

Grace for Living

by Lewis Gregory

Lewis Gregory's sermon emphasizes that grace is essential for living a fulfilling and purposeful life in Christ.

Duration: 24:57

Scripture: Luke 2:40, Romans 5:17, Romans 5:20 - 6:1, Romans 6:4-5

Topics: "Grace"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that grace is not just for salvation, but also for living a new and transformed life. He explains that Jesus Christ, who is the embodiment of God's grace, came to show us how to live in relation to God the Father. The speaker highlights that true freedom and liberty come from living according to God's will and experiencing a superior way of life. He concludes by emphasizing that living in Christ enables us to live a godly life and access God's grace through faith.

Transcript

...and share with you about the whole idea of grace. But I want to put it in context for you. Because you see, grace is for living.

Grace is for living. So I want to talk and share with you about graceful living. Graceful living.

How to live by the grace of God. Living by grace. And so that we understand what grace really is.

Yes, it's true, Christ died for us. Yes, it's true, He gave His life for us. And yes, it's true, we are free indeed.

But that freedom, as we all know, came by a great price. And we say that about our soldiers and the freedom in our country. And the freedom came, of course, through the death of Christ on the cross.

And that was God showing His grace to us. Showing His grace upon us. But that was only the beginning.

Because once Christ did all that for us, He wants to impart His life to us so that we then can live. So we then can have new life in Christ. And so I want to go to a passage of Scripture that addresses that.

And I want us to examine it carefully as we consider that grace for living. This whole matter of graceful living. So this is found in Romans chapter 5. And we go there to look at this passage.

In Romans chapter 5, verse 17, we'll begin with there. And there are a number of references in Romans 5 and on into 6 about the word grace. So let's look at what he says.

Romans 5, 17. For if by one man's offense death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. And then skipping down to verse 20.

Moreover, the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

So verse 1 of chapter 6. What should we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? And he adds, God forbid. Absolutely not. And then skipping down into verse 4, I'll just read the latter part there.

He says, even so we also should walk in newness of life. In newness of life. We should walk in newness of life.

He's saying God's intent for us through God's grace made available to us is not just that we can be free to do our own thing, but now we're free to do God's thing. We are free to walk in newness of life. We're free to walk in a new kind of life, in a new quality of life.

We're free to experience a superior way of life. That's true freedom. That's true liberty.

That's the joy of being free. Years ago, when our daughter turned 16, that's the big year, you know, when you get your what? It's called a driver's license. Wow, some of y'all up here on the front are pretty alert about that.

I mean, you're already thinking about it. Probably already saving money for your car. Well, I took our daughter over to do her driving test.

And of course, she was anxious, but she did okay and she passed. And so then they handed her license and she was so excited. And so, of course, she had to drive on the way back home.

So she got in the car and she was so excited. Now she had her license. She's official size and weight driver.

And she said, oh boy, free at last. I'm free at last. I have my license.

I can drive. I can go. I'm free at last.

Well, we have been given a license in Christ. But it's a license to live. It's authority.

A license is an authorization. And God has given us the authorization, the authority to live. And with authority comes power and responsibility.

And so here we have the authority to live. God has empowered us to live. And now, yes, we live.

But we live responsibly. The kind of freedom Christ offers, responsible freedom. It's the kind of freedom that causes us not just to be from the shackles of our past, freedom from the bondage to sin and Satan, but a freedom to do and be all that God has called us to be in Christ and to do through Christ.

Freedom. Freedom to be ourselves? Yes. But freedom to be the self God made us as new creations in Christ.

That's our freedom. That's our privilege. That's our opportunity and responsibility.

So this is our freedom, grace for living. So when I say grace for living, I'm referring to purpose. The purpose of God's grace is in order that we might live.

In order that we might live. Let's go back to a comment made by our Lord Jesus. When Jesus came, He spoke many things to us, gave us many insights and understandings about God the Father.

But He gave us a purpose statement. His purpose statement found in the Gospel of John chapter 10. And we note there in verse 10, He said this.

