

# Attributes of God (Series 2): God's Grace Abounding

by A.W. Tozer

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*God's grace is an unchangeable, infinite, and boundless attribute of God that operates through Jesus Christ and confronts human demerit and sin.*

**Duration:** 50:45

**Scripture:** Genesis 6:8, Exodus 33:17, Proverbs 3:34, Romans 3:24, Romans 5:15, Ephesians 1:6

**Topics:** "Attributes of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of infinitude, which means boundlessness. He tells the story of the prodigal son from the Bible, who squandered his inheritance and ended up in a far country, living in degradation and hunger. Eventually, the son realizes his mistake and decides to return to his father, admitting his unworthiness. The father, filled with joy, welcomes him back with a grand celebration, much to the dismay of the older son who feels neglected. The preacher emphasizes the message of forgiveness and redemption, highlighting the father's unconditional love for his lost son.

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## Transcript

I have about eight passages of scripture which I'll read and give you the reference. You needn't bother turning unless you want to. I'll be just reading these passages having to do with the grace of God.

And I go way back to the book of Genesis for the first reference, Genesis 6, 8, But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Exodus 33, 17, The Lord said to Moses, Thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. And in that stodgy old book of Proverbs, that is, it's not supposed to be a book of grace and gospel, it's a book of practical Christian ethics, Hebrew ethics first, Proverbs 3, 34, Surely he scorneth the scorner, but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

And we come to the New Testament and that familiar passage in John 1, And of his fulness of all we received and grace for grace, for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Romans 3, 24, Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, or Christ Jesus. Romans 5, 15 and 20, For if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God and the gift of grace which is by one man, Jesus Christ hath abounded unto many.

Verse 20, For sin abounded, grace does much more abound. Ephesians 1, 6, 7, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin according to the riches of his grace. 1 Peter 5, 10 and 11, But the God of all grace, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Now I simply typed out those on a card so I could read them without flipping over the scriptures, wearing out my Bible. They are accurate as taken from the King James Version. And of course I have not exhausted the texts, I have only picked out some special ones, there are many, many more there.

Let me say to begin again that grace is an attribute of God. That is, it is something God is. Now I said it last Sunday that mercy was something that God is, not something that God has.

And next Sunday night I am going to speak on the love of God, and I will say then that love is something that God is, not something that God has. And mercy is near to grace, or grace is near to mercy, but they are not the same, though they of course are in God one and related. Now goodness is the source of grace and mercy, so far as anything in God has a source except God.

I am speaking as Paul said, I speak as a fool speaks. When Paul was trying to explain some things, he said, this sounds silly, but I have to talk. If I don't talk, there will be no word spoken.

So when I say that mercy, that goodness is the source of God's grace and mercy, I sound foolish when I say it, because God is the source of goodness and grace and mercy. But it is out of the goodness of God that grace comes. Mercy, as I explained once, is God's goodness confronting human guilt, and grace is God's goodness confronting human demerit.

Now where there is stern disapprobation, where there is blame and disapproval to the point of execration, then justice confronts a moral situation and pronounces death. But because of that mysterious act which was performed in the darkness there on the hill of Calvary by Jesus Christ the Lord, goodness confronts the moral situation and pronounces life, because grace cuts in there, and grace makes it possible for a situation that had formerly had the stern displeasure of God upon it, now to have the gracious favor of God upon it. Now I want to give you some facts about grace tonight, and I realize that in saying this, the only thing different about it is that I am presenting it as an attribute of God.

You've heard this since you were knee-high to the proverbial grasshopper, and I don't suppose that I'll be able to say anything that you don't already know. But here are some facts which I want to give you about grace. Grace is God's good pleasure.

It is what God is like, and it is what you'll find God to be. Now everybody will find God to be like that, and you'll find God to be like that all the time. It is that in God which brings into favor one who has previously been in disfavor.

It is the unchangeable grace of God that never, never ceases to be what it is. Now in the English Bible, our common English Bible, grace and favor are interchangeable words. You will find the word favor occurring, and you'll find the word grace occurring.

But if you will look it up, if you're fortunate enough to be able to look it up in the original languages, you'll find they are the same word as originally given, but they're translated grace or favor, apparently at the whim of the translator. But there's three times as much in the New Testament about grace as there is in the Old, though as I said, there's four times as much about mercy in the Old Testament as there is in the

New. Now another thing true of grace is that Christ is the channel through which grace flows.

