
The True Grace of God
Wherein Ye Stand

1 Peter 5:12

GOD is made known to us as the "*God of all Grace*," and the position in which we are set is that of "tasting that He is gracious." How hard it is for us to believe this, that the Lord is gracious. The natural feeling of our hearts is, "I know that Thou art an austere man"; there is the want in all of us naturally of the understanding of the Grace of God.

There is sometimes the thought that grace implies God's *passing* over sin, but no, grace supposes sin to be so horribly bad a thing that God cannot tolerate it: were it in the power of man, after being unrighteous and evil, to patch up his ways, and mend himself so as to stand before God, there would be no need of grace. The very fact of the Lord's being gracious shows sin to be so evil a thing that, man being a sinner, his state is utterly ruined and hopeless, and nothing but *free* grace will do for him — can meet his need.

We must learn what God is to us, not by our own thoughts, but by what He has revealed Himself to be, and that is, "*The God of all Grace*." The moment I understand that I am a sinful man, and yet that it was because the Lord knew the full extent of my sin, and what its hatefulness was, that He came to me, I understand what grace is. Faith makes me see that God is greater than my sin, and not that my sin is greater than God . . . The Lord that I have known as laying down His life for me, is the same



Sales price $0.25

Salesprice with discount

Description

1 Peter 5:12

God is made known to us as the "God of all Grace," and the position in which we are set is that of "tasting that He is gracious." How hard it is for us to believe this, that the Lord is gracious. The natural feeling of our hearts is, “I now that Thou art an austere man”; there is the want in all of us naturally of the understanding of the Grace of God.

There is sometimes the thought that grace implies God's passing over sin, but no, grace supposes sin to be so horribly bad a thing that God cannot tolerate it: were it in the power of man, after being unrighteous and evil, to patch up his ways, and mend himself so as to stand before God, there would be no need of grace. The very fact of the Lord's being gracious shows sin to be so evil a thing that, man being a sinner, his state is utterly ruined and hopeless, and nothing but free grace will do for him - can meet his need.

We must learn what God is to us, not by our own thoughts, but by what He has revealed Himself to be, and that is, "The God of all Grace." The moment I understand that I am a sinful man, and yet that it was because the Lord knew the full extent of my sin, and what its hatefulness was, that He came to me, I understand what grace is. Faith makes me see that God is greater than my sin, and not that my sin is greater than God.... The Lord that I have known as laying down His life for me, is the same Lord I have to do with every day of my life, and all His dealings with me are on the same principles of grace. The great secret of growth is, the looking up to the Lord as gracious. How precious, how strengthening it is to know that Jesus is at this moment feeling and exercising the same love towards me as when He died on the cross for me.

This is a truth that should be used by us in the most common everyday circumstances of life. Suppose, for instance, I find an evil temper in myself, which I feel it difficult to overcome; let me bring it to Jesus as my Friend, and virtue goes out of Him for my need. Faith should be ever thus in exercise against temptations, and not simply my own effort; my own effort against it will never be sufficient. The source of real strength is in the sense of the Lord's being gracious. The natural man in us always disbelieves Christ as the only source of strength and of every blessing. Suppose my soul is out of communion, the natural heart says, "I must correct the cause of this before I can come to Christ," but He is gracious; and knowing this, the way is to return to Him at once, just as we are, and then humble ourselves deeply before Him. It is only in Him and from Him that we shall find that which will restore our souls. Humbleness in His presence is the only real humbleness. If we own ourselves in His presence to be just what we are, we shall find that He will show us nothing but grace....

It is Jesus who gives abiding rest to our souls, and not what our thoughts about ourselves may be. Faith never thinks about that which is in ourselves as its ground of rest; it receives, loves and apprehends what God has revealed, and what are God's thoughts; about Jesus, in whom is His rest. As knowing Jesus to be precious to our souls, our eyes and our hearts being occupied with Him, they will be effectually prevented from being taken up with the vanity and sin around; and this too will be our strength against the sin and corruption of our own hearts. Whatever I see in myself that is not in Him is sin, but then it is not thinking of my own sins, and my own vileness, and being occupied with them, that will humble me, but thinking of the Lord Jesus, dwelling upon the excellency in Him. It is well to be done with ourselves, and to be taken up with Jesus. We are entitled to forget ourselves, we are entitled to forget our sins, we are entitled to forget all but Jesus.

