

THE UNDENIABLE LAWS OF LIFE – The Law of Grace

You don't always get what you deserve, but you can get exactly what you want.

During a conference on comparative religions, experts from around the world debated what, if any, belief was unique to the Christian faith. A heated debate went on for some time until C. S. Lewis wandered into the room. *"What's all the rumpus about?"* he asked, and heard in reply that his colleagues were discussing Christianity's unique contribution among world religions. Lewis responded, *"Oh, that's easy. It's grace."* All the people at the conference had to agree.

The idea of God's love coming to us free of charge, no strings attached, seems to go against the grain. The Buddhist eight-fold path, the Hindu doctrine of karma, the Muslim code of law - all of these endeavour to offer a way to earn approval. Only Christianity shows us that God's love is unconditional, and His love is evidenced through grace more than any other means.

God's grace is often hard for us to fathom, and so Jesus talked to us about it often. Author Philip Yancey expressed it perfectly in his book 'What's So Amazing about Grace?' *"I have meditated enough on Jesus' stories of grace to let their meaning filter through,"* writes Yancey. *"Still each time I confront their astonishing message I realise how thickly the veil of 'un-grace' obscures my view of God."*

I'm convinced that the greatest inconsistency in the church today concerns the grace of God. Our souls must be intensely guarded in this one vital area. Every doctrine and every precept should come under the government of grace (so that they can become personally and operationally effective).

If you detach a particular spiritual truth from grace, you cease to propagate the gospel. Grace is the main rule of our new and better covenant. The further you move from the gospel of grace, the less capacity you will have to experience any of God's wonderful attributes. Remember, according to the new covenant God cannot operate outside of grace toward you.

The Law of Grace secures for you a supernatural life outside your own human experiences. Also, you acquire the ability to receive divine power that takes you beyond your natural limitations. Furthermore, it provides you with boundless opportunities to express fruits far exceeding your natural output. God's grace is truly dynamic!

Nelson's Bible Dictionary says, *"Grace is favour or kindness shown without regard to the worth or merit of the one who receives it and in spite of what that person deserves."* Grace is mercy in action! Grace is unmerited favour, and it is totally reliant on the character of the person who is releasing it (not on the recipient).

The Lord God is ***"merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth"*** [Exodus 34:6], therefore, grace is almost always associated with mercy, love, compassion, and patience. The supreme example of grace must have been the redemption of the Hebrew people from Egypt and their establishment in the Promised Land. This did not happen because of any merit in Israel's part, but in spite of their unrighteousness [Deuteronomy 7:7-8; 9:5-6].

Remember, even though the wonderful grace of God is always undeserved and free, it can't ever be taken for granted. It must be humbly sought and earnestly desired [Malachi 1:9], and received by faith [Amos 5:15]. You must learn to trust in the mercy and favour of God, even when you know that grace is undeserved [Romans 4:6; Galatians 2:16].

Grace is a free gift given freely by God – to be enjoyed within a covenant relationship. Grace is relationship centred because it was secured by the work of the cross. The grace of God was supremely revealed and given in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ. Jesus was the embodiment of God's grace [John 1:14], but He was also the vessel through which God brought it to mankind [Titus 2:11]. By His death and resurrection, Jesus restored the broken fellowship between God and His people. The only way to the Father is ***"...through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ"*** [Acts 15:11].

Note, the Holy Spirit is also called the *Spirit of grace* [Hebrews 10:29]. The Spirit is the One who binds Christ to believers so that they can receive every spiritual gift or grace [Ephesians 4:7]. Here we see the Father generously dispensing grace through His Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit sealing this divine act with His presence. All three Persons in the Godhead are involved and totally committed to "grace."

The theme of grace is especially prominent in the letters of the apostle Paul. He sets grace radically over the law and the works of the law [Romans 3:24, 28], and makes it abundantly clear that grace is not something that can be earned; it can be received only as a gift. ***"...According to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power"*** [Ephesians 3:7].

