

# *Trophies of Grace*

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*All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.*

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## INTRODUCTION

A trophy represents victory, and as recipients of God's grace we stand as monuments of all that He has done. There are none righteous, not one. But God, who is rich in mercy, has chosen to use us, His people, to make a statement to Satan about who He is.

Satan despises the grace of God, so it should come as no surprise that grace is exactly what God uses to bring about His most glorious victories. Through grace, the Father, Son, and Spirit give us all that we do not deserve. We have His righteousness and an eternal position, seated above principalities and powers.

The day will come when we will be in heaven in our glorified bodies, and we shall be as He is. His mercy endures forever and He will not forsake the work of His hands (Psalm 138:8). He Who began a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6). Jesus Christ has given us the free gift of grace

and the abundance of His righteousness.

This booklet will show that in the ages to come we who glorify Christ by receiving His grace will be on display for the angels—elect and fallen—to see. We will be viewed as trophies, masterpieces of God's perfect Finished Work.

*Chapter One*

**OUR HOME: THE HOLY  
OF HOLIES**

Every believer has a brand-new home, according to Hebrews 10:19: “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.” That home is the Holy of Holies.

In the Jewish temples, the veil in front of the Holy of Holies was sixty feet tall, thirty feet wide, and extremely heavy. Only the priests were allowed to touch it and to hang it in place. Furthermore, only the high priest could enter in beyond the veil. He went there just twice a year with blood sacrifices as an offering for himself and for the people (see Leviticus 16:1-19).

As we understand the chronology of Luke 23:44-45, the sun was eclipsed at noon as Jesus hung on the cross at Calvary. Three hours later, after the last sin had been transferred upon His body, Jesus Christ proclaimed, “It is finished!” (John 19:30). Then He committed His spirit into

the hands of the Father and died. At that moment, the veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom. What a shock that must have been to the Jews in the temple. They did not believe Jesus was the Messiah. Yet, at His death, the veil that no man could touch was torn apart, and they could look directly into the Holy of Holies. But to enter in, they had to believe.

### *A New and Living Way*

“By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:20-22).

The amazing thing about the Holy of Holies is that it is the new home for God’s royal family. Through the death of Jesus Christ, freshly slain, the Greek text says, “we have a way through the veil.” The Greek word *hodos*, “way,” is also used of the ways of God. Through His resurrection and ascension, we have a way into the Holy of Holies. Out of death came resurrection. Now, because we have been made members of God’s royal family, the Holy of Holies is open moment-



by-moment as our home.

There is a High Priest over the House of God. This is a brand-new thing. Imagine that for 1,500 years, only the high priest was allowed into the Holy of Holies, and he could only go in twice a year. But then it finally happened: The veil was rent. And now, as Christians in the Church Age, we are the only group of people in history who have the Holy of Holies as our new home.

Instead of being fearful, we can come boldly before Christ, who is seated in the Holy of Holies. There we have confidence and stability instead of gossip and slander. Instead of becoming offended or offending others because of a negative attitude, we have a new home in the Holy of Holies. We are accepted and we are seated there, in a brand-new place where no one has been before.

*Chapter Two*

## UNCHANGABLE GIFTS AND CALLINGS

“The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands” (Psalm 138:8).

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

“That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus...For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:7, 10).

“Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the

ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider... Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it: but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment" (Isaiah 1:2-3, 5-6).

### *The Reality of Heaven and Hell*

The Law was given so that every single mouth might be shut, because none are righteous. All have gone astray (see Romans 3:9-20). For this reason, the precious justice of God has established a literal hell as well as a literal heaven. Hell is a real place; heaven is a real place. For heaven, God has a special plan so that every believer has the opportunity and privilege to become one of the greatest displays of His grace throughout eternity. It is difficult to even remotely imagine, let alone speak about it.

People in hell will be there not because of their sins, even though they died in their sins (John 8:21). They will be there because they rejected and rebelled against the mercy and grace of God. That is the reason I believe hell will have

intensified degrees of punishment. People will be in hell for just one reason: They rejected the mercy and grace of God, motivated by God's nature of love toward them.

