

HYPER GRACE Documentary (feat. Dr. Michael Brown, David Ravenhill and Eric Ludy)

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Transcript

You know, one of the key things that we see in the truth of God's word is how we are saved. We are saved by grace through faith. So if you're the devil, one of the things you're gonna wanna touch is those two key concepts.

If you can mar our understanding of grace and mar our understanding of faith, what have you done? You've completely uprooted and undermined how we are saved. Now the Christian actually doesn't even know how he is saved because his idea of grace is messed up and his idea of faith is messed up. It's a brilliant tactic.

And that's exactly what we see the enemy doing in our modern generation. So if you start with the concept of grace, grace oftentimes today is understood as just a hug of God. Here we are just a mess, which is definitely true.

We are a mess. And so God comes along and he says, you know what? I know you're a mess, but I love you as a mess. And so he gives us a big hug.

And you know, he doesn't intend to change us from being a mess. In fact, he loves us being a mess. And that's called grace, God loving the mess.

Well, that's actually not what grace is in the Bible. You could call it more kindness, long suffering, mercy, but God loves us too much to leave us a mess. You see, maybe he loves us while we were yet sinners and that's when he died for us and he expressed and shed abroad that love.

However, he does not love us in that state or to keep us in that state. He loves us to help us out of that state. His agenda with us is to establish our feet upon a rock to wash us clean and to imbue his power or his life into us to enable us to live out a life that otherwise would be impossible.

Well, that's called grace. You see, it's grace that rescues us in our weakened state. Grace does have attributes of kindness and mercy and long suffering.

That's part of grace, but grace is a lot bigger than that. Those words already exist in the Bible. Mercy, you don't need to mix up grace and mercy.

It's a separate concept. Grace is a work. It is an enabling power of God to accomplish something in our lives.

And so what we see in our modern day is we see the concept of grace being turned into a license to remain in sin, a license to remain in the pigsty. It's like, no, God loves me in the pigsty. That's actually what we see in Jude 1 verse 4. For there are certain men crept in unawares who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men.

Well, what did these ungodly men do? It says that they turned the grace of our God into lasciviousness, a license to sin. It's like, no, we have legal right to this. We're under grace.

They transformed grace into something that it isn't. And denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. When you turn the grace of God into a license to sin, it's an affront to the cross.

It's an affront to Jesus Christ. Grace was never given as an excuse for sin. It was given as a means to have dominion over sin.

And so I think we've got to get back to the intention. I think I put in one of my books, the whole welfare system in America was designed to help needy families. Couldn't provide for their children and so on and so forth.

And so there were food stamps and so on. The problem was they abused the intent of that and went out and used food stamps for alcohol, traded it in for drugs and everything else. That was an abuse of the intention.

And so I think we've got to go back to the original intention of grace to understand that there is an abuse of grace that is not acceptable. Jesus Christ was full of grace and truth. And of his fullness, we have all received and grace for grace.

What is this great thing called grace that came through Jesus? A basic definition of grace is undeserved or unmerited favor. Grace always flows down. The slave doesn't show grace to his Lord, but rather the Lord to his slave.

Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. But a grace without truth is not biblical grace. Any grace beyond biblical grace is false and dangerous.

Grace is so much more than unmerited favor. In his grace, God exerts his holy influence upon souls. With those who abide in Christ, grace teaches them, grace empowers them, and grace kindles them to the exercise of Christian virtue, righteousness, and holiness.

When I speak of hyper-grace, what am I speaking of? I'm speaking of a message that basically says this. Because Jesus has died for us and made us righteous, and we are now fully accepted in Jesus, that not only have we already been justified so that God puts us in the righteous column, not only have we already been justified, but we have already been sanctified and made perfectly holy in God's sight, so God only sees us as holy. It's not even that he sees us through his son, but he sees us as holy.

He doesn't see our sins, and because Jesus died for all of our sins, past, present, and future, that means that all of your sins have already been considered forgiven by God. God's already forgiven your future sins, therefore you never need to confess sin because it's already forgiven and doesn't exist in God's

sight. You never need to repent of sin because it's already been forgiven and doesn't exist in God's sight, and any human effort that you put into trying to please God is a denial of grace and a denial of the cross.

In the New Testament, we see grace, the word translated, around 126 times, I should say around, I think it is 126 times. Out of those 126 times, I think it's around 124 that it's fairly clear, and I say fairly, about 25 times it's really clear, 124 times it's clear that it's the enabling power of God. There's one time when someone could say, no, no, it is a hug.

However, there's still room to argue that no, it also still could be talking about the enabling power of God, and there's one time that it's a different Greek word, *euprepia*, instead of *charis*, and so we have 126 mentions of the word grace, and there's an overwhelming evidence in the New Testament that it is to do with power. It is the labor of God to enable man to function as he ought to function, so what are we doing nowadays when we're coming up with a completely new definition of grace? Some of the best-selling books in Christianity, I think Philip Yancey's book, *What's So Amazing About Grace*, wins the Christian Book of the Year award, is quoted by more pastors than any, it's completely redefined grace, and it doesn't even go to the Bible to define it. Where are we getting this from? Well, it's turning the grace of God into lasciviousness.

There's a quote in a book that really messes with the notions of grace, it's called *The Ragamuffin Gospel* by a man named Brennan Manning, and in it he quotes Fyodor Dostoevsky. He says, Fyodor Dostoevsky caught the shock and scandal of the gospel of grace when he wrote, and this is what Dostoevsky wrote, "At the last judgment, Christ will say to us, "Come, you also, come drunkards, come weaklings, "come children of shame." "And he will say to us, vile beings, "you who are in the image of the beast and bear his mark, "but come all the same, you as well. "And the wise and prudent will say, "Lord, why do you welcome them?" "And he will say, if I welcome them, you wise men, "if I welcome them, you prudent men, "it is because not one of them has ever been judged worthy.

"And he will stretch out his arms, "and we will fall at his feet, "and we will cry out, sobbing, "and then we will understand all, "we will understand the gospel of grace. "Lord, your kingdom come." It's moving, it has pathos in it, where all of us are like, oh, praise God, that the gospel of grace accepts us no matter what we're like, except that's not what the gospel says. The gospel makes it very clear that God resists the proud, but gives grace unto the humble.

If there is a belligerence towards God, if there isn't a turning in faith and in belief unto Jesus Christ, I'm sorry to say, but the grace of God is not open to us. It is the humble that receive grace. It is the penitent, it is the repentant that actually receive the gift of God in Christ Jesus.

And so what we see is a denial of actually what the word of God says, and a redefinition of the concept of grace, and it feels good, and it itches people's ears because they want it to be that way. But the grace of God was made manifest at the cross, not in an empty hell. We wanna say, well, if God really is love, if God really is gracious, wouldn't there be an empty hell? He wouldn't let anyone go there.

That's why he came and shed his blood. The reason he gave up his life was because he is a God of grace, because he is a God of love. And he says, turn from your wickedness, believe and you will be saved.

We also see Brennan Manning making a statement, and he says it very clearly, so I'm gonna read it. This is the gospel of grace. A God who out of love for us sent the only son he ever had wrapped in our skin.

He learned how to walk, stumbled and fell, cried for his milk, sweated blood in the night, was lashed with a whip and showered with spit, was fixed to a cross and died whispering forgiveness on us all. And you and I could say, that's all true. Yeah, that's fairly well put.

But what we see is a diminishment of what grace really is. You see, it's not just that Jesus died. That's an aspect of God's grace at work.

But he opened up the channel for us to access his grace in and through his work of grace on the cross. You see, it's not just that his grace was evidenced on the cross, it's that his grace was made available to us so that we might live. And so that we might not just be dead in our sin, in our trespasses, but so that we might come to life in Christ Jesus, in his grace.

And his grace might enable us to live as otherwise we couldn't live. There's more to the story. It's not just that he died whispering forgiveness on us all.

How about the gospel of grace includes the fact that on the third day he rose again. And then he ascended to the right hand of the father. And you know where we're seated? We're seated in him.

We have been brought near. When we believe in Christ, we're actually in him. And where he goes, we go.

When he went to the cross, our old man was crucified. When he was buried, our old behavior was buried. And when he rose again, we rose to newness of life in Christ Jesus.

And when he ascended, we sit with him at the right hand of authority and power. We become heirs of salvation. And we've been brought into the throne of grace where there's a treasure chest of grace.

And it can open up to us. And guess what's available? The very life of God, it's called grace. The very spirit of God can be imparted to us so that we can live by grace.

Not just be saved by it, but live by it. The God who did it 2000 years ago desires to continue doing it in us. I call that the gospel of grace.

You see, it's bigger, it's larger. When we just say, oh, God forgives us. And so therefore, we still live in Adam.

We still live in this old, sloppy, messy life. No, his grace has been made manifest to us so that we can live, so that we can actually bear the nature of God so that we can show this world what Jesus is like. Not us, his grace does it in us.

And that's the gospel of grace. You ain't seen nothing yet. I'm glad we are part of it.

In his book, *Pure Grace*, Clark Whitten writes, little has changed in the Protestant church in more than 500 years. He believes that Luther and Calvin got it right concerning justification or how one is saved, but they missed it on sanctification or how one is perfected into the likeness of Christ. When Martin Luther stood up over 400 years ago and with a revelation that just shall live by faith, justification by faith, and the grace revolution began with Martin Luther, and they tried to kill him, they tried to burn him, they tried to silence him, okay? The devil opposed grace.

And over the last 500, 400 and something, 100 years, grace, the message of the gospel, has been recovered and has been recovered. But it is not fully recovered yet, friends. The gospel of grace that Paul

preached is not being preached in the majority of churches around the world.

Identifying himself as a new mystic, John Crowder says, just as there is a new mysticism on the rise, I believe it is coupled with a new reformation. The good news will be preached with such clarity that even the days of Luther will seem utterly primitive in its concepts of grace and faith. Even the reformers were not reformed enough.

In grace, the forbidden gospel, Rob Rufus is quoted saying, the church today does not need another spiritual revival because revivals come and go. It needs another theological reformation as it did in the days of Martin Luther. Reformation will automatically bring about revival.

Perhaps the most well-known hyper-grace preacher, Joseph Prince, refers to a gospel revolution in his book, *Destined to Reign, The Secret to Effortless Success, Wholeness and Victorious Living*. Grace is not a teaching. It's not a curriculum in a Bible school, one of the topics you would learn.

Grace is the gospel. Grace is the person of Jesus Christ. Grace is a person.

And when you encounter the person, grace teaches. There's something about grace. When you encounter grace, it teaches you.

Grace is a teacher. It teaches you to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. Amen, Pastor Prince, preach.

No, we preach grace and grace will teach. Aside from several articles appearing in *Charisma News* by Dr. Michael Brown, David Ravenhill, and others, there has been little exposing and refuting of the New Grace Reformation, also called hyper-grace. Dr. Brown has also written *Hyper-Grace*, exposing the dangers of the modern grace message.

The problem is the message in the so-called New Grace Reformation goes beyond what scripture says. It mixes in some dangerous elements with it that go beyond scriptural grace to the point that it's leading many believers into confusion to the point that it's leading many believers to become weak in terms of their resolve to resist sin because what does it matter? God sees me as perfect all the time. So it's actually a mixture.

It's not a biblical grace message. I call it hyper-grace because it goes beyond what scripture says. The proponents say it is hyper.

It's the word Paul uses, hyper. Grace should be hyper. Well, not if you go beyond what scripture says.

Hey, guys, I've got some good news for you this week. You know, there's this false moniker that's recently been placed on us. There have been a lot of monikers placed on us, but this one is called hyper-grace, which in all honesty is a bit of a compliment because you can never over-exaggerate the depths of God's grace.

Now, let me tell you something, boys and girls. You haven't even sniffed the cork yet. This glory train's gonna be so ADD hyper, you're gonna have to put it on Ritalin.

You can't over-exaggerate grace, but on the other hand, you can underestimate Jesus. And that is exactly what the adversaries of the gospel are doing these days as usual because it's really the scandal of the gospel that is so scandalous. Grace is personified in Jesus.

He came into this world full of grace and truth. So when a person says you can go too far with grace, what they really mean is, what they might as well say is, you can go too far with Jesus. And I say, no, you can't.

And so you can't go too far with grace. No, you can't. You overrun the grace space and you've left grace and you moved into disgrace.

Now, now and then you'll meet some... Probably the most prominent, best known teacher that would be in this camp today is Joseph Prince. Again, I constantly hear from people who've been helped and liberated and blessed by his teaching. And then I hear from others where it's reactionary, where they've thrown out the baby with the bathwater, where we can't even call them to holiness or perseverance because of their reaction against certain scriptures.

Andrew Womack would be a well-known teacher. Both of them somewhat in a word of faith camp. There are well-known grace authors like Steve McVeigh or Clark Whitten has become better known in recent years or Dr. Paul Ellis.

