

All Kinds of Grace! -- 1 Peter 5:10 "But the God of all (kinds of) grace ..."

I visited a dear godly lady one afternoon & listened carefully as she shared her deep concerns for members of her family. Some things were going on that were just tearing her apart inside. At the close of our visit I prayed for this dear precious lady, asking "the God of kinds of grace" to give her an "extra portion of His grace." When I had finished praying, she looked at me & said with a smile, "Yes, that's just what I need. An 'extra portion of God's grace.'"

Do you need an extra portion of God's grace in your life today? There is a beautiful thought in the words of our text. No **word** in the Christian vocabulary is more **beautiful or radiant** than the word **Grace!** There is a wealth of meaning in that one word, **Grace.** **Grace** has been defined as God's **undeserved favor.** We cannot buy, nor earn grace; God simply gives grace! **God is the great giver! Man is the humble receiver.**

And to think! God has grace of **every kind**, sufficient for our every need. He is the God of **all kinds of grace!** God has **an abundance of grace** ready & available for His people! That single phrase, "the God of all grace" is so rich in meaning! I have long been intrigued by that phrase & have studied it carefully. According to Adam Clarke, God is the very **Fountain** of infinite compassion, mercy, & goodness! **All kinds of grace**, every kind of grace, grace of all kinds, flow from this Fountain!

What ever your need, God has grace! In fact, God is the **Manufacturer & the Giver of Grace.** He is the God of **every form of grace!** God, who is full of grace, always gives you all the grace you may need! **All grace is from God!** He is the Source & Giver of all needed grace! He has saving, sanctifying, sustaining, satisfying & establishing grace which is all-sufficient (cf 2 Cor. 12:9-10). For sins He has the grace of pardon & forgiveness. For the carnal heart He has the grace of cleansing & purity. For sickness He has the grace of Divine healing. For sorrow there is the grace of His comforting presence. For stress He has the grace of peace that "passes all understanding." He has enough grace, & more than enough, to meet every need.

The fact that He has called us is proof of His grace; & the sufficiency of His grace assures us of all that is needed for daily, even holy living. My friend, **do you have need for grace for any reason today?** God has grace for you, for your every need. Grace for the home; grace for the job; grace to endure your aches & pains; grace to heal your hurts & disappointments; grace to withstand the storms of life. Grace to put up with, or get along with those you dislike. Grace to begin & Grace to endure. Grace to serve, & Grace to hope. And Grace to triumph at last. There is no shortage of His grace; no rationing of His grace.

Someone asked D. L. Moody: "Have you enough grace to be burned at the stake?" Moody replied: "No." "Do you not wish you had," they asked. Moody said: "No, for I don't need it. What I need now is grace to live in Milwaukee three days & hold a mission. If ever I would need grace to be burned at the stake, than God would give me that grace at that time."

The Bible promises us, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Ex. 33:25). In every situation, in every hour of need, God has grace for you. God will give His grace only to those who will **receive** His grace. Allow me to explore with you the kinds of grace you can experience by simply being open to receive His all sufficient grace: --

1. YOU CAN EXPERIENCE HIS SAVING GRACE!

Have you received His Saving Grace? My friends, if you have not been born again, if you have not experienced the New Birth, you are lost & bound for hell. When Nicodemus came to Jesus "by night" & asked Him eternal questions, Jesus said: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see, nor enter into the kingdom of God.

When it comes to Heaven, you cannot **earn** your way in; you cannot **buy** your way in; you cannot **work** your way in. When the Philippian Jailer asked the Apostle Paul: "What must I do to be saved?" the answer was: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, & thou shalt be saved!" (Acts 16:31). **There is only one way to be saved from our sins, through the shed blood of Jesus Christ!** In Christ we can be born again & become a new person altogether. In Christ we experience the saving grace of God. Paul writes: "By grace are ye saved through faith; & that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). No matter how **good**, or **honorable**, or **upright** you may be, It is only through the saving grace of God that you can experience the gift of Eternal life.

On the other hand, no matter how **bad**, or **sinful**, or **wicked** you have been, by the grace of God you can be saved, forgiven of your sins, & experience the gift of eternal life. By grace you can be forgiven; you can be born again. By grace you can find peace with God & have eternal life. God wants to save you! **You cannot save yourself**, so He stands ready to give you His saving grace through the death of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ! The Hymn writer put it so well: --

*Grace, grace, God's grace, Grace that will pardon & cleanse within;
Grace, grace, God's grace, Grace that is greater than all our sin!*

Back in the 1950s there was a well known radio host, comedian, song writer in Hollywood named Stuart Hamblen. The son of a Methodist minister, & one of the original members of the Stars Christian Fellowship Group, Hamblen was also well-known as a backslider who drank, gambled, sang with dance bands, owned a stable full of racehorses, & as a womanizer. One of his bigger hits at the time was, *I won't go hunting with you Jake, but I'll go chasing women.*