There is nothing so hard for our hearts as to abide in the sense of grace, to continue practically conscious that we are not under law but under grace; it is by grace that the heart is "established," but then there is nothing more difficult for us really to comprehend than the fulness of grace, that "Grace of God wherein we stand," and to walk in the power and consciousness of it.... It is only in the presence of God that we can know it, and there it is our privilege to be. The moment we get away from the presence of God, there will always be certain workings of our own thoughts within us, and our own thoughts can never reach up to the thoughts of God about us, to the "Grace of God."

Anything that I had the smallest possible right to expect could not be pure, free grace - could not be the "Grace of God. " ... It is alone when in communion with Him that we are able to measure everything according to His grace .... It is impossible, when we are abiding in the sense of God's presence, for anything, be what it may even the state of the Church - to shake us, for we count on God, and then all things become a sphere and scene for the operation of His grace.

The having very simple thoughts of grace is the true source of our strength as Christians; and the abiding in the sense of grace, in the presence of God, is the secret of all holiness, peace, and quietness of spirit.

The "Grace of God" is so unlimited, so full, so perfect, that if we get for a moment out of the presence of God, we cannot have the true consciousness of it, we have no strength to apprehend it; and if we attempt to know it out of His presence, we shall only turn it to licentiousness. If we look at the simple fact of what grace is, it has no limits, no bounds. Be we what we may (and we cannot be worse than we are), in spite of all that, what God is towards us is LOVE. Neither our joy nor our peace is dependent on what we are to God, but on what He is to us, and this is grace.

Grace supposes all the sin and evil that is in us, and is the blessed revelation that, through Jesus, all this sin and evil has been put away. A single sin is more horrible to God than a thousand sins - nay, than all the sins in the world are to us; and yet, with the fullest consciousness of what we are, all that God is pleased to be towards us is LOVE.

In Romans 7, the state described is that of a person quickened, but whose whole set of reasonings centre in himself ... he stops short of grace, of the simple fact that, whatever be his state, let him be as bad as he may, GOD IS LOVE, and only love towards him. Instead of looking at God, it is all "I," "I," "I." Faith looks at God, as He has revealed Himself in grace.... Let me ask you, "Am I - or is my state the object of faith?" No, faith never makes what is in my heart its object, but God's revelation of Himself in grace....

Grace has reference to what GOD is, and not to what we are, except indeed that the very greatness of our sins does but magnify the extent of the "Grace of God." At the same time, we must remember that the object and necessary effect of grace is to bring our souls into communion with God - to sanctify us, by bringing the soul to know God, and to love Him; therefore the knowledge of grace is the true source of sanctification.

The triumph of grace is seen in this, that when man's enmity had cast out Jesus from the earth, God's love had brought in salvation by that very act - came in to atone for the sin of those who had rejected Him. In the view of the fullest development of man's sin, faith sees the fullest development of God's grace.... I have got away from grace if I have the slightest doubt or hesitation about God's love. I shall then be saying, "I am unhappy because I am not what I should like to be": that is not the question. The real question is, whether God is what we should like Him to be, whether Jesus is all we could wish. If the consciousness of what we are - of what we find in ourselves, has any other effect than, while it humbles us, to increase our adoration of what God is, we are off the ground of pure grace. Is there distress and distrust in your minds? See if it be not because you are still saying "I," "I," and losing sight of God's grace.

It is better to be thinking of what God is than of what we are. This looking at ourselves, at the bottom is really pride, a want of the thorough consciousness that we are good for nothing. Till we see this we never look quite away from self to God.... In looking to Christ, it is our privilege to forget ourselves. True humility does not so much consist in thinking badly of ourselves, as in not thinking of ourselves at all. I am too bad to be worth thinking about. What I want is, to forget myself and to look to God, who is indeed worth all my thoughts. Is there need of being humbled about ourselves? We may be quite sure that will do it.

Beloved, if we can say as in Romans 7, "in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," we have thought quite long enough about ourselves; let us then think about Him who thought about us with thoughts of good and not of evil, long before we had thought of ourselves at all. Let us see what His thoughts of grace about us are, and take up the words of faith, "If GOD be for us, who can be against us?"

J.N. Darby

6 pages – Pamphlet – Author: J. N. Darby