

LIVING the JOY of God's Grace and Favor

Part 2 on Grace



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All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

KEY WORDS: Grace, gracious, favor, adoption, sonship, purpose behind grace,

Summary: *Is God just the God of Israel – or the whole world? For whom is God's grace/favor? And WHY did God come up with his precious grace and favor for us? What was his intended end goal? If salvation is not of works, what role does obedience to God play, if any? But some people we know have done unspeakable evils. Will God's grace be able to cover the worst of sins, or are some people just beyond redemption and being saved? What happens when regenerated/converted people with God's Holy Spirit sin? Does God still love you when you sin? That and much more in this teaching.*

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Hello everyone. I recommend you watch the video AND print out the notes as you follow along as I'm going to use a ton of scriptures. There's more in video.

The keynote scripture on God's gracious favor is in Ephesians 2, read by Scott Doucet, our webmaster. (He and his wife Brandie work so hard on having all these videos available.)

Ephesians 2:8-10 ESV

“For **by GRACE you have been saved** through **faith**. And this is **not your own doing; it is the GIFT of God**,
9 **NOT a result of works**, so that no one may boast.

10 **For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus FOR good works**, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

After giving my last sermon explaining God's wonderful saving Grace/Favor, someone commented to counter the message of **Ephesians 2:8-9** that we've been saved by grace and not of any of our works, lest man should boast. So he quoted **Romans 2:13** -- “not the **hearers of the law**, but the **doers of the law shall be justified.**” In other words, he implied, we won't be saved unless we do something; unless we are doers of the law.

But true, you and I would indeed be seen as righteous – justified – **IF** we perfectly kept and **continued** to perfectly keep all points of God's law. *Then we would not have needed a Savior or his grace!* **Gal. 2:21. That's the point of Romans 2.** But keep reading, and in Romans 3 we're told— *But hey, nobody has kept the law perfectly (Romans 3:10-11).* NO ONE, except Christ. Therefore we read what seems a strong contradiction of Romans 2:13:

Romans 3:20

“Therefore **by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight**, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

I think God's wonderful gracious favor for those who accept it, is so misunderstood. So please be sure, by the way, to **please first listen to the first sermon on God's Saving Grace**. It will set the foundation that I won't cover today except a bit of review. There's much more to say about the topic of God's gracious favor.

Romans 3:20 does not contradict Romans 2:13. It just explains that being perfect doers is great, if you can find anyone who does perfectly obey the law and therefore needs no grace! *God's grace is a FREE gift of His unmerited favor. It's not something we can work for, or that becomes "works" (Romans 11:6-7)*. Works are for REWARDS in the kingdom – but works don't SAVE us.

So that's WHY we need God's unmerited FAVOR on us because all have sinned, and all keep sinning though to a lesser degree, even after receiving God's spirit, as Paul says in Romans 7. So God's unmerited favor saves us. Hopefully, YOU see that you need God's saving grace – especially when you grasp a bit more of God's perfect holiness contrasted to yours.

Grace is FOR the WHOLE WORLD

This sermon part 2 on Living in the JOY of God's grace -- **is not for any particular church group**, but for ALL church groups and for all religions.

God did not send his son to just live and die and be resurrected for the Jews, or for those who are now Christians, or for the western world. Oh no! Jesus accepted His calling to be “the Savior of whole WORLD” (**1 John 2:1-2**).

So this sermon is also for you Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, atheists, those in Judaism, Catholics, Protestants, sabbath keepers, for everyone, really. God sent his son “to be SAVIOR of the WORLD” – 1 John 4:14.

So I see people everywhere, no matter their conduct or their religion, as brothers and sisters of mine -- who just don't know it yet! WHEN we really understand God's purpose, and God's grace, surely, we can begin to live our new Creation Life in JOY!

Salvation through God's grace is for everyone who responds to God's call to them, from anywhere in the world you are now live in. Once we really believe GOD'S JOY to have YOU in his family... we're starting to learn to live in the joy of God's saving grace.