Jesus went to the Cross to bear our sins and to pay for every single sin of the entire world (1 John 2:2), thereby reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). In doing this, God was in effect saying, "I will not accept human merit; I will not accept a system of works; I will not accept your performance. I will only accept you believing Me." This is why the Word of God says in Mark 5:36, "Only believe."

Abraham, in Genesis 15:4-6, took God up on that promise and was justified while he was yet ungodly. Certainly, it took time for him to grow as a believer, but the Word of God had begun a work in his life. The plan is simply this: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Eternal salvation, based on and followed by mercy and grace: These are gifts God offers each of us.

According to Romans 11:29, "the gifts and calling of God are *without repentance*," without

us doing something in our flesh to change our minds. The psalmist prayed, “Turn us, O God...” (Psalm 85:4). In Jeremiah 31:18-19, the prophet declared, “...turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented [changed my mind]; and after that I was instructed...”

### *Keeping Precepts in Order*

Some preachers never consider the fact that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. With no idea about God’s nature, they promote certain precepts out of order. A precept is an authoritative rule of action concerning a spiritual subject. Whenever we are relating truth from the Word of God, we must start with the first precept. We cannot promote precepts number six and ten in a given category without going back to precept number one.

For example, some will preach Acts 2:38, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,” without going back to Genesis 3:21. There, Adam and Eve simply accepted God’s grace when God killed animals and covered their nakedness. “Repentance, repentance, repentance,” they shout, stirring everyone up. Yet

these same people then enter a works system and start judging other Christians and exalting their own achievements. They are deluded and deceived by pride while sincerely trying to live the Christian life. It is among the saddest things to observe.

The Lord says, “I will turn you because of My gift. *I will do it.*”

As He turns me, my direction is now toward Him and not toward myself and my past. My mind is changed because God is changing it by mercy and grace through love. Now I can be instructed.

*Chapter Three*  
QUICKENED TOGETHER  
IN CHRIST

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

“Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

“But God, who is rich in *mercy*, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

“*Even* when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by *grace* ye are saved;)” (Ephesians 2:1-5).

“Dead in trespasses and sins”—that’s where we were. Our heads were sick. From the soles of

our feet unto our head, there was no soundness in us, only wounds, and bruises, and sores, and scar tissue—all of which we tried to cover up with pride, vindictiveness, and negativity.

“But God, who is rich in *mercy*, for his great *love* wherewith he loved us, *even* when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.” The first thing is mercy, motivated by love. Then comes the work of grace. God, in mercy, does not give us what we deserve, which is judgment for our trespasses and sins. Then, notice how the Holy Spirit uses the word “*even*.” *Even* when we were dead in sins, God quickened us together in Christ, and by grace we are saved. If we will allow the Holy Spirit to teach us this, the truth will overwhelm us every moment of our lives.

While mercy withholds what we do deserve, in terms of punishment, grace is God giving us all things that we don’t deserve. He quickened us together with Christ. Raised us up together with Him. Seated us in heavenly places with Him. *He* quickened us, *He* raised us, *He* seated us. He performed ninety-five things in us the moment we were saved.

This is what we must understand: Everything about our lives now is about what *He* did.



Why? So that “in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:7). He did all of these things so that for all eternity He might have you and I as trophies—a reflection of Himself forever.

### *The Nature of God on Display in Us*

We will be in heaven forever in our glorified bodies, for God will perfect that which concerns Him. His mercy endures forever, and He will not forsake the work of His hands (Psalm 138:8). He who began a good work in us will perform it until Jesus Christ comes back (Philippians 1:6).

Jesus Christ gives us the free gift of grace and the abundance of His righteousness (Romans 5:15-17). Picture how that, in the ages to come, we who use our knowledge to glorify Christ will be on display. God created us to glorify Him (Isaiah 43:7). For *His* pleasure we were and are created (see Revelation 4:11).

“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. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:8-10).

God comes on the scene and says, "Watch Me as I work in you." We become saved. Mercy quickens us, and grace gives us ninety-five things that we don't deserve at the moment of salvation. It is not of works at all. We are getting to know God, not how well we can perform. We are not getting to know how well we can walk the Christian life. We simply reflect what we know about God.

If, God forbid, you fall flat on your face, as soon as you name your failure, God is glorified because you are rebounding. A righteous man who falls seven times in a day keeps getting up; but the wicked fall and stay down (Proverbs 24:16). God is glorified when I trust in His Blood and His provision for rebound, knowing that He will not impute my sins to me because He paid for them once and for all. "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Romans 4:7-8).

