

WHAT IS THE GRACE OF GOD ALL ABOUT?

taken from
Ephesians 1:6

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We're in Ephesians 1, just finishing verse 6. We're correcting the translation as we go along. In verse 6, the way it's written in the King James it starts off with *"To the praise of the glory of His Grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved."* Actually the translation of that verse from the Greek language is different. It starts this way: *"Resulting in the recognition of glory, from the source of His Grace, from which He has pursued us with His Grace in the One having been loved."*

You have the word "Grace" there once in the King James and it appears twice in the original language of the Greek. So verse 6 actually reads, there's a result clause there at the beginning, it says *"Resulting in the recognition of glory from the source of His Grace, from which He has pursued us with His Grace in the One having been loved."*

Here's the concept that we're studying in Ephesians. Here's the Cross. The minute that you accept Christ as your Saviour you're in union with Christ. The word that we're seeing throughout this first chapter is the expression "IN HIM." "IN HIM" expresses your position IN CHRIST. It doesn't necessarily mean whether you are in or out of fellowship while you're down here, but it means that the moment that you accept Christ as Saviour this is what you have.

You're in union with Christ. The expression is always "IN HIM," IN WHOM, and so forth. You should now be able to see what He's saying when He says "IN the ONE having been loved." In that verse we have the word "Grace" appearing twice.

I think that one of the words that has been bandied around for a long time in Christian circles is the word "Grace." This is what it looks like in the Greek language (CHARIS), and I think it needs some explanation since it's mentioned here twice. We'll try to go slowly for you.

So, in verse 6 we actually have the word "Grace" used twice. And in verse 7 notice

that it says "IN WHOM we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His Grace." Now, that's three times in two verses that you have the principle of Grace mentioned. Well, the plan of God is called "Operation Grace," for a short title. It was provided for man **before** man was created. This is what we studied so far. Therefore, **man cannot earn or cannot deserve anything.** It's strictly the Grace of God. When you're talking about Grace, **under Grace God does all the work. And all that man can do is receive it and be the beneficiary.**

Now, in this verse 6 it says under Grace that God does the pursuing. We don't pursue Him. He pursues us. God is pursuing us and man receives the benefits. So, actually **Grace is God doing the work and man is the beneficiary.** God always pursues with Grace. Let me break it down for you, this concept of Grace, because not too many people define it.

The first point is the definition. I'm going to give you a definition of Grace which includes a lot of principles and Scriptures. Here it is: **Grace is all that God is free to do for man, and this is on the basis of the Cross.**

This is where God's Grace meets mankind. This is where the human race meets the Grace of God. **You cannot come into contact with Grace by other than accepting Christ as Saviour.** Once you do, then God is free to express His love to the human race through Grace. He does this without jeopardizing the other characteristics of His essence.

I want to show you something interesting. Let's look at the essence of God. He is:

- Sovereign—which means He makes decisions.
- Righteousness—which means that anything that He does is right.
- Justice—which means that whatever He does is fair.
- Love
- Eternal life

- Omniscient—"Omni" is the word for all. Then whatever you put beside it tells you what He is all _____. If you just put the word "science" here that means that He is omniscient, He's all knowing.
- Omnipotent—which means He is all powerful.
- Omnipresent—He is everywhere present.
- Immutability—which means stability. He never changes.
- Absolute veracity—which is the word for absolute Truth.

These are the characteristics of God. There are Scriptures that attribute to each one of these.

God has to be consistent with His character. **Through the Cross He is able to love the human race without jeopardizing other facets of His character.** Here's a point for you, for just in human relationships, based on this. **No one can truly give apart from freedom.** In other words, God has to be free to Grace us. God gives out of His total freedom because of the Cross. In other words, the **Cross has made it possible for God to have the freedom to give us His Grace.**

You have to remember that Grace falls within the framework of His mentality, His discipline, and everything else. Many people think that Grace is like someone being stupid, and they often think that this stupidity is confused with God's Grace as far as human beings are concerned.

But God has great cognizance and God knew exactly what we were like. **God was able to find a way in His character to give to us and never compromise His character.** So, therefore, in our definition of Grace, Grace is the Plan and the work of God on behalf of man beginning at the Cross. That's where it starts. So, Grace is both God's Plan and God's policy for mankind. Grace is a Plan. Grace is a policy. Grace is a function. Grace is a mechanics. That's the definition.