They all emphasize a number of the same key points and they all have the same reaction to our counterpoint. So even though it's not monolithic, there's a lot of similarity from one teacher to the next. And you'll find that many of the books repeat a lot of what Joseph Prince says originally.

To be fair, the hyper-grace movement does not overtly teach that grace is a license to sin. It's all about grace. Amen.

And there's always someone who's afraid that when you preach grace, you're getting people licensed to sin. But Romans 6, 14, if you look on the screen, I just wonder sometimes people can read. It is so clear, Romans 6, 14 tells us, for sin shall not have dominion over you because, for, you are not under law, but you are under grace.

So wherein comes this fear that when you teach grace, when people live under grace, they will live a licentious lifestyle, they will steer away from holiness. I find that when I'm under grace, my attraction to Jesus becomes stronger and stronger towards holiness, greater and greater, and my attraction towards sin gets lesser and lesser. How many can say amen to that? When you hear stuff like you heard today, or what you heard today, does it kind of just make you wanna run out and sin all over town? Just be lascivious all over town? That's a dirty word, isn't it, lascivious? No, no, no.

Does grace allow us to sin? Now, grace preachers are often accused of allowing people to sin, but in reality, this accusation is absolutely false. No one who truly preaches grace is saying that it is all right to sin or giving people permission to do what is wrong. The hyper-grace accusation has built up this straw man argument that's simply not true, that we're somehow preaching license to sin.

Grace is not license to sin, it is freedom from sin. I am still trying to figure out who are these mythical preachers who say you should go sin to your heart's content. I suppose with Facebook, there could be plenty of nutjobs out there saying that, but I don't know how I got looped in with any of it.

We've been preaching God-given holiness that manifests in real God-given right living for years. Grace is not a coverup, he's a person. Grace is literally defined as the divine influence of God upon a man.

It's like a wind that fills your sails and drives you and works mightily through you with his supernatural energy. You can only live holy when you realize that's who he made you to be. Nevertheless, hyper-grace

is an exaggeration and distortion of biblical grace.

The end result being similar to that of the grace changers which the apostles spoke against. If you preach like that, people go out and sin. Notice that people will still sin? Biblical grace is wonderfully important because every one of us is saved by grace, by God reaching out to us when we didn't deserve it.

If God gave us what our sins deserve, if God treated us justly, and outside of grace, outside of the cross, we'd all be damned and doomed forever. So we're all indebted to God. We're all indebted to the fact that he reached out to us when we were lost, that his son died on the cross for the things that we did.

And when people speak of grace, they sometimes say it's God's riches at Christ's expense or it's unnerved favor. That's the heart and soul of it. But the amazing thing about grace is it doesn't end there.

It's not just I was saved by grace 42 or 43 years ago, way back then. No, God's grace has continued to work in my life, forgiving me as I fall short and as I look to God for mercy, and also empowering me to live a new and changed life. So to the extent we understand God's grace, we can live free of condemnation, we can live transformed lives, and we can really exemplify to the world who Jesus is through transformed lives.

The scriptures tell us that we are saved by grace. Our salvation is a free gift, not earned or merited by our own works. God, who is rich in mercy because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

By grace, you have been saved and raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace and his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace, you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our savior, Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. But when the kindness and the love of God, our savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our savior, that having been justified by his grace, we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works.

These things are good and profitable to men. God loved us while we were sinners by sending his son, Jesus Christ, into the world. Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

The Pharisees said, Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners? This man, if he were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner. The Pharisees did not understand grace. By grace, God has initiated and offered salvation to sinners.

We weren't received because we were good enough. We were received because God is gracious. Boasting is excluded because this was not something we deserved or merited by any good works of our

own.

By God's grace, he accepted us, forgave us, and redeemed us. But in those same passages, Paul went on to say that we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, and those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. Paul is a pattern of how God's grace turns a lost, sinful, hateful person into a beloved brother.

By grace, Paul was forgiven, received, taught, and changed. He said, And I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord, who has enabled me, because he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man. But I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason, I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might show all long-suffering as a pattern to those who are going to believe on him for everlasting life.

Scripture is actually very clear on the fact that grace is not merely just a hug from God. It is enabling power. It is power to perform that which is otherwise impossible.

It's power to actually obey God. We couldn't obey before. There was something we wanted to do, but we didn't have the substance within our souls to be able to actually pull it off.

But now the grace of God has been revealed in Jesus Christ, and we have what we need in Christ Jesus, not in ourselves, in Christ, to be able to actually live out the life that we're called to, which is impossible, actually. So technically, grace is power to live the impossible life. And so what I wanna do is I wanna just give a brief overview of some of the key concepts of how grace is used in the New Testament just to back this point.

We see in 1 Corinthians 15.10, but by the grace of God, I am what I am, says Paul. And his grace, which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain. But I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God, which was with me.

Well, what's laboring in Paul? The grace of God. That's not a hug. So what we see is that grace is given that we might labor more abundantly.

In 2 Corinthians 9.8, Paul is again making this argument. He says, God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. So what do they need to have sufficiency in all things and to abound to every good work? Grace.

You see, grace enables the Christian to actually do that which they're called to do. So we see that grace is given that we may have sufficiency in all things. And grace is also given that we may abound to every good work.

In Romans 1.5, Paul is saying, by whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name. So they received grace for the strangest thing. I thought it was just a hug to cover over our sin.

No, that's not the way grace is used in the New Testament. He received grace for obedience to the faith. So grace is given for obedience to the faith.

In Acts 4.33, and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and great grace was upon them all. Well, grace is given as power for witnessing of the resurrection of Jesus. And then in 1 Corinthians 3.10, according to the grace of God, which is given unto me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon, but let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

So grace is given in order that we may lay foundations. In other words, this is a master builders toolbox. He needs grace.

How is Paul gonna go about and be a master builder of the church? Well, he does it with grace. And then in Ephesians 3.8, to me who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given that I should preach. Why did he receive grace? To preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ.

So grace is given for preaching among the Gentiles. Let us therefore come boldly, it says in Hebrews 4.16, under the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. So grace is given as our means of help in time of need.

So what does God give us in a time of need? He doesn't just give us a hug. He gives us help, practical help. Well, what is that help? It's grace.

And in Hebrews 12.28, wherefore we receive in a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Grace is given whereby we may serve God acceptably. And then in 1 Peter 5.10, this one's a loaded scripture.

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. Grace is given to make us perfect. Grace is given to establish us.

Grace is given to strengthen us. And grace is given to settle us. And then in Ephesians 2.8, for by grace are you saved through faith.

And that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Grace is given to save us. And then Acts 18.27, and when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him, who when he was come helped them much, which had believed through grace.

Grace is given to enable others to believe in Jesus Christ. This is powerful stuff. Grace works.

You see, it is the work of God. The cross is the work of God, is an expression of grace. But what do we need now to live the Christian life? We need God to work, to work within us, to work for us.

He ever lives to make intercession for us, not just on the cross, but he ever lives to do it. So he lives, and the way he does it is through grace. That's the term for it in the Bible.

God laboring on our behalf to accomplish what only God can accomplish. In him, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Grace covers our sins, but allowing sin and covering sin are two different things.

Paul said that where sin abounded, grace abounded much more. On the other hand, Paul also asked the rhetorical question, what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not. How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Hyper-grace teachers agree with these passages being understood in this sense.

Paul argued things like, well, shall we sin that grace may abound? May never be. It's an impossibility. How shall we who are dead? Once you're dead, you're dead.

How can we who are dead to sin live any longer therein? Jesus has set us free from sin that we might not be slaves of sin any longer, but we must act upon this. In order to obtain God's grace or favor, we must repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Peter said, repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Thus we are saved by grace through faith. We have access to God's saving grace through faith in Christ. Paul wrote, therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand.

But that's only the beginning. Grace says both, neither do I condemn you and go and sin no more. Biblical grace is saving grace.

It's transforming grace. You know, by grace you're saved. You know, Ephesians 2, eight and nine.

You go back a couple of verses, it says you were dead in trespasses and sins, but God made us alive. And so grace has got that power to make us alive, to transform us, to change us from what we were, to become new creatures in Christ Jesus. All things are passed away.

I mean, that's the power of grace is the power to change. And Paul says, you know, you're no longer under sin. Grace, we're no longer under the dominion of sin.

Grace has a greater dominion of sin's dominion. And so we've got to understand that saving grace is transforming grace. It's the power of God working in us and through us to bring about God's desire result of having children in his own likeness and image.

Paul went on to say that grace has freed us from slavery of sin to become slaves of obedience to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? Certainly not.

Do you not know that to whom you present yourself slaves to obey, you are that one slave to whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death or of obedience leading to righteousness. This is not fear that being under grace will cause life and life anxiousness. Because the Bible states clearly in Romans 6, 14, if you look up here, for sin shall not have dominion over you for or because you are not under law, but under grace.

But what we have believed is that when you are under grace, sin will have dominion over you. We've been hoodwinked by the devil. The word of God is so clear when you are under grace and not under law, sin shall not have dominion over you.

The word sin there is a noun. You can put faith and shall not have dominion over you. Sickness shall not have dominion over you.

Poverty shall not have dominion over you. When? When you are not under law, but under grace. As far as Joseph Prince is a person, I don't think his intention is to get people to sin.

I think the fruit of his teaching leads to that, leads to a loose lifestyle, it leads to carnality and so on and so forth. You know, I think that's the fruit. I don't think he's teaching, you know, go out and sin, do whatever you want sort of thing.

But I think the doctrine ultimately leads to that. Notice Romans 3.25 says, God had passed over the sins that were previously committed. But the hyper-grace movement teaches that Christians have been forgiven of their past, present and future sins.

In his book, Unmerited Favor, Joseph Prince writes, his grace is cheapened when you think that he has only forgiven you of your sins up to the time you got saved and after that point, you have to depend on your confession of sins to be forgiven. God's forgiveness is not given in installments. Paul Ellis says, forgiveness seems to be a blind spot for many people.

We just can't get it into our heads that God has forgiven us completely and for all time. In his sermon entitled, Totally Forgiven, Totally United, Totally Filled, Ryan Rufus says the following. You have been totally forgiven.

You haven't been partially forgiven. You have been totally and completely and utterly and fully and absolutely forgiven of all your sins, past, present and future. Amen.

Most Christians don't have any trouble believing that Jesus forgives them of all their past sins. But many Christians have trouble believing that Jesus has already forgiven them of all of their future sins. They struggle with that.

So they feel they have this need that if they sin, they've got to confess the sin and repent of the sin and be cleansed of the sin and they enter into all of these dead works, faithless works, because they don't have a revelation of total forgiveness. The idea that God has already pronounced our future sins forgiven is unscriptural and it's at the heart and root of the error of the hyper-grace message. He cleansed me of my sin.

Past sins. Present sin. Future sin.

He cleansed me of my sins. I'm clean. You are already forgiven.

So if you ever make a mistake, just tell God you're sorry and say, thank you, Jesus. My sins are forgiven. But if we understand that we have been completely forgiven for all of our sins, past, present and even future, because all of our sins were future when Jesus died.

Sometimes people say, you mean God, you're saying God has forgiven me for sins I haven't even committed? And I'll say, well, when did Jesus take your sins into and upon himself at the cross? Well, how many of them have you committed then? None of them. They were all future at that time. Yes, God's forgiven us for the sins of our lifetime.

And when we understand that, that we have received total forgiveness, then we're able to relax about ourselves. God took sovereign initiative out of his goodness of his grace to have his son crucified at the cross, whereby he forgave all of our sins, past, present and future at the cross. All of us are forgiven when we accept Christ of our past, present and future sins.

According to the hyper-grace message, the moment you're saved, God not only says, I forgive you for everything you've done in the past, I forgive you for your present and past guilt in the language of Colossians 2, wiping out the IOU that was against us, that written debt that we owed all this to God that we could never repay. The hyper-grace message also says, the moment you're saved, God pronounces your future sins forgiven. The moment we're saved, God puts us in the righteous column, the forgiven column, the column of being his children.

And he now relates to us differently. But if I fall short, if I blow it, it's appropriate to say, Father, wash me, cleanse me, I sin. It's appropriate to confess our sins.

It's appropriate to ask to be forgiven. Now, here's where the hyper-grace people are right. We're in the forgiven column.

In other words, God's not dealing with us as lost sinners who need to repent and be saved again. In the language of Jesus in John 13, we've had a bath, we're ready to cleanse, but our feet get dirty as we walk in this world. So we need to get our feet washed.

That's what 1 John 1.7 and 1.9 talk about. But this idea that God has already pronounced my future sins forgiven leads to all kinds of other errors. For example, God will never bring up to me my past sin.

He doesn't say to me, Mike, you shot heroin 43 years ago. You stole money from your father. No, I've been forgiven.

That's under the blood. Well, if my future sins are already forgiven, then why would God bring those up to me? What do you do with Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount? That if we don't forgive others, God won't forgive us. Simple.