When a man is saved, he comes to God spiritually sick. From the soles of his feet unto his head, he has wounds and bruises and putrifying sores (Isaiah 1:6). He is filled with negativity, reaction, and rebellion. But God goes to work. The God of all grace (1 Peter 5:10), the God of love

(1 John 4:8), the Father of mercies (2 Corinthians 1:3), the God of patience (Romans 15:5) goes to work. He says, “Watch Me. Study My life and My nature. Study what I have to say in My New Covenant, in the disposition of the Church Age.”

In Ephesians 2:10 we read, “For we are his *workmanship*”—*poiema* in the Greek. This word paints a great picture of a believer who walks in the way of grace, the way of mercy, the way of love, the way of forgiveness, the way of kindness, the way of patience through the Holy Spirit. As His workmanship, we reflect His glory and His nature (2 Corinthians 3:18) as we go from glory to glory. Just as a mirror shows who we are, our lives can show who Christ is in us. We simply reflect Him through the Holy Spirit who liberates us to do so (2 Corinthians 3:17).

## *Chapter Four*

# MASTERPIECES OF THE MASTER

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (1 John 3:1-3).

Throughout eternity, believers will be on display as God’s precious, sacred masterpieces, valued higher than all the perfect angels in heaven who never sinned. We accept what He has done, we accept who He is, and in so doing, we purify ourselves simply on the basis of His work on Calvary, His work in us, His work for us, and His work through us. He will never be anything but *for* us. And if God is for us, who can be

against us (Romans 8:31)?

### *Pillars in God's Temple*

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name” (Revelation 3:12).

This verse contains the Greek word *stulos*, meaning “pillar”—a permanent part of a structure, often inscribed with historical details about the building and its builders. The Lord manifests His victory in us by writing chapters about our lives to be included in His precious temple. It will be written about how we were saved by His grace and how His grace made each one of us His masterpiece. We will stand as God's trophies throughout all the ages.

We are made kings and priests unto God the Father through Jesus Christ (Revelation 5:10). Christ is the royal King and the royal Priest and He must have a royal family, though He won't have that until the Church Age is over at the Rapture. Then, the Father will present to the Son His Bride, made up of every believer who came

to Him in the dispensation of His grace (Revelation 19:7-11). We become members of His royal family, and He will then set up His Kingdom in the new Jerusalem as He marries His Bride. The Church becomes royalty as she is married to Christ. The royal King shall receive His royal Queen.

### *Promoted into Purity*

Speaking of brides and grooms, this is what the grace of God can do. Twenty-four of the past twenty-five couples that I have married said to me that they had never kissed before reaching the altar. Was that because righteousness was legislated from the pulpit? No, it was because God's grace taught them how to deny worldliness and ungodly lusts and to live quietly in this present evil world (Titus 2:12). Grace was their teacher. Temptations came, but the knowledge that God loves them and that He did it all in paying for their sins promoted them in purity.

God isn't interested in our works. He does not want human merit. He wants us to *believe!* "Only believe." The just shall live by faith, and the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith (Romans 1:17). We go from faith to faith, not from works to works. If we were to mix the

grace message with works, there would be so many problems. But we serve the God of *all* grace.

### *Perfected by Grace*

It is grace without works that produces the fruit of the Spirit in divine good. We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *agathos*, or divine good. Divine good is mercy, grace, love, forgiveness, patience, meekness, gentleness, and kindness. We are created in Christ Jesus unto divine good, and because we are, we let Him do the work through us.

When we get to heaven, Jesus Christ will not present an account of what we did by keeping track of how many times we went soul-winning or how many times we went to church. Instead, this is the kind of thing He will say about us: "I remember that you knew how to receive grace. You let grace be your teacher. You knew how to use rebound. You decreased and I increased. You could never become perfect on your own, so I perfected you in your position the moment I saved you."

"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded," the Word of God says in Philip-pians 3:15. We are complete in Him who is the

head of all principality and power (Colossians 2:10). And if we were to neglect so great a salvation as this, we could never make it (Hebrews 2:3).



