

(The Missing Messages in Today's Christianity) the True Grace of God

by Zac Poonen

The true nature of truth is living a life where our inner life corresponds with our outward life, and this is only possible through the help of God's grace.

Duration: 57:16

Scripture: Genesis 6:8, Luke 2:39, Acts 2:1-4, Hebrews 4:16, Jude 1:3-4

Topics: "Christianity"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the burden that Jude had to explain justification and salvation to people who did not have access to the book of Romans. However, the Holy Spirit prompted Jude to write about something else, urging believers to fight earnestly for the faith that was handed down to them. The preacher emphasizes the incredible nature of justification, comparing it to a condemned criminal being made a prince. He encourages believers to exult in the hope of the glory of God and to appreciate the power of the blood of Jesus Christ. The sermon also touches on the importance of grace and truth, and how grace strengthens the heart to resist temptation. The preacher concludes by highlighting the first step in grace, which is to receive and rejoice in the fact that God has accepted believers through the forgiveness of their sins.

Transcript

We continue our study in the missing messages in today's Christianity. I want to speak today about the grace of God. Beginning with John 1 verse 17, which says, The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

And grace leads to truth. When we speak about truth in the New Testament, it's not speaking about truth as opposed to lie, as we understand it, or truth of scripture alone. It includes that, but it means reality.

The opposite of truth is lie, so it's speaking about living a lie and living the truth. You know what it means to live a lie? To live a lie means to appear to be one thing on the outside, but something completely different inside. You know, in the book of Proverbs, it speaks about people who smile at you and want to shake your hands, but they got daggers in their heart against you.

There are lots of people in the world like that. That's living a lie. So the truth it speaks of here is living the truth.

Not just speaking the truth, but living the truth. When Ananias and Sapphira, without opening their mouth, they told a lie, and they were killed. This is the first sin for which God judged people in the early church.

So the truth spoken of here is that type of truth which was not possible in the Old Testament. Nobody could live truth in the Old Testament. Their inner life was much worse than their external life.

And their external life became good because of the law. And those nations that did not have the Ten Commandments, their external life was also bad. But because the Jewish people had the Ten Commandments, their external life was good, but their inner life was still corrupt.

They never committed adultery on the outside, but they committed it all the time, every day on the inside. They never killed people on the outside because of the Ten Commandments. They hated people on the inside.

And Jesus came and said, now listen, Sermon on the Mount. He was lifting the standard, the Ten Commandments higher and said, you have heard it said that you shall not commit murder. I say you shouldn't hate.

You must come to truth now. Truth on the inside. You got to live the truth.

You have heard that it said, don't commit adultery. I say don't even lust in your heart. You have heard it said that when you swear, put your hand on the Bible and swear you must speak the truth.

I say speak the truth all the time. So that is what it means to live the truth, where your inner life corresponds with your outward life. And I want to say to all of you in the name of Jesus, you must never be satisfied till your inner life corresponds with your outward life.

And determine, it's a battle to keep that. Lord, I never want to give people a pretense of being spiritual when I'm not spiritual. You don't have to confess your sins to everybody.

No, you confess your sins only to God. But don't live a lie. Don't try to gain a reputation for humility by acting humble.

That's a lot of rubbish. Live a truth. Now, do you know that even a prostitute can live the truth? You know what it means? It means to say, I'm a prostitute.

Outer life, inner life is just exactly the same as the outward life. That is the beginning. It means being honest.

You shouldn't stay there. But when the woman caught in adultery said, yeah, that's it. She was forgiven.

What is the difference between the two thieves on the cross? One was honest and said, yeah, I deserve this. I'm a criminal. Jesus said, sure, come to paradise.

The other thief said, hey, I don't deserve this. Pull me down from the cross. You go to hell.

See, the world of difference between loving the truth about yourself and being honest about it and pretending that everything is okay. That left-hand thief went to hell only because he pretended that he was

okay. And if you pretend that you're okay, you're going to be in a very serious condition.

Don't confess your sins in public, but don't pretend. Truth came through Jesus Christ. It was not possible under the old covenant.

But since most Christians live under the old covenant, they don't have truth in their lives. In other words, their outer life is far better than their inner life. And everyone sitting here, if your outer life is far better than your inner life, you have not yet come into the truth that the New Testament speaks about.

But you can come there. You can come there by honesty. Honesty requires humility.

And the higher up you go spiritually in the eyes of others, for example, if you're an elder brother, it's more difficult to be honest. I'll tell you that. Because you have to pretend that you're very spiritual.

Because everybody considers you an elder. And that's why there are a lot of hypocrites among elders even in the 1st century. Many 5 out of the 7 elders in Revelation 2 and 3 were outright hypocrites.

How did they become like that? Because they always kept preaching to others and never watched their own life. So, I think the person who just newly come to the church is very easy for him to be love the truth because he's got no reputation to maintain. He was just converted yesterday and he said, I was a sinner.

I've just come to the church. He has no reputation to maintain. It's very easy for him to live the truth.