You say those words don't apply to us today if you're in the hyper-grace camp. Those were just for the Jews before the cross. What do you do with James, the fifth chapter, speaking about a brother who's very sick? God will forgive.

That's it. If it was already forgiven, why is God gonna forgive it then? What about in the fifth chapter, James, verse 16? Confess your sins one to another. Well, why are we confessing our sins one to another if God's already forgiven them? We shouldn't have any consciousness of them anymore.

If my sins are already forgiven, the Holy Spirit won't convict me, and on and on. So this is the basic root error in the hyper-grace teaching, the idea that the moment you're saved, God pronounces your future sins forgiven, and he will never deal with you based on those future sins again. A provision was made, but pardon has to be received the moment we repent.

I have, and I was gonna write a blog about this. This is hand cleanser, sanitizer. Everybody carries one almost.

You know, you get it in various sizes and so on. I've had this literally for years and years. I paid for it, possibly five years ago at least.

I paid for it. It was paid for, but it continues to work. Now, I don't use it just once.

You know, I take it out and I use it once, and I never have to use it again. No, I can use it when necessary. It was paid for.

Provision was made when I paid for it. Jesus Christ made provision for our cleansing at the cross, but it's ever active in that sense. It's a new and living way.

He ever lives to make intercession. Jesus spoke about being forgiven on an ongoing basis, not that God forgave all of our sins, past, present, and future. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught us to pray, give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

Our forgiveness is conditioned upon our forgiving others who sin against us. Jesus also taught, for if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

And whenever you stand praying, forgive. If you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.

Note what Jesus said in the parable of the unforgiving servant. First of all, Peter came to him and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times? Jesus responded, I do not say to you up to seven times, but up to 70 times seven. Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him 10,000 talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him saying, Master, have patience with me and I will pay you all.

Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. And he laid hands on him and took him by the throat saying, pay me what you owe.

So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him saying, have patience with me and I will pay you all. And he would not, but went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved and came and told their master all that had been done.

Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, you wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you? And his master was angry and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So my heavenly father also will do to you, if each of you from his heart does not forgive his brother his trespasses.

In the parable, the servant had already been forgiven, but he was delivered to the tormentors because he did not forgive his brother. Being delivered to the tormentors cannot possibly be the fate of a saved

person. The servant's past sins were forgiven, but the forgiveness of his future sins was conditioned upon his forgiving others.

When a forgiven Christian does not forgive his brother, God's forgiveness will be revoked and the penalty will be reinstated. If you refuse to forgive others, even though you have already been forgiven by God, then you won't be forgiven after all. He says, forgive others and then you'll be forgiven.

If you don't forgive others, God won't forgive you. And it's like, we don't teach this. I mean, Billy Graham is not in a stadium telling people you wanna be forgiven.

Well, if you forgive others, then God will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, God will not forgive you. That's not the message that Billy Graham preaches.

That's not the gospel that we share today with unbelievers. Dr. Ellis claims that before the cross, Jesus preached conditional forgiveness, forgive to be forgiven. Dr. Ellis has a real problem with the conditional forgiveness taught by the Lord Jesus.

He writes, Jesus said, if you do not forgive men their sins, your father will not forgive your sins. This is not good news. This is bad news that should make a shake in our boots for it links God's forgiveness to our own.

It is not grace, it is law. It is quid pro quo and tit for tat. It is something you must give to get.

Later, we will answer the question, are Jesus's words for us? It is sufficient for now to quote the apostle Paul who wrote his epistles after the cross. Still forgiveness is imperative for Christian living. He says, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long suffering, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another, even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. How many people who are professing followers of Jesus, if they were honest, wouldn't have to say at some points along the way, you know, there's a person over here that I haven't forgiven them, I haven't forgiven them. Well, if that's the case, I would say to that person, you better be afraid, you better be very afraid, because by your own understanding of doctrine, you won't be forgiven by God because you've not forgiven others.

And in reality, what that then points us to is the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross was not effective because your forgiveness, your unforgiveness has nullified the cross. It is not that unforgiveness has nullified the cross. Jesus made it clear in Matthew 18 that the penalty would be reinstated if the forgiven servant did not forgive others.

Unforgiveness is ungodly in a sign of perilous times, as Paul said in Romans 1, 28 through 31, and 2 Timothy 3, 1 through 5. I said I was nearly finished. I lied, but I'm forgiven. Many hyper-graced teachers have stated that their teachings on grace do not give us a license to sin, but according to them, sin does not separate a person from fellowship with God.

Joseph Prince writes, because you did nothing to deserve his presence in your life, there is nothing you can do that will cause his presence to leave you. Philip Yancey, talking about grace in his, I wanna say it's an award-winning book, What's So Amazing About Grace. Grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us more.

No amount of spiritual calisthenics and renunciations, no amount of crusading on behalf of righteous causes. And grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us less. No amount of racism or pride or pornography or adultery or even murder.

Grace means that God already loves us as much as an infinite God can possibly love. I cannot moderate my definition of grace because the Bible forces me to make it as sweeping as possible. God is the God of all grace, in the Apostle Peter's words.

And grace means there is nothing I can do to make God love me more, and nothing I can do to make God love me less. It means that I, even I who deserve the opposite, I'm invited to take my place at the table in God's family. He's making it sound like the Bible is forcing him to make this as the definition of grace.

But that actually isn't what grace is. You see, we are cut off from grace under the law of sin and death. We sin, we die.

The tree of life has been cut off to us. There's cherubims with a flaming sword and they block the way to the tree of life. But the way has been made available to us in Christ Jesus.

And so we have been brought into the grace of God, which we could call Jesus, the life of God, the power of God, but that has been cut off to us. And in that life, we live. And so grace is the manifest presence, the enabling power, the gift of God unto us in the person of Jesus Christ.

And it's not just that he forgives us of our sins. We are wretches and he forgives us. It's that he actually imparts to us his life.

There is a throne room, it's called the throne of grace, and it's been made open to us and so that we can boldly enter into it to obtain mercy and to find help, grace for help in time of need. It's not just God loving us and overlooking every fault that we have. It's God intimately acquainted with our life, saying, I know what you need and I've made it available to you.

Come to me and I will supply you with grace so that you might live. There's nothing that you can do to make God love you more. No amount of spirituality, trying to impress how legalistic you are with other people.

There's nothing that you can do to make God love you less. No sin, no error, no evil that you can commit. I mean, look at David, look at Paul, look at Peter.

They all committed terrible crimes. Nothing you can do to make God love you more. Or nothing you can do to make God love you less.

An infinite God already loves you as much as God possibly can. And that if we could understand that, then we'd have a little glimpse of what God's grace is. Such a statement is misleading because many will equate God's love to God's fellowship.

But there is an important distinction between love and fellowship. God so loved the world that He gave His Son, but He does not have fellowship with the world because they have not received His Son. Those in the lake of fire are not going to be thinking that there was nothing they could do or not do to make God love them more or less.

Yes, God loved even them, but He loved them by sending His Son. In this, the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. God is love. God sending His Son was grace or unmerited favor toward us in His love.

But if you reject God's Son or rebel from Jesus Christ, then you are rejecting His love and fellowship. He who believes in the Son has eternal life, but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. And so those that are watching who think that sin changes God's attitude toward us, I'll tell you, this will set you free if you understand that our sin doesn't change how God feels toward us.

He loves us the same all the time. He doesn't love us because of how wonderful our behavior is. He doesn't reject us because of how bad our behavior is.

He loves us because He is love, and that's His nature to love, and that's what He does. God's love for us is not the same thing as salvation, or else there would be universal salvation. God doesn't stop loving us when we disobey Him.

However, that doesn't mean He is going to give us everlasting life either. If a congregation has to put someone out of fellowship for the purpose of church discipline, that does not mean they don't love the person anymore, but sin does affect God's attitude toward us. Jesus said, if you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love.

In Grace, the Forbidden Gospel, the author writes, Jesus already paid the full price so that we could have unbroken fellowship with the Father. This means that when we make a mistake, it does not break our fellowship or right standing with God. It is false to teach that our fellowship with God cannot be broken.

Jesus said to His disciples, if anyone does not abide in me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered, and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If we do not abide in Jesus and thereby produce fruit, then we will be cast out and burned. But God will not cast you out for making a mistake in ignorance.

The author of Hebrews says, looking carefully, lest anyone fall short of the grace of God. Lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled. Lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. As the hymn says, there is a time we know not when, a point we know not where, that marks the destiny of men to glory or despair. There is a line by us unseen that crosses every path, the hidden boundary between God's patience and his wrath.

There comes a point where our fellowship with God can be broken if we fall short of the grace of God. Consider Jesus' words in Revelation 3.20. He said, behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and dine with him and he with me.

This passage is often quoted by evangelists for unbelievers, but Jesus was standing outside of the church. This church was not in fellowship with Christ, but Jesus was knocking on the door for any individual who

would let him in for fellowship. Jesus loved this church, but he was standing outside and calling them to repent.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Then all of this jargon that I've invented, you know, I'm out of fellowship, now I'm back in.

I went to church, oops, I said the Lord's name in vain. Now I'm out of fellowship again. Now I'm back in because I did my quiet time.

Oops, you know, I stubbed my toe and cursed and whatever. Now I'm out again. This in and out and in and out of fellowship thing.

Well, the scripture says that we are one spirit with him. Anyone who has joined himself to the Lord, Corinthians says, is one spirit with him. Andrew Farley mocks the idea that Christians can lose their fellowship with God, citing 1 Corinthians.

But Paul also said in 1 Corinthians, do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are. God never, never, ever, ever, ever withdraws his presence from you, ever.

You're in union with him. I would say persistent, deliberate sin ultimately cuts a person off from God. I don't think one sin by any stretch of the imagination, if you are truly a born again believer.

First of all, John says he that is born of God does not commit sin, meaning he doesn't practice sin. We all stumble in many ways and we're not immune from temptation and falling and so on. But I don't think the first sin, you know, God sort of wipes his hands off us and say, you know, I can't wait to get rid of you sort of thing.

No, God's got incredible patience. We've got the story of Jezebel in Revelation 2. And God said, I gave her time to repent. I gave her time.

God's got incredible patience. You know, he waited 100 years during the construction of the ark, not willing that any should perish. And so having said that, I don't think we should by any means, you know, test the patience of God.

I think a lot of people misconstrue God's patience with God's permission. And that's a dangerous thing. In other words, you know, I can still prophesy.

I can still whatever, speak in tongues. I can still, you know, some particular gift that I have is still operating. People are still getting saved under my ministry, even though I'm sleeping around or whatever.

You know, we are, and therefore it can't be that big of sin in the eyes of God. Otherwise he would have sort of killed me long ago. No, that's God's patience, not God's permission.

There were two ways in which an Israelite could be cut off from God. One, if he never applied the blood to the doorpost, you know, going back to the Passover. In other words, if he did not avail himself of the blood, the death angel would have taken him.

But he says, after having applied the blood, if he refused to remove leaven from his house, the Bible says he was cut off. In other words, God's intention is I redeemed you by the blood of the lamb. Now that you're

redeemed, I expect you to walk in purity, in a sanctified way, if you like, because he said seven days, you shall remove leaven from your house.

Seven is always the number of perfection, always a number of completion and so on. And so God was saying, I've redeemed you by the blood of the lamb. Now it's your job to get rid of any leaven in your house, leaven, which is a type of sin.

And it says, if you don't do that, in other words, if you don't walk in obedience to my word, then you will be cut off. But it wasn't one day, it wasn't one hour, it wasn't one minute, it was seven days. In other words, it was a period of time.

So I think, you know, we need to understand, God is patient with us. But I think if we persist in sin, ultimately there is a cutting off. Now, when that day comes, when that time comes, I don't know, you know, we can't put it down to so many days or so many hours, but my spirit will not always strive with men forever.

I don't want to test the patience of God, you know, especially when I can avail myself of the blood of Christ and walk in liberty and freedom. Self and sin are not listed among those things which cannot separate us from God. There are no external forces which can separate us from God, but our own sins will separate us from God.

In fact, Isaiah the prophet said, that your iniquities have separated you from your God and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he will not hear. Don writes, the old life has been destroyed. You can dig as much as you want, but you will find no remnants of this old life buried in the gospel.

This makes joy and happiness come effortlessly for the believer. Ryan Rufus says, there is no sinful nature in there. There is no sin.

There is no unrighteousness. No, your spirit has received fullness, full perfection, full righteousness. John Crowder writes, I no longer even have an independent self that is capable of pleasing God.

It is no longer I, but Christ. There is no separate individual you. Christ has replaced you.

Saved people don't sin. Romans chapter five, we mentioned last night, for just as through the disobedience of one man, the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man, the many will be made righteous. Shackle over now, repair me or not.

The core foundation of what we were drinking, guys, you gotta understand, we are drinking from the source of this revelation that we are no longer sinners. We are no longer some fake sinner hybrid that you have to spend your whole life trying to overcome that sinful nature, beat up that old man, beat up that old nature, put to death that old nature. This is absolute, absolute anti-Christ garbage from the pit of hell.