1 John 2:1-2 NIV

“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense — Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, *and not only for ours* but ***also for the sins of THE WHOLE WORLD.***”

My God welcomes you from around the world to look into the true saving Grace of the living God and living in his FAVOR in spite of all the evils you have done in your past or even the present, or how bad your world is.

Whether you are Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, part of Judaism, or you were Muslim, Catholic – or whatever... call out to him today and get on HIS path, the WAY to salvation by God's favor and grace as revealed in his word.

I am confident, because of this incredible gracious favor of our God, **that I'll be in his Kingdom and have everlasting life.** I hope to see many of you there too – even if you're not a true practicing Christian yet today, I hope you WILL come to believe in Jesus Christ and ... I'd sure love to meet you who hear this message someday in God's kingdom.

This topic will be hard to exhaust or ever use up. Again, please be SURE to hear part 1 first for the foundation.

Welcome to Light on the Rock. I'm Philip Shields, host, and founder of this free website where our goal is to help people have **a closer walk with God, love Him** with everything within us, **and to love people – even our enemies** – a lot more. Remember to check out the short reads, the blogs, and our Sermons are going to be a mix of video sermons, and some are just audio, even some NEW ones.

Right now we have 5-6 people – that's it! -- who help towards this work we do to bring people to Christ, and we appreciate your support. It goes towards poor orphanages and congregations in Kenya and in assisting widows in America from time to time.

So what's the “end game” – what's the REASON for all this gracious favor from God? What's he trying to accomplish with His favor?

PURPOSE of God's TRUE Grace and Favor

It boils down to this, I believe: God in the Highest –whom we call “FATHER” – wants a loving family relationship with children of his own. God has children now (“NOW are we children of God...” 1 John 3:1-3; Romans 8:14-17).

The Word, who came as a flesh-and-blood human as Jesus Christ (or Yeshua as I say, his Hebrew name) was “the FIRSTBORN of MANY brethren” (**Romans 8:29**). We other children of God are Christ's brothers and sisters. He is the oldest child of God. Perfect Yeshua is “not ashamed to call us his siblings” (**Hebrews 2:10-11**). Speaking of Yeshua:

John 1:10-13

“He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 *He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.*

12 **But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of GOD**, to those who believe in His name: 13 who **were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but OF GOD.**”

A child of GOD. Born of GOD. Let that sink in! So YOU were called by God, who led you by his goodness to repentance (Romans 2:4) – and I believe **God was working and**

choosing you from early childhood, and in some cases, even *before* you were born! (Ephesians 1:4-6). Then he **goaded** you, like he did Saul/Paul (Acts 9:3-5) to respond!

IN God's gracious favor, He gives us his spirit which begets us into his family – "that which is born (or begotten) of spirit is spirit" (John 3:5-8) with lots of children. Once we receive God's ***Holy Spirit, WE BELONG TO GOD and Christ***. Hallelujah! (John 17:9-10; Romans 14:8; 2 Cor. 10:7)

Romans 8:29 (also read Hebrews 2:10-11)

"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be **conformed to the image of His Son**, that He might be ***the firstborn among MANY brethren***."

Let that sink in. "BORN ***OF GOD***." *That's* the end game to all of this. Believing in Jesus Christ, means we absolutely surrender to him as our Commander and LORD and believe he rose from the dead to live for us and become the King of the coming Millennial kingdom. God the Father has given all things to His firstborn – and he will also share all of that *with those of you in the first resurrection* as co-heirs of all things WITH Christ (Romans 8:14-17) – BUT we may have to suffer also, as going through suffering in peace and faith is one way we are made perfect (Hebrews 2:10-12).

John 1:14

"And the Word became 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**."

The Son of God came to pay a debt HE didn't OWE, because WE owed a debt WE couldn't PAY.

Now remember from the previous part 1 sermon, that "grace" in the New Testament refers to God's FAVOR, love, blessings, acceptance of you – as well as his forgiveness and pardon of all our sins.

This is WHY Jesus could be the friend of sinners. He could "see" them in God's family eventually too. He wanted them saved too. WE need HIS same mindset too (Phil. 2:5).