But the more you live in the church, the more chances of you're becoming a hypocrite. Till you become an elder, you can be the biggest hypocrite of all. Unless you battle, battle, battle, battle against lying in your spirit all the time.

Grace is very closely connected to this truth in the sense that you cannot live this life without grace. Your inner life cannot correspond with your outward life unless you have grace from God. Without grace from God, you will not be able to live with truth.

That's why it says grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. Nobody could have it in the Old Testament. Every single person in the Old Testament, including John the Baptist, the greatest of all, their inner life was not as good as their external life.

But now, in the new covenant, we have the wonderful possibility that our inner life and outer life can grow simultaneously. As we grow here, we grow here. Equal.

That is the easiest way to grow spiritually. It's the only way. Anything less than that is a hypocrite.

Your outer life is here, your inner life is here, you're a hypocrite. You've got to bring that up to here and let it grow together. Don't ever try to give another person an impression about something about yourself which is not true.

I sometimes go to homes and I ask little children who are there, do you fight with each other? And what do you think they say? Yes. I know that. I don't need to ask them to find out if they fight with each other.

I just want to know if they're honest. And I tell you, almost every one of those children tell me yes. And I say, that's great hope for you.

It's the parents who pretend that they don't fight. It's the children. They're honest.

Yeah, we fight. There's hope. The ones who pretend are the ones who have the biggest problems.

Remember this in your Christian life. There's nothing wrong in admitting failure. But when you pretend, you're in great danger because Jesus Christ came to bring truth.

And truth means the complete absence of pretense. Now, don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying you've got to go and confess your sins publicly.

All I'm saying is don't pretend. And I hope you understand the difference. And now grace is necessary to live this life of truth.

If I want to live, I know this is the crisis I had in my life. I had two crises in my life. One was when I wanted power and I sought the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

And the other is when I wanted reality where I said, God, I want my inner life to be exactly the same as my outer life. I don't want to pretend. I don't want to smile pretending I'm happy when I'm not happy inside.

Of course, I don't want to make other people miserable. That's fine. But I don't want to pretend to have a joy which I don't have.

I want a joy which is inward all the time. Even if my outward expression can be heavy sometimes. The joy inwardly should never go.

So it's better that people think less of us because of what they see on the outside. And our inner life is better than the other way around where people think so highly of us and our inner life is pretty corrupt. The human tendency is to get people to think highly of us and our inner life is much worse.

That's the way to hypocrisy. Hate that. Say, Lord, it's much better that they think less of me and my inner life is much better.

That's why Jesus said, when you fast, don't let anybody know that you fasted. Let them think that you never fast. But fast, God will see.

When you pray, let people think that you never pray. But you pray and God will see and He'll reward you. When you give money for God's work or do something for the Lord or make some sacrifice, don't let anybody know.

Let them think that you don't sacrifice at all. God who sees in secret will reward you. This is the New Testament standard and this is not possible without grace.

So, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. There was no grace in the Old Testament. Now, many, many Christians have believed that grace means the unmerited favor of God.

In fact, the Amplified Bible even uses that as an amplification which is totally wrong. It's not the Bible is wrong, the Amplified translation of it is wrong. Because that's what all Bible schools teach.

I remember in one church in the United States, I was saying that grace is not the unmerited favor of God. And I explained it as I will in a moment. And somebody came to me and said, Brother Zach, you have with one sentence demolished what all the Bible schools are teaching.

I said, that's fine. But you need to hear the truth of God's word. Unmerited favor means I got a favor from God which I did not deserve.

Is that grace? If that is grace, then all six billion people in the world get grace. Can you tell me one person in the world who gets a favor from God which he deserves? No. Can you tell me one person in the world who doesn't get any favor from God? They get health.

They get money. They get a house to live in. They get sun.

They get rain. They're getting favor from God. They don't deserve it.

Then they're all getting grace. That's a deception. Grace is not the unmerited favor of God.

If you look at the Bible, there are two verses particularly that tell us what grace is. And I'll show them to you. One is Hebrews 4 and verse 12.

Whenever people don't study the Bible, they get all these crazy definitions which become very popular and which are never found in scripture. One of the things I decided 47 years ago when I started studying the Bible was that I would never believe what another person taught me unless I found it in the Bible, in spiritual matters, in Christian matters. And that has protected me from all these wrong definitions and wrong understandings and wrong doctrines all these years.

That's what I tell people myself. Don't believe what I say unless I can show it to you in the scriptures. Some things I'll tell you openly is my opinion.

But when it comes to grace, it's not my opinion. There's not a single verse in the Bible which says that God's grace is God's unmerited favor. In the King James Version, you'll find verses like Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord in Genesis Chapter 6. But you go to the NASB which translates it more accurately.

He found favor in the eyes of the Lord. A lot of people find favor in the eyes of the Lord. But that's not grace.

Grace came only through Jesus Christ. Nobody had it in the Old Testament. Not even John the Baptist.

Because the spirit of grace was poured out only on the day of Pentecost. How could people get it inside? So grace, Hebrews 4 and verse 16 is grace is something that the last part of that verse something that helps us in our time of need. That's why the Holy Spirit is called a helper.