It is the core foundation of religion. It's this idea that you, as a believer, are still a sinner. Something that's a very dangerous deception is kind of a new Gnosticism.

It says this, well, 1 John 3, that whoever is born of God cannot sin because the seed of God remains in him, therefore he cannot sin. Well, how do we understand that? We understand that in terms of habitually practicing sin. If you truly know the Lord, then you cannot habitually continue to sin.

If you do, then 1 John says, either you never knew God at all, you're just a liar, right? So what is the hyper-grace extreme interpretation? It would say this, the seed of God remains in me, therefore I can't sin, but I do sin. No, no, no, that's not really me. I am a spirit, and my spirit is perfectly born again, and my spirit is perfectly redeemed, and my spirit can't sin.

All sin is of the flesh, and since my flesh is not really me, if I do something wrong, it's not me. It's sin that is doing the evil work. It's not actually me.

One of my friends called the pastor of the church that he was attending, and he said, I just need a yes or no answer. Do you sin? Yes or no? And the pastor said no. And then he proceeded to explain, what I mean is I am a born-again spirit, my spirit is perfect, my spirit cannot sin, therefore I do not sin.

Whatever's born of God cannot sin, and if there is sin, it's my flesh, and that's not really who I am. Again, utterly bizarre. I've seen it defended.

I've not heard it defended by mainstream teachers in the hyper-grace camp, but some just a little bit on the fringe, they've been teaching it, they've been defending it, and again, it's this separation, this gnostic separation of spirit from material. The fact is God deals with me as a whole human being, spirit, soul, body, and I will stand before him and give account for the deeds I did in the body. Again, another dangerous deception.

We all sin, even after we get saved, but God does not see our sin any longer. He sees Jesus. In Jesus, there is no sin.

When God looks at someone who has been born again, he sees Jesus standing there in our place. If you have been born of God, you do not sin and you cannot sin. This interpretation is obviously inconsistent with the rest of John's epistle and the rest of scripture.

John says also, now by this we know that we know him if we keep his commandments. He who says I know him and does not keep his commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps his word, truly the love of God is perfected in him.

If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of him. Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness and sin is lawlessness. And you know that he was manifested to take away our sins and in him there is no sin.

Whoever abides in him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen him nor known him. Little children, let no one deceive you.

He who practices righteousness is righteous just as he is righteous. He who sins is of the devil for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose, the son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil.

Whoever has been born of God does not sin for his seed remains in him and he cannot sin because he has been born of God. In this, the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest. Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God nor is he who does not love his brother.

Clark Whitten says that Christians can sin but they're not sinners. Jesus' blood cleanses, washes. Though they be as crimson, they shall be as wool.

Though they are red, they shall be white as snow. It cleanses us of our sins, removes them from us as far as the east is from the west. That's why you're not a sinner.

You can sin but you're not a sinner. Does that make sense? To Clark Whitten, it is on the basis of the forgiveness of sins alone that one is counted righteous. But John told us that those who have been truly born of God do not practice sinning.

Therefore, John said it is manifest by their deeds who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil. Whitten said that unrighteous deeds do not make a righteous person unrighteous and that righteous deeds do not make an unrighteous person righteous. Now let me ask you this.

Does the unrighteous deed that the righteous person does make the righteous person unrighteous? No. Deeds didn't make him righteous to start with. Deeds don't make you righteous or unrighteous.

You understand? There's only one way to become righteous or unrighteous, standing with God, and that's through the blood of Christ. That's faith in Jesus. That's His finished work produces that.

You don't. You can't ever. So does the unrighteous deed that the righteous man does make the righteous man unrighteous? No.

All right, let me ask you this. Does the righteous deed that the unrighteous man make the unrighteous man righteous? No. No.

You don't get righteous by doing deeds. It's by faith in Christ. You believe.

But the prophet Ezekiel wrote, The righteousness of the righteous man shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression. As for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall because of it in the day that he turns from his wickedness. Nor shall the righteous be able to live because of his righteousness in the day that he sins.

When I say to the righteous, he shall surely live, but he trusts in his own righteousness and commits iniquity. None of his righteous works shall be remembered, but because of the iniquity that he has committed, he shall die. Again, when I say to the wicked, you shall surely die.

If he turns from his sin and does what is lawful and right, if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has stolen, and walks in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live. He shall not die. None of his sins which he has committed shall be remembered against him.

He has done what is lawful and right. He shall surely live. Yet the children of your people say, the way of the Lord is not fair, but it is their way which is not fair.

When the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, he shall die because of it. But when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is lawful and right, he shall live because of it. Yet you say, the way of the Lord is not fair.

O house of Israel, I will judge every one of you according to his own ways. Do righteous deeds make people righteous? No. Do righteous deeds keep them righteous? No.

It's a permanent, listen, it's a permanent God-performed miracle. Righteous. I don't feel like that.

Always. Forever, really. But I am.

I don't care whether you feel like it or not. You are. If you believe in Jesus.

Certainly belief in Christ is essential. Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. But Abraham was not a wicked man.

By faith, Abraham obeyed. The apostle John wrote, if you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of him. Scripture teaches, in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace.

But must a Christian continue to confess their sins in true repentance? Joseph Prince says, my friend, this is the assurance you can have today. The day you received Christ, you confessed all your sins once for all. That verse said that he wasn't counting people's trespasses against them.

Does that mean that I don't need to ask for his forgiveness? Bingo. In fact, it insults the finished work of Christ when you do ask for forgiveness. I want to tell you now, there is no scripture in the new covenant.

For new covenant believers, that tells you that you need to continually confess your sins and repent of your sins and ask for forgiveness of your sins and get cleansed of your sins. Why? Because one sacrifice for all time, for all of your sins has already dealt with every single one of your sins. It's absolutely right and appropriate for believers to confess their sins to God.

It's what you do in a relationship. If I was short with my wife one day and then I left the house abruptly and then I came back two or three hours later, you better believe the first thing I would say is, honey, I am so sorry. Please forgive me that that was completely wrong.

I can't believe I treated you like that. Forgive me, that's wrong. And I was so insensitive.

I didn't even call. But it's what you do in a relationship. It's common courtesy.

I interacted with a hyper-grace teacher once and said, would you do that with your wife? He said, of course, but I'm not married to God. I have a different relationship with God. I thought, what in the world you're talking about? All the analogies in scripture, God and Israel, the husband and wife and Jesus and the church, the husband and wife and the relationship we have and the intimacy we have.

Of course. And 1 John 1, 9, which is not written to unbelievers. Contextually in 1 John, it's clearly believers.

Scholars recognize that of 1 John. And the Greek is speaking of ongoing, continuous, not a one-time thing. If we confess our sins in an ongoing way, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Now, here's the point. This is what's so important. I'm not confessing my sins in order to be saved.

And I'm not confessing my sins with the notion that if I miss one sin one day, I'm going to hell. Again, there's some people that live like that. And then they hear the hyper-grace message and you don't need to confess, just agree with God that you're righteous and that your sins you're already forgiven.

And it's helpful for them because they've been so sin conscious that all through the day, oh, I didn't confess the sin right. Oh, I confessed it with pride. And they're in this continual rut.

If I fail to confess a sin, let's say the end of the day, I did not confess to the sin of prayerlessness and I was oblivious to the fact that I was too busy to commune with God that day. I'm not going to hell if I fall asleep and die in the middle of the night. That's not what it's about.

It's relational. It's the forgiveness that comes within the family. Of course, it's right.

Of course, it's proper. It's common etiquette in a relationship and it helps us keep our conscience clear. And it helps us be conscious of failings in our lives.

In other words, if I just kind of look the other way as if it never happened, I could harden my heart. I could become accustomed to doing something wrong. Whereas when I get alone with God, I said, father, I'm so sorry.

I'm your child. I love you. I didn't act in accordance with that today.

It's not really who I am, but what I did was ugly and I shouldn't have treated that person like that. Lord, please forgive me. Wash me.

There's communion that comes out of it and there's a sense of fresh cleansing that comes out of it. That's a healthy thing, not an unhealthy thing. There was a young man who wrote to me from New York.

He's now in his 20s, but ever since he was 13 years old, he was bound to pornography and he'll watch it almost every day. And he says this, and Pastor Prince, as a martial artist, you know, I'm highly disciplined and I use all my discipline as a Christian to try to overcome this bad habit, but I couldn't overcome it. It's an addiction.

But when I heard your message that when you sin, confess, I am the righteous, that you're still righteous in Christ. I have so many testimonies of people who are bound to drugs, addicted to cigarettes, all right, and all kinds of bad habits, okay, eating disorders. While they are indulging, while they are doing it, I teach them, confess, I am the righteousness of God in Christ.

They'll still do it. My God confessed it. And when they're confessing, the devil will say, you are a hypocrite.

How can you confess that? But the Bible says, when you receive the gift of righteousness, you will reign in life. And when you reign in life, your addictions don't. When you reign in life, the evil habit doesn't.

When you reign in life, the devil doesn't because you are reigning. Nowhere does the Bible teach that reigning in life is achieved by confessing you're righteous when you're actually unrighteous and continuing in sin. According to Ryan Rufus, many Christians, when they sin, they feel unrighteous.

They feel dirty. They feel unholy. They feel like they've let God down.

They feel like God is no longer pleased with them. And they feel like they need to, oh, I need to do something. They feel guilty.

So that guilt drives them to want to do something to get rid of their sin or to get rid of the guilt of their sin. That guilt wants to lead them to try to get rid of their sin. So they feel like they need to confess, God, I've

got to confess my sins.

I've got to repent of these terrible sins. I've got to get cleansed of these sins. I've got to promise that I'll never do this sin again.

We are not called to confess our sins. We are called to confess our righteousness in Jesus Christ. Rufus goes so far as to say that to ask for forgiveness is a sin.

But as a new covenant, born again believer, to now go and ask for forgiveness for after you sinned, after you sinned, to now go and ask for forgiveness is a sin. It's the sin of unbelief. It's the sin of unbelief because you don't believe in the finished work of the cross.

You're trying to add to it. You're trying to do something. You don't realize it was already done.

Hyper grace has redefined the confession of sins to the confession of righteousness. You see, once you start listing all your sins, you will never run out of things to repent of. In contrast, the person who understands grace says to God, God, thank you for forgiving me.

Thank you that I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. Thank you that the blood of Jesus Christ covers all of my sins. The hyper grace teachers go so far as saying we must repent of repenting and that repentance is idolatry.

So often we try to repent and prove our repentance and show how sorry we are. That's idolatry, you know. You know why it's idolatry? Because if I think I have to show my sorrow and I have to wall one's self-condemnation and I have to rededicate myself and promise God this or that, then what I'm really saying is I don't believe the work of the cross was enough to deal with sin.

There's a contribution I need to add to it. And what I add is going to put it over the top. Idolatry.

Let's just relax. We're forgiven. Let's just believe in the finished work of Christ.

Ongoing repentance is idolatry? Writing to the Corinthians who are already Christians, Paul the apostle said that they were clear in a certain sinful matter because of their godly sorrow which produced true repentance characterized by indignation against sin and fear of God. For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it, though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while.

Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation not to be regretted, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

For observe this very thing that you sorrowed in a godly manner. What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication. In all things, you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

Speaking to the hyper-grace community, Michael Brown asked, We agree that the Holy Spirit never condemns us for our sins as believers, but does he ever make us uncomfortable when we sin? To which Paul Ellis responded, Jesus called him the Comforter not the Discomforter, so I guess not. Yes, the Holy Spirit is the Comforter and Helper, but the Holy Spirit is given to them that obey him. Peter said, And we are his witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey

him.

And the Holy Spirit does not comfort those in disobedience. Notice the refrain from Revelation, He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. What did the Holy Spirit say to these churches? Jesus said to these various churches, I have this against you that you have left your first love.

Remember therefore from where you have fallen, repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. You have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality. Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate, repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality and she did not repent. Indeed, I will cast her into a sickbed and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.

I will kill their children with death and the churches shall know that I am he who searches the minds and hearts. I will give to each one of you according to your works. I know your works, that you have a name, that you are alive, but you are dead.

Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember, therefore, how you have received and heard, hold fast and repent. I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot.

I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth. Because you say, I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing, and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come to him and dine with him and he with me. Obviously, the Spirit spoke words of discomfort to the churches to help them repent of their sins. Does the Holy Spirit convict unbelievers of their sins? Well, that is a common view that you'll hear all the time, that the Holy Spirit convicts unbelievers of their sins.

And for that matter, you'll even hear the Holy Spirit convicts believers for their sins. But that's not true. That's not what the Bible says.

In fact, when we teach that, we're reinforcing a faulty idea. Over in John 16 and verse 8, it says when the He, the Spirit comes, he'll convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment, concerning sin because they do not believe in me. That's central.

