

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning
Week 20 (May 11-17, 2014)

Last week we learned that through God's mercy, we **do not** get the eternal death and separation that our sins deserve (Romans 6:23a). This week we will look at passages on **grace**, the close relative of mercy. Through God's **grace**, we **receive** a gift that we do not deserve: salvation through Jesus Christ (Romans 6:23b). Let's rejoice together as we study God's wonderful gift to every believer.

Sunday, May 11 (read Isaiah 26:1-12)

*Though **grace** is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness; (Isaiah 26:10a, emphasis mine)*

The verses of praise that you read in this study will be fulfilled during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. Those who willingly live under the Lordship of Jesus will experience "perfect peace" (v. 3). Jerusalem will finally be safe and free from enemy attacks (v. 1). The people who have survived the Great Tribulation will live righteous lives during the kingdom because Jesus, Himself, lives among them (v. 8-9). Sadly, many children born during that 1000 years will not give glory to God, even though they are enjoying the benefits of His **grace**. Even today, unbelievers experience the **grace** of God, but they do not acknowledge that the Lord has anything to do with it (v. 10). For example, they receive rain on their crops and have good jobs enabling them to feed their families just like true believers do. I pray that you have come to understand the truth of v. 12. Personal pride has no place in the life of a Christian. Praise His wonderful name in your prayer time today!

Monday, May 12 (read John 1:14-17)

*For the law was given through Moses: **grace** and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17, emphasis mine)*

The Old Testament law consists of the Ten Commandments as well as more than six hundred additional rules. The purpose of the law was to reveal the sinfulness of mankind and the need of a Savior (see Galatians 3:24). No one has ever or will ever be saved by keeping the law. By **grace**, however, Jesus offers salvation full and free to anyone who believes in Him and receives Him as his/her personal Savior. Once you have been saved by **grace** through faith (see Ephesians 2:8-9), you begin to grow in knowledge of the truth given to you by God's Holy Spirit. Thank the Lord right now that we live under **grace** and truth and not under the law!

Tuesday, May 13 (read Romans 3:21-26)

*There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His **grace** through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. (Romans 3:22b-24, emphasis mine)*

The Old Testament law and the Prophets predicted the coming of a Messiah to redeem Israel (v. 21). Isaiah even prophesied that the Messiah would reach out to the Gentiles (see Isaiah 42:6-7). Because "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," we all need to be "justified freely by His **grace** through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." The sacrifice of Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Old Testament. God's **justice** required Him to punish sin, but His **grace** provided the only sacrifice acceptable to a holy God, His only Son. In His words, he did this "so as to be just **and** the one who justifies the man who has faith in Jesus" (v. 25-26). Can you bow before Him and say, "I love you, Father?"

Wednesday, May 14 (read Romans 4:13-17)

*Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by **grace** and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. (Romans 4:16, emphasis mine)*

Paul argues that the law did not save Abraham or any of His offspring (the Jews). He emphasizes that salvation comes by faith alone because no one has ever kept the entire law (v. 13-15). Praise God because “Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes” (Romans 10:4) and “where there is no law there is no transgression” (v. 15). The **grace** that brings this wonderful promise to us is guaranteed both to Jews and Gentiles who receive Jesus for full payment for their sins (v. 16). If you have learned to believe and trust in His promises, “the God who gives life to the dead” will allow you to call “things that are not as though they were” (v. 17). This means you can live as though you have **already** received the things promised to you. Begin today to claim the wonderful promises of God!

Thursday, May 15 (read Romans 5:1-5)

*Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this **grace** in which we now stand. (Romans 5:1-2a, emphasis mine)*

If we are to truly understand and enjoy the **peace** of God, we must first be fully aware that we are saved by His **grace** and kept forever by His **grace**. Because of this **grace**, we are **justified** which means, **just as if I'd** never sinned. We are presented “holy and blameless in His sight” (Ephesians 1:4). Since the Holy Spirit lives in each believer, we have gained constant access to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (v. 1-2). Many Christians are already suffering for their faith, but this text teaches that, “suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope” (v. 3-4). Hope really means **assurance** in the biblical use of the word, so we will never be disappointed because we are saved by God's **grace** and kept forever by God's **grace** (v. 5). Praise His holy Name!

Friday, May 16 (read Romans 5:12-17)

*But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's **grace** and the gift that came by the **grace** of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! (Romans 5:15, emphasis mine)*

Paul is discussing the door of sin that Adam first opened and all of us since have followed (v. 12-14). Adam's sin introduced death into the world because “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). By contrast, Jesus brings new life into the world through His death on Calvary. Death followed one man's (Adam's) sin, but new life is offered to all because of one Man's (Jesus') death and resurrection (v. 15-16). This wonderful gift comes by God's **grace**, just like all other blessings from the Lord. We could never deserve the price Jesus paid to purchase our souls from Satan. We will soon reign with Him in righteousness (v. 17) because He paid the debt He did not owe since we owed a debt we could not pay.

Saturday, May 17 (Romans 5:18-21)

*The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, **grace** increased all the more, . . . (Romans 5:20, emphasis mine)*

Adam disobeyed God and brought condemnation to the world, whereas Jesus obeyed and brought new life to the fallen world (v. 18-19). God gave Adam and Eve only one commandment (Genesis 2:16-17), but that was enough to arouse their sinful curiosity and introduce sin into the perfect Garden of Eden. Later, the Lord added more than 600 commands and/or rules so that we would be overwhelmed by our inability to keep the law. That's where His **grace** comes in! As our knowledge of our personal sins grows, so does His **grace** grow to cover every misdeed (v. 20-21)! I hope you are becoming more aware of His marvelous **grace**. We will continue this study in next week's devotions.