He says, I am come. I am come. Why did He come? He says, I'll tell you why I came.

He says, I am come that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly. The purpose statement given by our Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf is He has come that you might have life. And that you might have life more abundantly.

Well, He later went on to say in John 14, 6. I am that life. The life He said I've come that you might have, it's me. It's me.

God says, I've got a gift for you alright. It's the best gift ever. I'm going to give you myself.

I'm going to give you myself. I'm going to give you my life. And so Jesus came.

Not only to give His life for us. Death on the cross for our sins. But to give His life to us by resurrection.

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead. Here and now available. That we might be raised up to the glory of the Father.

To walk in newness of life. So He raises us up. Resurrection life.

Resurrection power. So that we can now walk in new life. Grace is for living.

So often we think of grace as just wow. I've got a license. I'm free.

But the misnomer is it's a license to destruction. Or it's the license to just do whatever I think, feel, want. It's the thinking that was prevalent in the day when there were no leaders in the land in Israel.

And it was described in the book of Judges. And it said everyone did what was right in their own eyes. They all went around just doing their own thing.

It's so big on our minds to quote do our own thing. But there is no such thing as your own thing. You're either doing God's thing or Satan's thing.

We are duped into thinking that somehow we're doing our own thing. But sin is independent thinking and independent action. And the reality of that is you're not even independent.

You just think you are. You're acting as if you're your own boss doing your own thing. But that just isn't possible and certainly does not happen.

Because there is no vacuum. It doesn't happen in a vacuum. Life does not happen in a vacuum.

And we're either living unto God or we're living unto the devil. Now he would tell us that if you read on in Romans 6. That whom you yield yourself to, that's the one you become servant to obey. So, as in to say, if you're yielding, giving yourself unto the Lord.

Then your life is subject to him and you walk in obedience to him. But if you don't, then you miss out on him. And you are operating as a slave to the devil.

Of course you don't know it. That's what the Bible calls being deceived. It's blind to the truth of what's happening to you and what you in fact are doing.

Even though often times it may look good, sound good. But it's not God. And thus, you miss out on life.

But grace is for living. Grace is God's plan for you to experience his life and that life more abundantly. Now, if we go back to the beginning of the Gospel of John.

And you know, it's interesting about this word grace. If you read through the book of Matthew, it's not mentioned not one time the word. If you read through Mark, you don't find the word grace listed not once.

You finally discover in the book of Luke, I think in chapter 2, it talks about that Jesus grew in grace. Well, that's all you find in Luke. But then you get to John, and there the word grace pops up.

But only really at the beginning, in chapter 1. And then after that, you don't see it again. Except here's what you do see in the Gospels. You see grace lived out.

And so John sets the stage for us here, because here's what he tells us. He says in verse 1, in the beginning was the word. And what's the word? Well, the word was with God, and then goes on to say, in fact, the word was, and I would add is, God.

All things were made by Him. So, the word is referred to as a Him. Already we've been told is, in fact, God Himself.

And now it says, verse 4, in Him was life. So, the word, who made all things, who is, in fact, God Himself, is also life. And then he tells us, likewise is light.

But now, here's the thing. If we want to understand grace, let's jump down to verse 16. It's mentioned earlier in verse 14, but I want to read verse 16.

Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. Now, it is yet to tell us the name of the word as Jesus Christ.

It's still just setting the stage, but it's building up to something humongous. So, if we look on to verse 17. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by whom? Jesus Christ.

And now we see that the word is known as Jesus Christ. And He, God to come flesh, is now among us to make God known to us, as He lives out the grace of God before us. In fact, it goes on to say in verse 18, that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, and, in fact, is the one who has declared God to us.

He has made God known to us. You see, Moses gave us the law, and that was good and important as a starting point. Because that's our standard.

It's the standard of which God desires for us and requires of us. But the problem is, the standard could not do for us what we needed. It was God's grace to tell us what He expected of us.

But God said, I have more in store for you. That is, I have the source by which the law can be lived. I have the power source by which you can keep the law.