Our second point is a concept. We have the definition and now you have to get a concept in order to understand what we are talking about. Here's the concept. If you get this

concept, it will open up a lot of passages and principles for you.

Grace depends on the character of God. Therefore, Grace depends on who and what God is. This is really relaxing. **Grace is dependent on what God can do for mankind and still be consistent with His own character.** Then it's the application of propitiation, which means that the Father is satisfied with the work of the Son and the fact that we are found IN CHRIST. So, then anything that God gives you is on the basis of **His character. He never gives you anything on the basis of your character. Never.** So, if your character isn't up to snuff, forget it. It doesn't depend on you. It depends on who and what God is.

Naturally there is an attack upon the Grace of God all the time, like any other principle of victory. So there is an issue for the believer when it comes to the Grace of God. What is the great issue? What is the great enemy of Grace?

So, the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ must sort out the issue between Grace and works. That's the conflict. **Legalism is works. It's man's ability intruding into the Plan of God.** Man always has some talent, some ability, some plan, some gimmick, some Madison Avenue concept, and he wants to incorporate that into God's Plan. These have to do a lot of times with raising money and getting bodies into a pew.

Well, nothing could be more tragic when it comes to the Grace of God than to pressurize believers for money in any way. I know someone, that when someone doesn't show up for church on Sunday they visit them and ask them for their tithe right in their living room. Now, you and I know that that's not the Lord knocking on your door. That's something else. For someone to knock on your door and ask you for money, to beg for money, put it in the bulletin, or have some special service, that's a travesty of God's Grace.

I think that God really has a tremendous sense of humor and a neat way in which He sets up things that are very practical.

God has never ordered any begging of money at any time. I think that there is probably a good reason for it. **The quickest and easiest way for God to shut down a local Church is very simple: just cut off its funds.** See how easy that is? And when the people are not motivated to give by simply their response to the Word of God, then it's time for another local Church to spring up somewhere else and do the job properly. So, when the money doesn't exist, the Church shuts the doors, and that's the way it should be.

Under this principle it's wrong, it's evil, it's totally an old sin nature function for any Church to beg, to ask for money in any way, or to use some form of subtle pressure. There are many ways in which this is done. Everybody feel sorry and have a guilt complex for the local Church, and dip deep and this type of thing. This is strictly emotional giving.

So, here is the perfect illustration for giving under the issue of the great enemy of Grace. Under Grace, God has no intentions for anyone to be pressurized at any time, under any circumstances. Man is always trying to throw some Madison Avenue principle to beg for money, to ask for money, to give money.

Because many of these principles operate on human viewpoint and are successful, organizations continue that should be shut down. See what I'm saying? There are always Christian organizations begging for money, and that should tell you something right then and there. It tells you that they should be shut down. And they are staying alive on the basis of human viewpoint and only human viewpoint and God is not in human viewpoint.

He says, *"My thoughts are not your thoughts. My ways are not your ways because My ways are higher than your ways."* So, that **anything that man throws into the Plan of God, if accepted, would destroy the whole principle of Grace** because a little leaven leavens the whole lump. However, the Plan of God is neither destroyed nor neutralized because **Grace rejects all human ability, human energy, and human talent, and human viewpoint.** There

is no place for this type of thing in God's Plan. In other words, **man's works cannot coexist with God's work.** They can't. Such an implied coexistence is blasphemous and it's absolutely impossible for the work of God and the works of man to coexist. **Grace excludes human works, human ability, human talent,** so that man's works, therefore, cannot coexist because they are mutually exclusive.

Point four. The principle of Grace in the word that we use as "sanctification," that simply means set-apartness. The point under this is that the **greatest thing that God can do for the believer is to make him exactly like His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.** Jesus Christ, as you know, is the only Celebrity in the Christian way of life. So, ultimately in the objectivity of God's Plan, He's trying to make every believer like His Son.

Now, man was created. Since man was given free will, it is inevitable that man with free will has the opportunity to blow it. Adam, as you know, had free will. And through his free will he sinned. So, it made it **necessary for the Lord Jesus Christ to become a human being and not an angel, in order to resolve this conflict.**

In other words, the first Adam lost the victory through the fall. The Last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, won the victory through the Cross. So, Grace found a way to make man, created inferior to angels, and make him superior. This is accomplished in three stages of your life as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, God's purpose for you is to make you exactly like His Son and He does it in three phases.