## *Chapter Five*

# BY GRACE AND GRACE ALONE

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another;

“But there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

“As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:6-9).

These verses trouble me. The sad part is that there are pastors who are in serious trouble with God for preaching another gospel, apart from the gospel of grace. Paul wrote that if they don’t preach the gospel of grace, let them go to hell, which is what “accursed” literally means.

Jesus Christ is *the* way, *the* truth, and *the* life, and no man can come to the Father but strictly by Him. There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof is death (Proverbs 14:12). I am not going risk it by the fact that I live a morally upright life. The Bible doesn't say I will be accursed by what I do; it just says that if I don't preach grace, let me go to hell.

There are people who just want to be scolded all the time so they can reinforce their guilt. A preacher may get up and tell them all the things that they shouldn't do and the things that they should do. These folks go out saying, "Boy, the preacher was really on fire tonight." The problem is that if they could live up to his message, they would be proud and self-righteous. If they can not live up to it, their guilt is reinforced. And when that happens, they have to live as hypocrites and pretend things are a lot better than they really are.

Paul declared, "By the grace of God, I am what I am" (1 Corinthians 15:10). "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:16-17). "Fulness" is *pleroma*, meaning that all of God's grace is available to me because I am in Christ. In Christ,

I can receive nothing but what Christ does. It is all grace.

It may seem that some people abuse grace and use it as a license to sin, but they are in the minority. Believers have to go through processes through the grace of God. That means that we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18)—and growth is a necessary part of life. As we grow we sin less, because we become more like Him. Not that we ever become sinless, or perfect, in ourselves. That is impossible.

### *The Riches of His Kindness*

In heaven, God will show us the exceeding riches of His kindness toward us throughout all eternity—all because we met mercy on our road to hell. He does not give us what we deserve. “It is not of works but of grace,” God says (2 Timothy 1:9). “If you accept My way, I will make you My trophy and My masterpiece. I will display you as My Bride.”

One day God will restore the earth to the Paradise it once was (Revelation 21). The children of Israel will be perfected in their land. People will come from all over to visit God’s trophies, who live in the New Jerusalem, which

will be suspended above Mount Zion (Isaiah 2:2). They will come to see the royal family, Jesus Christ's masterpieces, whom He created and saved and through whom He performed divine good. *He* did it. Everything about it is Him. We believe it, we receive it, and we confess it—believe, receive, and confess. That's it! Grace upon grace upon grace.

Grace cannot be argued with. Satan tries to pollute the gospel message by using some abstract interpretations of verses taken out of context. But God gets into this world system through us representing Him as ambassadors of heaven and believer-priests in the world. What we are becoming has already been given forever. By His provision, we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ *once and for all!*

In Zechariah 4:6-7, Israel was told to shout "Grace, grace" to the mountains. That is what we are to do with the mountains in our lives. We say to the mountains, "Don't you know who I am? Don't you know what I have? Don't you know my position in Christ? Don't you know that I am seated above the angels? And I will keep on confessing these things until you flee away."

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that

not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that, according as it is written, *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord*" (1 Corinthians 1:26-31).

Often, the intellectual and the wealthy won't let Him choose them because they are proud of all that they have achieved. But God chooses the weak, the foolish, those that are despised so that He gets all the glory.

*Chapter Six*  
MONUMENTS OF  
SATAN'S DEFEAT

“Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all” (Jeremiah 31:12).

“Trophy,” according to Webster’s Dictionary, comes from the Greek *tropaion*, speaking of a token of the amazing defeat of an enemy. It represents a supreme conquest for the victor, a monument to an enemy’s defeat. In the ages to come, God will show us off as trophies of the victory of His grace over Satan.

If you have loved ones who are in the world, don’t stop believing in what God will do. Just believe that they are going to be God’s trophies. Just believe that He will make them His master-

pieces to display His victory forever and ever.

He created us for His glory (Isaiah 43:7), for His eternal purpose (Ephesians 3:11), and for His pleasure (Revelation 4:11). He takes sinners and gives them grace and forgiveness. Christ suffered for us as the just; He died for the unjust that He might bring us to God (1 Peter 3:18). Being put to death in the flesh, He was quickened by the Holy Spirit.