So to all who BELIEVE in the life, work and resurrection of Yeshua the Messiah – God gives the right to be born of God. Don't be looking down on anyone! BE a godly friend to your neighbors and work associates. Maybe God will use you to bring them the Gospel of the Kingdom, of Christ, and His gracious favor.

So the POINT of all this "Charis" (Greek for "grace") is to work with humanity so – each in his own time order – we can become true, full spirit children of GOD, as is explained in such good detail in 1 Cor. 15, and 2 Cor. 5.

God had to have holy, set apart children who have rejected Satan but have chosen God and HIS WAY – and not the serpent hissing his lies to us in the Garden. Children who FIGHT sin, that so easily besets us. But the Spirit is willing, as Jesus said, but the flesh is weak (Mark 14:38) so we end up still sinning, even after receiving God's Holy Spirit.

See our 3-part sermons on “Your breathtaking Destiny”. Here’s Part 1.

Sept2017. [Light on the Rock - Your Breathtaking Destiny! Part 1 - by Philip Shields](#)

Of course we NEED God’s gracious favor (charis – pronounced “HAR-is”) – his grace – because we have all sinned and earned the death penalty and still periodically sin.

Romans 6:23

“The wages of sin is death but the GIFT of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

So God offered to save us, and you accepted, by his GRACE through faith.

Eternal life, salvation, having ALL our sins forgiven, receiving God’s LOVE, is all a GIFT from the perfect father. **There’s nothing you can do or that God wants you to do, that will make him save you more, or give you longer eternal life.** We all get saved and have eternal life when we believe.

TRUE FAITH INCLUDES OBEYING GOD; THIS IS OUR NEW LIFE

Truly believing in Yeshua means He’s our Master and Lord. It means we have agreed we will OBEY him and give up Satan’s way. We can’t eat at the Table of the Lord and the table of demons at the same time (**1 Cor. 10:21**). That’s why I don’t participate in pagan customs and holidays.

Hebrews 5:8-9

“though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. 9 And having been perfected, **He became the author of eternal salvation to all who OBEY Him...**”

Obeying God is proof you have truly surrendered to him and have FAITH in what He tells us to do and to be. **What we REALLY believe is shown by what we DO.** For example, Abraham BELIEVED God, and so he was also willing to sacrifice Isaac, knowing God could not lie and had promised descendants through Isaac. So our faith and belief mean we obey. Obedience is not “works for salvation” – but submission and full belief in God.

Your obedience, and even your good works, in fact, are the PROOF and evidence you have received saving grace. Remember Ephesians 2:8-10 says we’re created FOR good works.

Hebrews 3:18-19

“And to whom did He (God) swear that they would not enter His rest, but to **those who did not OBEY?**

19 So we see that they could not enter in **because of UNBELIEF.**”

Our obedience proves our belief, trust, and faith in God. Disobedience happens because of unbelief (or weakness perhaps), as we’ve just read.

So God’s TRUE grace and favor comes to those who have accepted his call to believe in Christ fully, **to obey him, to submit to him...** and then we’re baptized and receive God’s Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands from his ministers (**Acts 2:38**).

(Here are more scriptures you may wish to study **on the need for obedience** – **Acts 6:7; Romans 15:18-19; 16:26; 2 Cor. 10:4-6** and dozens more.) And didn't Yeshua tell his disciples to teach people *to observe* or obey all things I commanded you (**Matthew 28:18-20**)? And the Holy Spirit is given to those who OBEY – **Acts 5:32**. We OBEY because we want to.

The obedient life in us, is actually *following* Yeshua's LEAD; he WORKS now in us, living obediently and righteously. *The old "me" no longer lives,* but Christ lives in us, and we live by faith in him and of his faith (**Gal. 2:20**) As we obediently follow, we "walk as he walked" (**1 John 2:6**).