The first one we will call Stage One. This is positional. When you accept Christ as your Saviour, you're in union with Christ. This is when you accept Christ as your Saviour, you are entered into union with Christ Who is glorified.

See, Jesus Christ right now is sitting at the right hand of the Father. So, when you accept Christ as your Saviour, You're in union with the glorified Christ. Every believer is in union

with the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, **believers are now positionally higher than angels.** When Christ was seated at the right hand of the Father in His humanity He was higher than the angels. **We're in union with Christ.** He's the God-Man. So in Jesus Christ we are now positionally higher than angels. That's the first stage. That's the Cross. That's when you accepted Christ as your Saviour.

Stage Two. You're a believer in time. In the believer's life on this Earth, under the principle of growing in Grace by the knowledge of our Saviour Jesus Christ, it's possible for our experience to represent or misrepresent in an effective way, what was provided for us at salvation. In other words, God provided for you as a Christian. In other words, **the Grace life is the only normal Christian life that expresses the priesthood of the believer.**

It takes a couple of years at least to get there, if you concentrate. If you make a concerted effort, an all out effort to go on a crash program, it'll take you a couple of years to get there. Believers will grow up that way. **But, you can never, never live the normal Christian life unless you have a concentrated emphasis on the Word of God. The normal Christian way of life is Grace.** That's the only effective function of the priesthood.

So, Stage Two as a believer, is designed through Grace, whereby God can make a believer, living in the Devil's world, in this intensified stage of the angelic conflict, to grow to maturity. In other words, Christ is sitting at the right hand of the Father. You are here on this Earth. You are the target. You are representatives of Christ. It makes it possible for individual believers to adequately represent the Lord Jesus Christ. But, only Grace can do that.

Stage Three. This is the third stage in sanctification, which is really being set apart for all eternity. This means **when a believer receives a resurrection body, which is exactly like that of the Son of God's minus the old sin nature, minus human good, and he's exactly like the Son of God,** found in

Philippians 3:21, *"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."*

This is ultimate sanctification.

So, here's the Cross when you accept Christ as your Saviour. God is trying to make you exactly like His Son. At that moment you are positionally higher than angels by being in union with Christ. Now, as a believer you have to grow in Grace in order to appropriate God's Grace so you can represent Christ on this Earth. Then **when your testimony is over you are absent from the body and face to face with the Lord.** Then you are physically higher because you have a resurrection body just like the Lord's. **This is the way that the Lord is trying to make us exactly like Himself.**

Point five. This is really the entrance factor. Every believer, the Scripture says, has tasted of the Grace of God at least once. You may be sitting there and saying "Hey, I never tasted anything of the Grace of God. All I've tasted is bitterness." Well, you don't know anything about the Word of God then.

Hebrews 6:4 says that when you accept Christ as your Saviour you tasted the Grace of God. *"For by Grace are you saved, through faith, that not of yourself, it is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man, should boast,"* Ephesians 2:8, 9. So, you tasted Grace when you accepted Christ as your Saviour. You say, "I didn't taste anything. I had Lone Star on my breath, or whatever." You actually tasted Grace because you accepted Christ as your Saviour. That's Hebrews 6:4.

1 Peter 2:3 says the same thing, *"If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is Gracious."* You **have** tasted the Grace of God. If I gave you a test and asked you a question, "Have you tasted the Grace of God?" and you said "No" then you'd flunk because you have. You say, "Well, I never felt anything." Well, that's your fault.

At the moment of salvation every believer receives so many things from God and he never loses them. The moment that you

believed in Christ, God gave you so many things and they will never, ever be improved upon. You have them the day after you accepted Christ. You have them a year after you accepted Christ. You have them on your worst day that you will ever have in this life. You will have them even when you're not interested in the Word of God. **You have them because it's something that He has given you.**

The moment of salvation is the moment that every believer tastes of the Grace of God. That's Hebrews 6:4 and 1 Peter 2:3. The reason why is that you get one taste. It's like ice cream or peanuts. You taste it and you can't put it down. You just have to go with it. That's the whole thing. So, most people take one taste and then they quit. But, that taste at salvation is designed to get your "taste buds" going so that you want more of it. That's the study of the Word of God.

