

COME TO THE THRONE OF GRACE

(No. 1197 – 9/14/20 – DR Zoom Meeting)

I. INTRODUCTION

A. **Heb. 4:14-16:** ¹⁴*Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.* ¹⁵*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.* ¹⁶*Let us then approach the **throne of grace** with confidence, so that we may **receive mercy** and **find grace to help us in our time of need**.*

1. (AMP) *Let us then fearlessly and confidently and boldly draw near to the throne of grace (the throne of God's unmerited favor to us sinners), that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find grace to help in good time for every need [appropriate help and well-timed help, coming just when we need it].*
2. Grace brings help in the nick of time!
3. Because we have a High Priest who can sympathize with our weakness, we are encouraged to come boldly to the Throne of Grace—not a throne of judgment or condemnation—to receive **mercy** and find **grace** TO HELP US IN OUR TIME OF NEED!

B. Definitions

1. Mercy – compassion: not getting what we deserve!
2. Grace – God's unmerited favor: getting what we do not deserve! Expanded: God's free, unmerited favor (which we do not deserve)—the expression of His love and kindness—that gives us access to His power, wisdom and gifts; it calls, saves, teaches, transforms, works, helps, enables and equips!
3. NOTE: It is critical that we understand grace (**Col. 1:6**):
*All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and **understood God's grace in all its truth**.*

II. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

A. Importance of grace

1. God the Father is called the “God of all grace” (1 Pet. 5:10)
2. Jesus is “full of grace” (John 1:14-17); [NOTE: Even though Jesus was full of grace, He NEVER ONCE spoke about it!]
3. The Holy Spirit is called the “Spirit of grace” (Heb. 10:29; Zech. 12:10)
4. God’s Word is called the “Word of His grace” (Acts 20:32)
5. The Gospel we preach is called the “gospel of God’s grace” (Acts 20:24)
6. Grace is God’s final word (Rev. 22:21)!

B. God has plenty of grace—He isn’t stingy!

1. **Eph. 1:7-8; 2:7:** *⁷In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace ⁸that He lavished on us... the incomparable riches of His grace...*
 - a) God is “rich” in grace [Gk. “fullness, abundance”]
 - b) He “lavished” [Gk. “super abound, to be excessive”] grace on us
2. **Rom. 5:17** – *God’s abundant* [Gk. “surplus, superabundance”] **provision of grace...**
3. **2 Cor. 9:8:** *And God is able to make all **grace abound** [Gk. “super abound in excess”] to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.*

C. Grace can be seen—it produces observable effects and evidence

1. **Acts 4:33:** *With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and **much grace was upon them all.***
2. **Acts 6:8:** *Now Stephen, a man **full of God’s grace and power**, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people.*

3. **Acts 11:22-23:** ²²*News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.* ²³*When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.*
4. **Gal. 2:9:** *James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they **recognized the grace given to me**. [NOTE: It is important for leaders to be able to discern/recognize grace in others.]*
5. **1 Cor. 15:10:** *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.*

III. WHAT DOES GRACE DO?

- A. Salvation – it saves us from start to finish, eliminating ALL boasting!
 1. **Eph. 2:1-9:** ¹*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ²in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were **by nature objects of wrath**. ⁴But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵**made us alive** with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is **by grace you have been saved**. ⁶And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷in order that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of His grace, expressed in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and **this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God**—⁹not by works, so that no one can boast.*
 2. NOTE: It will take eternity (“coming ages”) for God to show/demonstrate the incomparable riches of His grace!
 3. **Rom. 3:23-27:** ²³*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are **justified freely by His grace***

through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus...

²⁷**Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded.** *On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith.*

4. Even repentance (Acts 11:18; 2 Tim. 2:24-26) and faith (Acts 18:27 – “those who by grace had believed”) are granted to us by God’s grace!
5. Those whom God has redeemed are for the “praise of His glorious grace”—they are like trophies displaying His amazing grace (**Eph. 1:5-6**):

*⁵He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will—⁶to the **praise of His glorious grace**, which He has freely given us in the One He loves.*

B. Gifts & Calling

1. **Gal. 1:6, 15:** *⁶I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who **called you by the grace of Christ** and are turning to a different gospel... ¹⁵But when God, who set me apart from birth and **called me by His grace**...*
2. **2 Tim. 1:9-10:** *⁹ [God] who has **saved us and called us to a holy life**—NOT BECAUSE OF ANYTHING WE HAVE DONE but **because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time**, ¹⁰but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*
3. God initiates the call, and it has NOTHING to do with who we are or what we have done!
4. **Rom. 11:29** – “**gifts and calling** of God are irrevocable”
5. **Rom. 12:3-8:** *³For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: **Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought**, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. ⁴Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶**We have different gifts,***

according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

6. NOTE: Grace is humbling (“do not think of yourself more highly than you ought”) and we get more grace by humbling ourselves. The only thing that makes us different from anyone else is God’s grace in our lives (**1 Cor. 4:7**):