OUR disconnect comes when we realize we DON'T always obey, but we slip up, we stumble in sin and fall short -- but we DO believe in Christ and our Father. *THOSE kinds of sins when we repent each time are covered, as I've explained, and we are not condemned, cut off, separated, or rejected, or unloved because of those sins, especially now as a child of God.*

GOD'S GRACE COVERS EVEN THE WORST OF SINS

Whatever your life, whatever your sins have been, God's Word says God's gracious favor is way more than enough to cover you, forgive you, love you, accept you into the family of God. Murder, rape, child molesting, arson, lying, stealing – COVETING. *Or those really awful sins of **PRIDE and self-righteousness*** because you don't feel all THAT bad... or not as bad as some others.

But remember, our own *righteousness* is just filthy rags in God's sight, remember (**Isaiah 64:6**). Well, ALL that is covered by His grace too – *if you believe in Jesus Christ with all your heart and being and accept God the Father's loving call for you.*

One translation of Romans 5:20 says where sin abounds, "grace super abounded." *No one can out-sin the ability of God's grace to wash you clean.*

Romans 5:20-21

"Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. **But where SIN abounded, GRACE abounded much MORE,** 21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

There's no sin or sinner too bad for grace. Even the worst people you could think of, if God called them to repent, and they did – could have their sins washed away in Christ's blood and they could be redeemed and reconciled with God. Yes, even the very worst. God certainly can cover you. (Exception: **the "unpardonable sin"** – those who *knowingly and permanently* reject God's offer and the working of the Holy Spirit that has been given to them.)

God's grace is so powerful that Paul said ONE description of his gospel is "**the Gospel of the GRACE of GOD**" (**Acts 20:24**). I hope your fellowship or church teaches such a gospel, by that name!

GOD'S SON, by TRUE GRACE, IS THE ONE TRANSFORMING US

God's gracious favor should be transforming us when we get in lockstep with it, with God. And that should fill us with his JOY of salvation. (Discuss **King David** on video – **Psalm 51** prayer – which ended with joy and peace, though the prayer started very “down” and forlorn).

Quick review of some few elements of last sermon:

- We showed **Romans 8:1-4**, how after Paul admitted to his ongoing stumbles into sin, he was not condemned anymore when we sin now, as children of God! As God's children, we're not condemned now either, when we sin. Please read Romans 8:1-4 yourself!

As a good friend says: “God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving us His Son as the sacrifice for our sins. **Romans 8:2-4** so clearly says that therefore the requirements of God's law would be fully satisfied FOR US, who now follow the Spirit and not the carnal nature”

*Too many of you may be too proud to receive anything “free.” Or too proud to accept what Someone has done for you, like perfectly fulfilling and obeying God's law. Christ paid your debt – the wages of sin is death. He fulfilled the law perfectly – **and then offers to clothe you with HIS righteousness (Hear my sermons on “God's Perfection for us”).***

This is so IMPORTANT:

- **Yeshua comes to LIVE inside us and it's HIS life** that should be ACTIVE in us, and we should be so close to Him that we LISTEN AND FOLLOW. He will live in you as he did when he was on the earth: obediently. **But it's HIS work, HIS righteousness.** Read Col. 1:28-29. Paul worked with them to present each of them perfect in Jesus.

Colossians 1:28b-29

“...that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.”

29 To this end I also labor, ***striving according to HIS working which works in me mightily.***”

Oh how I pray that I could say that I'm striving to let Christ's working be mightily at work in me. That would mean I'm truly seeking him, listening to him, obeying, and following him. Help me, Father, do that.

Yes, we must FIGHT sin, we must resist sin, we must repent when we sin, *but a LOT has changed now for you and me if we have God's spirit. We have an “Old man” nature that was crucified with Christ, but his old way – “the flesh,” still is in us. But that's not what God sees (Romans 8:8-9).* While we fight against sins that so easily beset us, we will still never totally conquer it, even *with* God's Holy Spirit, as Paul admitted in Romans 7.

I want to review some things some are having a real hard time accepting, and so don't have the JOY of God's grace. With Grace:

- Our death penalty for all time is now paid in and by Christ.

