

*Father, this morning, we thank You for the gift of life. Thank You for enabling us to come into Your presence. Now that we are here, O God, I pray, You give us ears that will hear, a mind that will understand and a heart that will believe; that we may decrease; Christ may increase; that the one who speaks and the one who translates is nothing but Christ is everything. We have not come for knowledge alone; Father, we have come for life. You are the Author of life. Your words are Spirit and life. When we go from here, help us to have gone after receiving more of Your life. We commit the families and the two Churches who have lost their shepherd, their father, the husband. We pray You would stretch forth Your hands and comfort them. For You are the God of all comfort. For You can comfort and strengthen in a way which no man can do. Comfort them and strengthen them. Be with us now, O Lord. For in Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.*

We have come to the tenth month of this year. Ten months. Nine months are over; the tenth month is here. Ten, in the Bible, the number 10 is always connected with judgment. So, as servants of God and others who are here, it is good to evaluate ourselves. We don't have to judge anybody else or other's ministry; we just have to judge ourselves and the ministry God has committed into our hands.

In his letter to the *Corinthian Church*, the Holy Spirit, through Apostle Paul will tell us in *2 Corinthians 13:5*,

**2 Corinthians 13:5**

***<sup>5</sup>Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.***

Scripture says, "Examine yourselves." It doesn't say about examining others. Examine yourself; test yourself and the answer is also given. Is Christ in you? That is the test. The answer is this – at the tenth month, has Christ grown in me? Has Christ more control of me in this tenth month than in the ninth month? Have I surrendered even more? Has Christ increased and I decreased? That's the test the Apostle tells us to take because that is my real hope – our only hope. Our hope is not in our works; our hope is not even in our faith; our real hope is in the Christ in us. *Colossians 1:27* says,

**Colossians 1:27**

***<sup>27</sup>To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: (what is this mystery? What is this glory?) which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.***

Where does our hope of glory come from? It has got nothing to do with our works. It is got to do with the Christ in us. The more Christ grows, the stronger becomes your hope. Our hope is in us, the Christ in us. This is the mystery of the ages. The Christ in you and me – that is the hope of our glory. We all want to be glorified when we die or when He comes. But the question is this: how real is our hope? Is Christ maturing in me? Is Christ growing in me?

In his Epistle to all of us but written to his spiritual son, Timothy, the Holy Spirit will tell us through Paul in *1 Timothy 4:13-16*,

**1 Timothy 4:13-16**

***<sup>13</sup>Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. <sup>14</sup>Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. <sup>15</sup>Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. <sup>16</sup>Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.***

Paul is telling Timothy, I'm telling every Pastor here – you have received the gift of preaching and teaching. Make the best use of it. Everybody should see your progress in your walk in Christ. Everybody should see our progress that we are actually growing in Christ and we are hearing more from God and He is revealing more to us. He says, "Everyone should see your progress." Then, he tells him, "Watch your life; watch your doctrine. Both your life and your doctrine." And he says, "Continue or persevere in both. In your life, Christ should have more and more control. In your doctrine, the doctrine of

Christ should be more and more established. If you continue in them,” Paul says, “you will save yourself and you will save your sheep too.” This is very important to servants of God. That’s how we examine ourselves. That’s how we judge ourselves. We judge our lives; we judge our doctrine, constantly bringing it into alignment with the Word of God because, above all, we live in the last days, where the preaching of the real Gospel becomes more and more difficult because of deception and because of false doctrines. Jesus warned that the main sign of the last days within the Church is that it will be full of wrong doctrines and persecution will be rising. And Scripture says, *“And we know the love of many is growing cold.”* And when this happens, the preaching of the real Gospel becomes very difficult. And we are tempted to change the Gospel to please our hearers, not to save our hearers. It is like the days of Noah. The door of the Ark is about to close but in spite of the preaching of Noah, no one was interested. They must have been curious about the spectacle – the Ark and the animals – but nobody received the message. They rejected the message of Noah. Do you know what was the message Noah preached? In *2 Peter 2:5*, Scripture talks about the message of Noah.

**2 Peter 2:5**

***<sup>5</sup> and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness...***

Noah preached the Gospel of righteousness. That was who he was – a preacher of righteousness. The Gospel has never changed because God’s Kingdom never changes. He also preached a message of righteousness. He said, “Repent and get in! Stay in the Ark! Judgment is coming!” But no one received his message. Only seven people received the message of Noah. Noah was a preacher of righteousness. He watched his life and he watched his doctrine. During the hundred and twenty years he preached, he never changed his doctrine and he was very careful as to how we walked. Therefore, he saved himself and his hearers. And then, Scripture records in *Genesis 7:16*; what does Scripture say?

