What Is God's Grace?
OR
Why Can't A Work's Gospel Save Anyone?

Introduction:

We wish to look at what God means when He talks about grace, **saving grace** in particular. If we have the wrong idea of what is God's grace (the grace of God that saves a soul), then we may yet be lost in our sins and under the wrath of God, a most serious situation to be in.

Grace Contrasted With Works:

We can be sure that God's grace has nothing to do with the works of man, since God contrasts His grace with man's works, as clearly shown here in Romans chapter 11 verse 6:

> "And if by grace[G5485], then is it no more of works: otherwise grace[G5485] is no more grace[G5485]. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." [Romans 11:6]

The Strong's Greek number for the word "grace" in the above verse is: "G5485" which is translated as ***grace*** 130 times in the King James version. And this word "grace" – as commonly used – means "good will, loving-kindness, favour" regarding **the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues**.

The Catholic Religion Has It's Own Unique Flavors Of Grace:

According to the Catholic church and some Protestant denominations there are several types of grace, each associated with (obtained through) a church

"sacrament" (a ritual or ceremony). One is the grace of **baptism** (Catechism of the Catholic church paragraph #265) that supposedly starts you off as a Catholic or Christian. This **water baptism** is a "works based" sacrament, like eating the communion wafer (a.k.a. "eucharist"), and participating in the ceremony (a.k.a. "sacrifice of the mass"), in the Catholic church and others, where the participant DOES something to GET something from God. The person DOES the sacrament (gets baptized or eats a wafer) to GET some "grace" (favor from God or some kind of enabling power). Then the theory is that when you GET this grace ***that you just did something to get***, you are thereby enabled to DO good works, the kind of works that the Catholic church calls "merits" (see Catechism of the Catholic church paragraphs #2009 & #2011). These merits are like salvation "points" that count towards your salvation, although the Catholic church never tells anyone how many "merits" it takes to get to heaven. They do say that some people actually earn more merits than they need to get to heaven and these extra merits get stored in a treasury in heaven (a.k.a. the "Treasury Of Merit") to be distributed somehow to people that don't earn enough of them while here on earth (see Catechism of the Catholic church paragraphs #1476 – 1478).

Catholics, for the most part, have not been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, they do not realize that it is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that ENABLES true "born again" believers to live holy, godly lives, serving the Lord Jesus Christ, by enabling them to recognize sins that they never recognized before AND by giving them the desire to obey and please God in a way that they were not BORN with. These characteristics of spiritually reborn Christians are referred to as fruits of the Spirit, as mentioned in Galatians chapter 5, verses 22 to 24.

We need to look to the Bible, God's Word, for answers:

We need to ask ourselves, is that really what the saving grace of God is all about? Getting some mystical power from God to help you EARN or MERIT salvation? According to God, according to the Bible, as we have seen in Romans 11:6, grace is something CONTRASTED with works. It is God's UNMERITED favor. It is not something that "enables" you to live a life "good enough" or "worthy enough" to qualify for heaven. God's saving grace is His wonderful provision of a free and complete pardon from sin to undeserving rebellious sinners. To put it another way, God's grace, in particular, is His salvation plan and that salvation plan is manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ, the all-sufficient sin-bearer and substitute who suffered the wrath of God for all the ungodly sinners that He came to save. Are you one of those sinners? How do you know?

Here is a description from the Bible of what God's saving grace is all about (keep in mind that these verses only apply to those whom God saves – i.e. grants salvation to):

> "8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet **sinners**, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from **wrath** through him. 10 For if, when we were **enemies**, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." [Romans 5:8-10]

Notice in verse 8 above, that Christ came to save **sinners** and the label "sinner" applies to everyone. God's grace involves His love for those who do not deserve love: sinners – people who daily and continually ignore and violate God's commandments, even when they think they are being good (because then they are being self-righteous and ignorant of sins that God sees but they don't see). God's love is displayed by the fact that He came to earth as a man and suffered and died to pay the price for sins that sinners could not pay.

In Romans 5:9 above, we see God's grace has to do with **saving a guilty hell-deserving sinner at the expense of Christ**, who suffered the punishment due to those sinners He came to save. Christ's atoning death is sufficient to justify (make perfectly and completely righteous) those sinners whom Christ saves. We also learn from Romans 5:9 that we are saved from the **wrath of God** which is **eternity in hell** as made clear in Luke chapter 12:

"And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him." [Luke 12:4-5]

In Romans 5:10 above we see that before God saves a person they are His enemies. Those who are enemies against Christ includes anyone who is not yet saved.

Regarding Christ's saving blood:

Romans 3:25 – "Whom God hath set forth to be a **propitiation*** through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"
*this has to do with appeasing God, satisfying His requirements for Divine justice
Ephesians 2:13 – "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."
Hebrews 9:14 – "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"
Hebrews 9:22 – "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
1 John 1:7 – "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from **all** sin."