- Christ dies once only for us sinners. Hebrews says that several times. We never again come under the death penalty. Those in the first resurrection do not have to fear “the second death” (**Revelation 20:6**). That's DONE, settled – even with our sinful stumbles! We've passed from death to life! (**John 5:24**)
- We receive the gift of eternal life *guaranteed by **the anointing of the Holy Spirit*** (**2 Corinthians 1:21**), as long as we stay the course (**Ephesians 1:13-14**). God is **also** committed to *finishing* what he started (**Philippians 1:6**) – and **for some of us, that could include fiery trials, maybe literally, and even martyrdom**, if that's what it takes to get us back on the right path.

*So I **am NOT teaching a Jude 4** licentiousness here, OK???? But **begettal** by God's own Seed, his SPIRIT, as I showed in part 1, is the best guarantee you can have of God completing /perfecting what he started. **God is NOT into “spiritual” abortion!** God says he would lose NO ONE in his hands. “NO one” means even YOU will be there, IN God's kingdom.*

Scripture is clear: ***BUT if you remain practicing a lifestyle of sin as your way of life – even after claiming faith in Yeshua – YOU WILL DIE.*** (**1 Cor. 9:6-9; Romans 8:12-14; Ephesians 5:3-8; Galatians 5:19-21**). We **MUST** be obedient as best we can with God's spirit.

FAITH, in fact, is often equated with obedience (Hebrews 3:18-19). Adult Israelites age 20+, could not enter Promised land due to their unbelief that led to their frequent disobedience.

I believe that we ALL have sins that we still commit all too often. Maybe not as a way of life, but as “stumbles” – whether it's eating too much, losing your temper, looking at porn on the internet, drinking too much from time to time, GOSSIP, feelings that your sins are superior to the guy you won't spend time with, Self-Righteousness, Pride, flirting, etc.

Those who overcome those will have a HIGHER REWARD. Those who don't overcome much, will have a lesser reward, but they WILL be saved. It comes down to faith in Jesus and whether our sins are aberrations or a way of life!

LET's repeat: the example of the 1 Cor. 5 sex sinner. He was handed over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh – for what reason?

1 Corinthians 5:4-5

*“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,
5 deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, **that his SPIRIT may be SAVED in the day of the Lord Jesus.**”*

And how we build on our calling – with precious stones and gold or with wood, hay and stubble? (Please, you should read 1 Cor. 3:9-15).

1 Corinthians 3:14-15

“If anyone's WORK which he has built on it endures, he will receive a REWARD.

15 If anyone's WORK is burned, he will suffer loss; but he HIMSELF will be SAVED, yet so as through fire.

• **Our father does not turn his love for us on and off.** *Many of you were raised by a father – or maybe YOU were such a father – who showed love to the children CONDITIONED on their good behavior. Our heavenly Father's love is NOT conditional.*

But we're told God loved us when we were still bad (“STILL sinners” – **Romans 5:6-9**). This applies to you Muslims, Hindus, Jews, Buddhists, and all Christians. The story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15 explains how this horrible son came back to his Father's joyful love!

So now, **when you still sin, in stumbles-- not as a way of life –God still loves and accepts you.** How on earth can he do that? Because you, the “old you, the old man” – died, and was crucified with Christ (**Galatians 2:20**) as we are now seen as being part of the very body of Christ. The Son of God now lives in us if you have come to believe in him.

Ephesians 1:5-6

“having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
6 to the praise of *the glory of His GRACE, by which He made us ACCEPTED in the Beloved.*”

1 John 2:3-6

“Now by this we know that we know Him if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know **that we are in Him.**

6 **He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.**”

- **Even when we go astray, the Good Shepherd comes looking for us!** And when he finds you, maybe stuck in some thorn bushes, he **rejoices and celebrates you when he gets back.** **Matthew 18:12-14.** Father is intent on not losing a single one of his little ones (v.14).

Our focus must be on our Savior. As we ABIDE in him, we bear much fruit (**John 15:5-6,8**) and as we focus on HIM, **NOT on ourselves,** believe it or not, we become more and more like HIM.