This is the principle of *epieikes*—mercy that goes beyond justice. *Epieikes* is found in 2 Corinthians 10:1 and Philippians 4:5, referring to the gentleness of Christ's nature, the moderation He uses to execute perfect righteousness. This simply means that a perfectly just and holy God has made a way not to judge us with justice. The sins of the world were transferred to Jesus at the Cross (1 Peter 2:24) so that the Father could say, "All who believe that Jesus died in their place as the substitute in His death, burial, and resurrection are no longer subject to justice. I will not give them what they deserve; I will give them what they don't deserve. My mercy shall rejoice against justice" (see James 2:13).

Jesus, in agreement with the Father's plan, pronounced, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that

sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24).

### *Justice Satisfied, Penalty Paid*

Imagine committing a major judicial crime and being brought before a judge. Capital punishment or life imprisonment awaits you. But then the judge comes out to say, “I cannot judge you with justice. You are free—someone else paid for what you did.” That is *epieikes*—one of the sweetest words in all of the Bible.

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1). We are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Him (Romans 3:24). God set forth Christ as the propitiation for sin, satisfying the Father’s justice, so that He could declare us righteous through faith in His blood (Romans 3:25).

God has a process and program to teach us how to live pure and clean the proper way—through grace (see Titus 2:11-12). “Of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:16-17). Every one of us should go to bed each night praying,



“God, I thank You God that You will never judge me with justice.”

### *For Our Sake*

God’s justice demands perfection, and His Son gave what was required on our behalf when we believed upon Him. He cannot compromise His holiness. He cannot compromise His righteousness. He cannot compromise His veracity. He cannot compromise His absolute sinlessness. But when the Son was made sin for us, He became the first trophy of grace. His life didn’t need grace, but He became sin for us though He was sinless. His work at the Cross is the ultimate trophy in the defeat of Satan, for it was accepted on behalf of all who believe on Him.

### *Spoiling Principalities and Powers*

I would have liked to have seen the faces of Satan and the demons of hell when the Lord Jesus came out of that grave. When He ascended, every single fallen angel tried to stop him from going up to heaven. The Lord Jesus rose past them, but, of course, they couldn’t touch Him. He spoiled the principalities and powers and made a show of them openly. The elect angels witnessed Christ’s victory and Satan’s de-

feat (Colossians 2:15).

Recently, we knocked on a door and led a woman to Christ. In an instant, she was saved forever, baptized into a union with Him. She was sealed with the Spirit and regenerated by grace through faith in Christ and not of herself. Instantly, she was seated in heavenly places and made a member of the royal family of God.

None of us, especially when we know how guilty we are, can readily understand this. But before God, that woman never has to face judgment from God—no matter what she has done in her life. How is that possible? That is because perfect justice was satisfied by the Blood. Try committing a violation and see if some judge will come and say, “I will judge by grace.”

A former president was asked by a great evangelist, “If Christians began to be arrested on the basis of their testimonies, would there be enough evidence to convict you?”

He thought silently for a moment before answering, “No, there would not.”

“Wouldn’t you like to accept Christ and have that evidence in your life?” he was asked. “Would you like to be a testimony for the Lord? Would you like to be born again?”

“Yes,” the former president said. “I want to

do it the right way, because I realize I have never been saved. I have only been religious.”

He was saved that day, and he will be a trophy of God’s grace forever and ever—and a monument to Satan’s defeat.

### *God’s Program for Perfection: Grace*

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love” (Ephesians 1:4).

God’s program of grace started before the world was formed. To Jeremiah, God said, “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee” (Jeremiah 1:5). To Paul, He said, “I called thee from thy mother’s womb” (see Galatians 1:15).

To us, He says, “I saw your substance in the lower part of the earth, and I curiously wrought you. I knew everything about you—even the color of your hair—millions of years ago. When you were still imperfect, not yet complete, I wrote down everything about you in My book” (see Psalm 139:15-16).

Millions of years ago we were known by God. Imagine it! We were saved by grace because

we *chose* to be, not because we were elected to be saved. We became the elect because God foreknew our decision. Free volition was the first institution given to man by God, and it was the first to be tested in the Garden of Eden: Choose life or death. It is a volitional decision because God has a perfect will that He desires for us to experience; however, He will give us His permissive will if we do not wish to be in His perfect will. Still, we were chosen *in Him* before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy before Him in love.