So, **this Grace package at salvation cannot be cancelled or destroyed.** Do you know what? God can't take it away from you. Angels can't do it. All of mankind and Satan combined cannot remove this salvation package. Because in 1 John 2:2 it says that **once you've accepted Christ as your Saviour, regardless of your spiritual status, you are under maximum love from God.**

But, here's the problem: **Grace can only find a place to lodge where there is a capacity for Grace. Capacity for Grace comes only through the daily function of growing in Grace.** That's where we are in Ephesians 1:6. This doesn't mean that those in Ephesians were there. It means that this is where they should be. This should be the spot whereby God can pursue you by Grace. **The pursuit of God's Grace only occurs when the believer is growing in Grace, moving on towards maturity.** In other words, capacity for Grace, if the functioning is growing in Grace, Grace will never go where Grace is not wanted. See, that's the principle that God is a Gentleman and He never goes where He is not wanted.

There are occupational hazards for believers and this is disorientation to Grace, or being negative to the Word of God. This

is the greatest occupational hazard that any believer will ever face. These expressions are found in Galatians 5:4 where it says, "*falling from Grace.*" That doesn't mean loss of salvation, as most people teach, but it *means that you're disoriented to it.* You're failing of the Grace of God, not falling actually.

It's also found in Hebrews 12:15 where it says "*missing Grace.*" God pours out His Grace at the point of salvation. And you don't fall from Grace. You're always in the sphere, but if you are disoriented to the Plan of God, then you're failing to appropriate that. So, **negative volition towards the Word of God is a great danger to the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.** That's an occupational hazard.

Point seven. What is the Divine Attitude? What is God's Divine Attitude as far as Grace is concerned? What does God think about Grace? It's very simple. **God is constantly waiting to pour out His Grace on every believer on this Earth.** That's found in Isaiah 30:18, 19. It's really interesting there because it just says that God is waiting to pour out His Grace upon you, but actually in the Hebrew language it is very interesting, because they use a term in the ancient world that means tapping His foot.

Actually that verb in Isaiah 30:18, 19 says that **God is tapping His foot, waiting to pour out His Grace on you and you won't let Him.** And He's just patiently waiting to do it, but you're negative and you won't let Him do it. But He wants to do it. Some of us know what that means and some will never know what that means because they're not interested in the Word. But, here is a passage, Isaiah 30:18, 19, which deals with the pursuit of Grace. He is pursuing. See, we have the concept that we are pursuing Him. We're not pursuing Him. He's pursuing us.

Point eight. Here are some passages where Grace is mentioned in salvation, or Stage One. Psalm 103:8-12 "*The Lord is merciful and Gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will He keep His anger forever. He hath not dealt with us after our*

sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."

In the New Testament we have one in Romans 4:4. This verse is unbelievable. It sounds almost like a country western song. It says the more you work for salvation, the deeper you go in the hole. Romans 4:4 *"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of Grace, but of debt."* Isn't that interesting? **As far as Grace is concerned, the more you work, the further you are from salvation.**

How can you work for salvation? Well, people say that they can work for salvation by changing a behavior pattern. Some people think that a work for salvation is being water baptized, or starting to tithe. **But the more you work for salvation, the further you get away from it.** Do you know what Romans 4:5 says? *"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."* So, in Romans 4:4 it says if you work you get deeper in debt. And Romans 4:5 says if you don't work you get saved. That's beautiful.

So, Grace really rejects human works. **The more works you accumulate, says Romans 4:4, the deeper you go in debt and the further you are from salvation.** That's found also in Ephesians 2:8, 9, and Hebrews 2:9.

Now, Grace is also the subject in the Christian way of life. I want to give you some passages on this. This will show you that Grace is an all-encompassing factor. Not only is it for salvation, but it is for everything that you do in life. **Grace is the subject for the Christian way of life.**

Prayer. Prayer is a function, but you know it has to be in the sphere of Grace. Hebrews 4:16 says, *"Come boldly to the throne of Grace."* **You can't come boldly to the throne of Grace unless you're saved by Grace.** Coming boldly unto the throne of Grace is the function of the believer as a priest. So, that's one thing. Grace is encompassing prayer also.