Concerning righteousness because I go to the Father and you no longer see me and judgment because the ruler of this world has been judged. But this thing of the Holy Spirit convicting unbelievers of sin, he said convicted of sin because they do not believe in me. What we need to understand is that sin is not an issue.

God through Jesus or in Jesus at the cross has dealt with the whole issue of sin. The Bible says that he came to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. John the Baptist, when he saw Jesus, said, behold, look, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

Over in 1 John 3, he said, you know that he appeared to take away sin. That's exactly what Jesus did. So when we talk about being convinced, unbelievers being convinced something about their sins, he puts that phrase with it.

It is that they don't believe in me. Believe what? What unbelievers need and believers too for that matter is to be convinced that Jesus has taken our sin away. The Holy Spirit never comes to any of us and says, you know, you need to stop, you know, using bad language and you need to stop getting drunk and you need to stop.

He doesn't come to us about that because God has dealt with our sins. What he does is he comes to us and says, let me convince you about who you are. Let me convince you about what Jesus has done.

McVeigh further claims the Holy Spirit will convict an unbeliever of only one thing, his unbelief in Jesus Christ. He will show that person where he stands so that he can enter into the experience of knowing God through Jesus. McVeigh misunderstands John 16, 8 through 11.

And when he has come, he will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment of sin because they do not believe in me of righteousness because I go to my father and you see me no more of judgment because the ruler of this world is judged. In the passage, sin does not refer only to the sin of unbelief. The Greek word hamartia is often translated as sins, plural.

For example, And she will bring forth a son and you shall call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins. Then Peter said to them, repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Peter responded to the people, repent therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.

And Jesus said it is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to convict of sins. It is God's grace that the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins. But according to Joseph Prince, the Holy Spirit never convicts Christians of your sins.

He never comes to point out your faults. It does not take a revelation from the Holy Spirit to see that you have failed. However, when you know that you failed, what you do need is for the Holy Spirit to convict you of your righteousness.

When you sin, look to the cross and say, Lord, thank you. It's faithful. If you don't do that, something inside you, your DNA is very smart.

When you condemn yourself, it seems like the cells of your body say, he wants to condemn himself. He wants to hurt himself. Let's create a disease.

Doctors call it psychosomatic, autoimmune disorders when your body fights against the cells. People are sick today, not because of sin. Sin is taken care of.

People are sick because of condemnation. Condemnation kills. So when you sin, what do you do? Look away from self to the cross and say, Father, thank you.

There is my judgment. There is my beating. And all the cells in your body go, peace, boys, relax.

The price is paid. It is finished. It is finished.

Hallelujah. It is well. Many adherents of hypergrace, when they hear the word convict, they think it means condemn.

You are now guilty, convicted. The court convicts you of this crime. Biblical conviction does not mean that.

When the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins, and by the way, the same word that's used for convict in John 16, that the Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin. That same Greek word is used for rebuke or reprove in quite a few other passages in the New Testament, including Revelation 3.19, where Jesus says, as many as I love, I rebuke and discipline. Same Greek word there for rebuke.

Therefore be zealous and repent. So condemnation is, you're guilty, away from me. Condemnation is, gavel comes down, convict it, out of here, next.

You know, next criminal, bring them in, and then we'll send them away. If you're a child of God, you never come under his condemnation. If you're a child of God, Romans 8.1, there is no damnation.

There is no doom. There is no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Jesus. Conviction is God's loving rebuke.

It's a good thing God makes us uncomfortable in our sins. There's some people that their nerves are dead and they can put their hands literally on a burning stove and they don't know it. But the problem is, it's still gonna burn and that's gonna damage their hand even further.

If we become insensitive to our sins, that opens the door to all types of deception and backsliding and compromise. So the Holy Spirit in his love doesn't condemn us, not what conviction means there, but he lovingly rebukes us, makes us uncomfortable, so that we'll turn from that sin, which is so hateful and destructive, and turn to God and receive his mercy. The word effortless is also used by Andrew Womack in the title of his book, Effortless Change.

The word is the seed that can change your life. In the book, he writes, Effortless change, it sounds impossible. Yet that's what the word reveals about how the kingdom of God works.

He continues, In this book, I want to share with you some truths from the word of God that can totally transform the way you understand and approach change. If you receive these truths into your heart and apply them to your life, you'll be able to see change take place in your life effortlessly. Joseph Prince teaches, My friend, there is no middle road.

You cannot mix your own efforts with God's grace. He says, When you receive completely what Jesus has done for you, your doing will flow effortlessly. Prince says, While success to the world comes by one's self-effort, willpower, and striving by one's own strength, God's way to supernatural effortless success is for you to depend totally on his unmerited favor.

It's very interesting that many hyper-graced teachers will talk about spirituality being effortless. The image would be of a tree. It doesn't make an effort to grow.

It just drinks in the water and it grows naturally. Or a little child. The little child doesn't make an effort to grow.

You don't sit there and stretch. You just eat and drink and sleep and you grow naturally. On the one hand, that's totally true.

100% true. It's what Psalm 1 speaks of, what John 15 speaks of, the abiding in God. And as we abide in God, we just bear fruit naturally.

And in that sense, it's effortless. On the flip side, it takes an effort to remain united with him. It takes an effort to meditate in the word day and night, recite, repeat, speak the word, get it in our heart and mind as Psalm 1 and John 15 speak of, Jesus talking about his words abiding in us and us abiding in him.

And throughout the New Testament, there are exhortations, be it Jesus telling us to take up our cross, deny ourselves and follow him, be it Paul telling us in 1 Corinthians 9 to run our race so as to win and to discipline our bodies so that we won't be disqualified or the image of Hebrews 12 of persevering in our race and encouraging us, hey, we haven't yet resisted sin to the point of shedding our blood and talking about the need to endure. In fact, it's a theme often repeated in Hebrews. You need to endure.

You need to persevere. And spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6, this speaks of a wrestling. This speaks of a battle.

There are many, many passages throughout the New Testament that speak of this. In fact, in my Hypergrace book, when I address the question of effortless spirituality, I first affirm where I agree and that we find rest in Jesus, that we cease from our religious strivings and we do come to him and find rest for our souls, as he says in Matthew 11, verses 28 to 30. But then I interview Jesus.

I interview Paul. I interview Peter. I interview other New Testament authors.

And I say, is spiritually effortless? And I respond with verse after verse after verse after verse. Now, the reason this is so important is because many times when I've posted, say, on my Facebook page, on Ask Dr. Brown on Facebook, I'll post a verse about persevering or enduring or running our race or an exhortation from another Christian leader. People will be saying amen.

And then someone, a Hypergrace adherent will chime in, that's just religious works. That's just sin management. That's just behavior modification.

I'm not into that, man. Spirituality is effortless. I'm thinking, why are they rejecting Scripture? Dead words.

Law. Old acts. Inch.

Dirty art smell in the room. I set you free. To no longer strive.

On the contrary, Jesus said, strive to enter through the narrow gate. For many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. The apostles also spoke about striving, willpower and making every effort.

I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men. To this end, I also labor, striving according to His working, which works in me mightily. Not that I have already attained this, that is, I have not already been perfected, but I strive to lay hold of that which Christ Jesus also laid hold of me.

Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have attained this. Instead, I am single-minded, forgetting the things that are behind and reaching out for the things that are ahead. With this goal in mind, I strive toward the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

For to this end, we toil and strive because we have our hopes set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe. Make every effort to present yourself before God as a proven worker who does not need to be ashamed, teaching the message of truth accurately. Therefore, while the promise of entering His rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.

Let us, therefore, strive to enter that rest so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue and virtue with knowledge and knowledge with self-control and self-control with steadfastness and steadfastness with godliness and godliness with brotherly affection and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election. For if you practice these qualities, you will never fall.

For in this way, there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The apostle Peter did not invalidate the work of the cross when he said, Save yourselves from this perverse generation. The condition of repentance for salvation is not a purchase price, as Crowder argues.

The condition of repentance and obedience do not change the gift of grace into a wage. God does require self-effort from us, but the striving of a Christian is not entirely dependent upon self-effort, because we are also enabled by God's Spirit and in cooperation with God's grace. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace, which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain. But I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to do His good pleasure. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

The word effortless is also used in the title of Benjamin Dunn's book, *The Happy Gospel, Effortless Union with a Happy God*. He writes, the only efforts necessary for this union with God were Christ's. Just simply respond with childlike wonder and amazement at the work of Christ.

Just shout, yes, I believe it. John Crowder asks, Does happy, effortless Christianity sound scandalous to you? Does a daily walk of joyful, sinless existence seem like an impossibility? Moreover, Crowder says that real conversion effortlessly leads you to a happy, holy life. The repeated resistance to the fact that God requires us to make an effort can only lead to apathy.

In the cases of Crowder and Dunn, effortless spirituality has led to utter foolishness and devilish mockery of the Gospel. And I think what this grace teaching does, I should say this hyper-grace teaching, it

absolves the Christian from any sort of personal responsibility. You don't have to pray, you don't have to fast, you don't have to do anything anymore.

You just sit there like a bump on the log and a great big funnel and God does everything for you. I just don't get it. They're reading a totally different Bible than the one I read.

And the one that all these people for centuries have read. It's a brand new form of, I hate to even call it Christianity, but a brand new type of religion that puts all the responsibility on God and absolves the Christian of any personal responsibility whatsoever. God's grace teaches us to say no to sin, to live soberly, righteously and godly.

Paul wrote, Zealous for good works. Joseph Prince says, As the moment you accepted Jesus, God gave you an eternal A-plus for your right standing with Him. In Pure Grace, Clark Whitten writes, You are like Him, my friend, and are in a permanent and unchangeable state of holiness.

When God looks at you, all He sees is the righteousness of Christ Jesus. The second chapter of Crowder's book, Mystical Union, is called, Sanctification is not a Process. Crowder says, The moment you decide to do something to be holy, you have trusted in yourself instead of Christ for salvation.

He didn't just die with him. This was not a partial death. Just to make sure he was fully dead, they ran a spear right up into his side, and the blood, you want to break your anointing? I'm going to break your bones for you.

I'm going to come break your legs, Make sure you're dead. Don't need to, you're dead. Not partially dead.

Not on the road to killing yourself, and sanctifying yourself for your own person. Sanctification is not a process, it's a person. When you get that theology, the Bible, 1 Corinthians chapter 1, He has become our sanctification.

When you set apart, you are fully set apart. Sanctification isn't a process, to be honest. We don't become more and more holy.

No, we become holy once and for all. We become sanctified once and for all. Now the life we live is the overflow of what has happened.

That miracle overflowing through our mind and through our body. Amen? In hyper-grace teaching, the idea that sanctification is progressive, is actually called a spiritually murderous lie. That's a direct quote from a prominent hyper-grace teacher.

The notion is you start from perfection. That the moment you are saved, you are completely and totally sanctified and made holy. Now there's a lot of language in scripture, but you have been sanctified.

For example, 1 Corinthians 6, 9-11, which talks about don't be deceived, the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God. Then it lists various sins. Those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom.

Then 1 Corinthians 6, 11 says, and such were some of you. But you've been washed. You've been sanctified.

You've been justified by the blood of the Lord Jesus, by the Spirit of our God. So you have already been sanctified. That's part of it.

But that's not the whole story. The moment we are saved, God sets us apart as holy. And He calls us holy ones.

That's how we're addressed in the New Testament. Saints. That's what it means.

Holy ones. He sets us apart as holy. And now He calls us to live that out.

1 Thessalonians 4. This is the will of God. Even your sanctification. Live like this.

2 Corinthians 7, 1. Having these promises of being children of God and God living among us, having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness, completing sanctification in the fear of the Lord. So we are set apart as holy. Now we are called to live that out.

So God, dealing with us in space and time, corrects us of our sins, exhorts us not to displease Him or grieve Him, points out when we do something wrong. The whole New Testament deals with sin in the lives of believers. 1 Peter 1, we are called to be holy in all of our conduct because the way we live, the way we act things out, is very important.

Just saying I'm a holy one, just saying I'm sanctified, is the beginning. Now as a holy one sanctified, I am to live out my sanctification. And then there's a final, ultimate sanctification.

1 Thessalonians 5, 23, Paul prays for the complete sanctification of our spirit, soul, body. If we're already completely sanctified, we don't need to be prayed for to be completely sanctified. Hyper-graced teachers will look at what Paul writes in Colossians 2, which says you're complete in Christ.

And some translations would point to being perfect, meaning that you are 100% perfect in God's sight because He sees you as a new creation through the blood of Jesus. So therefore, He'll never deal with you based on your sins. No matter what you do, you're still perfect in His sight.

You can't grieve Him or disappoint Him or displease Him because you're perfect. Let's just have Hebrews 10 up there. We'll just read verse 14 for the sake of time.

For by a single offering He has perfected for all time. Say for all time. How much is for all time? By one sacrifice He has perfected forever all of those who are being sanctified.