**Genesis 7:16**

***<sup>16</sup> So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.***

Yehovah; Noah did not shut the door. Left to Noah, he would have left it open because outside are your friends and family. God shut it. He said, “Time is up.” And the world is coming very close to that time where the age of grace will close. The door will be shut and after that, the only that is left is judgment. Two thousand years ago, Jesus said this in *Matthew 11:12-13*,

**Matthew 11:12-13**

***<sup>12</sup> And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. <sup>13</sup> For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.***

What is Scripture saying? Every prophet and the entire Old Testament until John, was talking about the Kingdom of God’s arrival – the Coming of the King and the Kingdom. And it is here that Jesus proclaimed. John the Baptist first proclaimed, *“Repent, the Kingdom of God is near.”* When Herod silenced his voice, Jesus stood up and said, *“Repent, for the Kingdom of God here.”* When the Romans and the Jews got together and silenced the voice of Jesus, fifty days later, a hundred and twenty rose up and said, *“Repent, for the Kingdom of God is here!”* The Gospel we preach is the Gospel of the Kingdom and that Kingdom is subject to violence. But we ourselves have to be spiritually violent to seize that Kingdom. To enter into that Kingdom, like Noah and his family, we have to be violent to leave all the others and get in. Everything that he has known and experienced for six hundred years is outside the Ark. And with great spiritual violence, he and his family tear themselves away from that and get into the Ark.

The Gospel has never changed. To go to the Promised Land, Israel had to be willing to leave Egypt in one day. To enter into the Kingdom, we have to be willing to be cut off with every spiritual tie with this world. They may be no physical ties;; but spiritual ties, yes. In *Acts 2:40-41*, Scripture says,

**Acts 2:40-41**

***<sup>40</sup> And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”***

Let me ask you this question: when was the last time, in a crusade, you heard a preacher quote this? They won’t say that. They will just say, “Repeat a prayer after me and you are saved.” There was never a Gospel like that. Neither in the time of

Noah or when Moses went and preached to Israel or John the Baptist preached to Israel or Jesus preached to Israel or the Apostle preached to the whole world. There was a demand – “*Be saved from this perverse generation.*” There were tens and thousands of people there but only,

**<sup>41</sup> *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized...***

Today, we will baptize anybody. That’s why there is no power in the Church because we changed the Gospel. To Israel, God said, “Believe in the Blood of the Passover Lamb, eat it and get out.” *Exodus 12:11* – “Get out immediately. Be ready to get out.”

**Exodus 12:11**

**<sup>11</sup> *And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD’s Passover.***

You go to some restaurants in this city, there are no chairs. You have to stand and eat because they want you to eat and get out. That’s what God is saying. “Partake of the Passover Lamb, tuck your cloak in your belt, your staff in your hand, under the cover of the Blood, get out of Egypt. That’s the beginning of your salvation.” To the Church, God says, “Repent, believe and be baptized.” When you are baptized, every spiritual tie with this world is broken and you emerge as a new person in Christ in His Kingdom. In Noah’s time, only seven believed in his message of separation and cleaving to Christ. In Moses’ time, from his generation, only two believed in his message. And the rest who followed were those who were below twenty years. Yet, what Noah was promised or Israel was promised is nothing compared to what is being promised to us because the New Covenant is a much superior Covenant than the Old Covenant. Yet, we are not willing to leave. At least, Israel was willing to leave. We are not even willing to leave. Now, when we come to the New Covenant, remember, we are ministers of the New Covenant. Examine yourself; evaluate yourself; judge yourself – am I a minister of the New Covenant? What is the difference? In *2 Corinthians 3:6*, the Holy Spirit through Paul will tell us,

**2 Corinthians 3:6**

**<sup>6</sup> *who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.***

Judge yourselves; let’s judge ourselves. Nine months of ministry of 2016, was I a minister of the Spirit or was I a minister of the letter? *The letter kills; the Spirit gives life.* Everybody preaches from the same Bible. These 66 Books. Everybody preaches from This but it can be the letter which kills or the Spirit that brings life. The letter of the law was given through Moses but we are not ministers of the letter of the law because the law has no power to save anybody. The only thing the law does is point out your and my sins, our mistakes and judge. But Jesus Christ comes as the first Minister of the New Covenant, which is the Spirit of the same law. It’s not the letter; but the Spirit which gives life and it is most beautifully explained to us by the Apostle John in the *Gospel according to John 1:17*,

**John 1:17**

**<sup>17</sup> *For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.***

The letter of the law came through Moses; the spirit of the law was revealed to us through Jesus Christ. What is the spirit of the law that came through Jesus Christ? *Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.* The question, then, we ask is: how can grace and truth come through Jesus Christ? The answer is in *verse 14*,

**John 1:14**

**<sup>14</sup> *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.***

This is the key. Whatever comes out of us is what we are full of. If we are full of worry, we will worry others also. If we are full of anger, we will be angry with others. If we are full of bitterness, what comes out is bitterness. How did grace and truth come through Jesus Christ? *Because He was full of grace and full of truth.* Moses came full of the law, the righteous judgments of God. That was what he was full of. Forty days in the presence of God alone, he saw the righteous

requirements of God and that is how he came. So, wherever Moses went, he brought judgment. He went to Egypt. First thing, he turned water into blood. Why? Where the law goes, it brings only judgment. He said, "Let My people go for a three-day journey." Pharaoh said, "No." Water turned into blood. *Jesus came with full of grace and full of truth.* Scripture says, "Three days later, He went for His first wedding at Cana. He turned water into wine." Wine is a symbol of life and joy in the Bible. Moses went and brought death; Jesus went and brought life. One was the minister of the letter; the Other was the Minister of the Spirit. When Moses was finished with Egypt, when he finished, every firstborn of Egypt had died. When Christ was finished with His work, the First born of God was dead so that we could have life. Two Covenants; two ministries. When Moses came down with the law, we know the story. We know what had happened in the camp when Moses was away. *Exodus 32:25-28* will tell us.