Then, the second facet is **suffering**, when you suffer. 2 Corinthians 12:9, *"And He said unto me, My Grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."*

Grace is designed for the greatest possible blessings. *"My Grace is sufficient for thee,"* and that's in suffering. Any time someone has a suffering situation they want to be healed of it, and yet that passage says to stay with it because His Grace is sufficient for your suffering.

Then as far as **growth** is concerned, the third factor, 2 Peter 3:18, it says *"Grow in Grace by the knowledge of our Saviour Jesus Christ."* **The only way that you can grow is by growing in Grace.**

Then another factor is **stability**. How does a person become stable as a believer? 1 Peter 5:12 and Hebrews 13:9 say that the only way that you are stabilized is by growth in Grace. It says that He will stabilize you by Grace.

And then as far as the **production** of Divine Good is found, that's Grace also. In 1 Corinthians 15:10 Paul says, *"by the Grace of God I am what I am."*

Then for our final concept in the Christian way of life, we've covered prayer, we've covered suffering, we've given you a passage on growth, on stability, and production of Divine Good, but now I'll give you a couple on giving.

Giving is Grace also, 2 Corinthians 8-9, Philippians 4:14-18. In other words, **everything that you do as a Christian is Grace.** Salvation is Grace. Prayer is Grace. Giving, suffering, production, stability, whatever it is, it is by Grace.

I'm going to give you some areas on this principle of Grace so you can have a package. These are four areas that people have problems with, that you may be able to help them with. These are four areas where people reject Grace and they don't know that they are doing it. But, you'll see these expressions. There are four areas and these areas include:

Pride. You know, **pride always rejects Grace.** This explains the number one sin, which was Satan's pride, which was the original sin. It also explains human pride. This explains why **pride is the top one on the list of the worst sins.** It's devastating. The first factor that I want to show you where pride causes believers to reject Grace, or even unbelievers, or the human race, first of all is the pride of the believer.

This is the believer who has accepted Christ as his Saviour, and his pride rejects the Doctrine of eternal security. **If a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ rejects eternal security, he has to be really full of pride in his mind to say that he can commit a sin that is greater than the plan of God.** That's really blasphemy. I guess that the person doesn't know that they're saying that when they do that, but that's what they're doing.

So, people who reject eternal security blaspheme God constantly. **Any time that you think that you can do something yourself to loose God's salvation for you, you have blasphemed God to the maximum.** It's blasphemous to actually think that you can do some sin or get into some kind of a situation, an evil situation, so that you can loose your salvation. That's an insult to the Grace of God.

That passage is Hebrews 12:28, "*Wherefore we receiveing a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have Grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*" That's an insult. You may not know that you're saying it, or some friend may not, but **God gives you eternal life based on His character. He has the power to keep you.** He knows exactly what He's doing. He's fair and just in doing it. And you say that you can loose it by smoking a cigarette or whatever. Now, that's blasphemy.

Secondly, the pride of the believer who has a *pressure and adversity*. This is normal for human beings, **but it is not normal for Christianity.** This is the pride of the believer who succumbs to pressure and adversity. **He thinks that his sufferings are greater than God's gracious provision for the believer.**

He thinks that no one has ever been through this before and God hasn't been able to take care of this one. This is the worst thing ever...

Again, 2 Corinthians 12:8-10 says, "*My Grace is sufficient for thee.*" That's where Paul prayed three times to have an infirmity taken away, but it wasn't taken away because God was trying to teach the principle that no matter what your suffering situation is, His Grace is sufficient for all things.

Everybody wants to know and tries to write up what Paul's ailment was. One guy said that he had poor eyesight and his handwriting was big and all this. Another guy said that it was really a thorn in the flesh. Or all kinds of things. But, you know, what's interesting about that passage? No one knows what it is and God the Holy Spirit doesn't tell anybody because if some guy came along and had the same one, he'd think he is in the sphere of the apostle Paul. **But the thing that's important about that passage is not the suffering, because He doesn't list it, but it is the Grace of God in the suffering.** That's what's important. So, you just faze the other one out and Grace comes right to the front.

Then, thirdly, there is the pride of what I call *pseudo-spirituality*—**the believer who thinks that his human systems of spirituality are greater than the ministry of the Holy Spirit.** That person's systems include usually some system of personality imitation, which most people pick up like in Bible schools. Or they observe certain taboos. That's picked up in Bible schools.

