

Undeserving, Yet Unconditionally Loved

by Chuck Swindoll

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and relying on God's undeserved favor and mercy, which transforms our lives and enables us to serve others.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:10, Ephesians 2:8

Topics: "Identity in Christ", "Grace"

Description

Chuck Swindoll emphasizes the transformative power of God's grace as articulated by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:10. He highlights three key statements: that God acts by His grace, that our identity is shaped by His grace, and that we are called to extend grace to others. Swindoll critiques the modern obsession with self-achievement, urging believers to recognize that any goodness in them is solely due to God's grace. He encourages the demonstration of grace in relationships, suggesting that it is essential for true freedom and connection. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a deeper understanding and application of grace in our lives.

Transcript

1 Corinthians 15:10

Whatever he became, according to his own statement, Paul owed it all to "the grace of God." When I ponder the words from that grand apostle, I come up with what we might call his credo. We can reduce it to three single-syllable statements, the first consisting of only eight words; the second, ten words; and the third, twelve. Occasionally, it helps to take a profound, multifaceted theological truth and define it in simple, nontechnical terms.

First statement: God does what He does by His grace. Paul's first claim for being allowed to live, to say nothing of being used as a spokesman and leader, was "by the grace of God." Paul deserved the severest kind of judgment, but God gave the man His grace instead. Humanly speaking, Paul should have been made to endure incredible suffering for all the pain and heartache he had caused others. But he didn't, because God exhibited His grace.

That leads us to the second statement: I am what I am by the grace of God. It is as if he were admitting, "If there is any goodness now found in me, I deserve none of the glory; grace gets the credit."

In our day of high-powered self-achievement and an overemphasis on the importance of personal accomplishments and building one's own ego-centered kingdom, this idea of giving grace the credit is a much-needed message. How many people who reach the pinnacle of their career say to the Wall Street Journal reporter or in an interview in Business Week, "I am what I am by the grace of God"? How many athletes would say that kind of thing at a banquet in his or her honor? What a shocker it would be today if someone were to say, "Don't be impressed at all with me. My only claim to fame is the undeserved grace of God." Such candor is rare.

There's a third statement, which seems to be implied in Paul's closing statement: I let you be what you are by the grace of God. Grace is not something simply to be claimed; it is meant to be demonstrated. It is to be shared, used as a basis for friendships, and drawn upon for sustained relationships.

Jesus spoke of an abundant life that we enter into when we claim the freedom He provides by His grace. Wouldn't it be wonderful if people cooperated with His game plan? There is nothing to be compared to grace when it comes to freeing others from bondage.

- See more at:
<http://www.insight.org/resources/devotionals/grace/undeserving-yet.html#sthash.0CMVjrbr.dpuf>

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