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by our Lord Jesus Christ. Now right here we have to stop and keep from getting into the woods, because right here, if you don't watch it, you will misread the marker and you'll find yourself in the dismal swamp of misunderstanding, because some people have made this to mean that because it says the law was given by Moses, but grace was given by Jesus Christ, came by Jesus Christ, that therefore Moses knew only law and Christ knows only grace. That's what we gather from this text if we're not careful.

The law was given by Moses, so we say Moses and the law are one, and the law came through Moses, but grace and truth came by Christ, and therefore Christ and grace are united, and so we divide our thinking into two blocks of black and white. We have Moses with his black block of law, and we have Christ with his white one of grace. Now this is to misunderstand it completely, brothers and sisters, because there was grace in the time of Moses and law in the time of Christ.

Christ came born of a woman, born under the law, and said, Not one jot or tittle of the law shall perish until all has been brought to pass. And before the flood of Noah, Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and after the law of Moses was given, it's written, Thou hast found grace in my sight. So grace was operative after the Ten Commandments were given, and grace was operative before the Ten Commandments were given.

Grace was operative back in the sixth chapter of Genesis, and grace has been operative ever since. Now how could it be otherwise, I want to ask you. God must always act like himself, I say again.

Now some of you are bored maybe a little bit with my reputation, but here a little and there a little, line upon line and precept upon precept, and if you will get it and let it get a hold of you, it'll change and transform your whole life. That God must always act like himself, that you can always get up in the morning knowing that the God who smiles down upon you hasn't changed during the night. And if you should lose everything and your health fail, God hasn't changed in the slightest, nor has he changed in his attitude toward you.

God never varies from himself, and so grace doesn't ebb and flow. Grace isn't like the boom and bust economy in the Western countries where everybody's either making more money than they know what to do with, or they're on relief. God is always the same, and the grace and power of God flow constantly like a great sea, and there is no ebb and flow of the tide.

And so there's another thing we come to now, and it is this, that these two important facts I want you to get. No one has ever been saved or can be saved otherwise than by grace. Before Moses, Abel was saved by grace, and everybody that was brought into God's favor was brought in by the sheer grace of God.

And since Moses' time, everybody that's saved is saved by grace. In the Old Testament, everybody that was saved was saved by grace. And in the New Testament, everybody that's saved is saved by grace.

And in the Ballym Valley, among the Aborigine Donnys, the 36 that we believe were saved and were baptized a few days ago were saved by grace. So there isn't any other way the word grace is written across the only door there is to heaven. The mark of the cross and the sign grace is there.

Nobody ever got in any other way. Let's not imagine that David was a man of law and Paul a man of grace. Some of our brethren divide the Bible up like that.

They call that rightly dividing it. I call it vivisection. For the Bible will die and bleed to death under that kind of interpretation.

It was grace that opened the door of heaven to Abel and even, I think, maybe to Cain and certainly to old backslidden Adam. It was grace that opened the door and there's no other way. And let me point out a second thing, that grace has always come by Jesus Christ.

When the scripture says the law was given through Moses and grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, it didn't mean that it came when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, because there's an awful lot said about grace before Jesus was born in Bethlehem. So if the baby Jesus and the man Christ Jesus and the dying lamb and the risen lamb had brought grace to the world, then there would have been no grace before Mary's baby was born in the manger there in Bethlehem. But grace had operated from the early days.

It was grace that prevented God from slaying Adam when Adam sinned. It was grace that prevented Adam from slaying Eve when Eve blamed the serpent. It was grace that found Noah, and Noah found grace in God's sight.

And it was grace that saved eight people in the flood. It was grace all down the years. So grace came by Jesus Christ, but grace didn't come when Christ was born in Bethlehem.

Grace had been in Jesus Christ from the beginning of the world. Christ was slain before the foundation of the world, and before the world was hurled into its orbit and populated by men. Grace had been in Jesus Christ and always was so.

Grace couldn't come by Moses because Moses was a sinner. Grace couldn't come by Abraham for Abraham was a sinner. Grace couldn't come by David for David was a sinner.

A happy singing sinner, but he was a sinner and he needed grace. So God couldn't send grace by any of them. Grace couldn't come by Paul.