King James Version says comforter. NASB in John 14 says a helper. Jesus said I'll pray and I'll send you another helper.

The helper gives us help. Or in other words, He gives us grace. Grace for what? To help me in my time of need.

And here it's talking about temptation. In verse 15. We have a high priest who was tempted in all things as we are.

And he did not sin. Now let us go to the throne of grace. So we also get the same help in our time of need.

And I'll tell you what your time of need is when you're tempted. When you're tempted to lust. When you're tempted to get angry.

When you're tempted to be bitter. When you're tempted to be jealous. When you're tempted to live for yourself.

To do your own will not to die to yourself. You're tempted, tempted, tempted. You know what you need? Grace.

In the time of need. You won't get it unless you go to the throne of grace and ask for it. You don't have because you don't ask.

It says let us go boldly to the throne of grace where we receive mercy. Mercy is forgiveness for our past sins. Mercy and grace are not the same.

Lot of Christians think they are the same. Mercy is an Old Testament word. We have plenty of it in the Old Testament.

Forgiveness for our past sins. Grace is help for the future. Mercy relates to the past.

Grace relates to the future. Mercy was there in the Old Covenant too. Grace only in the New Covenant.

Grace is help to overcome my sinful nature. And mercy is forgiveness for the sins I've committed through my sinful nature in the past. Jesus never needed mercy because He never sinned.

Did He need grace? He certainly did. People are shocked when they hear that. You mean Jesus needed grace? Well, if you think grace is unmerited favor, then of course He didn't need it.

Because everything Jesus got from God was merited. But grace is not unmerited favor. And I'll show you from Scripture how from birth to death Jesus got grace.

It's because people don't read the Bible carefully that they are ignorant. They are so ignorant that when we preach from the Bible, they think we are preaching a wrong doctrine. One of the things that happened to me when I got baptized in the Holy Spirit was I got a new Bible.

I got a new New Testament. Not new in the sense that it was written by somebody else. The same Bible became living.

My eyes got open to see a lot of things that I never saw before. So here it is. Let me show you this.

First of all, in Luke chapter 2, when Jesus was born, one of the first things written about Him after He was born and He was dedicated in the temple is this. He came back from the temple. Verse 39.

Luke 2 39. This is when He was a baby. They returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth, Joseph and Mary.

And the child Jesus, now read very carefully, this is the Word of God, continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him. Which means He was under grace. If grace is upon me, it means I am under grace.

And Romans 6 14 says, when you are under grace, sin will not have dominion over you. Why did sin not have dominion over Jesus? Because He was under grace. Luke 2 verse 40.

This is when He was a child. All through His life. Now let's go to the time when He died.

Hebrews chapter 2. Hebrews chapter 2. The missing messages in Christendom. Hebrews chapter 2 it says here, in verse 9. We see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, that is Jesus, because of the suffering of death. The way in which Jesus was made lower than the angels is that He died.

Angels don't die. So when Jesus died He was brought to a position lower than angels who don't die. He is now crowned with glory and honor.

By the grace of God He tasted death for us. How could He go to that death? By the grace of God. What did He have as a child? The grace of God.

So from birth to death the thing that helped Jesus all through His life was grace. So He never sinned, never disobeyed the Father even once. That's the meaning of Hebrews 4.15. He was tempted in all points as we are yet without sin and we connect it with these other verses and we see that was because of grace.

And therefore it says, we, let's go now, we can also go because He was like us. He was tempted like us and He overcame by grace. Let us go to the throne of grace and say, God, my Father, give me the same grace that You gave to Jesus to overcome sin.

Did Jesus overcome lust? Every single time. Did He overcome anger? Every single time. Except when it concerned the glory of God there was no question of overcoming.

He had to be angry in the temple, etc. But when it concerned Himself, never was He angry when people hurt Him or called Him names or anything because He had grace. He was never offended.

You know, I'm amazed that so many believers get angry, get offended and they just take it for granted. Oh, well, we're supposed to live like that. Why? Because they look at other believers around them who get offended, get angry, lust and say that's normal.

A lot of young people say, well, all young people do all these terrible things. They lust and they sin in so many ways, so I suppose I'm normal. You're not normal.

Everybody's abnormal and you're abnormal like them. The normal Christian life is the way Jesus lived. And if you can say Jesus did that, that's normal.

But if you lower the standard of normal to the standard of all the defeated Christians around you, that's all you'll ever have. If you run the race looking at all the Christians around you, you'll run a defeated life all your life. I decided as a young man, I will not look at all the defeated Christians around me.

I've said to people in CFC, don't look at all the worldly sisters around you. Look at Jesus. Don't fashion your dress according to the dress fashions of all the worldly people.

Don't criticize them. That's not your business. You're not to judge them, you're not to criticize them and you're not to imitate them.

You're to look at Jesus. That's the way you're going to keep yourself pure from the world. If you don't follow Jesus, you're going to be worldly or you're going to be critical and judgmental.