### **Exodus 32:25-28**

***<sup>25</sup> Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies), <sup>26</sup> then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, "Whoever is on the LORD's side—come to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. <sup>27</sup> And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.'" <sup>28</sup> So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day.***

The law went to Egypt and killed all the firstborn. When the law came to God's camp, do you know what is the first thing that is written in *verse 25*? The high priest had failed. The priesthood had failed and it brought death into the camp. Remember, if you are a minister of the letter of the law, your priesthood will fail. All you will bring is death into your camp. And on that day, about three thousand died. These are not the people of Egypt; these are the people of God. Yet, when the New Covenant begins, fifty days after Jesus rose from the dead, 120 were gathered in the upper room and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Peter stood up and spoke to the multitudes gathered. The ministry of the Spirit; not of the letter. The Book is the same. Peter is preaching from the Old Covenant, from the *Book of Joel*. He is speaking from the law and the prophets. Yet, this is the new ministry, the Covenant of the Spirit. And *Acts 2:41* says,

### **Acts 2:41**

***<sup>41</sup> Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.***

Same number. Three thousand were saved. When the law came, the letter of the law kills but the Spirit brings life. When law comes, death comes but when Christ comes, He comes with full of grace and full of truth. What is interesting is Peter also preached from the Old Testament. What he was preached was not the letter of the law; what he preached was the Spirit of the law. The letter of the law is represented by Moses; the Spirit of the law is represented by Christ. He preached Christ and the Holy Spirit did His work. That's all we have to do. We have to preach Christ. Jesus said, "If you lift Me up, I will draw all men towards Me." But always remember the balance of the New Covenant. What does it mean to be a minister of the Spirit? What does it mean to be a minister of the New Covenant? *John 1:17* – the balance.

### **John 1:17**

***<sup>17</sup> ...grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.***

Remember that. Balance. Not grace alone; not truth alone; grace and truth. If you really want the Holy Spirit to move in our midst, we need to balance both grace and truth. Listen to what the New Testament Scripture says about the Holy Spirit.

### **John 16:13**

***<sup>13</sup> However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come...***

Only that much is needed. What is the aathma's (Spirit's) name? He is called the 'Spirit of truth'.

### **Hebrews 10:29**

***<sup>29</sup> Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?***

Holy Spirit has two names. He is called the 'Spirit of truth'; He is called the 'Spirit of grace'. How did Jesus come? Full of truth and full of grace and He was filled with the Holy Spirit. Let me ask you this question: when is the last time you heard somebody saying, "I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit," and they talk about truth and grace as what it means? The only thing you hear is about gifts, which are something else. You know, I can give you a gift and not really be a part of you. And I can give you myself and I have all the gifts. That's why God says, "Examine yourself." Is Christ Jesus in you? How do we examine ourselves?

Because this is the 10<sup>th</sup> month. You know, when Abraham interceded with God for Sodom and Gomorrah, but the time he reached number 10, do you know why he stopped? Because God stopped speaking, turned and walked away. That's what Scripture says. At 10, God stopped. That's His number. So, we have to ask ourselves: have I grown in grace and in truth? That is what it actually means to be filled with the Holy Spirit. That's how you know we are filled more and more because truth and grace are increasing in us. That's how we judge ourselves. In *1 Corinthians 11:31*, Scripture says,

**1 Corinthians 11:31**

***<sup>31</sup> For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.***

If you don't want God to judge you... anybody wants God to judge you? No. Simple thing. God says, "If you judge yourselves, I won't judge you." He says, "If you judge yourselves, I don't have to judge you." But how do we judge ourselves? How do we judge ourselves as the ministers of the New Covenant? Am I growing in grace? Am I growing in truth? But be very sure – if you are a true child of God, if you don't judge yourself, if I don't judge myself, Scripture says in the next verse that God will judge us.

**1 Corinthians 11:32**

***<sup>32</sup> But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.***

Which Gospel did we believe? How do I examine myself? That is what we are looking at today. How do I judge myself?

Today, God has given us two yardsticks – one is grace; the other is truth. Because *Jesus came, full of grace and full of truth*. We will look at grace first. Have we grown in grace? The last words Apostle Peter will write to you and me in *2 Peter 3:18*; the last words written by the great Apostle Peter is this;

**2 Peter 3:18**

***<sup>18</sup> but grow in the grace...***

That's his last words to us. Grow in the grace of Christ. The last words written by this Apostle is, "Grow in grace." How do I grow in grace? How do I know I have grown in grace? Now, when we come to grace, we have to be very careful because all we hear is grace, radical grace and all kinds of grace. Some people, their wives name is 'grace'; daughter's name is grace but they see no grace. My Church's name is also Grace Tabernacle because grace is the most commonly used word today to excuse anything. So, we have to be very careful. Let me warn you – in Christianity, in the Church, as God's servants within the Church, the devil also has his servants from the beginning till today. In *2 Corinthians 11:13-15*, Scripture says,

**2 Corinthians 11:13-15**

***<sup>13</sup> For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. <sup>14</sup> And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. <sup>15</sup> Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.***

False Apostles. The Church is built on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets. Now, there are false Apostles! If your Church is built by the teachings of a false Apostle, even your foundation is wrong. Deceitful workers! Satan himself disguises as a messenger of light. Therefore, his servants, also, pretend to be servants of righteousness. Church will never be overcome by the world; the Church is overcome from the deception inside. And the greatest deception, today, is on grace.

