

Understanding God's Grace #4

Appropriating God's Grace

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I. Introductory Remarks.

In this series of messages we have been looking at the subject of Understanding God's Grace. We've been looking at what true grace is vs. what it is not. In this concluding message on God's grace I want to take a look at some of the practicalities of appropriating God's grace in our lives.

2 Corinthians 9:8 *And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, have an abundance for every good work.*

This is a powerful promise to us in God's word concerning His grace towards us. This means no matter what the situation we are going through, no matter what the problem we are dealing with and no matter what the task we are involved in, God's grace and sufficiency will be there to sustain us and help us in all that we put our hand to do.

2 Corinthians 2:14 *Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.*

Philippians 2:12-13 *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,' for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

Grace Defined:

The grace of God involves more than the dimension of it simply being God's unmerited favor towards us. It is also God's divine enabling through His Spirit. Through God's grace we are enabled to cope with whatever adversity, trial, or dilemma we face in a godly manner. We are also equipped by His grace to perform the spiritual tasks He gives us to do.

With this in mind let's look at some of the keys to practically appropriating God's grace in our lives. In other words let's look at what it will take for us to seize or capture His grace in our lives.

II. Keys To Appropriating God's Grace.

Key #1 - We Must Come To The Throne Of Grace And Ask For His Help.

Of all that I will be saying in this message concerning appropriating God's grace, this is the most important key that you can have working in your life. Without the key to the throne room of God's grace you will never be able to open the door.

Hebrews 4:14-16 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us holdfast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

God's grace will never be released in our lives until we learn how to come to Him through His mercy being poured into our lives. When we approach the throne of grace, we come first needing mercy, because we come as a person in misery or distress. God in His mercy gives us His grace--that is the divine enabling through His Spirit--to help us in our need. We must simply come to Him in prayer, asking Him to pour out His grace into our lives.

Hebrews 10:19-22 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

As we approach the throne of grace, we find that Jesus, our Great High Priest, has gone before us and is, even as we come, already interceding for us.

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He ever lives to make intercession for them.

What are you going through today? What kind of trouble, anxiety, perplexing problems or dilemmas have you come up against recently? Whatever your need is--you need the divine ability of God's grace working in your life? It starts with coming to His throne of mercy and grace.

- **The Example Of Jesus' Disciples In The Book Of Acts.**

Acts 4:29-31 *"Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, "by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.*

- **Paul's Example Of Going To The Throne Of Grace.**

2 Corinthians 12:7-9 *And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

I believe when Paul received the word from the Lord, "My grace is sufficient for you," that he received the strength and the determination to go on, because God had spoken deep into His spirit. It came as a result of him going to the throne of grace in a time of distress and need.

Key #2 - We Must Receive From The Word Of God's Grace.

Paul committed the Ephesus elders to the word of grace which was able to build them up.

Acts 20:32 *"And 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.*

God uses His word to impart grace into our lives as well. He will bring to mind some Scripture or Scriptures that are appropriate to the situation we may be going through. This happens through your personal study & time in God's word, through hearing sermons, reading inspirational books or through a friend who encourages you by speaking an appropriate scripture from the word of God.

Proverbs 12:25 *Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad.*

It takes giving yourself to a time of meditation and reflection upon God's word. We must become intimate with Scripture so that we can call it into remembrance

when it is needed. Growth in God's grace requires growth in our assimilation of God's Word.

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Romans 15:4-5 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Jesus.

In order to take up God's word as a sword, we must have it at our disposal. We must be like David who said, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against You."

The word stored in our heart provides a mental depository for the Holy Spirit to use to mediate His grace to us, whatever our need for grace might be.

When we have a command of God's word, we are not only to use it for our own benefit, but God will also use it in our ministry to others. Give examples of counseling experiences when God has given to me a specific scripture to speak to someone.

Proverbs 25:11 A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.

Key #3 - We Must Clothe Ourselves In Submission & Humility.

A very important key to receiving God's grace is clothing ourselves in humility and submission before God and others, because God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

1 Peter 5:5-6 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.

God gives grace to the humble, to those who humble themselves under the mighty and of God's providence. Our tendency is to become angry and rebellious towards God for allowing us to go through certain circumstances.

Joseph recognized that God in His sovereignty used even the heinous sins of his brothers to accomplish His purpose.

Genesis 45:8 "So now it was not you who sent me here, but God,. and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

We too, must see God's sovereignty ultimately ruling in all the circumstances of our lives if we are to appropriate God's grace. Even those circumstances that are difficult or disappointing, or humiliating, we must humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.