

GRACE FOR GRACE

John 1:14-18

In **Genesis 7:1**, Moses, “as he was moved by the Holy Ghost recorded these words: “And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for **thee have I seen** (verb tense past, always) **righteous** before me in this generation.” In **Genesis 6:8**, Moses again was moved by the Holy Ghost, after God has said in 6:7”It repenteth me that I have made man,” said of Noah, **“BUT** Noah found grace(it was revealed to him) in the eyes of the Lord.” That means he was enabled, **by grace, with the eyes of faith** to see all his salvation conditioned on Christ’s righteousness imputed. Jesus said to his disciples in Matthew 13:16, “But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.” Seeing and hearing are evidences of grace, not causes. It’s not what Noah did for God but what God declared of him.

What God said of Noah is true of every elect son and daughter in Christ. Every one of God’s elect is declared righteous by God and by his grace were shut up to Christ, the Anti-type of Noah’s Ark in eternity passed. This is the reality of all who stand unchangeably and eternally justified in Christ.

He is the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world and was eternally appointed our Substitute and Surety. As Surety for his people, our sins were laid on him. “God laid on him the iniquity of us all.” When Adam fell, fellowship was broken (**by us**), but our relationship didn’t change. “I have loved thee with an everlasting everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee, (Jeremiah 31:3) is God’s declaration and demonstration toward the recipients of grace. His grace truly is irresistible and irrevocable.

The accomplishment of our Surety and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ was so sure and certain to happen in time, God could declare Noah and all the elect justified before time in Christ. In **2:23 James, quoting Moses from Genesis 15:6 said,** “And the scripture was fulfilled which saith; Abraham believed God and it was imputed to him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God.” God did not just one day discover Noah and Abraham to be righteous; He always viewed them righteous in Christ. Abraham’s faith was evidence of his eternal standing in Christ by his cross. There is much debate today on this subject. How could God declare them righteous before the death of Christ and the establishment of righteousness? The same way he could declare me a sinner and forgive my sins before I committed them personally. And surely he did for Christ died before I was born and put away sins I had not committed personally and sins I will yet commit. This was accomplished by God through substitution and imputation. Those who would argue against this truth will have to contend with the God who decreed it, declared it and defends it.

What exactly did Noah find in “the eyes of the Lord” **Read John 1: 14-18.**

14 “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. 15 ¶ John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. 16 And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. 17 for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. 18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”

My title for today's message is from **V-16**; “*And of his fullness have all we received and “Grace for grace.”*”

Much has been said and written concerning grace. But most of what is said and written is by those with no experience in grace. “*The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works,*” (Psalm 145:9). The writer of Lamentations said this in 3:22; “*It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed.*” Jesus said of his Father, “*He causes it to rain on the just and the unjust,*” (he has mercy on all) but only the elect have and will experience the grace of God; i.e., only they are enabled to see (*in the eyes of the Lord*) what God in Christ has already done for them and gladly receive it. That's the subject of this Book from Genesis to Revelation.

One of Satan's greatest deceptions is in the area of grace. To most in religion their concept of grace is really just a cleverly disguised system of works. The prevailing belief in false religion has been that to the finished work of Christ who established and imputed righteousness, the addition of the sinner's responsibility and “free will” is needful to “finish the deal,” by believing or repenting or whatever condition the darkened mind can conger up. The error of making these conditions for, and not evidences of salvation are deadly and cancel out grace. The wisest of men are trapped by these deceptions.

“Prevenient grace” is a theological concept rooted in Augustinian theology and illustrates my point. “Preveneint” means to precede. Prevenient grace is that which precedes human decision.

Arminian theology believes prevenient grace enables sinners to engage their God given free will to choose or reject God's salvation.

They see God and Satan locked in mortal combat for the souls of men, with an uncertain outcome. God will win some; Satan will win some. Sinner's cast the deciding vote.

Several fallacies make this view unacceptable. **The first** is that the all knowing, all powerful God has no control over who will inhabit heaven and who will not. **Second**, it denies the doctrine of Divine election and promotes free choice, against such clear scripture that plainly states that sinners, by nature “*will not come to me that you might have life.*” “*Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.*”

Third, it pits the creature against the Creator with the creature holding the advantage. God would save you but you won't let him. The truth is at the time of the alleged vote, man was too

young to vote, Satan was not registered to vote and the only qualified vote was already cast by God alone.