Through a process, the Christian begins to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). He has a mind that comes from heaven (Colossians 3:2)—he is not high-minded, but he does have high mind, a tremendous spiritual IQ. He also has high conversation, for his conversation is from heaven (Philippians 3:20). He has a high position, for he is seated together with Christ far above principalities and powers (Ephesians 1:21; 2:6). Therefore, the devil is under his feet as he walks in the Spirit (Ephesians 1:22; Galatians 5:16).

## *Chapter Seven*

# TROPHIES OF GRACE IN ACTION

A second lieutenant in the Vietnamese army was told to take eight prisoners and execute them. His superior told him to take them three miles from the base and shoot them. The officer took them to a place not far from Saigon, and he began speaking.

“I am going to tell you the greatest story of your lives,” he said. “Jesus Christ loves you. He died and shed His blood for you. He was buried and rose again. He has paid for every one of your sins. Now, will you receive Him and be saved?”

They all got saved—some of them I am sure were thinking that they had better get saved before they are shot.

Then, he said, “See that road to Saigon? Get going. Live for God, get on your knees every day, and read the Bible. God had for you this day a Christian who wouldn’t shoot you any

more than he would shoot himself. Now get out of here!”

Once a year, those eight people got together for an old-fashioned prayer and praise meeting. They were truly saved, and they will be God’s trophies of grace for all eternity. They are His masterpieces. Thank God for that.

An unmarried couple who were living together in immorality attended our Easter play entitled *Heaven or Hell: From Here to Eternity*. They watched the staging of the Great White Throne Judgment and saw the unsaved sent to hell. Afterward, the young woman said to her boyfriend, “I am not going home with you tonight. I am getting saved, and I don’t really want to be near you right now.”

“Well, I am getting saved, too,” he said. “God loves me as much as He loves you.”

She went to her mother’s house; he went to their apartment alone. They have been coming to church and haven’t touched each other since that night. They plan to be married very soon.

Do you see what God’s grace does? In one night, this couple became trophies of God’s grace. They will be His workmanship, masterpieces created by God, forever and ever. They will go on display as monuments to that one

night when Satan, fornication, and immorality were defeated in their lives. Love came in, forgiveness came in, grace came in, power came in, joy came in, purity came in; and each of them became a new creation—in Christ.

### *Walking His High Road*

“...Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people” (Isaiah 57:14).

In this verse, the Hebrew word *calal* is translated as the verb “to cast.” It means to stop the stumblingblock by opposing it. We are to get on God’s highway that is above Satan’s road. On God’s highway, Satan cannot touch us; he has to flee.

There is a high road to walk. God gives greater grace to the humble and takes us to the even place at the Cross (Psalm 26:12; James 4:6). God’s Spirit, God’s mercy (*epieikes*), God’s grace, and our fellowship with His resurrection power keep us on that higher road.

A widowed mother came to me years ago saying that her sons were becoming involved in a gang. She asked me to invest in them. The youth leader of our church was planning a trip to New York City with fifty kids so I took her

sons with me in my car. We went down to a slum area and saw the alcoholics and addicts, some of whom were once doctors, professional people who now existed only to find the next drink of cheap wine.

I turned to the boys and said, “Do you want to end up like this? Your father is dead, and your mom loves you so much. Would you really want to end like this?”

A week later, I went out to dinner with those boys and drove them to a hill that overlooked a nearby city. There, several of the teens from our church gathered to pray for the people in that city. Afterwards, we went down into the streets to pass out tracts and witness. Back at the church for a prayer meeting, those young people prayed over every seat in the chapel and over the pulpit.

I was with those two boys up in the choir loft as the teenagers prayed below, and said, “I am not going to force you to do anything, but stay here and watch those kids. Do you think they are happy?”

The next Sunday morning these boys, who were reasonably tough, were the first ones to come forward at the salvation invitation. One of them became a leader in our church and now



serves on the foreign mission field with another organization.

The love of God, the mercy of God, and the grace of God brought those boys into a relationship that was personal with Jesus Christ. Glory be to God. Thank Him that the Word of God says that grace and peace are multiplied through the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:2). Thank God that He provides all things according to His mercy. Every single thing we need comes according to His grace for His glory (2 Peter 1:3).