Both are wrong. Some people avoid worldliness but they become judgmental. I'll tell you one thing.

To be judgmental and critical is one million times worse than being worldly. And many people who judge and criticize others don't realize that. When you see somebody who's worldly and you criticize and judge that person, you are one million times worse than that person in God's eyes.

I don't know whether you know that. At least you know it today. That's why I say I don't want to be worldly like that person and I don't want to be judgmental of that person.

That person lives before God. It's none of my business. Maybe they don't have light.

God's given me light so I will not be like that. Make Jesus your example. That is the normal Christian life.

And he lived by the grace of God. I want to live by the grace of God. I want to overcome temptation the way Jesus overcame.

And so we see here. I want to show you another verse. In the book of Zechariah chapter 12, there was a prophecy in the Old Testament.

Zechariah chapter 12 was a prophecy of what God would do on the day of Pentecost. We know that on the day of Pentecost He poured out His Spirit. And it's called here in Zechariah 12 and verse 10.

I will pour out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the house of David the spirit of grace and of supplication. That is a spirit that makes us pray in dependence upon God for grace so that they will look upon me. So when the spirit of grace is poured upon us we look at Him whom we have pierced with our sin and I will mourn and I will not look at other worldly Christians and judge them.

And I will not imitate other Christians. And I will not attach myself to some preachers. I will look at Jesus and be connected to Him and I will mourn because I pierced Him.

Imagine if you live your Christian life like this. That if you refuse to look at other worldly Christians refuse to get attached to men of God and say, Lord I want to be connected to You. I want to look at You whom I pierced by my sins and I want to mourn.

Boy, can you imagine what your life will be like 6 months from now? It will be absolutely unimaginable. Your spiritual growth. And that's why the devil is always going to turn you away from looking under Jesus, make you look at that person, pass an opinion on that person, judge the other person and destroy yourself.

My dear brothers and sisters I beseech you by the mercies of God give up that habit. Give it up. All you senior sisters who judge others.

When will you give up this bad habit? You senior brothers who think that you know so much. When will you give up this habit and just look on Him whom you have pierced. Yeah, the spirit of grace is poured on such people more and more and more and more.

And even in the early days the apostle Peter when he wrote his letter he had to use an expression called 1 Peter 5 1 Peter 5 and verse 12, the last part. He says I have written to you briefly exhorting and testifying to you that this is the true grace of God. Now when do you need to use the word true? Only when there is a counterfeit.

If I give you an Indian Express newspaper I don't have to say this is the true Indian Express newspaper because I've never seen a counterfeit Indian Express newspaper. Nobody wastes time making counterfeit newspapers. But if I give you a hundred rupee note I may have to say this is a genuine true hundred rupee note because people make counterfeits.

So the need for Peter in the first century, 35 years after Pentecost to be able to say this is the true grace of God means even at that time there was a false grace. So false grace is not a 20th century phenomenon. It was there in the first century.

And the apostles had to fight it. And to explain people that's not what grace is. This is the true grace of God.

And he writes in this letter. This is the true grace of God where you, verse chapter 4, verse 1, you suffer in the flesh and you don't sin anymore. You spend the rest of your life doing the will of God.

It's amazing. This is the true grace of God. 1 Peter 4, 1 where you stop sinning and spend your life doing the will of God.

That is the true grace of God where you stop sinning and do the will of God for the rest of your life. That is the true grace of God. Now take the book of Jude.

I want to show you something in Jude. It's the second last book of the New Testament. You know that Romans is a wonderful book explaining the gospel.

Did you know that if Jude had written what he originally planned to write, we would have had another book like Romans explaining the gospel. Because that was his burden. You see, today we say, why write another book like Romans? Well, the thing is, remember in those days there was no Bible.

The book of Romans was not widely circulated that everybody could have a copy. So there were a lot of people whom Jude was in touch with who had no copy of Romans. And he had a burden.

See, I've got to explain to people what justification is, what salvation is. And he had a great burden to explain this. And as he was thinking of writing this big, long episode on salvation, the Spirit of God prompted him and said, no.

I want you to write about something else. That's what he says in verse 3. Beloved, while I was making every effort to write to you, that means he had collected his thoughts and said, I'm going to write about this common salvation, I suddenly felt the necessity from the Holy Spirit to write to you about something else. Appealing to you that you fight earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

Why? Because certain persons have crept in unnoticed. That is an expression we need very much in the church today. When an elder brother is not a good door keeper, a lot of people creep in unnoticed.

You know, like snakes that crawl under the door. There's a little gap in the door between the door and the floor and the snake crawls in. And you're fast asleep.

Next morning you get up and you say, how did the snake get in? The door was closed. Yeah, there was a little gap between the door and the floor. Snake didn't walk in, it crept in.

And there are people who have crept into our churches unnoticed. Who are not wholehearted disciples of Jesus. They came along because their brother or sister or relative or somebody else was there.

They kept to come and sit there. This is a good church, they have good picnics, they have good meals and conference time you have three days of free meals. Come along here.