God had already chosen them, Christ has already assumed responsibility for their sins, the Holy Ghost had already sealed them and would in time, *“Make them willing in the day of his power”* to cast their vote with the God who cast his vote for them in eternity past. That’s prevenient grace, irresistible grace.

Webster defines grace as “the unmerited divine assistance given human beings by God for their regeneration or sanctification.” By definition Webster destroys the very properties of grace. Any “assistance” from God to sinners is contrary to the nature of grace. God does not assist man in regeneration and sanctification: nor will he accept any assistance from the sinner toward that end. Salvation is of the Lord from start to finish.

One act by, or any merit in the sinner cancels out grace. Nothing of human merit can earn any part of grace, nor can any unworthiness in the sinner circumvent its purpose. Grace excludes any contribution from the sinner and grace is no respecter of persons. It embraces the vilest of sinners.

Read Romans 11:5-6. *“Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (Chosen by God in eternity past without any consideration of or contribution from their persons) And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”*

Ephesians 2:8-10; *“For by grace (having been saved, ye are being saved) through **(the faith, the gospel and that (faith) not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:** 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, **(evidences of salvation; faith, repentance)** which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”*

Any works before regeneration and conversion, no matter how noble, how charitable, how sincere are dead works and fruit unto death because they are performed by those at enmity toward God and their motive is legal and mercenary. (Romans 10:1-4) My best work before regeneration and conversion (**and afterwards**) is so contaminated with sin; God cannot attribute any work of mine toward my salvation. Good works are produced by those justified before God based on the righteousness of God imputed to them. Though motivated by grace and gratitude, even these add nothing to our salvation. They only evidence it.

What is grace? It is the absolute, eternal and free favor of God toward the ungodly and unworthy who have no claim on grace, and who by nature hate and refuse it. It is the free gift to those “made willing in the day of his power.” It is these alone (**John 1:16,**) who receive of his fullness and grace for grace. What exactly is it we receive from Christ?

We receive of his fullness. The Greek for fullness is *plēroō* and means to fill to full. His fullness is defined in **John 1:14**; *“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”* God’s people receive of him, grace and truth about the law of God and the gospel of God.

Read John 1:17. *“For the law was given by Moses.”* The law of God has a claim on every sinner which must be satisfied, either in our person or in the Person of a suitable substitute. All, by nature, including God’s elect seek to satisfy that claim in their person by their own works. Ignorant of grace they seek by works to appease God.

The law of God is a hard taskmaster. It sets a demanding standard of perfect righteousness to which sinners must measure up. It demands nothing less than perfect continual obedience from the cradle to the grave or eternal death for the smallest transgression by the most moral of men. *“Do and live, disobey and die,”* is its mantra. Contrary to most in religion, God does not grade on the curve. He’s a Just God. Moses, the Mediator of the Mosaic covenant was highly esteemed by the Jews. It was he who delivered the law to Israel which was designed to show them the impossibility of being justified before God based on their law keeping. Paul the Apostle called the law in **2 Corinthians 3:7** a *“ministration of death.”* *But if the ministration of death, (Romans 8:3,) “For what the laws could not do.”* (The law cannot pronounce a sinner righteous based on that sinners character and conduct.) *written and engraven in stones, (10 commandments) was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:8 (when fulfilled by satisfaction) How shall not the ministration of the spirit (the gospel) be rather glorious? Grace is preferable over law (works)*

Moses was the Mediator of the Mosaic Covenant, the Law giver. . Christ is the Mediator of the Everlasting Covenant of grace, (Law satisfier) which terms are spelled out in the gospel of God’s free and sovereign grace in Christ Jesus

In order for God to be a Just God and Savior His law must be honored. Perfect, continual obedience or satisfaction in precept and penalty is required. *“The wages of sin is death.”* The dilemma for sinners is this: An eternity of suffering by the sinner will not atone one iota for his sin. A millennium of suffering by the sinner will bring him no closer to satisfaction than when he began. Even if he did keep the law perfectly God would owe him nothing, he would have done that which the law required of him. (Luke 17:10) He is not qualified to atone for one sin, let alone a flood of sin. He is himself a sinner and God’s law must pronounce him cursed. **Read Galatians 3:10.** *“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”*