Sometimes we can almost make a god or a little demigod out of the man Paul. He'd be the last one in the world to want it. Grace, my brother and sister, comes by Jesus Christ and always has and always will, and there's never any grace apart from Christ.

There's no grace anywhere except that governmental grace, which I have explained is over all the world. There is a governmental grace which is also in Jesus Christ, which prevents God from destroying men when they boast, prevents God from slaying Khrushchev when he sticks his bald head into other people's business, prevents God from allowing Achman to live in Argentina for 15 years with the blood of six million Jews on his head. It allowed him to live, I say.

It was the operational governmental grace of God. It's the grace of God that prevents Toronto from being dumped into the lake and drowned. It's the grace of God that saves the United States and the grace of God that keeps our continents afloat.

So in that sense, the grace is for everybody, and everybody profits by the grace of God. That is the good favor of God, the kindness of God, the goodness of God, the long-suffering of God. But saving grace is

another matter, and it's a narrower matter, and it comes to us through Jesus Christ and through him alone.

Now, the fifth thing I want to say about grace is, and I've said it before, that grace is God's kindness, and it's kindness of heart. We used to have a saying, I don't hear it much of late, that he was a kind-hearted man. Well, God is a kind-hearted God.

He's a God of goodwill and cordiality, and he's that way all through. God is what he is all through. I've said that over and over, and I've used the word unitary, and I don't know whether somebody went out and thought I meant I was a unitarian or not, but I'm not a unitarian in the sense that I don't believe in the Trinity.

I think you know that by now. But I believe in the unicity of God, the unitary sense that God is all one and what he is, and that God isn't anything else but what he is. You can take a lot of smiling fellows with their comb and scratch them, and you'll find a caveman there.

Get up in the morning and burn the toast and the coffee's weak, and see what papa, that smiling gentleman, how he'll grumble and growl, why he sounds like a zoo. And you saw into him, and there's some furniture that you can saw at any direction. It's all what it is.

And there's other furniture that's veneered. And if you saw into it, you'll find you didn't get what you paid for at all. You got veneer.

You got a little thin veneer over the outside and a lot of cheap wood in the inside. But you know, if we might use such silly illustrations to try it in somehow or other to climb up the ladder of thought into the kingdom of God and gaze upon the wonder that is God, we could say that God has no veneer, and that God isn't any different in the morning than he was that night. And you can look at God from any direction.

He's always the same, and he's the same all the way through, always, toward all people, forever. You'll never run into any meanness in God, and you'll never run into any resentment, nor rancor, nor ill will. I've met Christians, good people, you know, and I suppose they'll get to heaven by this same grace that's going to save me, and you, and all of us if we're saved.

And I met them, and they were all right as long as everything was going all right. And then they shocked me by pouting. I found them pouting.

They weren't all the same thing all the way through. There was rancor there, a bit of ill will, a bit of resentfulness in their hearts. But there is none in God.

God has no resentfulness toward anybody, anywhere in the universe. Justice, the holiness of God, requires that heaven be emptied of all that is impure, and that those who are not receiving, do not receive the favor of God through Jesus Christ, must be cast out because they could not, be permitted to pollute heaven with their unholy presence. Now, grace, God's grace is infinite.

Everything that God has is infinite. You remember what I told you infinitude was? I suppose what I should have done really was to teach this series now to be four months. Next Sunday night I'll close it.

That'll be four months of it. Suppose I should have taught it, and had you take notes, and then we'd have examinations to see where you rated. But do you remember that I said infinitude meant boundlessness? There was nowhere you could go to find any boundaries of any sort.

A lot of people are shocked and astonished because we can go up into the air there and float around, and they can send a man up, and he can come down talking Russian, and all that sort of thing. They're worried about it, but it never bothered me in the slightest. It's either because I'm beautifully and comfortably dumb, or else it's because I believe in the infinitude of God, and I'm inclined to think it's the latter.

I believe that God is boundless, and there's no border anywhere, and God contains all this. That's a simple little matter of somebody going up and floating around the earth, coming down again. It's nice, nice engineering feat, and it's nice work if you can get it.

And it's something that's, you know, it's adventures and all that, but it doesn't shake my belief in the great God Almighty, because you can get in that seemingly low rocket and ride until the stars are burnt out, and you haven't reached the boundaries yet of God Almighty, for God contains all space. We talk about the space age. God has been in the space age since the beginning of time.