But one day the young Youth For Christ evangelist Billy Graham came to L.A. to hold a tent revival. Hamblen, who was a key man in the area with tremendous influence, wanted to have Graham on his radio show, presumably to poke fun at him. In order to gather more material for his show, Hamblen showed up at one of the revival meetings. That night Billy Graham declared from the pulpit, "There is someone in this tent who is leading a double life. There is a person here who is a phony." Hamblen's resistance began to crumble, & after a terrifying violent mountain storm ended a drunken hunting trip, taken in part to get away from his wife Suzy's insistent nagging that he "get saved," Hamblen showed up at Graham's apartment in the middle of the night, & begged for help in straightening out his life. They sat down together at the kitchen table & Billy began to read the Bible to him, & explained what he needed to do. Finally, at the climax of an extended & tearful prayer session, Hamblen declared, "Lord, you're hearing a new voice," & he asked God to forgive his sins.

Improbable as it seemed to skeptical acquaintances, **Hamblen's conversion took!** He told his radio audience of his experience, & urged them **not** to smoke or drink the very products advertised on his program (a move that cost him his job). Furthermore he promised to sell all but one of his racehorses, keeping only the horse which had won a \$50,000 race, strictly for sentimental reasons, vowing never to race again. **Hamblen even invited his listeners to come to the big tent where he would sing & give his testimony.**

When long-time & good friend John Wayne commented on the remarkable transformation, Hamblen told the Duke, "It is no secret what God can do." To this, John Wayne said, "That's a catchy phrase. You should write a song about it." And the result became a country-music standard: --

*It is no secret what God can do; What He's done for others, He'll do for you.
With arms wide open, He'll pardon you. It is no secret what God can do.*

My friends, you too, can experience God's Saving grace!

2. YOU CAN EXPERIENCE HIS SATISFYING GRACE!

There are a whole lot of people who go all through life unfulfilled & unsatisfied, wanting **more**, wanting **something**, wanting **anything** that will bring an element of satisfaction into their lives! This was part of the problem of the Prodigal Son. He had everything a loving Father could provide, but the son was not satisfied, **so**

he went searching in a far country, until every thing he had was gone! When he hit bottom, he realized that what he had in his father's home was far greater than what he was now experiencing. So the Prodigal Son picked himself up & went back home

So many many people are not satisfied with what they **have**, or with what they **do**; or with whom they **are**. They want change; they seek **greener grass!** Greener pastures. But the good news is that God's grace can make you **satisfied**; His grace can bring **contentment** into your life! Jesus said, "I am come that you may have life, & that you may have it more **abundantly**" (John 10:10). There is no need to be restless & uneasy & unsettled! God's grace in your heart can provide you with a more abundant & more fulfilled life! You **can** be satisfied where you are if you will only let God's grace fill your heart & life!

When well-known Gospel singer, George Beverly Shea was but a young lad of eight years old, he & his father, the Rev. A. J. Shea, were on a shopping trip one afternoon. Together they came out of a store in Houghton, NY, & met a tall elderly woman making her way slowly up the street. His dad tipped his hat & said "good-day" to the lady as they passed. She stopped & looked up to see who was speaking. Smiling sweetly, she returned his greeting.

On up the way the father asked young George, "Do you know who that was, son? That," his father said, with reverence in his voice, "was Mrs. Clara Tear Williams. **She writes hymns.**" Although only eight years old, young George was duly impressed.

When father & son got home that afternoon, George told his mother about meeting Mrs. Williams, the hymnwriter. She smiled knowingly & nodded her head. Then she went to the piano bench & found a hymnal that contained one of Clara Williams' compositions, & played it. A few years later, when George Beverly Shea was in his teens, he began to sing solos, & one of his favorite's was the hymn his Mother had played that afternoon, entitled "Satisfied."

*Poor I was & sought for riches, Something that would satisfy
But the dust I gathered round me, Only mocked my soul's sad cry; But **Hallelujah!** I have found Him, Whom
my soul so long has craved! Jesus **satisfies** my longing. Thru His blood I now am saved.
Yes, & you too, can experience God's Satisfying Grace!*

3. YOU CAN EXPERIENCE HIS SUSTAINING GRACE!

What God said to the Apostle Paul -- He says to every one of us: "**My grace is sufficient unto you!**" (2 Cor. 12:9). Grace does **not** mean that the Christian life is problem free, or without suffering. Quite to the contrary, we do have problems. We do sometimes suffer. Our text speaks of our suffering: "After you have **suffered...**" **The key is that God has grace that will establish, strengthen & settle us** even in (or through) our times of suffering.

