

# The Redemption of Grace

Grace—part 2

July 7, 2019

## DAY 1: Looking honestly at sin

1. We will only appreciate and bow to grace to the extent that we accept the painful realities of sin in our hearts.

2. Our secular culture hates the idea of biblical sin. The following verses contain different reference to sin, and different components of sin. Below, underline the words or phrases at which our secular culture would sneer:

*Romans 3:10 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one;*

*<sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.*

*<sup>12</sup> All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."*

*<sup>13</sup> "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips."*

*<sup>14</sup> "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness."*

*<sup>15</sup> "Their feet are swift to shed blood;*

*<sup>16</sup> ruin and misery mark their ways,*

*<sup>17</sup> and the way of peace they do not know."*

*<sup>18</sup> "There is no fear of God before their eyes."*

3. The bible uses words we don't like to describe our sin. Place a check next to the ones with which you personally resonate.

\_\_\_ Wicked

\_\_\_ Evil

\_\_\_ Sinful

\_\_\_ Iniquity

\_\_\_ Transgressor

\_\_\_ Depraved

\_\_\_ Total depravity

\_\_\_ A sinner by nature

\_\_\_ Willful blindness

\_\_\_ Arrogance

4. What strikes you most from today's devotional?

## **DAY 2: The backdoor to recognizing and seeing our actual sinfulness...**

1. As we saw yesterday, our willful blindness, driven by our pride shields our eyes from accepting the truth about our sinful nature.

2. But all is not lost. God provides a “backdoor” to understand and begin to accept the reality of sin in our lives. It’s to take a long look at the cross, and ponder such questions as:

\_\_\_ Did Jesus really have to die on a cross?

\_\_\_ Is my sin nature really so bad that it necessitated the death of Jesus for me?

\_\_\_ Is a blood sacrifice for sin really necessary to save someone like me?

\_\_\_ Is hell what I really deserve?

3. If you are familiar with the Apostle Paul’s background you know he was a very committed Jewish man, a Pharisee, and extremely antagonistic to Christians. He arranged to have them arrested, imprisoned, and beaten for their faith.

4. On the way to Damascus, God stopped Saul in his tracks. God confronted Saul with a question of “Why?” Saul realizes that Jesus is indeed alive (as the Christians had testified). Jesus spoke to Saul. Saul was struck blind and had to be led to Damascus.

5. God changes Saul’s name to Paul, and elevates him to be an apostle and missionary. Throughout his missionary life, Paul is a “rock star.”

6. Yet, notice how Paul refers to himself late in life:

*1 Timothy 1:13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.*

*1 Timothy 1:14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

*1 Timothy 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst.*

7. In your own words, how does the great apostle Paul see himself?

8. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

### DAY 3: Grace, apart from works...

1. The reality of our sin nature hits us hard. Listen to what these two Russian novelists realized.

“I don’t know what the heart of a bad man looks like, but I do know what the heart of a good man is like and it is terrible.” --Ivan Turgenev, Russian novelist

“If only there evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds; and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?”  
Alexander Solzhenitsyn (Gulag Archipelago, p168)

2. Thanks be to God that the full reality of depravity can be defeated by the full reality of grace!

*Romans 3:21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.*

3. You can lump every human philosophy and every religion into one of two categories. Category 1 is the religion of divine achievement. The second religion is the religion of human accomplishment.

4. In the following verses, jot down what Paul says about the “religion of human accomplishment.”

*Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,*

*Galatians 2:16 ...know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.*

*2 Timothy 1:9 ...who has saved us and called us to a holy life--not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,*

5. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

#### **DAY 4: Grace, accepted by faith, and available to all...**

*Romans 3:22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.*

1. Grace is a gift. Grace is never earned. Grace is something given.
2. That said, grace must be received.
3. When I was a kid, my siblings and I could tell which Christmas presents were real TOYS, and which were “clothes,” (said with a contemptuous sneer).
4. You could not play with a new toy without accepting the toy. None of us turned to our parents and said, “Thanks for the bike. How much do we owe ya?”
5. We hopped on the bike, rode it out the front door and whizzed down the street as fast as we could peddle. The wind whipped my hair and there was merry glee in my heart.

#### **Grace is available to everyone...**

*Romans 3:22b There is no difference, <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

6. In our human courts of law breaking the law has levels of severity, crime and punishment.
7. If you get a ticket for speeding, you’ll pay a fine. If you are convicted of first degree murder you’ll spend the rest of your life behind bars.
8. But sin against God is not like that. All rebellion and against God is wicked.
9. And, thankfully, grace is offered to all for all!
10. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

## **DAY 5: Attained by justification freely; ... through redemption**

*Romans 3:24 ... and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

1. “Justification” is a legal term. Justification means that your prior record has been scrubbed, swept clean, erased.
2. Justification means, “Just-as-if-I’d” never sinned.
3. Justification is greater than:
  - a. Forgiveness. Someone may forgive you for something you’ve done, but that doesn’t mean your record with them is clean.
  - b. A mistrial. Your case may be thrown out by the judge, and thus not have to face trial. But, that doesn’t mean you are innocent of your crimes.
  - c. A pardon. You may receive a pardon, allowing you to walk away from any more prison time, but that doesn’t mean expunge your criminal record.

*Romans 3:24 ... and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

4. “Redemption” is the process of buying something, paying a price in order to get something.
5. Jesus bought us out of our slavery position.
6. But in this redemption the price was not an amount of money.

*Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace*

7. Note the high cost of our redemption. It didn’t cost Jesus a lot of money. It cost Him his life, the shedding of His blood in our behalf.

8. And notice how Paul finishes this idea of justification and redemption: “*in accordance with the riches of God’s grace.*”

*Romans 3:25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished--*