Such that we have Jesus Christ, who is the one who initially, as the word, gave us the words of God, His commands, His laws. Now, suddenly, He Himself coming in human form to say to us, this is what it looks like when it's lived as it should be lived, in relation to God the Father. And so Jesus walked it out for us, because grace is for living.

So He came to show us God's grace and all of its glorious splendor, as He lived among us and demonstrated to us the love of God for us. Wow! God came in the form that we could most easily grasp and comprehend. He came in the form of a person, the person of Jesus Christ, who is our Lord as we receive Him in our heart.

And so now let's go back to verse 16. Grace is for living, yes. Of His fullness have all we received.

The fullness of God in Christ. And we receive Him, He comes in, in His fullness. But here's the phrase, and grace for grace.

And grace for grace. You know, I used to read that, and I got to say, it seemed a lot like double talk to me, and I'm beginning to finally, I think, grasp it after all these many years of knowing God and reading the Word. Grace for grace.

Well now, wait a minute. Grace of His fullness of all we received. And then He says, in addition, as if, and grace for grace.

What He's saying is, it was God's grace that sent Christ to us. It was Christ living out the life of the Father, walking in perfect obedience to the Father, always saying and doing only what He saw or heard the Father say. It was God's grace that caused Jesus to stretch out His arms on that old rugged cross and give His life for our sins.

It was God's grace that enabled Him to be raised from the dead so that He could stand alive as the resurrection of the life to declare to us, there is no fear in death, there is no fear at all, because He has conquered all, and He is available to all of us. And so all of that was the grace of God. What Jesus did in coming to us, what He did in dying for us, what He did in being raised up so that we too could walk in newness of life, that is grace.

But there's the other side of that, grace for grace. So it takes the grace of God to be born again. So as we receive Christ, we are saved by grace.

So we receive Christ, and there's the new birth and the new life. But that grace is for living. There's the second grace, grace for grace.

Suddenly we realize, not only is it that the grace of God enabled Christ to do what He did and was the motivation behind what He did, but it was the grace of God that allowed us to receive Him and now makes it possible for us to live the life that He has made available to us in Christ. Grace is for living. Let's go back to where we started in Romans 5. I'm sorry, Romans... Let's skip over to Romans 6, verse 4, when He

says, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Life. But the life, we've already seen the life is Christ. So what we're talking about here is the walking in the Christ life.

We're walking in His life. Our privilege is that we are to live out His life, not by working hard for Him to try to imitate Him, but by allowing Him who is life to be Himself in us. And the grace of God is the releasing of His presence and power to work through us.

To work through us. Grace for grace. Now let's go back to the beginning of the book of Romans, to chapter 1, verse 5. As Paul introduces this book of Romans, he sets the stage for purpose.

And so in verse 5, as he explains the purpose, he says, by whom, that is by God, we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith. What have we received? We've received grace. And in Paul's case, some of them had also received what's called apostleship, which meant that they were called to be the spiritual leaders, which meant that they were given assignment and responsibility of oversight to care for others.

But he said we, as in for all of us, we have received grace for obedience to the faith. Now, to be sure that you're clear on that, and it's not just for the apostles, go to the end of the book of Romans, because he wraps it up the same way he began. And here at the end of Romans, in chapter 16, in verse 24, Romans 16, 24, he makes these concluding remarks.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. The grace. Grace.

Of who? Of Christ. Be with you all. He's saying to us, grace is a person.

We saw that in the beginning, in John chapter 1. And now he's saying here again, we have the grace of God available to us through Christ. And so he's saying, may it be with you. That is, continue in the grace of God.

And then the reference of that last chapter, he goes on to underscore exactly what he's talking about as he concludes this whole thing about living again. Because in the last part of verse 26, he says again, made known to all nations for, that's the word purpose, because, reason, for the obedience of faith. For the obedience of faith.