There are three major areas on how you can identify a false servant in the preaching of the Word of God. One – they

subvert or change the truth. Remember, Jesus said, “*I am the truth.*” Jesus said, “*You are sanctified by the Word and the Word of God is truth.*” *Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21* – the whole Bible is the Word of God and the truth. One of the ways deceitful workers, false workers trap people is – they change the truth of God’s Word. We won’t get into that now; maybe in the afternoon.

Second thing, false teachers do; they quietly and slowly take you back to the law. The entire Epistle to the Church in the Galatians was written as a response to this. Little by little, they introduced the law. “If you don’t keep the seventh day Sabbath, you are not part of the Church.” “If you want to be a complete believer, you need to be circumcised.” In *Galatians 3:1-3*, this is what Paul will say.

**Galatians 3:1-3**

**<sup>1</sup> O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you** (he says, “It is satanic; it is demonic,”) **that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?** **<sup>2</sup> This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?** **<sup>3</sup> Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?**

They take you back to the letter of the law. In *Galatians 5:4*, Paul will say,

**Galatians 5:4**

**<sup>4</sup> You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.**

Subtly, false teachers will come and bring this doctrine so that the people will fall from grace because you are saved and kept only by grace.

So, three main areas we have to be careful. One – false servants will come and subvert or change the truth. Second – they take you back to the law.

And third, it is the worst – they preach and offer a false grace. This is true. There is a true grace and there is a false grace. The entire *first Epistle of Peter* was written for this purpose – to distinguish between true grace and false grace. And finally, it ends in *1 Peter 5:12*. Do you know what he writes?

**1 Peter 5:12**

**<sup>12</sup> By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.**

Satya krupa (true grace). Be careful, Pastors, because, if there is a true grace, then there is a false grace that was being preached from that time because, in the last days, much of deception that is taking place is in the realm of grace. Remember, the problem is – true grace saves; false grace makes you feel saved when you are not saved. It’s a very dangerous thing. In this world, people only duplicate what is valuable. You have heard about fake gold, duplicate gold. Do you hear about duplicate aluminum? 500 rupee notes. Have you heard of duplicate 1-rupee notes? Because it’s not valuable. People try to duplicate everything that is valuable. In the same way, satan also duplicates what is valuable and precious in the Kingdom of God. So, the entire New Covenant warns us. False Apostles, false prophets, false teachers, false shepherds, false evangelists, false tongues, false gifts and worst of all – false grace. Jesus came *full of grace and full of truth*. So, the question is: what is true grace? Remember, grace is mentioned in the Old Testament 18 times but it is not the same. If I’m right, 18 times in the Old Testament; 123 times in the New Testament but they are not the same because grace is connected with salvation; therefore, it is connected with Jesus Christ. The most well-known verse connected with grace is *Ephesians 2:8* that we are saved by grace through faith, which is not of ourselves; but which is a gift from God.

**Ephesians 2:8**

**<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,**

This is connected with the first promise in the New Covenant in *Matthew 1:21*,

**Matthew 1:21**

***<sup>21</sup> And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”***

And He came *full of grace, full of truth* and we are saved by grace through faith. That was the first purpose of Jesus – He came to save His people from sin. And Scripture actually says in *1 Peter 1:10*,

**1 Peter 1:10**

***<sup>10</sup> Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you,***

They all prophesied of the grace, which is about Jesus Christ. He is called ‘grace’ itself now because it is through grace that He saves. Grace and Christ are inseparably connected. When Christ comes, grace comes. When Christ is revealed, grace is revealed. In *2 Timothy 2:1*, Paul will tell us, through his letter to Timothy,

**2 Timothy 2:1**

***<sup>1</sup> You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.***

Be strong in the grace that is in Jesus Christ. In *1 Peter 1:13*,

**1 Peter 1:13**

***<sup>13</sup> Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;***

When Christ is revealed, grace is revealed and we put our hope fully on that grace. In *Titus 2:11*,

**Titus 2:11**

***<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,***

Who is that? That is Jesus Christ. Now, you see, grace has become a Person. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that is revealed to us or given to us through Jesus Christ. In *Acts 20:24*, this Gospel is called the Gospel of grace.

**Acts 20:24**

***<sup>24</sup> ...which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.***

The Gospel itself is called the ‘Gospel of grace’. This age is called the ‘age of grace’. The Holy Spirit is called the ‘Spirit of grace’ and now, God’s Throne Room is called the ‘Throne Room of Grace’. And Jesus is said to have come *full of grace*. That is why grace is duplicated because it is very precious.

So, what is the true grace that Peter talks about? Grace has three sides. Only when these three come together, it becomes full and complete. If you preach only one, you still have left two out. It is still not complete. If you preach two, you still have left one out. All three makes the true and complete grace. The first side of grace is connected with the penalty of sins. When you and I truly repent and believe, it is the grace of God that saves us and declares us righteous before God. That is the grace of God that declares – we are righteous. Write it down. You don’t have to listen to my words; you need Scripture to back it up.

**Ephesians 1:7-8**

***<sup>7</sup> In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace <sup>8</sup> which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,***

We get forgiveness from the penalty of our sins because of the riches of His grace. First, grace is connected with the penalty of sin.