So let me close this question with this. When you come to Christ, you are perfected forever in the eyes of God. They'll point to Hebrews 10, which says that we have been perfected, but what that means there is through the sacrifice of Jesus brought into a place where we can rightly worship God.

In fact, in that very same passage in Hebrews 10, He talks about our ongoing sanctification. So this is one of the big rubs. This is really, really one of the biggest issues.

Christians have taught through the centuries that there are three parts of sanctification. That positionally, the moment we're saved, we are set apart as holy. Then progressively, as we grow and walk in the Lord, we grow in holiness and to the character of Jesus, and then the final, ultimate sanctification when we are resurrected and made perfectly holy.

According to hyper-grace teachers, there is no progressive sanctification. You just think. You're now preaching this.

You're preaching be holy. Well, I'm already holy. You're preaching, well, this is what God requires of you, your sanctification.

I'm already sanctified. Well, let us complete our sanctification in the fear of God. I've already completed it.

You can see how this can be a real trap. It's like salvation. We're saved.

We're being saved, and we will yet be saved, the Bible says. There's a big difference between salvation and conversion. Salvation is that all-inclusive moment, if you like, when we stand before God with our glorified body.

That's our ultimate salvation, but we are converted the moment we are born again of the spirit of God. We're regenerated, but then there's a process towards maturity. Let us press on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works.

All of that is up to you and I. God does not do it for us. My father used to say Christianity, in a sense, is like a do-it-yourself kit. God provides you with all the pieces, but you have to put it together.

It's like a jigsaw puzzle. God says, here it is. Now you put it together.

There's an element in which if a man purge himself from these things, he shall be a vessel unto honor. There's a self-purging, if I can put it that way, where God enlightens me through the Word of God that this particular thing is wrong or that particular thing and so on. I repent of it and then I move on.

This grace message absolves the believer from any of that. I can't say it. Lay aside, put on.

You've got that phrase used many times in the Scriptures. I've got to lay it aside. I've got to put it on.

Put on the whole armor of God. God doesn't put it on for me. He provides it for me.

God provides, but I have to apply it. That application is up to the believer. We are warned that the process of sanctification cannot continue if a believer falls away or continues in sin.

For those who repent and believe Christ, His single sacrifice is sufficient to present us to God, washing away our sins the moment we were saved. But there's more. If we reject this once-for-all sacrifice, if we decide that we can continue in willful unrepentant sin, there is a fearful warning for us.

For if we sin willfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins. But a certain fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Stern warnings like this have been relegated by hyper-grace teachers.

Obviously, if Christians were already completely sanctified, the apostles would not have to exhort them to live holy lives, which leads to sanctification. For example, the apostle John said, And everyone who has this hope in him, purifies himself, just as he is pure. Hyper-grace teachers believe that Christians need to be delivered from trying to please God.

John Crowder writes, It is high time the church gets delivered from God-pleasing. Likewise, Clark Whitten writes, If you are working to please Him, you are in for a lifetime of unfinished business, and it will leave you perpetually exhausted. According to Paul Ellis, There is nothing wrong with wanting to better yourself, but you have to understand that in Christ you are already as good and pleasing to God as you ever will be.

It is not true that Jesus pleased the Father so that we don't have to please Him. Too many scriptures say otherwise. Therefore, we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.

Find out what pleases the Lord. For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please Him who enlisted him as a soldier.

But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts. Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God. For you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Conversely, without such sacrifices, God is displeased. And again, if anyone draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him.

An ancient Israelite, when he sins, he brings his lamb to the priest in the tabernacle. And the priest does not examine the sinner, he examines his offering. He does not look at the offerer.

It's obvious why he is there. He looks at the offering. Today when you worship God, God is not looking at you.

God is looking at your offering. God looks at the lamb and examines the lamb. Is the lamb good? Is the lamb without blemish? What do you reckon about our lamb? Is he good? Is he perfect? Is he without blemish? Is he altogether lovely? God accepts you in the offering that you bring.

Joseph Prince wrote, Stop examining yourself and searching your heart for sin. Remember that when someone takes his sin offering to the priest, the priest does not examine him, he examines the sin offering. In contrast, Paul wrote to the Corinthians, But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you? Unless indeed you are disqualified.

Paul Ellis says, But don't confuse behavior with identity. You are not defined by what you do. Your identity is Christ, and in Him you are and always will be 100% pleasing and acceptable to God.

As for seeing Christians perfect, 100% pleasing and acceptable to God, no matter what they do, nothing could be further from the truth. Consider what Jesus spoke to the churches in the book of Revelation. Out of the seven churches, it was only the churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia that God found to be perfect, 100% pleasing and acceptable.

The five other churches, made up of individual believers, were strongly rebuked by Jesus. He sees you in Christ Jesus. He sees you in your older brother.

When he looks at you, he just sees the perfect righteousness of Jesus. He does not see your faults. He does not see your mistakes.

Well, first of all, if he's a real, genuine believer, he doesn't have any sin, or he shouldn't have. But if he does sin, obviously God sees it. He saw the sins of the five of the seven churches of Revelation, drew their attention to it.

You know, God doesn't wear rose-colored glasses and sort of see everything through the blood of Jesus. No, He sees us as we are. The reason He disciplines us is because He sees things that need to be chastened.

Every son He receives, He disciplines. so, obviously, He sees our condition. He brings that out.

Paul saw the condition of the man that was living with his father's wife 1 Corinthians 5 and said, you know, it needs to be dealt with. He says, you've not mourned, you've not grieved, and so on. Then when he writes the 2nd Corinthians, he brings in the point, he says, you know, you've got godly sorrow.

You've sort of finally woken up and it's brought you to repentance. So, again, there is another case of repentance for the believer. So, yeah, God sees us.

Paul certainly saw the condition of the church. He said, you know, your babes, your carnal, he pointed out and the Word of God points out. Now, it's not for condemnation.

It's so that God can deal with the situation. It's like going to a doctor and the doctor says, listen, you've got this disease or whatever it is, we need to operate. Yet John Crowder says, whenever someone is saved, the battle against sin is decisively over.

He also writes, we are not climbing an unseen ladder. We have already arrived. The only thing that differentiates you from a Muslim, from a Buddhist, from a Hindu, is that you've already arrived.

But the Apostle Paul wrote, not that I have already attained or am already perfected, but I press on that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended, but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Holiness is not about doing this or not doing that, about your clothing or your hairstyle or whatever it is.

It's not about your behavior. It's not about do's and don'ts. It's all about being occupied with the lovely one, Jesus.

The commandments of Christ and His Apostles are an important part of the Gospel of the Grace of God. In the Gospel of John we read, For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. Jesus epitomized grace and truth.

Even though Jesus did not come to perpetuate the law of Moses, this doesn't mean that Jesus had no law. Jesus' commands and His eternal law are not opposed to grace. Jesus and the Apostles referred to the Old Covenant law of Moses in the following terms, Until John the Baptist, obsolete, growing old, ready to vanish away, is passing away, abolished.

While the law of Moses was the inspired word of God in the Old Testament, its civil and ceremonial ordinances are not imposed upon Christians in the New Testament. Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying you must be circumcised and keep the law, to whom we gave no such commandment. Peter the Apostle said, Now therefore why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we should be saved in the same manner as they.

When the Apostles say things like you are not under law but under grace, and the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ, they are contrasting the Old Covenant law of Moses with the New Testament. In those passages, grace is being used as a synonym for the New Covenant, primarily because the forgiveness of sins is a major theme throughout the New Testament. But that is not to say that the New Covenant has no law.

A very common sentiment today is the notion that, look, I'm free, I have liberty in Christ Jesus, I don't have to worry about what I do and how I do it, I don't need to dot I's, cross T's, that's legalism. And you know, I'm not a fan of legalism anymore than anyone else would be. However, what we see is this concept, this marring of a concept of being free, or having liberty in Christ Jesus.

You see, we're a slave. We're a slave unto sin in our Adam condition. However, there is one that has come, he's known as the last Adam.

And he has accomplished something that actually, when we turn to Jesus Christ and believe, there's a new law in effect. The law of sin and death, sin, you die, has been trumped by a higher law, the law of believe and live. And so when we believe in Jesus Christ, we have life.

And when we have life, we are free from our old Adam state, called the flesh. We're no longer ruled by our carnal or baser instincts, but we are now ruled by a higher life. We are ruled by our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

So what are we free from? Are we free from God? No. We're free from our old lusts and behaviors, so that we can now live unto God and be a slave unto righteousness. Before we were a slave unto sin, but now we can be a slave unto righteousness.

And some people are like, I don't want that, I want to be free from God. Well, that's not Christianity. If you want life and life abundant, you give your life unto Jesus Christ.

You see, you're going to be a slave one way or the other. You're either going to be a slave unto sin and remain on that throne of your life and die. You sin, you die.

Or you believe and you live. But when you believe and you live, what you're doing is you're giving up your life as you now know it. You're coming to that cross, you're dying, so that Christ can now live.

It's old man and new man. That old life is crucified. Paul says, I am crucified with Christ.

My old man was crucified in Christ Jesus. This is a fact. But then when you turn to Jesus, you have newness of life.

It's not just that your old life dies and now you're in control and you're free from that old life, and you're free from God too, and you just live your own way. No, you're free from the old man, so that a new man can take the reins. And you are now ruled by the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

You have a king of kings and a lord of lords that masters you. That's good news. It's not bad news.

If we're in control of our own life, we die. We need to be controlled by God. In general, hyper-graced teachers have created a false dichotomy between a grace-filled relationship with God and a commandment-keeping faith relationship with God.

The truth is that a saving relationship with God is characterized by obedient faith enabled by His grace. Steve McVeigh claims, whether we see people as living morally or immorally, we're viewing life through a lens we aren't intended to use. God hasn't designed life to be lived based on a system of morality.

He has a much better plan in mind for us than that. Paul Ellis writes, a counterfeit gospel will imprison you within the confining walls of rules and regulations, but the true gospel proclaims, if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. The New Testament is very clear that a new covenant has been inaugurated with the people of God.

It's to Israel and Judah and then by extension to all those who believe in the Jewish Messiah. And this new covenant is not like the Sinai covenant. That was a covenant even though the laws were good and perfect.

Paul says in Romans 7 the law is holy and just and good. Read Psalm 19. Read Psalm 119.

The law is something praised and God is to be thanked for his wonderful commandments and statutes but it was written on stone, not on our hearts. So the law is over here telling me, Mike Brown, don't commit adultery. Mike Brown, don't worship idols.

Mike Brown, don't steal. And I myself fall short as a fallen human being and that now condemns me and that's why Israel suffered the way it did in the Old Testament Scriptures because it was constantly falling short. That's why God said he would make a new and better covenant, one where he would put his law on our hearts.

So Paul says in Romans 6 as he's exhorting us and encouraging us to die to sin and live to God, he says you're not under law, you're under grace. Now by the way, he is telling us that to encourage us to live a holy life. He's telling us that to help us live an overcoming life.

However, the hyper-grace camp often reacts against commandments themselves, laws themselves. One hyper-grace teacher said if God wrote the law, the Ten Commandments on our hearts, it would kill us. No! If he writes his law on a new heart that's been redeemed by Jesus, it's now our nature to do it.

That's why the New Testament is filled with commandments. In 1 Thessalonians 4, when Paul's exhorting the Thessalonians there, he uses the word for exhortation, which is basically a commandment word. This is what we command at you.

And that's why Paul can freely quote from the Ten Commandments in Ephesians 6. And he says, children, obey your parents and the Lord for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise. Paul quotes from the Ten Commandments and gives it to the Ephesians as such.

So in point of fact, the law is good in and of itself. We are bad. That's the problem.

So God made a new and better covenant where he changes us from the inside out and puts his laws on our heart. So that means we can read all of the word and be enriched by it, be changed by it, helped by it, edified by it, learn about the holiness of God through it, but not be under that system of law as a system of justification. Legalism is bad in itself.

Law is not bad in itself. And sometimes hyper-graced teachers make that failure to distinguish. And they think that somehow law in itself is bad.

Law brings wrath because of the sinfulness of man. Law is the strength of sin because of the sinfulness of man. As new creations, we now love the law of God, which is written on our hearts, and we say, I delight to do your will, as per Hebrews, the 10th chapter.

And the hyper-graced camp has too broadly defined the law. They understand the term law as any command in the Old Testament or New Testament that requires from us some work of obedience, whether it was given by Moses or Jesus. For instance, Eric Dijkstra defines law as trying to change yourself through self-effort, rules, or willpower.

I mean, think about it for a second. Think about it. Basically, you've got two taps to deal with.

On the one side over here, we talked about this last week, there's the tap of the law. Everybody say law. By law, I mean this.

We try to change ourselves through self-effort, through rules, and through willpower. You can go ahead and throw that up on the side screens. We try to change ourselves through self-effort, through laws, and through willpower.

But the New Testament writers specifically refer to the law of Moses under the Old Covenant when they speak about the law. Hyper-graced teachers understand Paul to be referring to any works of righteousness whatsoever when he says law. When the Bible speaks about the law, it's speaking about God's word of command.