2 Corinthians 3:17-18

“**Now the Lord is the Spirit;** and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all, with unveiled face, **beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image** from glory to glory, **by the Spirit of the Lord.**”

This is where we have to believe: **have faith that God and Jesus mean what they say in all these verses.** Jesus paid the debt and died, Jesus took on God's wrath on himself for us, and HE was judged for us – guilty due to OUR sins on him—and died! Our "Old man" – the old self – was crucified or died with Christ, IN Christ according to Galatians 2:20.

But we still have flesh, but God no longer sees us as being "in the flesh" – Romans 8:9 – but in the spirit! So when the flesh sins, it's "no longer I who sin, but sin that dwells in me" – **Romans 7:14-20.** God does not see you and me as "in the flesh, but in the spirit." We have to believe it.

WE have a judgment coming as to what our REWARD will be, but the **judgment for eternal life is DONE, forever! There's no double jeopardy with God!** We've been judged as SINLESS when we came to God through Christ – as ALL our sins were heaped on Yeshua! And His blood CONTINUES to cleanse our sins (1 John 1:7).

Our sin tomorrow or next month won't change that DEEP LOVE we have for and from God as long as he sees us striving against sin, though sometimes we lose. As long as we do repent each time too. You've got to DISCARD any notions that God has conditional love, especially in the New Covenant. Again, read Romans 5. (I realize in the Old Testament that they could choose life or death, physical blessings conditioned on obedience.)

But now as God's children, when we repent, it's to be brought close again – we had wandered off the path a bit -- but our DEBT to die for our sins has been forever paid. **Don't fear the 2nd death anymore.**

SOME of you are really struggling with this... I can feel this in my spirit! Satan wants to control you by his FEAR that you won't "make it"! Rebuke Satan! Those are his thoughts, not yours. TELL him your Savior already "made it" for you. You've been given eternal life and you should know that. You have been begotten into God's family and you belong to God. And nothing, -- get this—NOTHING can separate us now from the love of God (Romans 8:38-39).

Do you believe Yeshua's words? Or not?

John 5:24

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who **hears My word and believes** in Him who sent Me **HAS everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but HAS PASSED from death into life.**"

Where's your JOY of salvation?

King David did a horrendous series of sins when he connived to take one of his best men's only wife and got her pregnant! Then he connived to have Uriah killed on the battlefield. God was VERY angry with that and there were many **consequences** promised by God – but STILL, David spoke of restoring the JOY of God's salvation again. And in the same prayer he went from the pits of despair and repentance to the JOY of Salvation (**Psalms 51:12**).

But it seems **MANY** of you coming to Christ, or already in Christ, have no, or little, JOY of salvation **because you don't believe this!**

“**COGs**”: They feel THEY are the ones **who have “to make it” into the kingdom**, or salvation – and thus they deny their faith in Yeshua who HAS made it and fulfilled the requirements for us (**Romans 8:1-4**). But since they fail to live perfectly, they become Olympic champions of guilt. So STOP feeling bad all the time. You have a Savior! You have passed from death to life.

BUT neither do we want to be lax, licentious (Jude 4), or like Laodiceans (Rev. 3)! We want to be zealous, striving against sin – but that will happen more and more by abiding and focusing on Christ.

Catholics – STOP. You don't have to do penance.

Buddhists and Hindus – STOP. With the true God you don't have to fear reincarnation as **a cow or a BUG**, Hindus, because you may have been so imperfect in this life!

Muslims: you can be certain, with God's true religion, that you have a bright future, instead of wondering if your Allah is going to give you eternal life in Paradise or not! You don't have to worry if your good will outweigh your “bads.” *Come to true joy, peace, and know you can have eternal life.*

Remember the one life of Yeshua, who was the WORD with God, was worth more than all human life that could ever be born, so his one life paid for all of us WHO ACCEPT God's grace. I realize the Quran says that nobody can atone for the sins of anyone else. In the true God's truth, the life of Yeshua CAN atone for you and save you – *but you must humbly accept him.*

Speak out your faith in him and believe in Jesus –and receive his free gift of total forgiveness and granting you favor, grace, blessings, acceptance – and eternal life. **God's gift is NOT something we can earn, pay for, or work for (Hebrews 11:5-6).** God loves us, grants us his favor and his blessings though none of us deserve it. (Romans 5:17 – gift of righteousness)

Come to really believe **with deep JOY the scriptures which clearly say we have – right now – eternal life and salvation** if we endure and don't reject God permanently in our lifetime. I got some pushback on scriptures that say we HAVE eternal life now, but I'm confident I can believe God's word!