**Romans 3:23-24**

<sup>23</sup> *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,*

Where does our redemption come from? Because of grace.

**Romans 5:15**

<sup>15</sup> *But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.*

It is the grace of God that gives us the gift of righteousness, the gift of life and the redemption from sins. I'll give you more Scripture because remember, the first work of the grace of God is that it brings redemption from sins.

**Galatians 2:21**

<sup>21</sup> *I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain."*

It's the grace of God that declares that we are righteous when we repent and believe in the Blood of Jesus.

**Acts 15:11**

<sup>11</sup> *But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they."*

**Titus 3:7**

<sup>7</sup> *that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

We are justified by His grace, declared guiltless. This is the first work of grace. We get remission from our sins. In *Luke 24:45-47*, this is Jesus' final Commission to His disciples. First,

**Luke 24:45-47**

<sup>45</sup> *And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.*

Pastors and believers, every day, cry out to Jesus, "Open my understanding that I might comprehend the Scriptures." If He doesn't open, we will not understand this. This is a mystery which was locked up from all the Old Testament prophets. Even Daniel, Noah, and Job – nobody understood this. If we have to understand this, He has to open our eyes.

<sup>46</sup> *Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, (the next verse is the main verse) <sup>47</sup> and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

Two things have to be preached, primarily – repentance and remission of sins. *Jesus came full of grace and full of truth.* We need both. Repentance is the work of the Spirit of truth. Remission of sins is the work of the Spirit of grace. Both are of one Spirit but with two works. When the Gospel is preached, the Spirit of truth goes in, convicts us and when we cry out, "Lord, what should I do?" He says, "Repent and believe." And when we repent and we believe, the Spirit of God declares us, "Your sins are remitted; you are righteous before God." They are one and the same Spirit. They work differently. Where there is no truth preached, no conviction of sin can take place. Therefore, there cannot be a true work of grace. Are you getting the picture?

I'll tell you exactly what happens now. Most meetings are blessing meetings and healing meetings. Healing is preached. Kingdom is not preached; healing is preached. Jesus said, "*Go and preach the Kingdom and heal the sick.*" Most of them have heard that; they don't preach the Kingdom; they preach healing and they pray for healing. There is no preaching of truth; there is no conviction of sin; there is no repentance; and then, they will say, "Repeat a prayer for me and say that you are saved." It doesn't work like that. It has never worked like that in the Gospels because they work together. Truth and grace work together. They always work together. You can receive healing; you can receive the greatest miracle, be unsaved and go to hell. Preach repentance and remission of sins. Preach the Kingdom and heal the sick. The healing of the sick was only to testify of the power of the Kingdom. So, people receive a false grace that does not have the power to save them and



repeatedly, they are coming back only for blessings and healing; not for the Word of truth which will make them grow in the knowledge of Christ and grow in grace. That's why, whenever the Gospel is preached, you will see, Scripture will say, "They were cut to their heart." And they will ask, "What should we do?" Because repentance will always involve an acknowledgment of sin. And in some cases, it will involve restitution. You have to give back what you took. Zacchaeus stood and said, "From all whom I've taken, I will give four times over; and half my wealth, I will sell and give it to the poor." And Jesus said, "*Salvation has come to this house today.*" Today, thieves sit in Churches, who have never returned back what they stole; they have been baptized and told that they are going to Heaven. Why? Because repentance was never preached. It doesn't matter who it was; even the Samaritan woman. When she wanted that water, which is grace; "This water that I give you and if you drink, you will never thirst again." She thought, "This is great! I don't have to come back to this well again." But Jesus was talking about the life that grace brings. She said, "Give it to me." Immediately, He changed the subject. The Spirit of truth came. "Go and bring your husband." She said, "I have no husband." He said, "Truly, you have said. You had five husbands. Now, you are living with the 6<sup>th</sup> one." That's how it works. It doesn't work any other way. Don't change the Gospel. We, more than the people, will be held accountable with God for perverting the grace of God. Because the true grace of God really saves from the penalty of sin. There is genuine repentance and there is remission of sins. Then, it doesn't matter what people say; we know grace has set us free. Because Scripture says, "She left the pot there; she ran back to the men of the city, the very people from whom she is hiding and she told them 'come and see the Man who told everything about me! Is He the Messiah?'" Once grace has done its work, it doesn't matter what people say about you because you know, you have remission for your sins. Because *when the Son sets you free, you are free indeed*. The Gospel of grace sets people free of their sins. That's the first work of grace. Grace saves me from the punishment or the penalty of sins but that's only the first work.

There is a second work of grace. Yes, I am saved from sin; I have been forgiven from sin but when I wake up in the morning, the same temptations are coming and my flesh is propelling me to sin again. I realize, in me is the power to sin. The second work of grace – it also saves me from the power of sin. The grace of Jesus Christ, the grace of the Spirit of God when I learn to say 'no' to sin. Listen to what Paul tells Titus in *Titus 2:12-14*. Pastors, mark this very carefully in your Bibles. Because, when I go to other places and I show them this to other Pastors, they have never seen this side of grace.

#### **Titus 2:11-12**

***<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, <sup>12</sup> teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age...***

We only received the first part of grace for long years in our lives and we kept on falling. We kept on going back for the forgiveness of the same sins. We did not realize that the same grace that forgave us could also teach us and give us the power to say 'no' to sin. It's the grace of God. The second part of the grace of God.