And when it speaks about the gospel, it's speaking about God's word of promise. Remember, when I say law gospel here, we can nuance this in a thousand different ways. That's not my intention here this morning, but we've got to understand this is the genre of command and the genre of promise.

The gospel of grace that Paul preached is not being preached in the majority of churches around the world. That is a fact. It's not critical.

It's a fact. They still mix law and grace together. Alright.

Prince says the more we try to be righteous, we fall from grace. After you are righteous, as a gift, God gives you the gift of righteousness. The more you try to be righteous after that, you fall from grace.

In the context of his epistle, Paul is clearly referring to justification by the law of Moses, namely circumcision and other ceremonial ordinances. Paul is not rebuking the Galatians for obeying Jesus Christ or trying to be righteous. In fact, Paul said to the Galatians, O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? You ran well.

Who hindered you from obeying the truth? The problem with the Galatians was their disobedience in seeking to be justified by the law of Moses, not that they were trying to be obedient to God. Elsewhere, Paul clearly stressed the importance of obedient faith and the works of righteousness. Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God bethought that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints, neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

For this you know that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man who is an idolater has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth, fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal, the Lord knows those who are His, and let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity. They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work. This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works.

These things are good and profitable to men. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him. While Paul is said to be the apostle of the law-free gospel, this can only accurately refer to his rejection of the law of Moses as a means of salvation.

Paul was not altogether anti-law, but he was against the idea that keeping the law of Moses was a requirement for salvation. But Paul absolutely taught observance to the commandments of Jesus. Paul said, circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.

Paul is clear that grace is for obedience. Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name. Though Jesus did come to set us free from sin, Jesus also has rules.

Grace is not a substitute for obedience or a covering for disobedience. Grace is for obedience to Jesus Christ. Paul says his message to the Romans was to bring about obedience to the faith.

And Peter, again, he calls us obedient children. I've often thought, you know, instead of using the word Christian the way we do, it's become sort of watered down. It would be neat to call ourselves obedient children.

Are you an obedient child? You know, that's what God is after. In the book *Grace, the Forbidden Gospel*, the author states, at the risk of sounding critical, it remains a sad reality that the Bible society chose to combine the Old and New Testaments into one single book. This single decision has caused widespread confusion within the ranks of believers throughout the world.

Many of the writings in the Bible before the cross portray God to be a harsh, cruel being set on destroying and punishing people if they dared to disobey the set of moral standards represented by the Ten

Commandments and the other laws. There's some other things that I've seen in the hyper-grace camp that concern me. Along with the denigration of the law in a wrong way, not in the spirit of the New Testament, but in a wrong way, there's often a denigration of the Old Testament as a whole.

One hyper-grace author in his book said that the worst thing that ever happened for believers is that the Old Testament and New Testament were put together in one book. And now people have a wrong view of who God is because of the God of the Old Testament. I wrote to him and said, do you actually believe this because I'm taking issue with it in my book? He said, oh yeah, 100%.

That's terribly dangerous. That is a heretical idea. And that's the old heresy of Marcion who said that the God of the Old Testament was different than the God of the New Testament and that the Old Testament should not be part of the Christian canon.

Very, very dangerous. When you do that, it's like building a two-story house and cutting out the first floor. You're going to bring a collapse with that.

The God of the New Testament is the same God of the Old Testament who destroys and punishes those who disobey Him. There are even examples of this recorded in the New Testament after the event of the cross. For instance, the angel of the Lord struck Herod so that he died.

Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died. Also, after the event of the cross, Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit and fell down dead as a consequence for their sin.

And there were those in the Old Testament who found God's grace. For example, Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. This is the genealogy of Noah.

Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. God said to Moses, You have found grace in my sight, and I know you by name.

Thus God was still a God of grace in the Old Testament and still a God of wrath in the New Testament. The author of *Grace, the Forbidden Gospel* writes, Paul preached a different message than Jesus, but for a good reason. They were living under different covenants.

Hyper-grace teachers create a conflict between what Paul preached and what Christ preached. Did Jesus and Paul really preach two different messages? Two different gospels? What gospel did Jesus preach? We read that Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom. Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

Most of Jesus' parables and teachings described the kingdom of God. God established a kingdom, the king of which is Jesus, the citizens Christians, and the laws of which are the commandments of Christ. The gospel message of the kingdom of God is consistent throughout the New Testament, beginning with John the Baptist who came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, preparing the way for Christ and saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel. What gospel? The gospel he just preached.

The kingdom of God is at hand. Jesus said, I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent. Then Jesus commanded his disciples to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. Furthermore, Jesus said, And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations. And then the end will come.

This is the one and only gospel that Christians are to preach in all the world until the end comes. The gospel of the kingdom. Did the message change after the cross? Or after the resurrection? Luke, the historian, recorded, The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach until the day in which he was taken up, after he through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom he had chosen, to whom he also presented himself alive after his sufferings by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

The gospel of the kingdom was also the message of the earliest Christians. But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God in the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. What about Paul? Did Paul really preach a different message than Christ and the other disciples? Of course not.

And Paul went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. So when they had appointed Paul a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, from both the law of Moses and the prophets, from morning till evening. Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

From John the Baptist, to Jesus, to the apostles, to the apostle Paul. The gospel message has always been the gospel of the kingdom of God. Paul only believed in and preached one gospel.

In fact, Paul had zero tolerance for any other gospel, in Galatians 1, 8-10. What about the gospel of grace? Paul considered the gospel of the kingdom of God and the gospel of grace to be one and the same. Paul said, But none of these things move me, nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Notice how Paul used these terms, gospel of the grace of God, and gospel of the kingdom of God, interchangeably and synonymously. Paul never referred to more than one gospel.

This gospel of the kingdom is the gospel of grace. There is only one gospel. It is an act of grace that God sent us the gospel of the kingdom of God, the message of salvation, also called the gospel of grace.

But the hyper-grace movement teaches that Jesus' ministry was under the Old Covenant, so His teachings are not for us. Mike Kapler and Joel Bruschi have a podcast called Growing in Grace. In a blog post called How Much of What Jesus Said is for Us Today, Bruschi essentially says that Jesus' ministry was part of the Old Covenant, and therefore His teachings are not for us today.

For instance, he says, Jesus' words about forgiveness in the Lord's Prayer is a Jewish mandate, and not for Christians. He argues, Jesus' words as recorded in the Gospels were often intended solely for a particular group of people, most often His fellow Jews. What we're saying is that the New Covenant didn't begin at the start of the book of Matthew, but it actually began after the death of Jesus.

Jesus did indeed have an Old Covenant ministry that led up to His death and resurrection, which then brought about the New Covenant and ended the Old Covenant. Under the Old Covenant Jesus spoke many times as a Jew to Jewish people. Under the Old Covenant, including Jesus' Old Covenant teachings in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, if they didn't forgive others, God would not forgive them.

But under the New Covenant, which is completely new and is completely separate and different and much, much better than the Old, we have already been forgiven of all sins because of nothing less than the blood of Jesus. Everything is changed in this New Covenant after the death and resurrection of Jesus. Joseph Prince argues that some things that Jesus said in the four Gospels were spoken before the cross, before He had died for our sins, and some were said after the cross, when He had already won our complete forgiveness and rightfully given us His righteousness.

It is the latter that applies to us, believers under the New Covenant today. Hyper-Grace teachers point out how the New Testament was in force after the death of Christ. Here's the big thing.

The New Covenant began upon the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. The writer of Hebrews says a covenant is not of effect until the death of the one that wrote it. So Jesus then lived under the Old Covenant.

When He talked about forgiveness there, He was called a minister to the circumcision, a minister to the Jew. It was a law mentality. Hebrews 9, verse 16 and 17, they say this.

They say a covenant is only in force when there's been a death. Now, what does that mean? It means that a covenant, even the New Covenant, it did not begin with baby Jesus in a manger. Now, I know, I know you go get your Bible, you grab it off the shelf, and you look at Matthew chapter 1, and you flip back one page, and in big block letters it says, the New Testament.

Well, what I'm saying is, that's not right. That's not the beginning of the New Testament era. It's not the beginning of the New Covenant.

A covenant begins not at a birth, but at a death. The dividing line of human history is not baby Jesus in a manger in Bethlehem. The dividing line of human history is Jesus hanging on a cross.

A covenant is in force only when there's been a death. And so, what does that mean then? Well, it helps me understand, what's Jesus' motive as He's saying, cut off your hand, pluck out your eye, sell everything. What's His motive? His motive is to say, you need me.

You need the New Covenant. And how am I going to show you that? Tough love. I'm going to show you through exposing the fallacy of works righteousness.

Now, I want you to ask yourself, when did this New Covenant really begin? I mean, when did it all get started? Because I'll tell you, we go to the Bible, and we turn to Matthew chapter 1, and then we flip back one page, and in big block letters it says, the New Testament. Now, the publishers put that there, but let me tell you, that's not really the beginning of the New Testament. The New Testament does not begin, the

New Covenant does not begin, this new agreement, this new contract does not begin on any page in a book.

It doesn't begin with baby Jesus in a manger either. It begins with Jesus Christ hanging on a cross. Yes, the death of Christ was necessary as he was the mediator of the New Covenant, but this does not negate the teachings of Christ prior to the cross.

Though the New Covenant was not in force until the death of Christ, according to Hebrews 9, the terms and conditions of the covenant were given in Jesus' earthly ministry while he was still living. In fact, one of the major characteristics of the New Covenant is that God would write his laws on the minds and hearts of his people. In Hebrews 8, 8-12, the author quotes Jeremiah 31, 31-34, prophesying of the New Covenant.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their mind and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Thus, in the New Covenant, not only are our sins forgiven, but God also writes his laws upon the minds and hearts of his people.

It's not that hyper-graced teachers altogether dismiss the pre-cross teachings of Jesus, but they do argue that the purpose of Jesus' teachings is not for our obedience, but for teaching the hopelessness of the Old Covenant. In the Naked Gospel, Andrew Farley writes, Peter, James, John, and Paul wrote epistles about life under the New Covenant. Years earlier, Jesus was teaching hopelessness under the Old.

The audience wasn't the same, the covenant wasn't the same, and the teachings aren't the same. It is these preachers of law that love to quote scriptures from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John out of context, forgetting that the crowds who Jesus was preaching to were Jews. These Jews had been polluted with hundreds of years of preaching of the Old Testament law, hearing day after day that it is their obedience to the law that will cause them to become righteous, and that their level of morality and good performance will earn them God's acceptance and blessings.

Is it true that Jesus was teaching hopelessness under the Old Covenant? Jesus was ushering in the Kingdom of God and New Covenant. Jesus himself said, For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. In other words, the Old Testament law was until John the Baptist.

Then, Jesus inaugurated something new. Jesus said, The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time, the Kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.

Since the time of John the Baptist, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God is preached, and Christ's commandments are the law of that kingdom. Christ's commandments far surpass those of the Old Covenant law of Moses, and he ushered in a higher standard of righteousness. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus quoted from the Old Testament, saying, You have heard that it was said, but I say to you, Moses said that, but grace and truth says this.

You have heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you, that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. Grace is always a higher standard than the law.

In other words, it doesn't lower the bar, it raises the bar. The law says, thou shalt not commit adultery. That's the law.

But I say to you, grace, because he came full of grace and truth, whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery. That raises the bar. One is just, don't commit adultery.

Now it's, boy, if I even look at a woman, you know. And all the way through Matthew 5, he makes a statement, and then he raises the bar. So grace is not, I think a lot of people think that grace is some sort of chink in God's armor that you can sort of drive a truckload of sin through, and it doesn't worry him.

No. Furthermore, it has been said, whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce. But I say to you, that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery.

And whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery. Again, you have heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not swear falsely but shall perform your oaths to the Lord. But I say to you, do not swear at all.

You have heard that it was said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I tell you not to resist an evil person. You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you. How does the grace reformation respond to the Sermon on the Mount? They say the Sermon on the Mount is not for us. In his book, Extra Virgin Grace, Ryan Rufus writes, Matthew 5.1-7.29 is the Sermon on the Mount.

Is this sermon intended for the church? Absolutely not. It is intended for the self-righteous. It is a pre-salvation preach that exposes self-righteous pride and performance and reveals the need for God's righteousness as a gift through faith in order to see the kingdom and become children of God.

Unless you really understand grace, don't go near the Beatitudes. They will mess you up. Teaching the Beatitudes to Christians produces legalism and religious pride or condemnation in them.

We must rightly divide the Word of God to see what Jesus was saying and trying to achieve here. The Beatitudes are not for the church, but were for unbelieving Israel. The church doesn't need the Sermon on the Mount.

If you were to ask Jesus if he intended the sermon to be a standard that the church measures itself against, he would either start rolling around on the floor screaming with laughter or bow his head and weep. This is a pre-salvation message that is delivered to self-righteous people who think that they are doing well with righteousness because they can keep some of the law. Once this message has done its job, it has served its purpose, and we then move on to the way of the Spirit.

