faith. Every one of you here who believes that this life is possible, it'll come to you.

And the person next to you who doesn't believe it, even though it's available to him and her just as it is to you, will not receive it, because it only comes to those who believe. To all who believed Him, to them He gave power. All who received Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on His name.

So when the Son of Man comes, is He really going to find faith on the earth? It is by grace, through faith, that we're saved. Christ is that grace. He is the power of God.

He, in all the fullness of God, dwelt bodily in Christ. And Christ takes from what is His and makes it known to us. His wisdom, His power, His righteousness, His pure heart, all of His understanding, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, have been hidden in Christ.

And Christ comes to us by the Holy Spirit. When we receive Christ by His Holy Spirit, all the very nature of God comes to dwell in us. And we begin to be changed into a new image.

We used to look like Adam. And we used to do what Adam did. But now we begin to look like Christ.

And do what Jesus did. And this is the confidence that we have in the Day of Judgment. This is the confidence.

If you really want confidence in the Day of Judgment, here's where it comes from. In this world, we are like Him. That's confidence in the Day of Judgment.

What's that verse? That verse is in 1 John 5.17. Someone read that if you wouldn't. 1 John 5.17. Oh, 4.17. Thank you, brother. 1 John 4.17. Leonard Ravenhill explained it this way.

Why should any person who knows in the bottom of their heart that they strove with everything within them to receive everything God had for them in Christ, why should that person fear to stand before the Father? Why not? Even that person knows he wasn't perfect in everything, but there's a vast difference between a person who gave all and fell short and a person who gave short and fell all. Big difference, and God knows that difference. And I'm tired of people saying, they always want to go back to, can you be perfect in this life? Let me tell you what you can be in this life.

You can be mature. You can be complete. You can be stable.

You can be righteous. You can be godly. Isn't that enough? Isn't that enough? You can be different.

Old things can pass away and all things can become new. That's enough. And then, in the next world, guess what we get to be? For those who live that way in this life, what do we actually get in the next life? Perfect.

Perfection in the sense we understand that word. In the next life. But that life, why would God, in His fairness, the most perfect judge in all the earth, why would He give that precious gift of complete perfection to someone who sat on his can, thinking that the blood of Jesus Christ would forgive him for not trying? God forbid.

He's far wiser than to ever do that. The gift of His perfection will be given to those who with all their heart strove to be as Christ. The Bible says that everyone who has this hope in Him, purifies himself as he is pure.

I mean, if you have an understanding of how sin has wrecked God's creation, you don't want any part of it. You don't want an ounce of it in your life. Look what it's already done.

Look what sin has done already. In the whole hope of heaven, I really don't know where some of us come from. Some of us, do you know what the hope of heaven is? The hope of heaven is seeing Grandpa again.

You know what? What hope would that be if sin was up there? Haven't we had enough misery in this life? Some of you, do all of us want to go up there and take the same body up there? No. I don't think so. Some of us have been fought sickness this year.

We're weak. We're struggling. We struggle with sin and temptation.

And I guarantee you what? What makes heaven so wonderful is the fact that God will not let a single wicked thing there. No temptation. Satan cannot harass anybody anymore.

That's what makes it special. And everyone who has that hope has the right attitude about sin. He wants clean.

He wants to be free. He wants to live above it. He wants to live by the Spirit of God.

They have understanding. They've received understanding. They are being taught by genuine grace.

It's just a rare thing on the earth. And I'm burdened. I guess you can tell I'm burdened.

I'm burdened we understand this. You know why? Why am I burdened with this? One last verse. Jude.

Jude. I don't have to say chapter in Jude. Peter Schrock was telling me they had a banner.

How does it read Peter? So they kept asking him. How do you guys know God's going to judge the earth on June 15th? Jude. Alright.

This is why I'm burdened. Okay. Verse 3. Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which is once for all delivered for the saints.

You see, you know what I'm concerned about? There's a faith being talked about around the world that didn't come from the apostles. There's a Christianity in the earth that did not come from the early apostles. It's not what Jesus left.

It's a man-made fabrication. Verse 4. For certain men have crept in, already back then, unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation. They are ungodly men.

Well, obviously, if they're ungodly men, what do they don't have? Grace, because the grace of God teaches you to deny ungodliness. So they're ungodly men who do what? They change the grace of God into a license to sin. How do you change the grace of God into a license for sin? You say, I know nobody's perfect.

The blood of Jesus Christ takes care of it anyway. I know the Lord really doesn't want me to live with my girlfriend, but you know, after all, I'm only human, and God is merciful. A young person says, I know we're supposed to wait to have sex in marriage, but you know what? I mean, everyone else is doing it.

And after all, all I have to do is confess my sins and I'll be forgiven. Watch that person split hell wide open. That's trampling the blood of Jesus Christ under their feet.

That is using His blood for their own selfish gratification. That's treating something so sacred like it's their common exempt card. I'm exempt from judgment.

I've got Jesus' blood over me. I can go to the movies I want to go to. I can read what I want to read.

I can say what I want to say. I can curse if I want to curse, and I can take care of it all with, Lord, forgive us for our many sins. That's what burdens me.

That's the kind of gospel that's out there. And you know what's sad about that? Is some of you have relatives that are falsely, under some kind of false delusion because they really think they're okay. They've deceived themselves.

God have mercy. We need to live this way. Yeah, brother.

Now, we need to close. I say we need to. I say that out of respect for trying to recognize a time constraint.

Sometimes I wonder if we're wise for doing that, but I do understand there's time constraints. But here's the burden. How long can we expect the world to believe a gospel that is contradicted by our own example? How long can we continue to expect the world to accept a gospel that is contradicted by our own example? Paul said, my message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but in demonstration.

You know what the world needs to see? A living demonstration of Christ in you. Okay? Let's go and be that living demonstration by the power of the genuine grace of God that Christ is full of. And by the way, greater is He that is in you.

You're going to meet Him who's in the world this week. He roams about like a roaring lion seeking who may devour. Resist Him.

Stand fast in the faith. You know what? All your brothers in all the earth are undergoing the same testing. But greater is He that's in you than He that's in the world.

And He is able to keep you from falling. Can we end the service with the same song we sang before? Come on, guys. Can I get Daniel and Josh to come back up here? Let's stand up.

Y'all sing this with me. At least the chorus part. Better is one day in your court.

Where is the court of God? Jesus. Where is the house of God? Jesus. In Him.

Wait for Joshua. Daniel has it. How lovely is Your dwelling place O Lord Almighty For my soul longs indeed To see Your beauty To find You Brother Drew, would you close us in order of prayer?

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