

GRACE, ~ GRACE, ~ GOD'S GRACE.

GRACE THAT WILL PARDON AND CLEANSE WITHIN.

▶▶ Grace, ~ grace, ~ God's grace, ~ grace that is greater than all our sin!

THIS A.M., ~ IN CELEBRATING THE LORD'S SUPPER, ~ set our study of James aside ~ ¶¶

▶▶ and focus on ~ God's amazing grace.

▷▷ In Eph. 2:8-9, ~ Paul explains that our salvation, ~ is totally ~ by God's grace alone.

IN VERSE 8a, ~ PAUL SAYS, ~ ¶¶

FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED."

▶▶ "grace" here means free and undeserved favor.

▷▷ Saved by God's

▶▶ Paul emphasizes "by grace."

"For by grace you have been saved."

▷▷ Paul does not want us to miss this, ~ that the source of our salvation ~ ¶¶

↪↪ is God's grace, ~ and His grace alone! 1/10 ¶¶

▶▶ In our unsaved state, ~ we were ~ 100% sinful.

▷▷ Sinning ~ was a way of life for us.

▷▷ We were following ~ the standards of this world and Satan.

▷▷ We were ~ enslaved to our sinful nature and its sinful desires ~ 77

↳↳ and carried those sinful desires out.

▷▷ We were ~ God's enemies, ~ and were subject to, ~ deserving of, ~ 77

↳↳ and destined for ~ God's wrath.

▶▶ Even though all this was true, ~ 77

▷▷ God's mercy and love ~ led him ~ to offer humanity ~ the gift of salvation.

▷▷ As John tells us in his 1st epistle, ~ This ~ is real love ~ not that we loved God, ~ 77

↳↳ but that he loved us ~ and sent his Son ~ as a sacrifice ~ to take away our sins.

BACK IN EPH. 1:8, ~ PAUL SAID ~ THAT GOD ~ LAVISHED ~ HIS GRACE UPON US.

▶▶ The Greek word for ~ **lavished** ~ means ~ 77

▷▷ more than enough, ~ to ~ provide in abundance, ~ to ~ cause to overflow. 2/10 ↓↓

GOD IS INFINITELY RICH IN GRACE.

▶▶ But ~ He is not stingy with it. ⇨⇨ Not like some ~ cosmic Scrooge.

▶▶ God ~ does not give His grace to us ~ in limited measure, ~ carefully weighed out.

▶▶ He causes His grace ~ to overflow, ~ to abound ~ to us.

▶▶ Gives it ~ in overflowing measure.

AND GOD'S GRACE ~ IS SUFFICIENTLY ABUNDANT ~ TO COVER THE SINS OF ALL.

▶▶ And it is adequate ~ for the worst of sinners.

▷▷ As the hymn that we're going to sing later says, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ the vilest offender ~ who truly believes, ~ that moment from Jesus ~ a pardon receives.

SOME MIGHT THINK, ~ "OH, ~ GOD COULD NEVER FORGIVE ME FOR WHAT I'VE DONE."

▶▶ Consider Paul, ~ before his conversion, ~ he persecuted Christians.

▷▷ Stephen. ⇨⇨ On way to Damascus

▷▷ But Jesus didn't hold this against Paul.

↳↳ Jesus didn't refuse to forgive Paul.

→→ Jesus didn't withhold His grace from Paul. 3/10 ¶¶

▶▶ Jesus ~ abundantly bestows His grace ~ on all who come to Him in true repentance.

▷▷ Paul testifies to this ~ in 1 Tim. 1:12-14. ~ Paul writes, ~ "I thank him who has given me strength, ~ Christ Jesus our Lord, ~ because he judged me faithful, ~ appointing me to his service, ~ though formerly ~ I was a ~ blasphemer, ~ persecutor, ~ and insolent opponent. ~ But I received mercy ~ because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ~ and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus."

↪↪ Used of a vessel ~ that becomes too full. ⇨⇨ Run over, ~ overflow.

▶▶ No one, ~ in this life, ~ is beyond the reach of the Savior.

▷▷ Is. 59:1 declares, ~ "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, ~ that it cannot save"

▷▷ If you've never accepted Christ, ~ it doesn't matter what you've done ~ or are doing.