*For who makes you different from anyone else? **What do you have that you did not receive?** And if you did receive it, **why do you boast** as though you did not?*

7. **1 Cor. 12:1, 4-11** – Spiritual gifts [Gk. *charismata*] are the expressions of God’s grace [Gk. *charis*]*—lit. “grace gifts”*
8. God’s grace is manifold—it is manifested in a diversity of forms and ways: (**1 Pet. 4:10-11**):

*¹⁰Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering **God’s grace in its various forms** [“manifold grace of God” – KJV]. ¹¹If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

9. The five ministry offices of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are gifts of Christ to the Church (**Eph. 4:7-11**):

*⁷But to each one of us **grace has been given** as Christ apportioned it. ⁸This is why it says: “When He ascended on high, He led captives in His train and gave gifts to men.” ⁹(What does “He ascended” mean except that He also descended to the lower, earthly regions? ¹⁰He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) ¹¹It was **He who gave** some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers.*

10. Paul attributed his ministry to the gift of God's grace
(**Eph. 3:7-8**):

*⁷I became a servant of this gospel **by the gift of God's grace** given me through the working of His power.*

*⁸Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this **grace was given me**: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

- C. Grace strengthens, equips, enables, sustains, brings encouragement & hope

1. God never intended for us to live the Christian life and fulfill our calling/ministry in our own strength—it is impossible without grace! Grace equips each one with supernatural strength & ability for their calling/ministry
2. Ministers in the Early Church were “committed to the grace of God” for the work they were undertaking
 - a) **Acts 14:26**: *From Attalia they (Paul and Barnabas) sailed back to Antioch, where they had been **committed to the grace of God** for the work they had now completed.*
 - b) **Acts 15:40**: *But Paul chose Silas and left, **commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.***
3. Paul recognized that his labors in the ministry were the result of grace, not his own effort (**1 Cor. 15:10**):
But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet NOT I, but the grace of God that was with me.
4. It is *grace* that enables us to abound in good works (**2 Cor. 9:8**):
And God is able to make all **grace abound** to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will **abound in every good work.**
5. **2 Cor. 12:9**: *But He said to me, “**My grace is sufficient** for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.*
6. **2 Thess. 2:16-17**: *¹⁶May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who loved us and **by His grace gave***

us eternal encouragement and good hope, ¹⁷*encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.*

7. **2 Tim. 2:1:** *You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*
8. **1 Pet. 1:13:** *Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.*
9. NOTE: The message of Christ's return should bring hope and encouragement, not fear and dread [see 1 Thess. 4:13-18 – “encourage each other with these words” (concerning the Rapture)].

IV. HOW TO ACCESS GOD'S GRACE

- A. Noah “*found grace*” (Gen. 6:8), so it must be something we need to look for!
- B. Humble yourself—admit your weakness and confess regularly: “I need help!”
 1. **1 Pet. 5:5-6:** *⁵Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” ⁶Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time.*
 2. **James 4:6:** *But He gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”*
 3. Don’t let pride blind you to who you really are... NOTHING (Gal. 6:3):

For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.
- C. Come to God in full assurance of faith
 1. **Rom. 5:1-2:** *¹Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.*

2. **Heb. 4:16:** *Let us then **approach the throne of grace with confidence**, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*
3. **Heb. 10:22:** *Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart **in full assurance of faith**, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

D. Be filled with the Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit is the “Spirit of grace” (Heb. 10:29)
2. Seek and walk in the anointing of the Holy Spirit
3. The Messianic prophecy in Psalm 45 (quoted in Heb. 1:8-9) clearly speaks about the “anointing of grace” that was upon Jesus (**Ps. 45:2, 7**):

*²You are the most excellent of men and Your lips have been **anointed with grace**, since God has blessed You forever...*

*⁷You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has set You above Your companions by **anointing You with the oil of joy**.*

4. Stephen and Philip were chosen because they were “known to be full of the Spirit”—they were also “full of God’s grace and power” (Acts 6:3, 8; 8:6)

E. Give grace to others

1. **Mat. 10:8:** *Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. **Freely you have received, freely give*** [Span. “of grace you have received, give of grace”].
2. Treat others the way you want to be treated... with mercy and grace (**Mat. 7:1-5 12**):

*¹Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ²For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and **with the measure you use, it will be measured to you**. ³Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴How can you say to your brother, “Let me take the speck out of your eye,” when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?*