In 2 Corinthians 12:9 the apostle Paul quotes the Lord directly and states, ***"My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."*** The original Greek simply says, ***"My grace is enough for you, for My power is perfected in weakness."*** Paul knew he needed God's power and strength to accompany his ministry, but God knew that the best way for this to materialise was for Paul to be kept in a place of weakness. When he was weak he was in fact strong in Him!

In a time of crisis, too many of you still build walls to retain what little human strength you have instead of letting go and relying totally on the pure grace of God. You stubbornly refuse God's avenue of escape – His amazing grace! Note failing is no longer an issue because Jesus took care of that on the cross. Failing grace, however, remains the primary issue. To stay down after having failed is to fail the wonderful grace of God. Getting what you don't deserve is a part of God's plan.

Let's examine this spiritual principle more closely... God says. ***"My grace is more than enough for you, because My awesome power is perfected in human weakness."*** What God is saying is simply this, ***"My grace is more than enough for you, because My sovereign power comes to its successful conclusion in human inadequacy."*** Implying that the very purpose of grace is to allow the power of God to accomplish its predetermined aim [to reach its goal], and that is, to glory in human frailties.

You see, God has a positive answer for every negative situation, because there is sufficient grace for all! Yes, there is more than enough grace - grace for every weakness and every defect you may have. And grace to cover every imperfection in your character. God's grace has a paramount mission and a great purpose in your life. That is, to change every negative to a positive!

Hebrews 4:15, 16 suddenly makes more sense, ***"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathise with our weaknesses [who does not show compassion toward human frailty], but was in all points tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."*** His mercy covers the things you should not have done, and His grace empowers you to do what you should be doing but do not have the strength or ability to do. Grace empowers!

Grace is available when and where you need it! At the very moment of an assault or failure, you only have to look to Jesus, and waiting to be deposited is sufficient grace. Grace to help you in the nick of time! There is no postponement; it's where you need it – when you need it. Yes, grace will give you what you don't deserve, but by faith, you can also get exactly what you want. Faith, operating through grace is powerful!

God purposed that His grace would be the very mechanism that commands divine power to come to a successful conclusion in human frailties. You give Him your weaknesses and He gives you His strength! His divine power turns every negative into a positive – to your benefit but to His glory! It is evidence of His great love for mankind [for you and I].

This is how you can apply the Law of Grace right now:

[1] Think of a specific situation you are presently struggling with. You desperately need insight [to know what to do], in order for it to resolve or come to a successful conclusion. Acknowledge your frailties, foolishness or mistakes in that situation, and then simply ask for God's wisdom to manifest. James 1:5 states that God will give you a liberal portion of His wisdom, and without reproach. 1 Corinthians 1:27 declares that His wisdom is made perfect [comes to its successful conclusion] in your foolishness. Therefore, the gift of grace will see you through - no matter how foolish you've been.

[2] Think of something you do not have the power or ability to accomplish right now - something that's impossible to you. Then ask God for His resurrection power [that is at work in you] to manifest and causes you to be victorious. 2 Corinthians 4:7 states, His power is made perfect [comes to its successful conclusion] in earthen vessels. Not only do you house God's power, but to also dispense His power!

[3] If you are caught up in sin, or have any compulsive habits, all you need to do is receive forgiveness and then forgive yourself. So, see yourself as righteous! 2 Corinthians 5:21 declares, His righteousness is made perfect [comes to its successful conclusion] in your sinfulness. Remember, where sin abounds, grace abounds even more [Romans 5:20]. Therefore, there is not enough sin to stifle the grace of God.

[4] If you are having financial difficulties, focus on your covenant with God. And remember, He has given you the power to obtain wealth in order to establish His covenant [Deuteronomy 8:18]. 2 Corinthians 8:9 states, His riches are made perfect [come to their successful conclusion] in your lack. Now, take your eyes off your lack and acknowledge that your promised land is awaiting you. Imagine that it's just over the hill. You may not feel that you deserve the milk and honey you're about to receive – but that's fine with God. So, surely it must be fine with you also? This is grace in action!

Whatever your problem, the overcoming powerful grace of God has the answer! Grace desires to release the awesome power of God into every negative situation you're confronted with – in order to secure the victory – right now!