

Grabbed by Grace

“And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all”
(Acts 4:33).

“But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they”
(Acts 15:11).

In this lesson we will look at one of the favorite words in Christian circles—“grace.”

The early church experienced great power and grace. They believed it was through grace that they would be saved.

It is not enough to be grabbed by grace (to experience the unmerited favor, and kindness of God). We must obey and allow grace to lead us into salvation (Acts 2:38). We then continue in obedience to the Word of God. We should turn from godless living, and sinful pleasures, to right living. It is not acceptable to have one foot in the world, and one foot in the church.

It is hoped that the study of this lesson will encourage you to make a fresh commitment to live Christ-like in this evil world. It is possible to live in such a way that we frustrate God’s kindness to us.

Paul testified, “I do not frustrate the grace of God” (Galatians 2:21).

It is often quoted:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Grace has a purpose. It leads us to salvation (Titus 2:11-12). Grace is not salvation. Neither does it exempt us from following the plan of salvation.

Many talk so loosely about grace. Have you ever stopped and pondered to see what it means?

Grace means—

- Good-will (goodness of God toward us).
- Loving-kindness.
- Mercy.
- The kindness of a master toward a slave.
- The kindness of God toward man.
- Expresses the concept of kindness given to someone who doesn’t deserve it.

- Unmerited favor of God toward fallen man.
- Regarded as the sustaining influence that enables the believer to persevere throughout all the Christian life.

Did you know that it is possible to experience the grace of God, be grabbed by it, and still not be saved?

We will look closely at the lives of two women who were grabbed by grace. Men, do not think these stories do not apply to you. Watch and see—a man grabbed by grace will appear.

There is good and bad news. Which do you want first? Okay, Let us start with the good news.

On September 11, 2002 *Time Magazine* featured an article entitled, “A Miracle’s Cost” and asked the question, “Why isn’t Genelle dead?”

The article explains that nearly everyone who had not left the Twin Towers by 10:28 a.m. on Sept. 11 perished, but not Genelle.

Genelle worked on the 64th floor. She was walking down stairway B when it collapsed. 2,819 people were slain in this horrendous act of terrorism. Genelle was buried in the rubble for twenty-six hours, and was the last of only four people caught in the debris to be found alive.

“Was this luck? Was this the hand of God?”

She was trapped. Everyone else had disappeared, and she found herself alone—just her and God. She feels she survived because she called on God. She prayed, “Help me, Lord!” Eventually she heard voices in the distance. “I’m here!” she screamed as loud as she could. A rescue worker responded, “Do you see the light?” When she reached her hand through an opening, one of the workers grabbed it. She cried out, “Oh God, thank you!”

Genelle knows that if she had died that day she would not have been ready to meet her Maker.

People think she’s lucky. “This is not about luck,” she says, “This is about God having a plan...”

Genelle believes God has a plan for her life, and refuses to live in sin any longer. She was grabbed by grace, and is still holding on!

The article draws this conclusion. “The big answers to why she is here may always lie hidden between her and God.”

That is a story from recent history. Now it is time to turn to the Bible and get into the Word.

The question now is not “Why isn’t Genelle dead?” It changes to, “Why is Lot’s wife dead?”

The angels were sent to Abraham with a dual message. Good news and bad news.

The good news—Abraham would have a son.

Sarah laughed. The angels heard and asked, “Is anything too hard for the Lord?”

What is the bad news?

Sodom (the adopted home of his nephew) would be destroyed.

Abraham was excited over the promised son, but shocked and devastated over the possible loss of his nephew.

He prayed, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Genesis 18:25).

He entered into negotiations with the Creator. He asked God to spare the city for fifty. As God continued to agree, Abraham continued to lower the number.

He asked, “Will you spare the city for ten?” God agreed. There he stopped. Why? He probably thought there were ten saved people in the city—Lot, Lot’s wife, His daughters, and their husbands.

Sadly, only Lot and two daughters would be saved. What a shame. Look at Lot’s family leadership history.

- Lot pitched his tent near Sodom. The cost of compromise is always high.
- Lot was originally a “sojourner” in the land—just passing through.
- Now he had taken up residence. He moved to the city. He knew Sodom was a wicked city, but made a selfish choice to go there anyway.
- He began to act like a citizen. He adopted their lack of morals, and standards. (You become like the people you hang around and can tell the character of a person by the friends he keeps).
- He arranged for his daughters to marry the men from Sodom.
- He was willing to sacrifice his daughters’ purity.
- He became ineffective at dealing with his family, or his son-in-laws.

“When Lot still hesitated, the angels seized his hand and the hands of his wife and two daughters and rushed them to safety outside the city, for the Lord was merciful” (Genesis 19:16, *NLT*).

The angels insisted they leave the city; like now! They were told not to look back. Lot’s wife ignored the angel’s warnings. That is right; she looked back. She became a monument to all who are grabbed by grace but turn back.

She left a message for all who come after her.

“Remember Lot's wife” (Luke 17:32).

Charles Spurgeon says that Lot’s wife perished through sin. He outlines the steps as follows:

1. She lingered behind.
2. She disbelieved.
3. She dared to look back.

“And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62).

It is possible to be grabbed by grace, but not be saved.

What would you do if the heat of the fire was against your backside, and someone offered you a way of escape?

Dropping everything, I would run as if it were a race and only stop when I reached my destination, the place of safety.

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11-12).

Another translation reads: “For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with self-control, right conduct, and devotion to God, while we look forward to that wonderful event when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed” (Titus 2:11-13, *NLT*).

Now we get to the heart of the matter. There are three blessings of grace:

1. It brings salvation.
2. It appears to all men.

3. It teaches us.

Lessons Taught by Grace

You Cannot Have One Foot in the World and One Foot in the Church

Deny ungodliness	Turn from godless living
Deny worldly lusts	Avoid sinful pleasures
Live soberly	Live in this evil world with self-control
Live righteously	Do right
Live godly	Devote yourself to God
Look for the rapture	Look forward to the rapture

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other” (Matthew 6:24).

We should not love the world. “World” is mentioned twenty-two times in the five chapters of 1 John.

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the *lust of the flesh*, and the *lust of the eyes*, and the *pride of life*, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17).

What is your testimony today? Which category best describes you?

- Grabbed by grace, and holding on. Running the race away from the world, and toward heaven.
- Grabbed by grace, and not saved. Looking back, and not fit for the kingdom.
- Grabbed by grace, and ignoring it.

Study Questions

1. What is the meaning of “grace”? _____

2. Write Ephesians 2:8-9. _____

3. What does grace lead to? _____

4. We should turn from godless living to what? _____

5. Write Titus 2:11-12. _____

6. What admonition does Luke 17:32 give? _____

7. How many people were saved from Sodom? _____

8. What does the grace of God teach us? _____

9. What are the three blessings of grace? _____

10. All that is in the world is made up of what three things? _____