They haven't come to become disciples of Jesus Christ. Oh no. They've come for fun.

They don't come for the prayer meetings, they come for the picnics. These are the people who come, who have crept in unnoticed because the elder brother was fast asleep. And he never discovers even though the snake is now crawling all over the house.

Be very careful. Who have crept in unnoticed. It happened.

It happened in those days. It happens today. But the apostles preached so strong.

They offended so many people that they drove people out just like Jesus offended people and drove them out of his crowd till he was left with those who wanted to live for God. And we read here these people have, they have mocked out for condemnation. They are going to hell.

One day God will judge them and if the church is faithful, they'll get exposed in the church. If the church is not faithful, they will live in the church for years thinking that everything is alright with them. One day they will discover the judgment seat of Christ.

They were not even converted. You know one of the marks of the fact that God has been with us through the years is this. That when people creep in like that, we've got some elder brothers who crept in like that or who became like that after coming into the church.

But God removes them. We have seen through the years how different elder brothers have been removed and put out of the church and gone out permanently. We've seen brothers who've been in the church 20 years and who finally left because God exposed them.

They fooled me, but they couldn't fool God. Like I've said, you know these checkpoints where you have a bar like that, the car cannot cross till the bar is lifted at the checkpoint and you go through. And I've always said I've got a checkpoint, but I'm not perfect in my discernment.

So I lift the bar and let this brother in, but he gets caught at the next checkpoint which God is manning. And you can't get past that. You can't fool him.

And he sends you back. And you get thrown out of the church. So don't be satisfied that you fooled me and went past my checkpoint.

And the other thing I've discovered is this. That the closer I get to God, the distance between these two checkpoints becomes less and less and less and less and less. So even though I lift my checkpoint, pretty soon the other fellow gets exposed and comes back.

But if you're far away from God, it may be many years before he reaches that checkpoint because you yourself are living so far from God. So if we walk closer to God, this checkpoint gets closer and closer and people who creep in unnoticed get exposed pretty quickly. And exposed.

They may get offended. They may get angry with you. Praise the Lord.

Let them get offended. Let them get angry. Don't waste your time buttering them.

We have to fight the battle in the church to preserve the church from all these people who creep in unnoticed, who do not believe in an overcoming life. Who sit there getting offended talking to other people about every little thing. I've seen people who you correct them, they go around complaining to others.

Where are such people? They've been in the church so many years, they are godless and I think even unconverted. But they crept in unnoticed and they sit there or they came in sincerely once but they backslid so badly because it went well with them. I've seen that with many people when they prosper financially, it goes very badly with them.

They go up financially and down spiritually. I've seen that with numerous people. Be careful when you prosper financially because you go down spiritually usually at that time.

And so we see here that these certain persons crept in unnoticed. They were long before marked out for condemnation. Ungodly persons who turn the grace of God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ.

See, they turn the grace of God into a licentiousness to commit sin. Did you hear that? They turn the grace of God into a licentiousness to commit sin. You know what a licentiousness is? You get a driving licentiousness.

You get a driving licentiousness means now you can drive a car. And many people think grace means, ah, now I've got a licentiousness to commit sin. Now it doesn't matter if I sin because the blood of Jesus cleanses me all the time.

I'm okay now. And people who have taken the grace of God like a driving licentiousness, a licentiousness to commit sin, their standard of life goes below the standard of life of people in the old covenant who did not get that licentiousness to commit sin. The commandments, the ten commandments were so strong.

If you went and picked up sticks on the Sabbath day, you were killed. If you were caught committing adultery, you'd be stoned to death. Boy, people got scared.

And that fear kept them from sin. But now, how is it that so many believers, their standard of life has sunk below the standard of people in the old covenant? The reason is they have taken grace of God as a license to commit sin. Is that like, is it like that in your life? Where you treat sin lightly because you say, oh, I can always ask God to forgive me.

The blood of Jesus will always cleanse me. Then you have turned the grace of God into a license to commit sin. And you have less fear of God than those old covenant people who had a far greater fear of God than you have.

So I want to say to you in Jesus' name, learn from this. And the Holy Spirit prompted Jude to not write on the gospel of salvation as in Romans. There's something else which is more serious.

And that is people are turning the grace of God into a license to commit sin. And I want you to write about that and the Holy Spirit told that to Jude and Jude wrote it. And then he writes to these people and says, I want to warn you.

Don't think that just because you were saved once, everything is okay. I want to warn you. I want to remind you, verse 5, that the Lord saved some people out of the land of Egypt, which is a picture of salvation, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, baptized in the water, in the Red Sea, baptized in the cloud, baptized in the Holy Spirit, and afterwards destroyed them who did not believe.

Oh boy, how that destroys this whole doctrine of one saved, always saved. Here are people who were saved out of Egypt and then destroyed because they didn't believe afterwards. They backslid.

It's a great deception, this one saved, always saved teaching, which has turned the grace of God into sin. People can live as they like and they think, oh well, I accept to try so and so date. I'm alright.