Some of you, Pastors, are just sitting there and not even listening. Tomorrow, if you are in my Church, I will make you stand in the corner. Ask my Church people. If you haven't come to hear the Word of God, don't waste your time. God says that. I didn't say that. He says, "Either be cold or hot." He said, "Go to the world and enjoy yourself. Why are you wasting your time here? If you are feeling sleepy, go and wash your face. You have come for one purpose – to hear and listen to the Word of God. Receive it. That's what Scripture says, "Grace has the power to tell us to say 'no'."

Listen to *Romans 5:20-21*, what Paul says again.

#### **Romans 5:20-21**

***<sup>20</sup> Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, <sup>21</sup> so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

These verses have been completely misinterpreted by false teachers. You know what Scripture actually means? *Where sin abounds*, when you are tempted to sin so much, *grace abounds*. You can have the grace of God, the very power of the Holy Spirit to overcome this sin. If sin reigns in death, grace reigns in righteousness. Look at *Romans 6:14*,

#### **Romans 6:14**

***<sup>14</sup> For sin shall not have dominion over you, (why?) for you are not under law but under grace.***

So, is grace better or law better? Under law, sin had dominion over you but God says, "Under grace, *sin shall not have dominion over you.*" You are overcoming more and more because you realize more and more grace of God is available to fight and to overcome sin.

Jesus came in this flesh. How did He remain sinless till the end? Why? Because He was full of grace and full of truth. That is what reigning in life means. Reign in life. *Romans 5* will talk about reigning in life. In the old days, I have heard preachers talking about, in Christ, you shall reign in life and they will say, "That means you, as a child of the King, should have a big house, a big car and big things," and all this, they will preach about 'reigning in life'. That's how they pervert the Word of God. Jesus had no house of His own. How do you know? Because Scripture says, "*Birds have nests; foxes have holes; but the Son of Man does not have a place to lay His head.*" Most of His life or almost all His life, He walked because He didn't even own a donkey. We, at least, have a cycle. He did not even have a donkey. And for His last ride in a donkey, to fulfill Scripture, He had to borrow it. Most of the time or all the time, He never carried money. To show an illustration, He had to borrow a coin. We have; He didn't have. He said, "Give Me a coin. Whose head is this?" To pay taxes, He had to believe His Father would provide through fish. Joseph of Arimathea already had a grave ready. The Son of Man who came to die, did not even have a grave; He had to borrow one. Yet, He reigned in life. Why? Because sin had no power over Him. Full of grace; full of grace. He said, "*The ruler of this world has come and he has found nothing in Me.*" That is what reigning in life means. A poor man living in a hut can reign in life unto righteousness while a rich man living in a palace can reign in sin unto death. That's why this Gospel sets the rich and the poor free. But the poor receive it better than the rich. Don't believe when they say reigning in life is got to do with material things; it has got to do with appropriating the grace of God to overcome sin. That is what we are offered through Jesus Christ. The entire Gospel, the work of grace of Jesus Christ is summed up in *Romans 5:1-2*; the entire Gospel in 2 verses.

#### **Romans 5:1-2**

**<sup>1</sup> Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God...**

By the grace of God, I am saved through faith; I have remission of sins; I have peace with God. There is no record of the past because you have repented; where you had to, you made restitution and you have received the grace of God which gives you the remission of sins. We have peace with God,

***...through our Lord Jesus Christ...***

...that is through grace. Not only that; this has got to do with my past, with my yesterday. But today,

**<sup>2</sup> through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand...**

Today, I am not fallen because the very grace of God teaches me to say 'no' and to stand in Christ. Because I have peace about my past and I'm standing now in the grace of God. When I look to my future I have absolute,

***...hope of the glory of God.***

With confidence, we should be able to say today, "Come, Lord Jesus." All three are the work of the grace of God. I am saved by grace; I am kept by grace; and I look forward to His glory because of grace. Grace is much more than what we hear. That is why we are able to say 'no' to sin. So, *Romans 5:17* will say,

#### **Romans 5:17**

**<sup>17</sup> For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)**

Perspective from Heaven and from earth is different. Reigning in life means reigning in righteousness and it is a gift. I receive grace; I believe God; I say 'no' to sin and I am declared righteous over and over again. You are growing in grace; you are growing in truth; you are being established in righteousness; God says, "You are reigning in life." And it doesn't matter who you are; a poor man living in a hut can reign in life because of righteousness; while the richest man can be reigning in

death, because of sin, because he has no grace.

And there are patterns in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, there are patterns to this. In his father's house, Joseph reigned in life. Ten elder brothers are there. They will not listen to the father. He is the only one who will listen and honor his father and all his brothers hated him for that. But he chose to reign in life. Because of envy and jealousy, he was sold as a slave. Now, he is a slave in Egypt. He is a slave in Potiphar's palace. Everything around him is idolatry and sin but he is able to say 'no' to sin. Therefore, in Egypt, he is reigning in life. Now, he is falsely accused by a loose woman and he is thrown into prison. But in prison, he is still able to say 'no' to sin and he is reigning in life. One day, God will set him free and he will become prince of Egypt. It's a type of the overcoming saints. God says, "When you use the grace that I have given, the power of the Holy Spirit and learn to overcome, one day, I will also declare you as kings and queens of this world." This is the true Gospel. This is the Gospel of grace. But what false teachers do is that they pervert the grace of God. Instead, they turn it around and say, "The more you sin, God understands. It is the age of grace. God understands. After all, this is the age of grace." That's why Paul answers them in the *Book of Romans*. He says, "*Because grace abounds, should we sin?*" He says, "Certainly not!" But grace is the power of God (the second part) to overcome sin and God warns us, through the *Letter of the Epistle of Jude*, about this perversion of grace in *Jude 1:4*,