This is confusing the means and the results. Assuming, for example, that if you witness to 10 people a day, that's the filling of the Holy Spirit. In other words, **when the filling of the Holy Spirit is being accomplished by confession of sins, then that results in effective witnessing.** The operations of the "holy rollers," the ones who babble through vocal cords and think that some how this has spiritual content, but it's only sheer blasphemy. No one has had the gift of tongues since 70 AD. It's been 1911 years since anyone has spoken in tongues.

Then there's the principle of *ecstasies*. All you need is a rosy glow as a Christian and somehow the rosy glow is the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Or *programism*. You have a point system in which you operate in a local church. Or ritualism. All of these are systems of pseudo-spirituality, which are blasphemous to the Grace of God.

Then, fourthly, in conclusion, the *pride of the believer who is in rebellion in his soul*. That believer assumes that his feelings and his emotions, and his experiences are more important than the work of God. That's refuted in 2 Corinthians 6:11, 12, "*O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.*"

Well, this verse says that He has pursued us with Grace, verse 6, in the sphere of the One having loved us. Now, this is the ultimate – Grace. When you are alive on this Earth and God's Grace is pursuing you, then you have reached the absolute ultimate.

I want you to notice here in verse 6, it says "*His Grace.*" In verse 7 it says "*the riches of His Grace.*" In Ephesians 2:7 it says "*the exceeding riches of His Grace.*" You know, there's a principle involved here. When it says "*His Grace,*" "*the riches of His Grace,*" and when we start to study James it says "*much more Grace,*" or "*the exceeding riches of His Grace,*" **these are just words where the human language is unable to explain all that God has done for us in Jesus Christ. But, you see, once Grace starts pursuing you, you go from Grace, to the riches of His Grace, to the exceeding riches of His Grace.** But, it was all poured out when you accepted Christ.

Now it's a matter of your understanding and appreciating it. Or you go from Grace to the wealth of His Grace to the exceeding wealth of His Grace. In other words, once Grace is nipping at your heels, is pursuing you, you are on the most fantastic ride that you'll ever have in this life as a Christian on this Earth. **All that is necessary for you to go**

on that ride is: 1) to accept Christ as your Saviour; and 2) have a positive attitude towards the Word of God, and you're going to be on a roller coaster. See, once Grace pursues you, then the first thing that you can do is to begin to see the riches of His Grace, and then you begin to see the exceeding riches of His Grace.

Now, since Grace demands that the justice and righteousness of God be satisfied so that God can love the human race, our next section in verses 7-12 deals with the principle of how the work of the Lord Jesus Christ harmonizes God's righteousness and justice so that He's free to pursue us with His Grace.

See, we have reached a peak at this particular point in our study. Here is God pursuing the believer with Grace. In order for that to be accomplished, there must be harmony between the righteousness and justice of God and the love of God. **See, the love of God must not compromise the righteousness and justice of God.** So, the righteousness and justice must not be compromised in the function of Grace. So, therefore, in verses 7-12 we have a section that shows us how this is accomplished. This was accomplished by the work of the Son related to the Plan of the Father.

In verse 7 we have how the function of the Lord Jesus Christ harmonizes God's love with God's righteousness and justice. We'll look at His character again. This is the sovereignty of God where **God is not willing that any should perish** and He makes the decision to save the human race.

But, you see, God is righteous and God is justice and His love is over on the other side. **In order for Him to love the human race He has to satisfy His righteousness and justice so He doesn't compromise His character.** Verse 7 tells us how He did this. This is the function of Jesus Christ harmonizing God's love with God's righteousness and God's justice. A lot of people run around saying, "God is love" and "God is love" and "God is love." **But, they never ever mention any of His other characteristics.** So, here it is, how this was done.

In verse 7 it says *"In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sin."* And now notice, *"according to the riches of His Grace."* Now, I want you to see something. The word "according" is the word KATA, which means norm or standard. Here is the norm or standard, God's norm or standard, how we have redemption and forgiveness of sin. Then what follows is it tells you what the norm or standard is. And you know it, *"the riches of His Grace."* So, we're right back where we started from.