Now in the first one we read there in verse 1, it was called obedience to the faith. So when he says to the faith, when it says the faith, when it has the word the in front of it, he's talking about the Christian faith. He's talking about our belief system according to the gospel, that is, according to the word of God given us in the New Testament, spelled out for us as to how we are to now live as new creations in Christ.

Okay, that's the Christian faith. So we have obedience to the Christian faith. That is, that we would share the gospel and carry out the gospel and live out the word of God.

That's as it begins. But as he ends it now, he's saying, God's grace be with you in order for the obedience of faith. The obedience of faith.

That is, as you live by faith, you walk in obedience to God. As you live by faith, you walk in obedience to God. Which is to say, when you are trusting Him, His grace is available to you.

His supernatural strength and power, that's grace, supernatural strength and power is available to you. His divine life in you is now going to live through you, that is, He's going to enable you in all that you say and do. So let's go back to Romans 5 and take note of one verse in Romans 5, and then we're going to back up to Romans 4. In Romans 5, verse 2, he says, By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.

Okay, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace. So how do we access God's grace? By faith. So as we rely upon Christ and walk in obedience to His leading in our life, we access God's grace for our life.

That is, it releases God's enabling and empowering for us to live daily as He intends. In fact, there's a phrase that I like that says, in 2 Timothy, in chapter 3, he says, And all who live godly. And then he goes on, of course, to talk about the fact that it's not always going to be all fun and games.

He says they'll suffer persecution. But the phrase that we must give attention to, live godly in Christ Jesus. So you live godly as you live in Christ.

And living in Christ, you live a godly life, a life that is of God, a life that pertains to God, a life that is characteristic of God, by living in Christ, who is your life. Who is your life. So again, we access this grace through faith.

Now we back up to Romans 4, 16, where he says, Therefore, it is of faith. Why? In order that it might be by grace. So the provision God has made for us is not according to works of righteousness, which we've done.

It's not according to whether or not we've lived up to the standard of the law, in terms of the letter of the law on the outside. But it's whether or not we have simply put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and are now trusting him as our life to live in us and through us, every moment and every day of our life. Grace is for living.

And he says, in order for it to be by grace, it's got to be through faith. That is, we've got to exercise faith in order to tap into the grace of God, which is already available to us. And he said in verse 2 of chapter 5, we already stand in it.

Because we're standing in him who is in us, Christ Jesus our Lord. The grace of God embodied in us in the person of Christ. And so he says, by faith, we stand in him.

By faith, we walk in him. By faith, we live. So when he talks about living the quality of life, he's talking about reigning in life.

He's talking about living as more than a conqueror. We don't just eat through life anymore as God's children. We're not some paupers here.

We're not some weak, frail, defeated losers. We're children of the King. We have life in Christ.

We have an inheritance in Christ. We can do all things through Christ. By faith, we stand because of the grace of God.

Grace is for living. And the kind of living we get is the glorious character and conduct of Christ as we allow him to be himself in us. He then lives his life through us.

And we get to enjoy the ride. Wow, you know, my wife Lou is a great chauffeur. Most of the time, she drives.

I enjoy the ride. You think, well, that's kind of odd. Most guys drive.

Well, hey, she's a good driver. And I can sit. I can study.

I can pray. I enjoy the ride. How about you? God says, I have a life.

It's available to you. It's a life that I've come to live in and through you. Just let me do it.

Grace is for living. Let's pray. Lord, thank you for your abundant, super abundant and amazing grace.

Lord, it's a word that's so vague and nebulous. Lord, it's just Jesus. It's Christ in us.

It's your life, your strength, your power, your ability. Lord, it's just you doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves. And thank you, Lord, you did that.

When you came to us while we were yet sinners, died for us. Lord, we thank you that it's you making that sacrifice for us and being raised from the dead to show us that you are the resurrection and the life. Lord, I thank you that it's not only what you did for us, but who you are now to live in us and through us so that grace is for living.

That we don't have to just kind of mope through life. We can walk through joyously, victoriously as more than conquerors through Christ our Lord. And we give you praise in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Hallelujah.

Amen. Love y'all. Thank you, Lord.

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