Don't fool yourself, my brother, sister. I want to remind you that there were people saved out of Egypt and God destroyed them because they didn't believe afterwards. That's what Jude says.

Of course, hardly anybody preaches on these things nowadays because it's not very popular. You won't become popular. Your crowds will not increase.

Your crowds will increase if you make the grace of God a license. Here, everybody, license. License to commit sin.

God is a good God. Just do as you like. It doesn't matter.

Those are the churches that increase in size. That's the tragedy of today. So what then is grace? There are many things that people had in the Old Testament, but they could not experience grace.

Well, let me just quickly tell you something about the New Testament speaks about grace. First of all, I want to tell you in Hebrews 13 verse 8 that grace is not something for our head to understand but something to strengthen our heart. As you listen to me, you may understand what grace is.

It doesn't solve your problem. It will never solve your problem. You may be able to understand it so well that you go and preach it to somebody else.

But Hebrews 13 verse 8 says, it is good for the heart to be strengthened. Verse 9, sorry. Hebrews 13 verse 9. It's good for the heart to be strengthened by grace.

So grace is primarily not something to be understood in my head but something to strengthen my heart to keep the door shut against temptation. That all these lusts come and push the door and grace strengthens the heart to say, sorry, you can't get in here like you did in the old days. That's what grace is, you know.

Temptation is lust coming and knocking at the door of our heart. Come on, get angry. Come on, lust.

Come on, speak back. Come on, do this. Come on, do that.

Get offended. Get bitter. And grace from within strengthens the door and says no, you're not going to get into my heart.

You're not going to get me to say those words. You're not going to get me to think those thoughts. You're not going to get me to have those attitudes.

Grace strengthens the heart. If you don't have grace, the door opens and you fall. That's why many believers fall, because grace has not strengthened their heart.

The first step in grace is to receive, to rejoice in the fact that God has accepted us because our sins have been forgiven. Turn to Romans. We read in Romans in chapter 3, verse 24.

We are justified as a gift by His grace. So that's the first thing. You can't begin unless your entire past history has been taken care of.

Your past history, full of sin, full of evil, disobedience to God, has not only to be forgiven, but God has to declare you righteous. You, my son, my daughter, are a righteous person by grace. Not because you deserve it, but because my son died for you.

His righteousness is put to your account by grace. You are justified. If you don't start here, you've got an unshaky foundation.

You've got to be absolutely convinced that God has forgiven you completely, accepted you. Romans 5.1 says the same thing. Verse 2. Romans 5.2. In Christ we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand.

And in this grace we exult. Exult is even more than rejoice. It's like jumping for joy because of the hope of the glory of God.

I mean, does your salvation make you jump for joy? Or do you weakly say, I believe I'm justified. You haven't understood it then. You such a criminal who should be going to hell.

It's like a man who's been condemned to be executed and hanged. And instead of being hanged, he's made the prime minister. And not just released from the prison.

But he's made the prime minister of the country. Such things never happen in the world. Only God does things like that.

Imagine, you should be hanged and you're made a prince in the palace. Does it excite you a little bit? We should exult in hope of the glory of God. Then you know you're really justified.

And we must live in that enjoyment all the time. That is the power of the blood of Jesus Christ. I believe that many of us believers don't value or appreciate what the blood of Jesus Christ has done for us.

Justified, Romans 5, 9, freely by His blood. We exult. That's the first thing that grace does.

Secondly, from there we move to step number two. Many people do not get to step number two because they haven't properly got past step number one. You've got to exult in the glory of God.

God's forgiven me. I'm justified. I'm accepted.

I don't have to cover my face when I get into God's presence. The angels may have to do that, but not me. The seraphims cover their faces when they go before God, but I speak to Him face to face.

Why? Because Christ lives in me. I am in Christ. Rejoice in that.

Don't let the devil rob you of that boldness because of what Christ did for you. Then Romans 6, 14, where we read that sin shall not rule over you. That's the next step.

Once my past is taken care of by grace, the next step is that sin will not rule over me because now I'm under grace, just like Jesus. I'm not under law. To be under law means me struggling, struggling, struggling, struggling to keep the commandments and I can never keep them.

To be under grace means that grace comes in and gives me the power to keep them. It's the difference between pushing a car and getting inside and starting the engine and even the steering is power steering. Can you imagine that? Have you heard of power steering? It's one of these new things that come in the cars where you just touch a wheel and it turns.

It's not like the old days where you had to struggle. It's amazing. Grace is like that.

Power steering and the accelerator is very sensitive and you can shoot off instead of pushing, pushing. I've got to move this car from here to there. I've got to keep the commandments.

That's living under the law. This is grace where another power moves the car and not your power. Another power moves even the steering wheel and it's not your power.

Grace. It's like you're driving a scooter. It's not pushing the scooter.

It's another power inside the engine that moves the scooter. Next time you drive your car or scooter, think of grace. That's what grace is like and that's how you're supposed to live the Christian life.