But Jesus himself said, It is the Spirit who gives life. The flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are Spirit, and they are life.

That includes the Sermon on the Mount. Introducing his commandments in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

In conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in your name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.

Therefore, whoever hears these sayings of mine and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock, and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of mine and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand, and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, and it fell, and great was its fall. Furthermore, Jesus says that keeping his commandments is evidence of our love for him.

If you love me, keep my commandments. He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves me, and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

He who does not love me does not keep my words, and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. You are my friends, if you do whatever I command you.

And John the apostle wrote, Now by this we know that we know him if we keep his commandments. He who says, I know him and does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. Now he who keeps his commandments abides in him, and he in him, and by this we know that he abides in us by the Spirit whom he has given us.

By this we know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. This is love, that we walk according to his commandments.

This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it. Even after the event of the cross, after the resurrection, and after the inauguration of the new covenant, Jesus gave the great commission and said, Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. Jesus' words are clearly for us in the new covenant.

Christians are to be disciples of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed. It is by abiding in the words of Christ that we are his disciples.

It is by keeping his commandments in the gospels that we abide in him. Perhaps one of the best pictures of salvation is found in John the 15th chapter, where Jesus says, Abide in me, and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches.

He who abides in me, and I in him bears much fruit, for without me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered, and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it

shall be done for you.

By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, so you will be my disciples. As the Father loved me, I also have loved you. Abide in my love.

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. Just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. One of my greatest concerns with hyper-grace teaching is it relegates virtually all the teaching of Jesus before the cross to the Jewish listeners then.

And it says, for example, Sermon on the Mount does not apply to us today. The Lord's Prayer does not apply to us today. The parables about reward and punishment don't apply to us today.

That was for the Jewish listeners before the cross. It's a tremendous concern to me. Number one, as a lover of Jesus, I want to drink in every word he says.

I want to embrace his words. John the 15th chapter says that if we remain united with him and his words remain united in us, abide in him, his words abide in us, ask what will be done for us. The Great Commission in Matthew 28, Jesus says as we make disciples, we teach them to observe everything he commanded us.

The Greek tense is referring to what he previously taught. John 14, he said the Holy Spirit will bring to remembrance the things that he taught. Why? So the apostles could write them down.

Why did they spend so many years preserving his teaching, passing them on orally, and then decades later putting them in written form for the body if it was just for the Jewish believers before? It is so misguided and so destructive, and it takes away the call to take up our cross, the call to deny ourself, the call to leave everything and follow him. Think of all of the calls to discipleship, all of the calls to obedience, all of the lofty ethic of Jesus that was put there for us. Not just for those who would hear it for a few years and most of them would reject it or not even understand what he was saying.

No, this is given to us. That's why Acts 1 says that Luke writes in the former treatise in the Gospel of Luke, I spoke about everything Jesus began to do and teach. Now it continues.

This is not something that has a break from the words and deeds of Jesus. They continue through us today. And it's a very, very serious thing to say that the words of the Savior, which some Bibles they put in red ink so that will especially recognize their importance that they should basically be put in invisible ink.

That's very dangerous. As Christians, we ought to take the words and commands of Christ seriously. But hyper-graced teachers will say that nobody really believes every word Jesus said because if they did, then they would have to cut off their hand and pluck out their eye.

It is for unearned, undeserved, unmerited favor. Amen. You know, when Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount, he said love your enemies.

We've got problems loving our neighbor, let alone our enemies. He said if your right eye offends you, pluck it out. Throw it away from you.

If your hand offends you, cut it off. Have you seen any church, anyone doing that? The church would look like a huge amputation ward. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you.

For it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. For it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

Matthew 5, 29-30. If we truly obeyed these verses, there would be a lot of Christians without eyes and hands. So in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said if your eye offends you, pluck it out.

Throw it away from you. If your hand offends you and causes you to sin, cut your hand off. Has anyone done that? The church would look like a huge amputation ward.

Well Pastor Prince, you should have come earlier like a few years ago. Clap your stumps all together. And he says cut off your hand, pluck out your eye, be perfect, sell everything.

If we were obeying this today, the church would look like an amputation ward. Of course Jesus did not intend for us to amputate our body parts. Jesus is instructing us here to take ruthless action against the sins that will result in separation from God and hellfire.

The eye represents the thoughts, while the hand represents the works. Thus, you must ruthlessly avoid the thoughts and actions that will prevent you from entering into the kingdom of God. If there are places you go, people you associate with, ways you make a living, hobbies or interests that you have that present great temptation, then you must cut these things out of your life, even if they be as much a part of your own identity as your own hand or eye.

Paul instructs us, mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth. Fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry. For if you live after the flesh, you shall die.

But if you through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live. If your hand or eye caused you to sin, it would indeed be better to cut it off than to be cast into hell. But eyes and hands do not cause a person to sin.

Hands and eyes may be instruments of sin, but they don't cause sin because sin begins in the heart. Jesus said, Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

These are the things which defile a man. It is not to be thought that Jesus intended for a person to cut off their hand or pluck out their eye, for that is not where the real problem lies. He speaks hypothetically.

If it were even your hand or even your eye that caused you to sin, get rid of it. But it's not even possible for your hand or eye to cause you to sin. A person's own desires and lusts cause them to sin, not their eyes or hands.

James said, each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death. A blind person or a quadriplegic can still lust, though they have no eyes to pluck out or members to cut off.

So when Jesus says, if your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out, and if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off. He is using a figure of speech to convey the severity of sin, but not the remedy for sin. Jesus' commandments are not opposed to grace, but they are grace, and they are truth.

The words I speak are spirit and life. He is the Word. He's the living Word.

The Word became flesh. He also said that I don't speak and say a thing unless the Father tells me. So if you say that Jesus' words are not for the Christian, then you see God's words are not for the Christian.

There's no contradiction in the Trinity. He that rejects me and does not receive my sayings or my word has one who will judge him. The Word I spoke will judge him on the last day.

He goes on to say, therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told me. You can't get it any clearer than that. The very words I speak are going to be the things that are going to judge you on that day.

Christians who seek to love Jesus by obedient faith and oppose the new grace reformation are vilified as grace-haters, Pharisees, self-righteous, legalists, or law-keepers who are under works and in bondage. Joseph Prince writes, Notice that there was one group of people that was very unhappy with what Paul was preaching, the Pharisees, or what I call the religious mafia. These religious keepers of the law are still around today.

The law binds them. When they see believers impacted by grace, they become filled with envy because they have worked so hard and depended on their own efforts to achieve their own sense of self-righteousness. Clark Witten writes, The rock-throwing legalists who fill modern Christian churches and spawn the Pharisaical preachers they listen to each Sunday seem to be more dim-witted than the Pharisees of Jesus' day.

They at least walked away without saying a word in John 8-9 and had sense enough to keep their mouths shut, which is more than can be said of the mean-spirited Pharisees of our day. According to Rob Rufus, grace-haters are the legalists who will try to intimidate, manipulate, and dominate people with the spirit of witchcraft. They are parrots and puppets, no longer voices for God, but echoes, not pursuing God but pursuing opportunities for position and prestige.

They are cloned to act the same, dress the same, and speak in the same religious tones. You know where everyone looks the same, you can be sure a religious spirit is operating. One of my biggest problems with hyper-graced teachers and adherents is that they are so graceless towards those who differ with them.

I don't want to go tit-for-tat with Dr. Michael Brown. I'm sure he's a nice guy and he can grow a mustache almost as nice as mine. He's the guy who wrote the book Hypergrace in which he quotes me as many times as Joseph Prince as the fringe extreme of this movement.

He travels from Pentecostal church to church getting people as scared of me as they are ISIS, Obama, and the New World Order. Dr. Brown's chief ministry is built on debating people, and I personally think debate is just a rhetoric game, so I'm not interested. And the trophy of the truth goes to the winner of this debate.

Look, it's just as silly and as staged in my opinion, but that's how he rolls and that's fine. Look, I'll just put out a little teach every now and then, you can do what you want to with it. Now, if it sounds like I'm calling

Dr. Brown a Pharisee, well he does spend a lot of time attacking others and breaching the law, but look, I don't necessarily think he plays well with us, but I'm not going to personally attack him with an ad hominem argument.

As for his teachings, on the other hand, I will be quite blunt. Many of his teachings resemble Judaism far more than Christianity. There seems to be a hyper sensitivity, and the moment you challenge this, the moment you question some of the teaching, when they say, for example, that the words of Jesus spoken before the cross, like the Sermon on the Mount, that was just for the Jewish people before the cross, they don't apply to us today, and when you challenge that and give them good reason for it, you get called a law keeper, you get called a Pharisee, you get called a legalist.

One leading hyper-grace author makes these accusations, not naming names, but he makes these broad accusations throughout his books, which means that if you don't agree with his position, those that follow him think that you're one of those people. You're one of those really bad condemning, Pharisaical law keeping, grace haters, and you're just trying to put them back into bondage. So, rather than nuancing things, and say, look, there are some legalists, and they teach this, and it's destructive, and there are some in their zeal to please God, they can get into a performance mentality, and we need to help them see God's grace.

Instead, they come out as graceless accusers, which means there's something deeper, some hypersensitivity there that needs to be dealt with. Because until they have overcome that, they are not really walking in the grace of God. And let me tell you, a lot of hard-hearted legalists have trouble accepting this abundant freebie of forgiveness.

Grace is not cheap, it is free. That's the scandal. But unless people are beating themselves down continually, I don't know, listen to Leonard Ravenhill or somebody, they can't stomach the idea that God likes them.

In Peter's conclusion and farewell of his first epistle, the Apostle says, To him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. By Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.

Yeah, I was speaking with Dr. Michael Brown on one of his radio programs about a year ago. And it was about maybe a week before that, just reading my devotions through 1 Peter. And I got to the end, and I don't think I'd ever seen it before, and I brought it to Michael Brown's attention, that he basically summarizes that entire epistle by saying, you know, the words that I've written to you are about the true grace of God.

In other words, it was an elaboration on grace. And I'd never quite seen it that way. You know, true grace implies, obviously, that there is a false grace.

And you go through 1 Peter, in fact I've got a few notes here. Verse 2, that you may obey Jesus Christ. Verse 14, as obedient children do not be conformed to the former lusts, but be holy in your behavior.

Chapter 2, verse 2, long for the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby. 2 and verse 9, you're a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, or a holy people. Chapter 2 and verse 11, I urge you to abstain from fleshly lusts.

And then he goes on, he himself, in verse 24, bore our sins in his body on the cross that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. I mean, the whole thing is towards righteousness, is towards purity. That's the intention of grace.

God giving us the power to live a triumphant life over sin, to have victory over sin. Sin doesn't have dominion. Grace has got more dominion.

It's got more power. They think of grace as a sort of a commodity. That God's got a warehouse full of this grace.

He's trying to get rid of it, you know, and so he's got a fire sale. You know, so grace is something external from God. No, God is grace.

In fact, Hebrews talks about the spirit of grace. You've insulted or you've grieved the spirit of grace. Grace is a person.

And it's God's power working in us to bring about, again, his desire that we might be conformed to the image of his Son. That's God's ultimate purpose. And anything short of that, then, frustrates or thwarts the grace of God.

Another concern is that some hyper-grace teachers have gone to bizarre extremes. Now, this is not the norm, but I see it as a potential fruit of carrying out the hyper-grace message. Some have now claimed that no matter what they do, it's been redeemed as holy.

That everything they do is holy and they engage in all kinds of atrocious behaviors and claim it's redeemed. Now, again, that's an absolute fringe. But you could get there if you resist the conviction of the Spirit in your life.

You could get there if you believe that God always sees you as perfect. Every major hyper-grace teacher would renounce that, but I see that. It's not a hurry.

We're not fleecing you. I've seen a few on the fringe heading towards universalism. After all, if the finished work of the cross means there's nothing for me to add to it at all, well, why do I have to add my faith to it? If Jesus paid for all the sins of the human race and it was finished, why must I add my faith to it? There are some, again, fringe.

They would be renounced by all the mainstream hyper-grace teachers. But on the fringe, they are now saying, why not? One even went as far as saying, what about the demons? What about Satan? One went as far as saying that if Jesus did not spend so much time cursing the Pharisees and rebuking the Pharisees, that Jerusalem wouldn't have been destroyed. He should have spent more time blessing them.

I mean, it's one of the most insane things I've ever read. Again, it's on the fringe. But I understand how it gets there.

That's why hyper-grace teachers really need to step back and do a major course correction because there are things they are saying that are leading people to these bizarre extremes. Titus chapter 2 verse 11. We'll close here.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us or teaching us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in the

present age. So what does the grace of God do? It teaches us, it trains us, to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in the present age waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to what? Redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Let this be the foundation of our grace teaching and it will keep us properly anchored.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/dtRVWoeNuvw.mp4>

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