Space is only a word we use to indicate distances between bodies, that's all. And now we're all steamed up now, and everybody's clawing the ground, wondering what happened, and is the Bible an old-fashioned book? No, the Bible talks about him that sits on the circle of the earth, and the nations of the world are but grasshoppers, and all the nations are but dust in the balance and are nothing before God. God is an infinite God, and so let's not strain to understand or comprehend how marvelous the grace is.

Abounding grace, it tells us here, where sin abounded, grace does much more bound. And let's try to compare it with our need and not understand it nor comprehend it. Grace has abounded unto many, says Romans 5, 15.

Grace has abounded unto many, and says Ephesians 1, 6, the riches of these and Romans 5, 20, where sin abounded, grace does much more abound. Now, God was always a gracious God, but until sin came into the world, nobody knew it. If there was a time when there were intelligent moral creatures, but there was no sin, then nobody knew that God was gracious, except technically, you know.

They might have known it academically, just as you might know academically a truth, but never have experienced it. But when sin came into the world, then the grace of God became known to the world. Our assistant pastor and a great singer, who was killed in an automobile accident some years ago, used to sing a song.

I don't know where he got it. I think I never heard anybody else, maybe more than one or two, ever sing it. It's about, holy, holy is what the angels sing, and they want to help them make the courts of heaven ring.

And it says, but angels cannot know the grace, the song that I sing of the mercy and grace of God. That's the gist of what they sing. The angels can never know it.

Why? Because the angels that sinned don't know it, and the angels that didn't sin haven't any reason to suspect it. It's only the sick man that knows about a doctor, the finest doctor in the world. And there incidentally are some of the finest doctors in the world in this city.

And the finest doctors in the world can be here. And if you don't get sick, you won't know it except academically. You read a squib in the newspaper, the doctor thus and thus, is known internationally as being the greatest child doctor in the world.

But if your child doesn't get sick, that'll be an academic knowledge to you. You'll never know it really. But someday, if the little one goes down with a terrible disease, then you'll thank God for that good doctor here at Children's Hospital.

You'll know it really, and when you see the little one pale and sick and dying go in and come out red-cheeked and happy, you'll say, thank God I found out truly that there are great doctors here. Now, the angels desire to look into these things. The angels wonder at the grace of God.

We sinners know. No angel can sing with any meaning, marvelous grace of our loving God. No angel can sing amazing grace, how sweet the sound.

They can sing it academically. They can get the right pitch and sing it because it's a theory. But they can't sing it with any meaning because they haven't had any occasion to do it.

But the grace of God is infinite and boundless. And for us who stand under the disapprobation of God from the time we're old enough to sin our first sin, you know what my parents told me? Now, it's no reflection on me, it's reflection on the people around me. They told me my first baby word was a swear word.

Now, I didn't invent it, but I was learning to talk. And I had heard some scoundrel using vile language. And when I opened my baby mouth and uttered my first word, it was a swear word.

That's what they told me. But my last one is going to be a doxology. But my first one was a curse word.

And I needed the grace of God just as soon as I was able to do anything towards sinning. Ah, the grace of God. We, I say, who stand under God's displeasure by birth and by practice, who by sin lie under the sentence of everlasting banishment, grace is to us an incomprehensibly immense and overwhelming plenitude of goodness and kindness on the part of God.

Every mosquito in all the swamplands of the world was a sinner. And every star in the heaven was a sinner. And every grain of sand by all the seashores of the seven oceans, each one was a sinner.

The grace of God could swallow it up. For where sin abounded, grace does much more abound. I believe that, my brother.

I believe that. The president of some college or some seminary said this about me. I was down there and preached at the seminary.

I asked about it, but somebody said they hadn't heard him say it, but he said it. He said, Tozer is a legalistic scientificationist. What do you think of that one? Legalistic scientificationist.

I don't know what he meant by either term. I know what they both mean, but I don't know what he meant by them. But, brother, basically, philosophically, theologically, practically, and experientially, I am a believer in the grace of God.

For how could a man who cursed the first time he opened his mouth ever hope to have any help from law? And to say that he's legal means he believes in law. Keeping law to save you never while the world stands. The grace of God.