▷▷ In this life ~ you are not ~ beyond God's grace. ⇨⇨ Emph. on ~ this life

▶▶ Paul says in Rom. 5:20, ~ "Now the law came in ~ to increase the trespass, ~ but where sin increased, ~ grace abounded all the more."

▷▷ What a contrast!

↪↪ No matter how great human sin becomes, ~ 77

→→ God's grace ~ overflows beyond it ~ and abundantly exceeds it.

▶▶ Marvelous grace of our loving Lord, ~ Grace that exceeds ~ our sin and our guilt!

▷▷ Marvelous, ~ infinite, ~ matchless grace, ~ freely bestowed on all who believe. 4/10 ↓↓

"FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED," ~ PAUL TELLS US.

▶▶I.e., ~ by God's grace, ~ ¶¶

▷▷believers have been freed ~ from sin and our sin nature.

↳↳Rom. 6:6 (NLT), ~ We know ~ that our old sinful selves ~ were crucified with Christ ~ so that ~ sin might lose its power in our lives. ~ We are no longer ~ slaves to sin.

▷▷We have been freed ~ from all the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly places.

↳↳God has delivered us ~ from the domain of darkness ~ and transferred us ~ to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ~ in whom ~ we have redemption, ~ the forgiveness of sins.

▷▷Every one of our sins ~ has been forgiven.

↳↳As far ~ as the east ~ is from the west, ~ so far ~ has he removed our transgressions from us.

▷▷We have been ~ reconciled with God.

↳↳Therefore, ~ since we have been justified by faith, ~ we have peace with God ~ through our Lord Jesus Christ.

▷▷We have been ~ delivered from God's wrath.

↳↳1 Thess. 5:9-10, ~ For God has not destined us for wrath, ~ but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ~ who died for us ~ so that ~ whether we are awake or asleep ~ we might live with him.

▶▶Truly!, ~ God's grace is amazing, ~ isn't it? 5/10 ¶¶

GRACE ~ AS WE NOTED EARLIER, ~ MEANS FREE AND UNDESERVED FAVOR.

▶▶ We are saved by God's grace.

▷▷ But grace goes further ~ than our salvation.

▷▷ It does not cease ~ at the moment of our conversion to Christ.

▶▶ James writes, ~~ Every good gift and every perfect gift ~ is from above, ~ coming down from the Father of lights.

▷▷ The gifts are viewed ~ as continually ~ coming down from God the Father

▷▷ The Greek verb ~ views each gift ~ as originated and designed in heaven ~ ∩∩

↪↪ and then ~ as descending ~ in an ~ unending ~ succession.

▷▷ In Lamentations Jeremiah writes, ~ ∩∩

↪↪ The steadfast love of the Lord ~ never ceases; ~ his mercies ~ never come to an end; ~ they are new ~ every morning.

▷▷ God's free and undeserved favor ~ flows abundantly into our lives ~ on a daily basis.

▶▶ But there's more.

▷▷ Grace is also an ongoing provision from God, ~ enabling believers ~ to live in conformity with His will ~ ∩∩

↪↪ and to undertake the ministry and service that God has entrusted to them. 6/10 ∩∩

▷▷ IOW, ~ grace is also divine enablement, ~ empowering us ~ to live the Christian life ~ and to serve God.

↪↪ We see this meaning brought out in 2 Cor. 12:7-10

▶▶ Truly!, ~ God's grace is amazing, ~ isn't it?

IN VERSE 8b, ~ PAUL STATES HOW WE RECEIVE GOD'S GRACE FOR SALVATION.

FOR CONTEXT, ~ START AT BEGINNING OF VERSE 8.

▶▶ Paul says ~ For by grace you have been saved ~ [and here's how we receive it:] ~ through faith.

▶▶ Whereas God's grace is the objective source of our salvation, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ through faith ~ is the subjective means ~ or channel ~ ¶¶

↪↪ by which one receives God's grace ~ and is saved.

▶▶ This is important, ~ for the salvation that was purchased by Christ's death ~ is universal ~ in its provision.

▷▷ But it is not ~ universal ~ in its application.

▶▶ One is not ~ automatically saved ~ because Christ died.

▷▷ But one is saved ~ when one puts their faith and trust ~ ¶¶

↪↪ in God's gracious provision. 7/10 ¶¶

▶▶ Jn. 3:16 points this out.