### *The Father of Our Faith*

Abraham failed so many times. He lied to Pharaoh. He had a child with Hagar, the bond-woman. But thank God, Romans 4:16 says that he is the father of our faith. Why? Because justice didn't knock him down and judge him. Grace came in and Abraham got right.

Jacob failed and failed, but Numbers 23:21 tell us that God "hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them."

Thanks be to God, *epieikes* says to us, "I don't want you to judge Jacob. I am going to make

him a trophy. I am going to make him a masterpiece in the Old Testament faith. Don't touch Jacob."

"But he deserves judgment," you may be thinking.

"That's right. He has been chastised, but you cannot do it, because mercy rejoices against judgment."

### *From Beggar to Chosen*

Picture the beggar of Luke 16. He died and the Bible says that the angels carried him to Abraham's bosom. He had been eating crumbs from the rich man's table, the dogs came and licked his sores, and then he died and was taken directly to heaven. I want to see that glorified beggar in heaven. He is a beggar no more. Meanwhile, the rich man (who never acknowledged that poor man's plight) is in hell—not because he was rich, but because he wouldn't receive Christ. The beggar is in a brand-new body that will stay brand-new forever. Jesus will say of him, "He is a trophy of My grace. He is My masterpiece through My love and what I did for him."

Mary Magdalene had eight demons. Jesus healed her and delivered her, and she became a

soul winner and a tremendous woman of God. She loved him so deeply. This woman had been a prostitute who came to Him in Simon the Pharisee's house. He said, "Thy sins are forgiven ....your faith has made you whole" (see Luke 7:48-50). Forever and ever, Mary Magdalene will be a trophy of the grace of God, of the mercy of God, of the forgiveness of God, of the love of God. Matthew 26:13 says that a memorial will be told of her wherever the gospel is preached, because she anointed Jesus with oil before his death and burial.

Peter cursed and denied Jesus when Jesus needed him most. But then Jesus restored Peter without putting him on probation. In John 21:15-19, when Peter had gone back fishing, Jesus confronted him and asked, "Do you love me more than these [fish]?"

"I do," Peter said.

"Feed my lambs," Jesus told him.

"Do you love more than these?" Jesus asked again.

"I do," Peter said.

"Feed My sheep."

"Do you really love me more than these?" Jesus asked him again.

This time Peter was grieved in his heart and

said, “You know that I don’t love you with the right kind of love, but I do love you.”

Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not” (John 21:18).

When Peter grew older, he would gladly die for Christ. Now he is a trophy of God’s grace, the result of what grace had done in him and for him. Peter never earned it—and neither have we. Peter was a product of God’s grace.

### *Putting Away the Past*

Saul of Tarsus witnessed the murders of so many Christians that you would think that he would have had some lingering guilt. But it was Paul who wrote this: “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

Paul didn’t have a past. He couldn’t remem-

ber all those that he had murdered and he didn't mention his past in these phrases. Throughout eternity, God will get the glory for Paul's transformation. He is a trophy of God's grace, a monument to the love of God.

## CONCLUSION

The mercy of God is so good. The grace of God is good. God is a good God. He will give us power over bad habits, power over wrong dispositions and negative attitudes. He is such a good God.

“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand” (Psalm 149:6). The “high praises” speak of our knowledge of the Finished Work and the two-edged sword refers to Bible doctrine. These high praises are in our mouths because we know that we are members of the royal family of Jesus Christ, members of His body, flesh, and bones. We know that we are seated above. Christ is in us, deep in our hearts. We sing high praises because of His *epieikes*—mercy that rejoices against judgment.

True worshipers have no consciousness of sin. They recognize that they are cleansed,

purged and made clean by the precious blood of the Lamb of God. No one has a right to bring up any negative report. If he does, he is on the devil's side. If you accuse a brother for something he did in the past, you are on the devil's side. Those who refuse to relate to the past are on God's side.

*Thank You Lord God that we have the Holy Spirit in us. Jesus Christ is in us, and we are seated above as members of His royal family. What a joy it is to know we are forgiven, our sins are forgotten, and we have power in our prayers.*

*Father, we thank you that we can see ourselves as properly positioned and seated above. Bless us and give us peace, joy, and divine protection, for we are Your trophies of grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.*