And it's this overwhelming plenitude of grace that saves us. So, if the devil's been around telling you there's no use, there's no use. Oh, these nice people here.

I see such nice people. I think there's some of them, I don't want to keep saying this, you think I'm a banana oil squirter, but I'm not. I'm just the opposite.

And I said to the pastor tonight in the study, I said, Did you ever know so many nice people congregated in one place in your life? I never have. People you love, you know, you want to run through your arms about them, and I'm not a throw-your-arm-around-about-her kind of fellow. But that's what I feel toward a lot of you people.

I've never met such lovely people, but, brother and sister, it's the grace of God that'll save you and not how nice you are. You can be as nice as they come and still go to hell in the end. It's the grace of God that saves us.

And only the grace of God, and there isn't any other way. And the grace of God never takes into account how nice anybody is. A lot of people are nice, but they're no good nevertheless.

And a lot of people are anything but nice, but the grace of God has marvelously changed them. I thank God for His grace. The grace is bestowed only through the Eternal Son, only through Jesus Christ the Lord.

The grace existed before Christ was born, and it existed before He died, and it existed before He rose again. But it couldn't operate except He was to die. You say, How then did it operate in the Old Testament, as you say? It operated looking forward to His dying.

David saw Jesus on a cross and said, My God, my God, where's thou forsaken me? Way back there, 800 or 900 years before the baby was born in Bethlehem. And that whole 22nd Psalm, that whole 69th Psalm's a messianic psalm. We don't hear that word so much anymore.

I wonder about the people of Toronto. One of these days I'm going to bust loose in prophetic preaching. I'd like again to tell the world that prophecy's still true and there's still hope and a future for Israel.

And that David saw Jesus on a cross before Jesus was ever born in Bethlehem's manger. And Abraham saw my day and was glad. And everyone who was converted down the earth was converted through the grace of God.

But it was on credit, so to speak. He was coming and when He came, He paid all that off and infinitely more. Well, angels and prophets don't understand it.

And Paul said, Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. God manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory. So grace means that God is incurably addicted to blessing people who don't deserve it.

It means that the only weakness in the heart of the great God who has man is that He likes to do good to people who only deserve evil. It means that God is gracious and kind and favors people who don't deserve any favor. Jesus said, I didn't come.

Physicians don't heal the well people, they heal sick people. And when they complained that he ate with sinners, he said to them, A certain man had two sons. And one of those sons came to him one day and said, Dad, give me of the goods that falleth to me.

And so he gave them all his goods. And he took it after a few days and departed into a far country and spent it in radical living. And when he had spent all of it, there was a famine in the land.

And he attached himself to a man in that far country. And he went out in the fields to feed the swine, a terrible degradation for a Jew. Went out to feed the swine.

And after a while, the famine became so great that there was nothing for him to eat. And after a while, he came to himself. And he said, Why, what am I doing here? Many of my father's servants back home have enough to eat.

And here I am a son. And I am out here hungry, lying among the hogs. He said, I will arise and go to my father, and I'll say, Father, I'm not worthy.

If he'd gone on any other terms, he couldn't have been received. But as soon as he opened his mouth and said, Father, I'm not worthy, the bells began to ring and the whistles began to blow. And our band struck up, and the orchestra began to play, and the choir joined in.

And everybody was happy around there. And some people struck out and did a little dance. And the sulky old legalist was out back.

And why, he said, I've been a church member since I was young. And I've been at every prayer meeting since this thing opened. And I have given of my money regularly.

And you never made a feast like this for me. Look, he said, a band, an orchestra, a choir, soloists, food and banquet, and all because this fellow came back from the far country smelling as a pigpen. Oh, his father said, Son, don't be like that.

Everything I've had has belonged to you. Don't you know that? But the celebration is over the boy that was lost and has come back. The celebration is over the one who was dead and who is alive again.

He got alive somewhere on his way back. I don't know where, but on his way back. Or maybe it's when the father grabbed him, hugged him to his bosom, he hugged life into him again.

Now, I want to, there it goes. All right, thank God for memory. They'll take care of it anyhow.

That's advertising the Rinko company. I pulled that off of a paper and wrote it down there. Well, anyhow, I want to talk to you now a little bit.

I want to apply this matter about the grace of God. I want to ask you first, those of you who have tried and failed. Now, there are some people like that.