I mean, 200 years ago when people never had cars and scooters, if you had told them we can move at the speed of 100 miles an hour, 150 kilometers an hour, they'd have laughed at you. Today we can on the roads. That's how it is.

Many Christians don't believe that the grace of God can make you go shooting up into God's presence. They say, no, it's not possible. They are living like people who lived in the 1700s.

So, grace, sin cannot rule over you. That's the next thing. The true grace of God is that which, that sin will not rule over you but you rule over sin.

The third thing is 2 Corinthians 9 and verse 8. Grace makes us sufficient for all situations. Not just sin. Not just temptation.

2 Corinthians 9 verse 8 says, God is able to make all grace abound towards you so that you always, having all sufficiency in everything, may have an abundance for every good deed. Have you noticed the seven superlatives in that one verse? It's the most amazing verse about grace in the entire Bible. God is able to make all grace abound always all sufficiency everything abundance every.

Seven times superlatives in one verse. And it's about grace. For every single need that you can ever have all sufficiency.

And you know the other well-known verse in 2 Corinthians 12 verse 9. My grace is sufficient for your need. There is no need I can face in my entire life for which the grace of God is not sufficient. Paul had a sickness that he never overcame but grace was sufficient to help him to overcome it.

Even though he never got healed he was an overcomer. So there may be some problems some permanent handicaps that we have that in God's great wisdom he never allows us to get rid of. But you can be an overcomer there more than the people who don't have that handicap.

That's what grace can do. Grace can make a lame person a greater overcomer than a man who walks properly on two legs. Yeah.

Grace made Fanny Crosby who was blind to write thousands of hymns and to know God's grace in a way which a lot of people whose eyes are both open can't didn't experience. People can have handicaps but grace can make them overcome it and they'll be overcomers. There are many cases like that in history.

Grace is so powerful so powerful it can make a blind person and a lame person a hundred times better than a person who can see and walk. That's the power of grace. Sufficient for every single need in our life.

All sufficiency. And imagine those of us who got legs, who got eyes, who got ears imagine what grace can do to us. But we have to be weak because God gives us grace.

I'll come to that in a moment. I want to also show you it says in 2 Timothy in chapter 2 in the same connection it says, My son be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, Paul tells Timothy. Meaning that Timothy, if you really want to serve God you've got to have a sufficiency for every situation, particularly those of us who are serving the Lord in some type of position of responsibility.

And I tell you to serve the Lord is not easy. It's one of the most difficult jobs. It's the most difficult job that anybody can ever have.

The President of the United States has got a pretty easy task compared to a man who's serving God. He's tackling terrorists. We are tackling the devil and demons.

Who is more powerful? Have you got any doubt whether demons are more powerful or terrorists are more powerful? A servant of God is tackling demons the devil. And he's got the most difficult task of all. And the more effective you are as a servant of God the more you are the target of the devil.

Sure, he tries every possible way to knock you down but grace is sufficient. I mean, if grace was not available, we'd all be knocked out long ago. Grace is sufficient to warn us in advance of the tricks of Satan to prepare us for every attack of the enemy that we need not fall.

Why is it you hear of so many servants of God, suddenly they've been preaching for 30 years, suddenly they fall into sin. And sexual sin. How is that possible? It's because they have neglected the grace of God.

They have not understood the grace of God. The grace of God is sufficient for every need. You can be the target of a million demons.

The grace of God is sufficient for that. You must believe it. I believe with all my heart the grace of God is sufficient for anything that the devil can try on me.

You must have that faith. The devil can't put any sickness on me that the grace of God will not help me to overcome. The devil cannot tempt me with anything which the grace of God cannot help me to overcome.

The devil cannot bring anybody against me which the grace of God will not help me to overcome. I am going to be an overcomer till the day Jesus comes. Not because of myself, but by the grace of God.

Very often Christians say, oh by the grace of God I did that. They don't even mean what they say. Grace is a powerful thing.

Sufficient for every single need. And grace can strengthen our heart to live for God. Okay, number four.

Titus 2 verse 11 and 12. Number four. Titus chapter 2 verse 11 and 12.

Grace teaches us to deny ourselves. See Titus chapter 2 verse 11. The grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men and instructing us to deny ungodliness, to deny worldly desires, to live sensibly, to live righteously, to live godly in the present age.

How is it I say no to those worldly fashions that I see Christians around me have? Grace of God. That's all. How is it I don't judge them also? Grace of God.

When the grace of God comes into you, you don't follow those worldly fashions and you don't judge other people who do follow them. If you don't follow them yourself but you judge them, you didn't really get grace. It could be legalism.

But if you don't follow them and you don't judge them, then you really got grace. Have you got that? Or have you got a legalistic attitude where you do something right but judge everybody else who does it wrong? Do you know that I can look at people who do things, many things differently from me and not judge them at all? I don't celebrate Christmas. I don't judge anybody who does.

I can go to a house where they're dancing around a Christmas tree and well, God bless them. That's the light they have. They're doing it for the glory of God.

Fine. I don't have to do that myself. I have no problem with these things.

I don't care if a woman is decked with gold. It's not my business to judge her. I don't do it myself.

