

# Grace Reigns

by H.J. Vine

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*God's grace reigns today, saving, keeping, and teaching believers, and will soon display its surpassing riches through them.*

**Scripture:** Acts 20:24, Romans 6:14, 2 Corinthians 8:9, Ephesians 2:7-8, 1 Timothy 1:14, 2 Timothy 2:1, Hebrews 4:16

**Topics:** "Gods Grace", "Christian Freedom"

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## Description

H.J. Vine preaches about the glorious truth that grace reigns today, emphasizing that believers are not under the law but under grace, with Jesus sitting on the throne of grace. He encourages believers to be strong in the grace of Christ, reminding them of the throne of grace where they can find help. The sermon highlights the transformational power of grace, as seen in the conversion of Saul to Paul, and the eternal reign of grace through righteousness unto eternal life.

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## Transcript

Let us not hide the glorious truth that grace reigns today! Let none silence or hinder the telling-forth of "the gospel of the grace of God!" and let it be known to all who believe on our Lord Jesus Christ, that they are "not under law but under grace!" Grace is on the throne!

Tell the timid and tearful Timothys to be "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus!" Tell the suffering and sorely-trying saints that there is "the throne of grace" to which they may come boldly and find grace for seasonable help! Say to every gathering together of those who love the Lord with their varied needs, "Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!" and to the exercised individual or the anxious servant of the Lord, "Grace, mercy and peace" be thine!--"grace be with thee!"

Let it be known to all that our Saviour and Lord sits upon the throne on high!--that the Holy One whose wonderful grace brought Him into the deepest depths of sorrow, is now anointed with the oil of gladness, and graces the throne of the greatness and majesty above. Downward He descended to the stable--to the manger to the waters of Jordan--to the hunger and thirst of the wilderness--to the rejection, scorn, spitting, mocking and smiting--to the thorny crown, and to the darkness and abandonment of the cross of shame; but upward He has ascended as the risen Man to the pre-eminent place!--to the throne of God!--to the crown of glory and honour!--to exaltation above all the heavens! Having glorified God upon the earth He is glorified in God on high! Jesus the One who once died for our sins is now alive for evermore and sits enthroned, therefore grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life! Grace is triumphant!

The throne is now a "throne of grace," for the Saviour of sinners sits upon it! Having fully maintained all the just and holy claims of that throne, one of Christ's first acts from that sovereign seat was to arrest Saul of Tarsus, who was endeavouring to exterminate all who believed on Christ; but he was saved to preach the very faith which he once destroyed! Grace converted Saul the persecutor of the assemblies to be Paul the preacher of the Gospel of God's grace! Writing of this to Timothy afterwards, he said, he was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent, overbearing man; but "the grace of our Lord surpassingly overabounded," and He appointed him to the ministry of the Word. About one hundred times Paul mentions grace, and he speaks of it seven times in his two letters to Timothy, beginning and ending each of them with his expressed desire that grace should be with him.

"Grace taught our wandering feet

To tread the heavenly road

And new supplies each hour we meet

While travelling home to God."

When old age and infirmity were forcing King David from his throne, when he was about to go the way of all the earth, he deeply desired to see Solomon firmly established at the head of the kingdom of Israel; and he saw no other way of procuring the stability of the throne save by the administration of strict justice and judgment; law must prevail. Let not Joab's "hoar head go down to the grave in peace," said the dying monarch Hold not Shimei the son of Gera guiltless, but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood, said the king. Adonijah by his disloyal scheming was a menace to the establishment of the throne as David desired so Benaiah fell upon him that he died. Joab fled to the tabernacle of the Lord and caught hold on the horns of the altar, but there was no perfect sacrifice then, and no risen and glorified Saviour upon the throne of God, "so Benaiah the son of Jehoida went up, and fell upon him, and slew him." And Solomon also gave commandment concerning Shimei, so Benaiah "went out, and fell upon him, that he died. And the kingdom was established"; yes, established for a time, but not forever! Just judgment prevailed temporarily.

Grace justifies the believer today, and sets him in a kingdom which can never be moved. Great David's greater Son is crowned on high, and lives no more to die. A greater than Solomon is there to administer grace to the chief of sinners, and to the most needy of the saints. "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead," said Paul to Timothy, in the same chapter where he exhorts him to be "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2:1, 8). Having first made purgation of sins, the Son of God ascended to the throne: having laid down His life for us, He lives above: grace is ascendant, and righteously prevails today. God in grace, the Father, is now fully made known. This is the time of the activities of God's grace, and that in Divine consistency with all His glorious attributes of holiness, righteousness and truth, for all were conciliated with grace, mercy and peace in view of the blessing of the sinner by the atoning death of Jesus upon the cross.

The dictionary tells us that grace is unmerited favour; but God's grace to the sinner who believes is more: it is favour for the one who merited judgment; and further still, according to the riches of that grace, as well as to the praise of the glory of it, believers are taken into Divine favour as sons, through the redeeming work of Christ; they are "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6-7). Mephibosheth by royal favour dwelt at the palace of the king "as one of the king's sons," but today we "are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus." The fact is, we are treated not according to our deserts, but according to what God's beloved Son

deserves.

As the present principle of the actings of God on our behalf, grace is contrasted with both law and works. Neither of these latter could justify those who had sinned against Him

His grace, however, could do so consistently through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. We are therefore justified, saved as sons, and set in the favour of God by His grace (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8).

"O to grace how great a debtor

Daily I'm constrained to be!

Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,

Bind my wandering heart to Thee.