1 John 5:11-13

“And this is the testimony: that **God has GIVEN us eternal life**, and this life is in His Son.

12 He who has the Son i life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that **you may KNOW that you HAVE eternal life**, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”

There are SO many scriptures that tell us because of believing in Yeshua, **we have passed from death to life** and right now *have* everlasting life, as far as God is concerned. Even what evil you've done, has been erased in Christ. If you DON'T let him erase your sins in HIM, you are still under God's wrath (**John 3:36**). But if you confess your belief in Yeshua, you have passed from death you deserve – to the free GIFT of God, His awesome amazing grace.

WE MUST SHARE AND EXTEND GRACE to all people

Let's shift gears here a bit now. You've received God's gracious FAVOR and love. Now what? Our Father and our Savior would not want you keeping all that favor locked up inside you. We are to SHARE and GROW in the favor/grace of our Lord and Savior (**2 Peter 3:18**).

First of all, you're in the body of Christ if you have His spirit (**Rom. 8:9, 14**). **And we need to see each other as BELONGING to one another.** We are like parts of one body – all connected to do a job.

Romans 12:5

“so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually **members of one another.**”

When you or I judge another body part of Christ, we are not likely to see Yeshua very happy with that! See **Romans 14:10**. Plus, we'll be judged by the standard we used on our brothers/sisters. **God wants us esteeming one another –even BETTER than ourselves (Philippians 2:3).**

Whatever God does in us, for us, to us – he wants us sharing with others. And when we exhibit his graces, we receive more. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy – **Matthew 5:7.**

Colossians 4:6 ESV

“Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each person.”

1 Peter 4:10

“As each one has received a GIFT, **USE IT** to serve one another, as good **stewards of God's varied grace:**”

If you see a brother in need, but shut up your heart, how can you say you love God? That's all through 1 John. When God comforts us, we are to use that same comfort to comfort others! (**2 Corinthians 1:3-4**).

Now how about God's grace, his favor, pardon, acceptance of YOU and all your sins? Can you now extend that same acceptance, favor, forgiveness to your family of God? You've been forgiven a LOT (**Matthew 18:21-35** - read).

Can you not forgive your brother of what you've heard about him through gossip? Did YOU not sin by listening to gossip and then you used that to justify your hard heart to a

brother in Christ? For if we can't forgive and accept one another, neither will you be forgiven. (Matthew 18:35).

Matthew 18:32-35

Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. 33 Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' 34 And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

35 "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

That's happened to me many times (not being forgiven) and I've had to pray God to forgive them for their hard heart and to keep me from having such a heart.

My daughter Story – during church services, I was preaching, and my 9-year-old daughter was not being quiet and respectful in church, so I was going to discipline her. I had just given a sermon on God's merciful heart. She looked down, and said, "Daddy, can you show me mercy and love me, just like God?"

Of course I had to be gracious and merciful to her at that moment!

People should be learning more about God, his love, his grace, his acceptance, ***BY and BECAUSE they see it so clearly in the behavior and lives of his children*** who extend favor even to former murderers, rapists, molesters, terrorists who repent and come to God. I listed what people consider the "worst" sins to make my point. But your sin caused the death of innocent Yeshua on the cross. MY sins did too. We all caused the same death, so ... let's quit being unforgiving of those we knew as being drunks, sex fiends, or whatever.

Remember the story in 1 Cor 5 about the sex sinner thrown out of the fellowship? But sometime later, Paul tells the Corinthians to extend their LOVE even to someone this "bad," now washed, and welcome him back.