Whatever your problem; whatever your situation; whatever your need; whatever your circumstances; **God has grace to sustain & to keep you!** This is **the very heart** of the message found in verse 10. No matter what you may suffer in the here & now; God's grace can lift you & give you a peace in your heart. Grace to endure the hardships. Grace to withstand the storms of life. Grace in grief & sorrow & disappointment. Grace for our weaknesses & infirmities & afflictions. Grace to be like Him; like Him in our spirit & our attitudes. Grace to acquire & enjoy the fruit of the Spirit. Grace for our duties & responsibilities. Grace for the day, & all the night long!

*Through many danger, toils & snares, I have already come,
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.*

Dr. Dennis Kinlaw, a powerful preacher, & former president of Asbury College in Wilmore, KY, tells of an experience he had as a young pastor. The church was rather formal without much spiritual life. A lady named

Margaret was asked to teach the adult Sunday school class. While faithful & very religious, Margaret was not a born-again Christian, but then, neither were many others in the church either. While she had little Biblical understanding, Margaret felt it best to teach the Bible in the class, so she began to read & study the Bible. It wasn't long before she began to realize that her life fell far short of what God expected of her, & Margaret confessed her spiritual need before God & experienced the joy of sins forgiven & a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Margaret began to share with the class her own experiences in her walk with the Lord. The members of her class were not used to this, & they became uncomfortable with her teaching as they felt their own guilt. One of the leading members circulated a petition through the entire church to have Margaret removed as a teacher. **She was deeply hurt** as she felt she was no longer wanted in the church.

The young pastor, Dennis Kinlaw, went to visit Margaret when he discovered what had happened. **He was attempting to bring spiritual renewal** to this congregation, & she was one of the few people who understood, & could be counted upon. As they visited, they wept together, & Margaret expressed her hurt & disappointment, & said, "And just when I thought perhaps my husband Tom was getting close to accepting the Lord. Now, we have a set back! We'll have to find another church & begin all over." The pastor said, "**You are needed right here in this church!** You would stay wouldn't you if God wanted you too?" Margaret replied, "You mean go back to that class which rejected me? That would take a miracle!" Pastor Kinlaw said, "Yes, go back & show them the spirit of Christ you have been teaching about." Again Margaret replied, "That would take a huge miracle!" And Kinlaw said, "Yes, it would take a miracle of grace, but I challenge you to give it a try. I'd like to see you set on the third roll & **show them what the grace of God can do in your life.**" Kinlaw did not know what to expect, but after praying for Margaret, he left. On Sunday, he watched to see if she would show up. She did, & every week she was right there on the third roll of the very class that had voted her out, & she smiled!

After about six months, the ring leader of the group who had circulated the petitions, came running up to Pastor Kinlaw early one Sunday morning, saying, "Pastor, did you hear what happened to Tom?" The way he said it, Kinlaw thought maybe Tom had died! Kinlaw said, "No! What happened to Tom?" The man said, "I don't understand it, but Tom said he got **saved** last night." Kinlaw couldn't understand either, because he didn't know of any revival in the area, so he looked up Tom as quickly as he could & asked, "Tom, what happened to you last night?" Smiling, Tom said, "I found Jesus last night!" Kinlaw asked, "Where did you find Jesus? How did it happen?" Tom replied, "I found Him while kneeling by my bed. My wife helped pray me through!" Then Tom explained, "After that class voted my wife out, I was so mad I wanted to mop the floor with them. But every night I would watch her kneel by our bed & I'd listen to her pray for those same people who had rejected her. The longer she prayed, the madder I got. It would take me a long time to get to sleep I was so angry. But after about six months, I began to realize **it was not them she needed to pray for; -- it was me.** So last night I knelt down beside her & said, 'Stop praying for them! It's me who needs prayer.' And she said, 'Oh!' And with that we prayed together!"

God had given Margaret sustaining grace, & rewarded her richly not only in the salvation of her husband Tom, but also in helping to bring spiritual renewal to her whole church congregation! And you too my friends, can experience God's sustaining grace!

Conclusion: -- All of God's resources stand ready to aid you this very moment. **God will give His grace only to those who will receive His grace.** God Himself freely gives the very grace we need! God's grace can **save** you from your sins. God's grace can **satisfy** the deep longings of your heart. God's grace can **sustain** you in every circumstance. Open yourself up to **God's amazing grace** today! There is plenty of grace available for your need! **The God of all kinds of grace stands ready to aid you this very moment!**

It is the Hebrew writer who invites us everyone to come, "**Boldly to the throne of grace**, that we may obtain mercy & **find GRACE TO HELP in (every) time of need**" (4:16). There is an endless supply of Grace available! No matter how great your need, you cannot exhaust God's grace! You may feel that your situation is extremely difficult, **but God's marvelous grace is all sufficient** to give you the peace & power you so desperately need!

Rather than going from **struggle to struggle**, by God's grace, you can go from **struggle to strength!**

Rev. Lyle W. Pettit -- Calvary Baptist Church -- Benson, AZ
Sunday Morning -- August 24, 2014