They've tried and they've tried and they've tried. They've gone to altars and they've gone, they've followed evangelists around and they just can't somehow seem to make it. But they're discouraged.

They're deeply despondent. Their despondency isn't painful anymore. It's stopped being painful.

It is a sort of a low grade feeling, if it's a feeling at all anymore, that there just isn't any use. They wouldn't even make an appointment to see Pastor Gray. They're too far gone for that.

And they just don't think anybody can help them anymore. Nobody can counsel them, nobody. I want to ask you if this incomprehensibly immense, overwhelming plenitude of favor and goodwill on the part of

God operating toward you now isn't the answer to that despondency of yours.

I want to ask you whether you can believe tonight, and dare to believe tonight, that God has grace enough that the good favor of God, and the worse off you are, the more the favor of God will shine when you're finally found and dug out and lifted up. When the grace of God does the work, the worse the sinner. How is it that St. Bernard says that the blacker was the iniquity, the deeper was the fall, the sweeter is the mercy of God who pardons all.

And no matter how deep and terrible it is, you can find, there's just a hairbreadth between you, now despondent, and a joyous, victorious Christian life. There's just a hairbreadth. Rise and come and say, I will arise and go to my Father.

And I want to ask you people who have slipped a little bit, you've slipped back a little bit, if you're real honest, you're not quite where you were a little while ago. Every once in a while I hear some grieved and burdened pastor, and he'll tell me, I meet a lot of preachers, and they'll tell me, well, there's a man in my church, and he was a good, busy, hard-working brother and a man of God, and then he got a new position. And his new position forces him to work long nights, evenings, and he doesn't get to prayer meeting, and he just is slipping.

He isn't where he was. He's making a lot of money now, but there's a light gone out of his face. Well, that could have happened to you.

It could happen to anybody. And I want to ask tonight whether it's those of you that have slipped a little bit back there. Now, it's very foolish if you've slipped a little bit, to say to yourself, well, I just proved what kind of fellow I am.

God will never have anything to do with me. Well, it's just because you're the kind of fellow you are that God does have something to do with you. If you were fine like an archangel and made vows and kept them and never failed and never tumbled, you would be a saint and there would be no place in the grace of God for you.

But because you're the kind of person you are, the grace of God operates towards you, you see. So that same grace of God now operates towards you. So I say, be cheerful.

Be hopeful about this. Be hopeful. Start being hopeful now.

Dare to rise and say, yes, I'll not sit and be gloomy anymore. I will dare to believe that the grace of God, that vast grace of God, is big enough. When I was a kid out, there used to be little ponds and then the weeds around the ponds.

And I'd go and beat the weeds. And unknown to anybody, there were frogs sitting there, green frogs sitting there. And I'd beat the weeds.

And there'd be a long, graceful arc, and it'd go ploom, all around the place, ploom. These frogs had been sitting around there. They'd plunge in.

And what I'm trying to do tonight is to beat the weeds a little and see whether I can sort of encourage some of you to make a little plunge into the big, not pond, but the big ocean of God's grace. Come in. Come in.

Nobody's here. This fine-looking man up here that everybody's talking about being such a serious-minded man of God. All right.

If he got what he deserved, he'd perish. And so would I. And so would the best man you ever knew perish. The grace of God, my brother and sister, and the same grace of God that saved us will save you.

So I say, I recommend, if you've slipped a little bit, why, just because you slipped, I remember reading St. Teresa of Avila. She's giving her life story. And she said, I got discouraged and quit praying.

And said, I didn't pray for a long time. And said, I wanted to pray again. But she said, Now listen, you haven't prayed for a long time, and you're not worthy to pray.

She said, you're just not worthy to pray. And so she said, because I felt I wasn't worthy to pray, I wasn't worthy because I hadn't prayed. And I wouldn't pray because I wasn't worthy to pray.

But she said, I soon caught on. That was Satan. She said, I decided that it wasn't my worth, but it was the goodness of God.

And so I went back to my knees and prayed. And she went to one of the greatest saints of her generation, or of any generation, even though she was part of a system I don't like. You can't take away from her that she lived in the grace of God, and loved God, and his Holy Son, and also the Holy Ghost to comfort her.

There's that little trick. You haven't prayed, and therefore you feel you're unworthy to pray. Well, if the devil tells you you're unworthy, smile and say, that's so.