The word "in" is the preposition EN, plus the locative of the relative pronoun which looks like this EN HOS. This may not appear like anything to you, but when you take this EN + HOS, the relative pronoun must always have an antecedent. The antecedent is the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is described by our English above as Beloved. But, as we have seen before, it says the One having been loved.

So, the subject is Christ. And then it says "in Whom" right here in verse 7. So, this is referring to the antecedent, which is Jesus Christ. So, when it says "in Whom" we're right back to Christ again. When it says "in Whom" in verse 7, the Greek has set it up so that you can say this is *"in Christ we have redemption"* and that would be accurate.

Then I want you to notice something here. The words "we have" here are some of the greatest words in the Greek language, and I always think of it like when you're driving around Spring Branch, there's a place there called Echo Lane. Well, this is the Greek word for "have," "we have." This is the way it looks in the Greek language: ECHO.

It's a present tense, active voice, and indicative mood. The present tense means that it's continuous. The active voice relates to the fact that we have it when we accept Christ as Saviour. The indicative mood is the reality of the fact that we have it. The subject is redemption. The word ECHO means to have and hold. The present tense, which means unchanged, means that we will always have this. **We will always hold this.** It's re-

demption through His blood, the forgiveness of sin. **That's a verb for eternal security.** The word plus the entomology say that this is something that you have and you will never lose. And the thing that we have is redemption and forgiveness of sin. The subject is "in Him," "in Whom," which is Christ.

So, we're back to where we started again. Once you accept Christ as your Saviour, you're found "in Him," not having your own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith in Christ Jesus. And **when you accept Him you have, you keep on having, there never will be a time when you don't have, forgiveness of sin and redemption through His blood.** That's eternal security. People are sloppy in their thinking about salvation and other passages. So, we always have this.

Here is the basis that God can pursue us with Grace after salvation. How can He possibly do it? Because we have met the requirement "in Christ." See, *"God the Father made God the Son to be sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God IN HIM."* That's why this whole book of Ephesians is so important.

Now, **here's the basis whereby God can pursue us with His Grace after salvation, because His righteousness and justice have been satisfied and they are not compromised.** And He is free to love us. There are certain theological terms such as expiation, reconciliation, redemption, imputation, justification, all of these terms combined say, in actuality, that **God is able to bless us to the maximum in time without compromising one iota of His Divine character.**

So, this really says *"in Whom we keep on having redemption and forgiveness of sin."* See, we're pursued by Grace, verse 6, at the point of salvation. That's the basis for it, verse 7, the moment of salvation. Verse 7 says that we keep on having redemption, which is the principle. Then the second part of it is forgiveness of sin. That's the mechanics. I'll say that once more. In verse 6 Grace pursues us at salvation and we have the basis for it at the

moment of salvation. And we keep on having redemption, which is the principle.

Now, what are the mechanics of redemption? You have it as the forgiveness of sin. First, redemption, the principle is the object of the verb "*we have*." Here is the word for "redemption" and it's an interesting word that has to be explained. It's a compound word. APOLUTROSIS. That's the word for "redemption." This word is the strongest word in the Greek language for being purchased from slavery. That's what that means: purchased from slavery. It means delivered from slavery by a payment. It could be translated "bought out of the slave market" but it's even stronger than that.

Here is a slave in a slave market. And the slave is purchased. He could be purchased to go and become someone's personal slave, or to work on a plantation. That's the way some of this was used, which is often what happened in the slave markets. But, APOLUTROSIS says **he's purchased and he's released, and he's a free person now**. So, this word emphasizes **purchasing a slave for the purpose of freeing him**.

See, that's salvation. You were born physically alive and spiritually dead and you were a slave to your old sin nature and Satan was your father. Jesus Christ went to the Cross, died for you, you accepted Him, now you're purchased. Now you're free.

I'll show you how this works, how this is very practical. Take a person, for example in the 19th century, who's been taken out of the darkest part of Africa, and whether you know it or not, people don't know anything about history, but that goes with the territory.

The Arabs were the big slave purchasers in Africa in the 19th century. So, they purchased slaves and they were sold to some New England shipmaster. The Arabs did that to the people in New England. And New England, at that time, always had a hypocritical attitude. **They're always talking about the South, you know, but they were always supposedly opposed to slavery, but they**

always had the ships that brought the slaves over. Now, isn't that interesting?