2 Corinthians 2:5-9

"But if anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but all of you to some extent — **not to be too severe**. 6 This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man,

7 so that, on the contrary, **you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow.**

8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your LOVE to him. ...

2:11 -- lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices."

Later, in **2 Cor. 5:17** Paul speaks of us being **God's "new creation"**. In the verses just before that, Paul says "quit thinking of others the way they USED TO BE before they began responding to God's call to eternal life."

That includes we quit gossiping or listening to gossip about the sins of others. God's love and grace cover a multitude of sins! Let's do the same.

I'll say again, **it makes it so much easier to believe GOD has forgiven you, when you can see the loving forgiveness and acceptance of YOU**, and your washed-away sins – from your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Don't be like the older brother of the Prodigal. Just don't! WELCOME back, lovingly, and joyfully, any awful sinful brothers who have come back to Father! Let them worship God with you.

I hope this sermon has given you much food for thought. Share God's grace.

POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT GOD'S GRACE AND FAVOR:

- **The purpose for God's Grace is to open the way for anyone in the world whom He's calling to become a part of HIS Family of children. Yeshua is the savior of the WORLD.**
- **We live in the JOY of God's grace**, realizing we are His BELOVED child, well pleasing to Him, and accepted in Christ (**John 17:23**).
- **We keep our focus on what Christ is doing in us more** than on what we do (**Hebrews 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:17-18**). Thus we grow in Christ's image to God's glory.
- **WE must SHARE God's gift of his grace/acceptance with others** – no matter how bad they were before. WE accept them too. Christ -- a friend of sinners. So should we be. This is part of the gospel of the Grace of God (**Acts 20:24**).
- We are **saved (forgiven, given eternal life) FREELY by grace as God's gift** we can't pay for or work for; we are **rewarded by our deeds** and good works (reward = what we'll be and do for eternity) (**Eph. 2:8-9, 10**).
- **ALL our sins are forever washed away**, and as far as God is concerned, forgotten! (**Hebrews 8:12; 10:17**). We should quit looking back too.
- **We confess Christ and believe he lives, we repent, are baptized, receive God's spirit, we now belong to Christ by God's wonderful grace, then:**
 - **You now BELONG to God. We are begotten into his family. We are not our own. He owns us now. The whole PURPOSE of Grace was to have the means of providing a holy, righteous family for God.**
 - **Now when you sin, you are NOT condemned (Romans 8:1; John 3:17-18)**, but God continues to love us, as father did the prodigal son.
 - **We never lose God's spirit now unless** we ourselves walk away forever. God's Holy Spirit guarantees our salvation (**Eph 1:13-14**).

- **Neither does God cut you off from him when you sin now**, though we must repent. He will never leave us or forsake us (**Hebrews 13:5**). Nothing can separate us from the love of God. **Romans 8:31-39**.
- **Christ's death covered and paid for ALL our sins for all time (1 John 1:9). The debt of death is paid once, for all time for you. This frees you from Satan's rule. You are now free.**
- **His blood continues to cleanse us** (ongoing tense) as we sin or stumble in sin after we become His child -- **1 John 1:7; 1 John 5:11-13**.
- **We have passed from death to life** and are seen as having eternal life. **John 5:24 We don't have to fear the 2nd death, or "making it" into God's kingdom. You've already been qualified (Colossians 1:12; Romans 8:2-4).**
- **Christ's once-for-all-time sacrifice has perfected YOU and all who are being sanctified** (read **Hebrews 10:14**). (That was all explained in my "Perfection" sermons.)

From now on we should live in the glorious life of God's grace and favor, being loved, and accepted by him, yes – even when we step off the path – for He will ensure He gets us back on the right Way. He guarantees that. Salvation is all HIS doing, remember. It's salvation by grace, not of works, to his glory.

Let's end with this passage:

Hebrews 9:27-28

"And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

28 so **Christ was offered once** to bear the sins of many. To those who EAGERLY wait for Him He will appear a second time, **APART FROM SIN**, for SALVATION."

Closing prayer