And the same thing with so many things. I'm not here to judge anyone. If they want to go that way and live that way, that's their business.

If they want to spend their money that way, that's their business. If they want to live like that, it's their business. I don't follow them.

I don't judge them. That's what grace does. And if you really got grace, that's the way you'll go.

Otherwise, you'll be a legalist till the day Jesus comes and get a big surprise when He comes. That you thought you were so holy and the Lord said, you're worse than those people. You say, Lord, I was worse than those people? Sure.

How? You spent your life judging them. You're the biggest legalist of all. Don't get that surprise when Christ comes.

The grace of God teaches us to deny this ungodliness and deny these worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in this present age as a God-fearing person. It's the grace of God that makes us God-fearing. Number 5. Colossians 4 and verse 6. Colossians 4 and verse 6, the grace of God makes us gracious in our speaking, in our speech.

Colossians 4, 6 says, let your speech always be with grace. That means there's grace in my conversation. I'm not rude to people.

Jesus was strong in His speech, but He was not rude. You need to distinguish between being strong and being rude. Rude is where you insult somebody.

Where you deliberately humiliate him. Strong. Jesus is very strong.

And the strongest person I've ever heard speaking is Jesus Christ. Because He loved us so much. But He was never rude.

And we must not be rude to our children. We must not be rude to anybody. You must not be rude to your wife or your husband or anyone.

There may be times when we have to be strong in our speech. Let your speech always be with grace. There must be grace in the way we speak.

Grace that it says here that you know exactly how you should respond to each person. It's not a standard way. Jesus, one person would come to Him and Jesus would speak to Him in one way.

Another person would come to Him and He'd speak to Him another way. We need grace to know how shall I speak to this person? How shall I speak to this person? How shall I speak to this hypocrite? And how shall I speak to this sincere falling disciple? World of difference. I need grace to discern.

To know how to speak to this person, how to speak to the other person. And how to speak to the fellow who's trying to pretend that he wants to be a Christian and he's a religious fanatic who's just coming to the church pretending to be a Christian to sneak in to destroy the church. How to speak to that person? And how to speak to this other person who's a sincere falling disciple who's trying to struggle and struggle and struggling to follow the Lord.

To speak to each person. How to speak to a child? How to speak to each person? Then number 6, 2 Corinthians 8, verses 1 to 19. It says here about grace makes us generous with our money.

2 Corinthians 8, verse 9. You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though He was rich He became poor so that you through His poverty might become rich. And He goes on to say in that whole chapter.

Now I pray that you will also. Verse 1 I want to make known to you the grace of God which has been given to the churches of Macedonia that in a great ordeal of affliction in their deep poverty they overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. That means even though they were poor they gave money to help the poor believers.

Grace makes us generous to help the poor. Grace makes us frees us from being tight fisted with our money. Teaches us to give.

If you are still tight fisted and miserly with your money there is one aspect of the grace of God you have not experienced. You may be getting a lot. There are some people who just get and get and get and get and get and get.

They are the poorest believers of all. They don't realize it. Poorest believers of all.

The richest believers I have met on the face of the earth are the ones who are generous and who have learned to give. They are the most blessed because the word of God is fulfilled. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

And lastly number 7 is grace helps us to exercise a specific gift in the body of Christ. Romans 12 verse 6 says that to each person we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us. To some prophecy, to some service, to some teaching, some exhortation, some to give money, some to be leaders.

It's a grace to exercise a particular gift. That is also grace. The charisma as it says from which you get the word charismatic is a Greek word which means gifts of grace.

Charis is gift. Charisma is gifts of grace from which you get the word charismatic. Gifts that God gives me through His grace to enable me to do what? To communicate grace to other people.

I would never be able to preach if God had not given me the gift of prophecy to be able to communicate grace to other people not just instruct people in their head but to communicate grace. And I want to say to you, it says here listen carefully each of us is given grace is given to each of us different measure, different type of gifts you got to exercise it. Finally we know the well known verse in 1 Peter 5.5 God gives His grace to the humble.

In each situation if you humble yourself and say Lord I want to go down. I don't want to go up in the eyes of the world or in the eyes of the church I want to go down. You'll find Jesus there and you'll find grace.

You know the devil's greatest aim is to make you think highly of yourself to think ah brother, see the way God is using you now. Some people despised you but see how he is using you now. Fool that you are to listen to the devil.

You are doomed. Tell the devil to shut up. You are not going to listen to him.

Go down and every day and every year go deeper and deeper down and the grace of God will be abundant on you. You don't have to convince anybody that God is with you or He is using you. They'll see it.

They'll be blessed and when they are blessed be careful that you don't get puffed up. Go further down. Okay let's just pray for a moment.

Heavenly Father we pray that these words will sink into our hearts and we will receive what You want us to receive. Grace to meet every need in our life to be overcomers to experience the true grace of God and never to use it as a license to sin. We pray in Jesus name.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/15/SID15473.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/the-missing-messages-in-todays-christianity-the-true-grace-of-god/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net