*⁵You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye... ¹²So in everything, **do to others what you***

would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

3. Be quick to forgive 70 times 7 (**Mat. 6:14-15**):

¹⁴For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

4. Bitterness cuts off the flow of grace (**Heb. 12:15 NKJV**):

*Looking carefully lest **anyone fall short of the grace of God**; lest any **root of bitterness springing up** cause trouble, and by this many become defiled.*

F. Keep growing and increasing in grace

1. **2 Pet. 1:2 (NKJV)**: ***Grace and peace be multiplied** to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*

2. **2 Pet. 3:18**: ***But grow in the grace** and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*

3. From the fullness of Christ's grace, we receive "grace upon grace" (John 1:16 NAS)

4. Study, learn, memorize, love the Word of God—it is the "Word of His grace" which can edify and build you up (**Acts 20:32**):

*So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the **word of His grace, which is able to build you up** and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. [see also 2 Tim. 3:16-17]*

V. PICTURES OF GRACE IN ACTION

- A. As already noted, Jesus, though filled with grace, never once used the word "grace" in His teaching or preaching—BUT, He demonstrated grace and gave many parables showing grace in action.
- B. **John 8:1-11** – story of the woman caught in the act of adultery
- C. **Luke 18:9-14**: *⁹To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood up*

and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

¹³“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ ¹⁴“I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

D. **Luke 15:11-32** – story of the prodigal son:

²⁰So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his **father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.** ²¹The son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. **I am no longer worthy to be called your son.**” ²²But the father said to his servants, “Quick! **Bring the best robe** and put it on him. **Put a ring on his finger** and sandals on his feet. ²³Bring the fattened calf and kill it. **Let's have a feast and celebrate.** ²⁴For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” So they began to celebrate.

1. This is what grace looks like!

2. NOTE: the older son did not understand grace

E. **Mat. 18:21-35** – parable of the unforgiving servant

³³“Shouldn't you have had **mercy** on your fellow servant **just as I had on you?** ³⁴In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

³⁵This is how My heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.

F. The cross is the ultimate picture of grace (**Rom. 5:8**):

*But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: **While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.***

VI. IMPORTANCE OF MINISTERING GRACE TO THE CHURCH

A. Our message to the Church is the good news of God's GRACE

B. **Acts 20:24:** *However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord*

*Jesus has given me—the task of **testifying to the gospel of God’s grace.***

- C. God will confirm the “message of His grace” with signs and wonders (**Acts 14:3**):

*So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who **confirmed the message of His grace** by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders.*

- D. Urge people to come to the throne of grace (Heb. 4:16) and continue in the grace of God (**Acts 13:43**):

*When the congregation was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to **continue in the grace of God.***

- E. Pastors and leaders must learn to commit their disciples to God and the word of His grace (**Acts 20:32**):

*[Paul to the Ephesian pastors and elders]: **Now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace**, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

- F. Grace should be the heart of our message to the church (**2 Cor. 6:1**):

*As God’s fellow workers **we urge you not to receive God’s grace in vain.***

- G. Remind people regularly that religion and ceremonies cannot save them—their hearts need grace (**Heb. 13:9**):

*Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings. It is good for our **hearts to be strengthened by grace**, not by ceremonial foods, which are of no value to those who eat them.*

- H. Warn people about the danger of missing, failing, or falling from grace—this should be feared more than any other sin

1. **Heb. 12:15:** *See to it that no one **misses the grace of God** and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.*
2. **Gal. 5:4:** *You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have **fallen away from grace.***

I. Let *grace* teach our disciples (**Tit. 2:11-13**):

¹¹*For the **grace of God that brings salvation** has appeared to all men. ¹²**It teaches us** to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.*

J. After great opposition and numerous setbacks, the builders of the restored temple were encouraged with these words to the prophet (**Zech. 4:6-7 NKJV**):

⁶*So he answered and said to me: “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘**Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,**’ says the LORD of hosts. ⁷‘Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And **he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of “Grace, grace to it!”**”’*

1. The temple would be completed, not by their own power, but by the power of God’s Spirit!
2. There would be no boasting, saying, “Look what we’ve done!” Rather, they would be praising God, acknowledging that it was ALL BY GRACE!

Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you;

He rises to show you compassion.

For the LORD is a God of justice.

Blessed are all who wait for Him!

*O people of Zion, who live in Jerusalem,
you will weep no more.*

How gracious He will be when you cry for help!

As soon as He hears, He will answer you.

Isa. 30:18-19

*The **grace of the Lord Jesus** be with God's people.*

Amen.

Rev. 22:21