Regarding what Christ's saving blood accomplishes:

Romans 5:1 – "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"
Romans 3:24 – "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:"
Romans 3:26 – "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."
Romans 8:30 – "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Regarding God's wrath:

Romans 1:18 – "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"
Romans 8:1 – "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."
John 5:24 – "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."
1 Thessalonians 1:10 – "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come"

Regarding the eternal nature of God's wrath:

Revelation 14:11 – "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."
Matthew 8:12 – "But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
Matthew 13:42 – "And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."
Matthew 13:50 – "And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."
Matthew 22:13 – "Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
Matthew 24:51 – "And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
Matthew 25:30 – "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
Matthew 25:46 And these shall go away into **everlasting** punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.
Luke 13:28 – "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."
It is the GRACE of God that saves sinners from the wrath of God even though they deserve God's wrath for their sins:

> "Noah found **grace** in the eyes of the LORD." [Genesis 6:7-8]
>
> "Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found **grace** in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" [Ruth 2:10]

"And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. 12 And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. 13 Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found **grace** in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find **grace** in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people. 14 And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. 15 And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. 16 For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found **grace** in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. 17 And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found **grace** in my sight, and I know thee by name. 18 And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. 19 And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be **gracious** to whom I will be **gracious**, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. 20 And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. 21 And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: **(see 1Cor 10:4)** 22 And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: 23 And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen." [Exodus 33:11-23]

"And he said, If now I have found **grace** in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance." [Exodus 34:9]

God's grace provides an inheritance:

Matthew 19:29 – "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall ***inherit*** *everlasting life."*

Matthew 25:34 – "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, ***inherit*** *the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:"*

1 Corinthians 6:9 – "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall ***inherit*** *the kingdom of God."*

Galatians 5:21 – "Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not ***inherit*** *the kingdom of God."*

NOTE: You don't earn an inheritance. You receive it as a gift **(see Acts 8:20, Romans 6:23, Ephesians 2:8)**. Also, we do NOT receive an inheritance ***because*** we forsake things of this world. God ***causes*** His children to forsake the things of this world when He saves them and puts His Spirit in them because at that point He makes a person a new creature in Christ **(see Ezekiel 36:25-27 & 2 Corinthians 5:17)**. Paul makes this point clear in Galatians 6:14-15:

> "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

Circumcision or any other work of man is useless for purchasing a salvation that was already completely paid for by Christ.

Those who forsake the things of the world ***in the flesh***, are doing it in their own self-righteousness and will not receive everlasting life but rather everlasting contempt.

What is the inheritance that the unsaved will receive:

Daniel 12:2 – "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

2 Thess 1:7 – "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;"

Matthew 7:13 – "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life,

and few there be that find it."

It is the grace of God that redeems sinners (purchases their salvation) through Christ Jesus:

> "Being justified freely by his **grace** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" [Romans 3:24]

It is the grace of God that calls a person out of this lost world and into God's eternal kingdom:

> "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his **grace**" [Galatians 1:15]

It is the grace of God that makes a sinner acceptable to Him on Judgment day:

> "To the praise of the glory of his **grace**, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." [Ephesians 1:6]

It is the grace of God that redeems a sinner through the blood sacrifice of Christ:

> "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his **grace**" [Ephesians 1:7]

God's grace is the undeserved kindness that He shows a sinner by placing the sinner's sins on Christ and placing the righteousness of Christ on the sinner:

> "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his **kindness** toward us through Christ Jesus." [Ephesians 2:7]
>
> "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." [Isaiah 53:5-6]

Has God converted you from a self-righteous sinner into a person who is now aware of the depth and degree of their unrighteousness in the sight of an infinitely righteous God?

"And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" [Philippians 3:9]

Do you understand the holiness of God and who He is to whom you will have to give an account to someday for every thought, word and deed?

"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" [Habakkuk 1:13]

"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." [Hebrews 4:13]

God's grace involves showing sinners how He sees them and how much trouble they are in with God and how far they fall short of His glory:

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." [Romans 3:10-12]

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" [Romans 3:23]

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." [Romans 5:21]

"And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance ." [Exod. 5:21]

Do you realize the enormity of the debt you owe to God and that you could never pay such a debt and dare not even try, lest you insult Christ for the grand and glorious work He did at the cross to save hell-deserving sinners?

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" [Hebrews 2:3]

"… Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. " [Isaiah 6:5]

Do you realize that religious rituals, religious traditions and any human effort are useless coverings for the nakedness of your sins and that only the righteousness of Christ can cover your sins?

> "… Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." [Matthew 15:6]
>
> "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" [Revelation 3:17]
>
> "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness." [Proverbs 30:12]
>
> "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." [1 John 1:7]

Do you realize how much God hates sin?

> "The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul **hateth**. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." [Psalm 11:5-6]
>
> "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou **hatest** all workers of iniquity. Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will **abhor** the bloody and deceitful man." [Psalm 5:5]
>
> "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." [Hebrews 10:31]

Do you realize how much you need God to be gracious and merciful towards you?

> "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." [Luke 18:10-14]

So now that you know what is God’s grace, do YOU have God’s grace?

Do YOU possess God’s salvation?

SEE ALSO:
The Wrath Of God by Arthur Pink
What is the grace of God?
Bible Verses About Grace
— *RM Kane*