In perfect harmony with these actings of Divine grace is the surpassing beauty of the manifestation of personal grace in our Lord Jesus Christ. This latter, however, must be clearly distinguished from the former. The one places us in fullest blessing, the other shows us what we are to delight in and take character from. That which was seen in Jesus as a Man amongst men--that which shone with such lowly lustre in Him in the days of His sojourn on earth--that which was personally exemplified in Himself as He walked the dusty roads of Palestine, and spake as never man spake before, that is the personal grace which we are to behold and rejoice in, as we discern the moral traits and the excellent delineations of its glories in our adorable Lord and Saviour. John, who contemplated His glory as an only One with a Father, saw Him full of grace and truth. He observed His walk and His ways, he heard His words, he saw His works, and he beheld the personal grace which characterized Him in all and under all circumstances.

He was the Creator Word who became flesh and dwelt among us. He testified of the truth to all, but with the gentle and meek and lowly He trod His humble pathway in obedience and love, His wonderful ways often astonished even His disciples, and, though past finding out, their rich results glorified, the One who sent Him. The sweet singer of Israel, whose singing reached such heavenly heights when his heart meditated the royal majesty and matchless meekness of the Son, sang thus of Jesus, "Thou art fairer than the children of men, grace is poured into Thy lips." As the hearers listened to His preaching in the Nazareth synagogue, they wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. One evening, as the light of day was still in the sky, they brought to Him the sick and infirm from the whole country around, and, before the sun was set, He healed them all. To the blind He gave sight, to the deaf hearing, and to the dumb speech, so that men "were beyond measure astonished, saying, He has done all things well: He makes the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak." His works of power amazed the multitudes, but they were done in such a gracious manner that men glorified God when they saw Him do them with the personal grace which always marked our Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah saw Him coming to take the government on His shoulder--coming first in lowly grace--a child born! a son given! Yet he gives us the incomparable greatness of His five-fold Name, "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of Eternity, the Prince of Peace." Again, he saw His glory and spake of Him (John 12:37-41), "the King, Jehovah of Hosts" (Isa. 6:1-5): He was sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and the seraphims cried one to another, and said, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts." Nevertheless, Isaiah further speaks of the grace of Him who is the high and lofty One: though He inhabits eternity, He dwells with the humble and contrite, to revive their spirit and their heart (57:15). Yea, He Himself came into the path of poverty, and humility, having this end in view, to bring us to dwell with Him in untold blessedness for ever.

Desiring to produce a practical result in the saints at Corinth, Paul wrote, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). That is God's way of bringing about giving of such sort as is pleasing to Him--the ministry of the grace of Christ. As we appreciate this, practical response will be the outcome, and God will rejoice in a sweet savour of Him.

How bright and blessed is the prospect of dwelling eternally with such an One! The place of that dwelling will doubtless be surpassingly glorious; but oh! does it not move our hearts deeply when we remember the grace and love of the One with whom we are to spend eternity? And when universal intelligences behold the outshining of those thus blessed with Christ, we are told that through them will be displayed "the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7). Meanwhile the very last verse of the inspired volume breathes forth the desire of the Spirit for us all along our homeward journey, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints" (N. T.).

The sovereign mercy of God saved Israel out of Egypt; the sovereign grace of God saved us. In the time of their full kingdom blessing, Israel will celebrate God's mercy, singing, "His mercy endures for ever"; the assembly in her heavenly place with her glorious Bridegroom will celebrate the surpassing riches of Divine grace. Mercy is mentioned sixty times in the Psalms, grace but twice. For Israel a mercy seat was provided in the presence of Jehovah; for us there is the throne of grace. Mercy saved and secured approach to God for Israel representatively; grace has saved us and given us access to the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ by the Spirit. Mercy was to give character to Israel but grace to the assembly. We also have obtained mercy, but grace reigns today, as we have seen; grace and truth subsist by Jesus Christ, and of His fullness "grace upon grace comes to those who believe. Israel's high priest stood in the holiest of all on the ground of blood-shedding, but only once every year; Jesus is seated in heaven in virtue of His own perfect work in perpetuity.

"There is the throne of grace,

The virtue of His blood

There lives before Thy face

Our great High Priest, O God

His Name our plea

When we draw, near

In holy fear

To worship Thee."

It is the Apostle who designated himself "The least of the apostles," who writes so frequently of Divine grace, and of the royal abundance of its wealth, He also styles himself "the chief of sinners," and "less than the least of all saints," to whom "is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." It was grace which produced such a devoted and diligent servant of Christ, even as he himself said, "By the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Paul gloried in it, speaking of its abounding, of its over-abounding, and of its surpassing

over-abounding. He writes, too, of the praise of the glory of God's grace, of the riches of His grace, and of the exceeding riches of His grace. Little wonder then that he commended the saints to God and to the word of His grace when leaving them after he had foretold the dangers which would beset the assembly; nor is it surprising that he should persuade those who had believed to continue in the grace of God. As regards himself, after having fully proved it in his abundant labours for his Lord and Saviour, he said, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."

What a living proof Paul was that grace reigns today--that Christ is on the throne--that the Saviour of sinners is supreme! "The grace of our Lord surpassingly overabounded" in saving him, and in making him His servant as he tells us in 1 Timothy 1:12-16. Grace made him the untiring labourer that he was, and sustained him in great weaknesses--grace was sufficient for him. Right on to the end, until he had finished his course, till he had fought the fight, he proved this fully; and his last word was "to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." The same grace reigns for us now! It has saved us, keeps us, teaches us, and will soon display its surpassing riches through us, when, with Christ as the Centre, the splendours of redemption shall show its glories to the intelligences of the universe. Grace reigns.

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