#### **Jude 1:4**

***<sup>4</sup>For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.***

What did they do? They turned the grace of God, take us back to the world, the lusts of the world and the sins of the world. They have crept in. This is not in this world; this is in the Church and God warns us, through the final Epistle, before the *Book of Revelation*. "Beware of people who turn grace around." That's why Apostle Paul will warn believers in *2 Corinthians 6:1*,

#### **2 Corinthians 6:1**

***<sup>1</sup>We then, as workers together with* (Christ. He says, "I am standing with Christ." I, Timothy, Silvanus, Titus, we are all standing together with) *Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain.***

Don't receive the grace of God in vain because the grace of God not only forgives you and gives you remission of sins but also gives you power to say 'no' to this world. The writer of *Hebrews* will also warn us about grace.

#### **Hebrews 12:14-15**

***<sup>14</sup>Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: <sup>15</sup>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;***

Don't fall short of the grace of God. You see this? Do you know that you can fall short of grace? The root of bitterness. There are so many bitter people in the house of God. You know, when you have fever, when you have a sickness, your tongue is very bitter. Anything your wife brings is bitter. Is there anything wrong with anything she brings? The problem is with your tongue. When the bitterness goes from your tongue, everything will start tasting good. This is a root, a very dangerous root. It brings forth many different fruits. Bitterness is a very dangerous thing. It can cause trouble and can defile many. You can fall short of the grace of God. Paul understands this better than anyone else. He knows what the grace of God can do. In *2 Corinthians 12:9-10*, he says,

#### **2 Corinthians 12:9-10**

***<sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.***

Why? We know these very well but do we experience this? Because he says, "*Because Your grace is sufficient for me.*" These preachers had no houses, no vehicles; often, no money; often, hungry; often, naked; often, beaten; but they were very happy because they experienced the grace of God.

I told you the difference between 21<sup>st</sup> century Apostle and 1<sup>st</sup> age Apostle. Today, the big Apostles, they put titles on themselves 'Apostle' or 'prophet' and they come to Hyderabad. They will only stay in Taj Krishna and all, these Apostles. When Paul went as an Apostle, he never had to worry about accommodation because he knew, by the end of the evening, the jail is for him. I always ask this question to myself; I see these pamphlets about big Apostles coming everywhere. But I have one question: I know the law of this country. If you come on a tourist visa, you cannot preach in public and they will not give you a religious visa. How come you are preaching? You have broken the law. Do you think the Spirit of truth will come with you? You ask my Church; many foreigners have come. I said, "You can sing; you can pray; but you cannot preach." You need to ask these big questions, big meetings. When the meeting is over, just ask him: what is the kind of visa you have? That is the problem. Many are coming this month and next month. Plenty are coming – apostles and prophets are coming. Paul knew, if he preached, jail is ready.

Grace of God saves you from the penalty of sin; two – it gives you power over sin. If you fall, cry out for mercy, remission of sins and ask for more grace so that tomorrow, you won't fall in the same area. Both are the work of grace but that's only two sides.

But there is a third side; especially for us, servants of God, and also, for the others. The greatest struggle in our lives is with our work. The largest number of dropouts is in ministry. Every month, at least three thousand Churches are shut down in America. In England, from where all our missionaries came in, not even 5% go to Church now. Muslims are buying Churches are making them into Mosques. Why? Yet, this is the age of grace. Apostles of that age faced pressure daily. How did they serve God faithfully till their death? And violent death, almost all of them. Listen to 2-3 verses of what they went through.

### **2 Corinthians 4:8-11**

***<sup>8</sup> We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—<sup>10</sup> always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. <sup>11</sup> For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.***

This is their lives. This is called 'work pressure', real work pressure. But they all finished their race well. How did they do it? Look to their beginning. *Romans 1:5* – the beginning of Paul, the Apostle.

### **Romans 1:5**

***<sup>5</sup> Through Him we have received grace and apostleship...***

What did he receive first? Grace. To do your work, there is a grace that is available. We want an office. We don't want the grace that goes with the office. That's why we print these huge posters with 'prophet' because we don't have grace. Because the one who has grace and has the office doesn't need a poster because he knows, wherever he goes, the police will be behind him. Grace and apostleship. First, we need the grace to do the work which God has called us for and then, the grace enables us to serve God in that office. In *1 Corinthians 3:10*, Paul will say,

### **1 Corinthians 3:10**

***<sup>10</sup> According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation...***

You know the problem? We haven't learnt this. He says, "According to the grace given, I have laid the foundation." Why? "Because God has only gave me the grace to lay the foundation and not build on it." Another is building on it. Most of the Pastors' struggle is because they are working more than the grace they have received. The greatest Apostle knows, "These are my limits because I have been given grace only for this." Grace. Lean on grace and God is faithful. If the grace increases, then let Him extend. You don't have to push any door. How much did Jesus minister? Around 40 square miles. That's all. Why? Father said, "That's enough." But He was full of grace but the Father marked out His boundary and He stayed within. He says, "According to the grace given..." But if you grow in grace, God may extend your boundary. In *2 Corinthians 9:8*,