So, the Arabs would sell them to a New England shipmaster and now this man has been taken out of darkest Africa. All right, now he does not even have a clue as to what anything is like in relative civilization. He came right out of the Stone Age. And you bring him over to the United States, and some man comes along and buys him through compassion.

This happened, say for example, in Charleston, NC, where they used to have slave markets. So, **he buys him in Charleston and he has compassion on him and sets him free immediately**. Now, they don't tell you anything about that in history either. Now that man is free. **But he has no capacity for freedom**. I want you to remember that. **You have to have a capacity for freedom**. He has to learn a great many things before he can begin to appreciate, to enjoy, or to utilize his freedom. He has to learn things. He has to know things.

Now, here it is. You and I at the point of salvation are free from the slave market of sin, Ephesians 2:1 and following. **But just because we're born again, just because we're children of God, just because we have eternal life, doesn't mean that we have any capacity for the freedom which God has provided through redemption, through Grace**. Not a bit. **You don't know anything about freedom when you first accept Christ as your Saviour. And therefore, it takes a lot of taking in the Word of God to have capacity for freedom**.

One of the first characteristics of Christianity is capacity for freedom. And many people do not have capacity for freedom. That's why people are mixed up. So, that's first and foremost. Without that you have simply had it. **You have to learn the Word after you're saved**. That's the whole objective. The soul is saved. It says "*stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has set you free*." How do you stand fast? You learn the Word of God. **Capacity for freedom is in the soul,**

not in the function of the body. A lot of people have been freed from tyranny, but they're still in slavery in their souls. You know **we have people in this country who are free, who live here and they're enslaved in their souls.** Their feet are free, but their soul is in slavery.

Now, where does slavery begin and where does freedom begin? Not in the feet or in your geographical location. **It begins in the soul.** So, what is freedom? Well, freedom is nothing without a dirty word called **discipline.** It is a dirty word in the 21st century. We're free to do anything that we want to. No, no we're not. **We're not free to do anything that we want to.**

We're not free, for example, to run stop signs. If you ignore them at the intersection you'll see that there'll be cars all over the place. We're not free to do anything that we want. **We're free to have privacy. We're free to have property. We're free to pursue a course of life.**

Freedom can only be exploited and utilized by authority. Verse 7, *"in Whom (Jesus Christ) we keep on having redemption."* We always have it. We always have freedom as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. And we'll always have the freedom that comes from this Doctrine of redemption, and from the mechanics of redemption, which is through the blood. That's the mechanics of redemption.

So, redemption here is the principle that sets up our spiritual freedom. **But, just because God freed us, it doesn't take us out from under His authority.** His authority is His Word, the mind of Christ, the **Divine Viewpoint** of life, and when we pursue the Word of God, we discover that Grace is pursuing us. How is this possible? *"Through the blood, the forgiveness of sin according to the riches of His Grace."* God is in His essence is sovereign. He makes decisions. He's righteousness,

which means that He is absolutely right. And He's justice, which means that He's fair. He is love. He is eternal life. These are general characteristics of the essence of God. But, all three Members of the Godhead have these essences the same amount. In other words, each One has identical essence even though They are different Persons. They are one in essence, three in personality.

Now, here it is. Billions of years ago, Ephesians tells us that God the Father, the Planner, made the decision, sovereignty, to reach mankind. He had to be able to do so without anyway compromising His character. For example, **God cannot just love mankind and ignore His righteousness and justice.** That would completely destroy the essence of God. But, this is the only way in which God can be consistent with His own essence.

In other words, God must not compromise His essence. Sovereignty, He makes decisions. He is righteousness, He is justice. And what He does is make the decision to save mankind. The only way He can is by sending His Son to die on the Cross. And He makes Him to be sin for us and He judges Him, so that **Christ satisfies the righteousness and justice of God. Now when you accept Him, God is free to pour out His Grace on you.** That's it. The central character, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the central part of the Father's plan. That's what verse 7 starts with. We have a few verses here on the ministry of God the Son and it pertains to the Cross.

So, we begin right here in verse 7. I want you to see the impact of this so that you can appreciate how much God has done for us before we even existed. And how you can relax and grow in Grace and appropriate some of the principles and you can make decisions in your own life.

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