Well, that just makes me a candidate for the grace of God. Because if I were worthy, then the grace of God couldn't reach me. But the very fact that I'm unworthy is enough.

My dear old friend, Dr. Max Reich, a sweet old Jew, son of a rabbi, converted in London, graduate of Oxford University, had a beautiful Oxford accent, was a poet and a scholar. And he went once to visit a woman. She was what we call a fallen woman.

We're all fallen. But she was a fallen woman, and she was on her deathbed. He went to see her.

He didn't tell that kind of story. He wasn't that sort of man at all. He was a Bible expositor and a saint.

But he told this. Let's see this woman. And she said to him, Dr. Reich, you're a good man, but you don't know me.

I'm a terrible woman. I'm unworthy for you to sit here by my bed. I'm a terrible woman.

He said, you're dying. She said, I know I'm dying, but I've lived a terrible life. Well, he said, God will save you.

She said, not me. No, no. No, no.

I'm not good enough. I'm not good enough. She said, my goodness, can't get me in.

And he was a sharp old boy. That's right. The Holy Ghost was on him.

He picked that up like a, grabbed it like a dog grabs a bone. As soon as she said, my goodness, can't get me in, he said, sister, if your goodness can't get you in, your badness can't keep you out. And she raised herself on her elbow and began to cry and said, is that so, Dr. Reich? He said, that's right.

If goodness can't get you in, badness can't keep you out. She believed on Jesus Christ and was converted right there and lived to testify and witness to the fact that the goodness couldn't get her in, but badness couldn't keep her out. Now, why? Because the grace of God, I tell you, when the grace of God confronts a moral situation, it pronounces life.

Judgment and justice pronounce death. So goodness couldn't get her in, but the fact she'd been a terrible woman couldn't keep her out. There are many saints in heaven that the self-righteous members of the Ladies Aid Society would never vote into membership.

Now, that woman, never. Never. She's a bad example.

But the grace of God brought her in. I don't like self-righteous people, and I don't believe God is very pleased with them, self-righteous people. Whenever I see a woman elevate her nose, some of them elevate it until they drown in a rainstorm.

And that woman, why, she's a, she's a, sure she is! But seven devils went out to marry. Seven devils. I don't know what they were like and what kind of devils they were.

But Jesus Christ cast seven devils out. And I'll say this to you tonight. The lowest woman that ever wallowed her way through the vices of the honky-tonks, when the grace of God operates to save her and the blood of Jesus Christ washes her, she's as pure as the purest virgin and as clean as the holiest woman that walked, ever walked the streets.

Goodness can't get you in, but if you'll trust the grace of God, badness can't keep you out. So get away with your discouragement. Oh, rise, rise up and shine, for the light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee.

Grace divine, how sweet the sound, sweet the grace that I have found. Sweet the sound of grace divine, sweet the grace that makes me thine. So why not tonight, you that have slipped a little bit, you that have wanted to know God better, but you somehow felt you had to do it, forgetting that that's just exactly the opposite.

You don't have to do it. It's grace that sanctifies, it's grace that fills, it's grace that saves. Grace does everything.

You don't have to have anything. Grace does everything. All the fitness he desires is to feel your need of him.

Some of you want to be better. You want to be. And I'll tell you something else I said to the pastor tonight in the study.

I was talking about you. And I'll tell you something else I said. Now this part you won't like, but this part you need to hear.

I said, I've never in my long ministry met as many nice people, loving people, as I've met at Avenue Road. But I said, and say now to you, that doesn't necessarily mean spiritual people. You can be awfully loving

and nice, and still be a long way from God.

I want you to be a spiritual people. I want you to be a people upon whose forehead sets the fire. I want you to be a people who walk in the glow of God's grace.

Now she's not here tonight, and so I can talk about it without embarrassing her. But Nan McCracken is that kind of girl. A Baptist preacher told me recently, he said, you have a girl down at your church.

I said, she's not a member of our church. He named her. He said, she came to our place brother.

He said, God came down on that. I want, you don't have to be like Nan McCracken, but I want to see you like Christ. And what I like about Nan McCracken is Christ in her.

That's it. And there are others, but I'm mentioning her because she doesn't go here. She's not a member here and wouldn't be here tonight.

Now, what about it? Let's arise and let's come.

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