God’s law cannot pronounce a sinner just and righteous based on that sinners obedience. The law can only demand obedience and dispense justice. **It is a minister of death.** If left to ourselves

we would die in self-righteousness, trying to satisfy the law. Israel sought through the law to attain what only Christ can give. Sinners today still seek to be justified before God by what they do and not by what Christ has already done. By nature sinners think the law of God requires only the best we can do. The law says otherwise; *“Do and live, disobey and die.”* The law of God shows us our sinfulness and deservedness of condemnation but it offers no solution to the sinners needs. It ministers condemnation to all who seek to be justified by obedience to it. **Read Hebrews 7:9** *“For the law made nothing perfect, (It cannot pronounce a sinner righteous based on that sinners character and conduct.) but the bringing in of a better hope (the gospel) did, by the which we draw nigh (Grace) to God.”* **The law was given by Moses.**

But, John 1: 17; *“Grace and truth (the gospel) came by Jesus Christ.*

Notice the order: grace is given before truth can be known.

Christ is the embodiment of grace, (Full of grace) the fountain of grace, the only source of grace. What we receive from him is grace without measure. There is no possibility the source of grace can be exhausted. He is also *“the way, the truth and the light.”* He is the embodiment of truth. Moses gave the law. Christ brought the gospel. (truth) **Read John 1:18.** *“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him.”*

The gospel is the good news of how God saves sinners and remains just in so doing. Grace from the Father sent his only begotten son to satisfy by his obedience suffering and death the laws demands against the election of grace. As our Substitute and Surety Christ *“Bore our sins in his body on the tree.”* *“ He was delivered up for our transgressions and raised again for our justification”* in order that God might be both a Just God and Savior. He was made a curse, *“For it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.”*

Grace chose us in Christ, grace appointed Christ our Representative, Grace made us one with Christ in the view of his law and justice, grace sent him to the cross to bear our sins in his own body on the tree to make satisfaction to law and justice for us. All this from Him who had the Fathers glory foremost in his mind, who was in the bosom of the Father, who *“thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and took upon himself the form of a servant; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”* (Philippians 2:5) Why? **V-18;** To declare the Father to his elect. His death satisfied the debt owed by his church and established the only righteousness whereby a just and holy God could remain just to justify the ungodly. His death met the standard of righteousness required of God for sinners; that standard whereby every sinner will be judged. Grace and truth declare it so.

Of his fullness we have received grace. We have received salvation based on his finished work alone. A salvation which, by nature we are ignorant of and go about to establish righteousness of our own.

But grace will not leave one of her children in ignorance. God's people "*shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.*" **V-16** "*and of his fullness have all we received and grace for grace.*"

The God of grace, by grace conditioned all our salvation on him who is full of grace and truth, and sent him to meet every obstacle to our salvation. He satisfied every demand, obeyed, suffered and died the death of his elect and established for them righteousness which the Father freely imputed to all or whom he died.

Grace for grace is that grace which reveals to the prodigal sons and daughters of God what he in Christ has already accomplished for his people. "*Of his fullness have we all received and grace for grace.*" He gave us grace to see and embrace what in grace Christ has already obtained for us. To this prevenient grace is added irresistible grace to hear, see, believe and hold dear the truths of the gospel. That's God's gift to all the heirs of grace.

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Have you received of his fullness and grace for grace? Have you found grace in the eyes of the Lord? Does your faith frustrate grace? In **Galatians 2:21** Paul wrote, "*I do not frustrate grace, (view as nothing his accomplishment) for if righteousness come by law then Christ died in vain.*"

Read 2 Timothy 1:9

"*God, who has saved us (by the work of Christ, grace) and THEN called us with an holy calling (grace for grace), not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*" Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. That's where I found mine. I recommend you look there for yours.

The church redeemed

John 1:16

Blind, we wandered on the way that seemeth right to men
With every step sin's darkness veiled the bondage we were in.
Content with our own righteousness, we saw no need of one
Required of God the Father and wrought by God the Son,
Who, with his death has satisfied for sinners' great and small
God's law and justice and redeemed a remnant from the fall.
For we found grace, nay grace found us and darkness took its flight
When eyes that once were blind to sin were made to see the Light
Now we behold his glory in our blessed Saviors face
And stand for ever in the love of his amazing grace.

by **Winston Pannell**