▷▷ "For God so loved the world, ~ that he gave his only Son ~ [God's gracious provision], ~ that whoever ~ [universal provision, ~ i.e., ~ available to all].

↳↳ But to apply ~ God's gracious provision to him/herself.

→→ That whoever believes in him ~ should not perish ~ but have eternal life.

PERHAPS EMPHASIZE POINT, ~ that God's grace alone is the source of our salvation, ~ ¶¶

IN VERSES 8c-9a PAUL EXPLAINS ~ THAT OUR SALVATION ~ ¶¶

▶▶ does not originate with humans ~ in any way, ~ shape, ~ or form.

IN VERSE 8c, ~ HE SAYS THAT ~ IT DOES NOT ORIGINATE ~ WITHIN US.

HE SAYS, ~ AND THIS ~ [I.E., ~ YOUR SALVATION] ~ IS NOT YOUR OWN DOING ~ [I.E., ~ you are not the source]; ~~

▶▶ it is the gift of God ~ [from God, ~ or, ~ it is God's gift].

▷▷ And this salvation ~ is not ~ from you as a source; ~~ it is the gift from God.

▶▶ Rom 3:23-24a, ~ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ~ and are justified by his grace ~ as a gift.

▷▷ Grk. word for gift ~ refers to ~ being ~ freely given, ~ as a gift, ~ without payment, ~ w/out charge.

▷▷ Our salvation is free & undeserved gift from God. ↳↳ Originates w/ God. 8/10 ¶¶

NOT ONLY ARE WE NOT THE SOURCE OF OUR SALVATION, ~ ¶¶

IN VERSE 9a PAUL SAYS THAT ~ NEITHER ARE OUR WORKS ~ THE SOURCE OF OUR salvation.

▶▶ He says that this salvation is also ~ not a result of works.

▶▶ "works" here ~ refers ~ to any good deed ~ ¶¶

▷▷ by which ~ a person might seek ~ to gain God's favor ~ and attain salvation.

↪↪ In brief, ~ we cannot earn salvation ~ by doing good works.

→→ And it's definitely ~ not earned ~ by a person's good works ~ outweighing their bad.

▶▶ Rom. 11:6, ~ But if it is by grace, ~ it is no longer ~ on the basis of works; ~ otherwise ~ grace ~ would no longer be grace."

▷▷ If we could earn salvation through works, ~ then God's grace ~ ¶¶

↪↪ would not be what it really is, ~ free and undeserved.

SINCE NEITHER WE ~ nor our works ~ are the source of our salvation, ~ none of us ~ ¶¶

HAS BRAGGING RIGHTS ~ WHEN IT COMES TO OUR SALVATION, ~ Paul says in verse 9b.

▶▶ So that ~ no one may boast.

▶▶ Paul puts it this way in Rom. 3:27-28. 9/10 ¶¶

▷▷ Then what becomes of our boasting? ~ It is excluded. ~ By what kind of law? ~ By a law of works? ~ No, ~ but by the law of faith. ~ For we hold ~ that one is justified ~ by faith ~ apart from works of the law.

↳↳ Since righteousness ~ is based on faith in what God has accomplished in Christ alone ~ ¶¶

→→boasting in ourselves ~ is ruled out.

OUR BOASTING ~ CAN ONLY BE ~ IN THE LORD ~ AND WHAT HE HAS DONE FOR US.

▶▶ As Paul puts it in 2 Cor. 10:17, ~ "Let the one who boasts, ~ boast in the Lord."

▶▶ The point is, ~ it's not, ~ "Hey, ~ everyone, ~ look what I've done."

▷▷ But, ~ "Hey, ~ everyone, ~ look what great things Jesus has done for me ~ ¶¶

↳↳ and how He has had mercy on me!"

MY ~ BY GOD'S INCREDIBLY FREE AND UNDESERVED FAVOR ~ WE HAVE BEEN SAVED.

EVEN THOUGH WE DID NOT DESERVE IT, ~ GOD'S MERCY AND LOVE ~ LED HIM ~ ¶¶

▶▶ to offer humanity ~ the free and undeserved gift ~ of salvation.

▷▷ Amazing grace ~ is what we celebrate around this table this a.m. 10/10