### **2 Corinthians 9:8**

***<sup>8</sup> And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.***

Is this true? Scripture is true, right? Then, why do we struggle? Because we haven't understood – there is a grace for the remission of sin; there is a grace for power over sin; there is a grace for the work that God has called you to do. The five-fold ministry, which God calls, in *Ephesians 4:11*, the five-fold ministry, our ministry,

**Ephesians 4:11**

***<sup>11</sup> And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,***

These are the five offices through which God destroys the power of the enemy. This is, symbolically, the five stones which David picked to destroy Goliath. These are the five offices. We have one of the five offices. Now, *verse 7* says,

**Ephesians 4:7**

***<sup>7</sup> But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.***

How do you work in this office? According to the grace given. Grace has been given. We don't serve Him in His strength. We have been given grace and we can abound in grace. In *1 Timothy 1:12-14*, this is what Paul tells Timothy,

**1 Timothy 1:12-14**

***<sup>12</sup> And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, <sup>13</sup> although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. <sup>14</sup> And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.***

He says, "Your past does not matter." He has remission from sins; he has power over his sins; and the most powerful testimony of his, comparing himself with Apostles is *1 Corinthians 15:9-10*,

**1 Corinthians 15:9-10**

***<sup>9</sup> For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.***

He says, "I did not receive the grace of God in vain." He said, "I have the grace of God in me which has worked more than in Peter, John, Andrew, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas and all the other Apostles. The grace of God has enabled me to work more." Do you see the three sides of grace? This is the man who came last. This was the worst among the Apostles. And he always says that, "*I am the least of the Apostles* and I cannot be called an apostle." Because Peter did not persecute the Church; John did not persecute the Church; Andrew did not persecute the Church; Thomas did not persecute the Church; none of the Apostles persecuted the Church. He said, "I persecuted the Church. I have the blood of a saint on my hand but I realize the power of grace. Grace gave me remission of my sins; grace gave me power over my sins. Above all, I understood the grace of God in my ministry. I have labored more than all the other apostles." This is true grace; this is the full message of God. And that's why Paul will tell us, "Do not receive the grace of God in vain." It's the very presence, power and the provision of the Holy Spirit in our lives. This is the true Gospel. This is the real Gospel.

Between you and God, me and God, receiving the grace of God, there is, primarily, only one block. *God gives grace to the humble and resists the proud.* Only the humble receive grace. Why was Jesus full of grace? Because He was the most humble Man who ever walked on earth. That's what He said, "*Learn of Me; I am meek and lowly.*" He said, "The meeker you are, the more grace you will receive and *My grace is sufficient for you.* The answer to all your problems," God says, "is the grace of God." Therefore, the greatest invitation of God to a child of God, a believer is *Hebrews 4:16*,

**Hebrews 4:16**

***<sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace...***

Now, simhasanam (the Throne) is called krupa simhasanam (Throne of Grace). Under the age of grace, the Throne Room of Grace has changed. It is called krupa simhasanam (Throne of Grace). Come boldly. Don't be afraid. But first, obtain mercy.

First, we need mercy because when the Spirit of truth comes, He will convict you of sin.

*...that we may obtain mercy...*

“Lord, I am sorry.” Ask forgiveness where you need to seek for forgiveness. Receive mercy and then, God says,

*...and find grace to help in time of need.*

All the answers are there. And the only thing that stops us is our pride. We come to the Throne Room of grace. “Lord!” His Spirit shows us somebody. Go and seek mercy. “No, I won’t. I can’t. I won’t.” No grace. Pride stops you from receiving mercy and grace. That’s the main problem. This is put there first. I have to obtain mercy but I will find grace. Mercy has to be obtained. *Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.* I don’t have to obtain grace; I will find grace because grace is free. Mercy has to be obtained. To receive mercy, you have to humble yourself. God says, *“I resist the proud and give grace to the humble.”* That’s our major block and we just start getting bitter and *we fall short of the grace of God*; we defiled many and slowly, we end up as ministers of the letter of the law and not ministers as the Spirit of the law.

As we come to the end of the morning session, two Scriptures and then, we will close.

**1 Peter 5:10**

***<sup>10</sup> But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.***

The God of all grace will give us grace so that we can be perfected, established, strengthened and settled. Do you know how the Bible ends? The last verse of the Bible. *Revelation 22:21* – God’s last words to man.

**Revelation 22:21**

***<sup>21</sup> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.***

That’s what He says and that’s all we need. The grace of God is more than enough. Learn to use and apply the grace of God in our lives.

Now, we will pray, go for lunch and then, come back by 2 o’clock and sleep. No, no sleeping. Shall we pray?

**Closing Prayer:**

*Father, we just thank You, the God of all grace. Even this morning, we are here only because of Your grace and Your grace is sufficient for us. I pray, Father, Your Spirit would continue to work in us, continue to speak to us, continue to minister to us. Now, as we go for lunch, we thank You for Your provision. We receive it with thanksgiving. We believe it is blessed; we believe it will be sufficient and we believe that each one will be full. We will come back into Your house to be fed by You again. We just bless Your Holy Name. For in Jesus’ Name we pray, Amen.*