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A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF *Grace*

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HOW TO RECEIVE GOD'S BLESSINGS: A Clear Understanding of Grace

Strong, sweet, godly—my wife's grandfather was one of the finest gentlemen I have ever known.

He belonged to a generation that was determined to pay its own way. He'd give you everything he had, but you couldn't give him anything.

Of course it's an admirable thing for people to want to pull their own load; but the fact is, our lives aren't complete until we learn how to receive. And that was something Pop never learned.

I remember when I discovered how true that was. He had an old, beat-up watch that he'd been wearing for years. One day the watchband broke, so he ran a paperclip through the band, bent the paper clip over the top of the watch, and wore it that way.

When I saw that paper clip holding his watchband together, I thought, A fine gentleman and man of God shouldn't be wearing an old, broken watch like that! So I bought him a new watch. I didn't pay a lot of money for it, but I saw it, liked it and decided to buy it. When Christmas came, I gave the watch to him as a gift.

Two or three months later we were back over at his place and I noticed that Pop wasn't wearing his new watch. He was wearing that same old, broken watch.

I said, "Pop, where's your new watch?"

"Oh, I don't wear that," he said.

"Is there something wrong with it? If that's the case, I'll get you another watch."

"Oh, no, no. It's a fine watch. It's too fine. That watch is too nice for me." He was serious. He simply couldn't receive my gift.

I remember feeling as if a door had slammed in my face. I had given Pop that watch and wanted to see him wear it. Rather than the joy of being a blessing to someone I cared about, I had an empty feeling. He was left without the blessing of wearing a new watch.

ROBBED BY FALSE HUMILITY

At that moment, The LORD spoke to me. Do you see how that makes you feel? It does the same thing to Me. Of course, you know that he's saying these things out of humility, don't you?

I said, Yes, Sir, I know he is.

But do you realize that it isn't true humility? The LORD continued. All it did was grieve your heart. Suddenly, I had a clear picture of how I had often treated The LORD.

Gloria's grandfather lived into his mid-nineties. He was a good man, but there wasn't any way he'd let anyone help him, including God. Because of that, his life fell short of what it could have been in God. False humility kept him from receiving.

We have the tendency to do the same thing Gloria's grandfather did. Every day, God's grace is extended to us, but often a sense of false humility keeps us from receiving. We don't have confidence in the Giver so we turn away from His gifts.

You are Mine. Come and be blessed by Me, The LORD says.

"Oh, God," we reply, "I might take a little bit of Your provision, just enough to get by, but I don't think that it

would be right for me to receive too many blessings from You."
False humility.

How can we avoid grieving God in this way? We must learn that we walk in a great, eternal covenant that's been formed between the Son and the Father. "Grace and peace," they speak to us. "Power and prosperity."

That's why we need to wake up, get a clear concept of the grace of God, and take our place in it.

THE DEFINITION OF GRACE

In the past, grace has been defined in religious circles as the “undeserved favor and mercy of God.” That definition is accurate as far as it goes, but grace is more than that.

First of all, grace is a gift—totally, completely and absolutely. You couldn’t earn it if you tried. In fact, if you received grace because of something that you’d done, it wouldn’t be grace. It would be a paid debt—a payment rightfully earned.

Grace is the gift that results from God’s accounting, or crediting, to you the same judgment, righteousness and favor He accounts to Jesus Christ.

The grace of God is also an ongoing process based on the never-changing truth that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). If He ever did anything for any human being, then He will do the same thing for all other people; and He will do it upon request. That’s what makes it grace.

From the moment of Adam’s creation in the Garden of Eden until this very day, everything God has done for us has been based on the fact that He is no respecter of persons.

Jesus basically said, “*Father, show them that You love them as much as You love Me*” (John 17:23). That’s an amazing statement, but it’s true.

But Brother Copeland, you may be thinking, I know God loves me, but I’m not sure I’m able to see myself being treated just like Jesus!

If that’s the case, it’s because you haven’t a clear revelation of what it means to be made “righteous.” Understanding righteousness is a major key to walking in the grace to receive from God.

We find a vital key to operating in the grace to receive in Romans 4:13: “*For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.*”

That’s an important verse.

God didn’t credit righteousness to Abraham because of Abraham’s good works. God made some promises to Abraham and, according to Romans 4:3, Abraham believed God. It was Abraham’s faith in God that was credited, or accounted, to him for righteousness. From then on, God treated him as if he had never sinned, which was God’s intent all along.

THE SACRIFICIAL WORK OF JESUS

John 3:16 makes it clear. God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son so those who “believe on Him” could experience zoe life, or life as God has it. Why was Jesus willing to be sent? Because He wanted to please His Father (John 8:29).

Jesus, while still a man, obediently walked out that covenant which had been made with Abraham, and fulfilled it without sin. God didn't have to credit anything to Him because He did all things perfectly and uprightly before God.

But then He became sin, not through disobedience, but by sacrifice of Himself: “*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Jesus lived as our example and died as our substitute. That was God's purpose in sending Him all along.

He bore the burden of our sickness, disease and poverty. He bore every jot and tittle of the curse, completely, totally, absolutely, from start to finish, all the way from heaven to hell (Isaiah 53).

The Bible says the redemptive work of Jesus was so far-reaching that His blood even cleansed the heavenly utensils of worship, which means that He dealt with things that we've never even seen, praise God!

As Jesus bore all that sin, He was judged. Before God raised Him from the dead, He was in the middle of hell, paying the price for sins that He didn't commit—yours and mine.

When Jesus marched out of hell, holding the keys to death, hell and the grave, He presented Himself before God in the heavenly Holy of Holies; and God judged Him to be spotless, holy and righteous (Revelation 1:18; Hebrews 9:13-14).

We need to understand that Jesus didn't just go into the Holy of Holies and stand there on our behalf. He opened the way for us!

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an 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 10:19-22).

By virtue of the blood of Jesus, we have the right to go into the Holy of Holies after Him and receive everything that He received. Everything!

Revelation 3:21 even tells us that we sit with Him on His throne as He sits beside His Father. We've had a tendency to stagger at this promise. We've never plumbed the depths of it and haven't had the

courage to walk in the little bit of it that we know.

It's no wonder we haven't had the grace to receive from God. But that is changing now.

LET GOD BLESS YOU

It should be starting to become apparent now—your ability to operate in the grace to receive from God is linked to your understanding of your righteousness before Him—a righteousness purchased for you by Jesus' sacrificial death.

In fact, the verse immediately following the one we examined a moment ago, 2 Corinthians 5:21, which declared that we become the righteousness of God, says this: *"We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain"* (2 Corinthians 6:1).

Do you see the connection? In one verse The WORD declares that we have become the very righteousness of God. In the very next verse we're warned not to receive "the grace of God in vain." That King James term "in vain" simply means "uselessly, or to no effect."

The WORD is clear. Failing to understand that you stand before God completely righteous—robed in the purity and authority of Jesus Himself—will cause you to nullify the operation of God's grace in your life.

God wants to treat you as if you've never sinned. He wants to treat you like you are the smartest, holiest, and most beautiful thing that ever existed.

All this time, He's been trying to treat us this way, and yet we wouldn't allow it. Like Gloria's grandfather, we haven't learned how to receive. When God has tried to bless us, we've said, "I'm just an old sinner, saved by grace. I don't deserve that."

Well, you're either an old sinner, or you're saved by grace. You can't be both, and you need to make up your mind which one you want to be. If you are saved by grace, then you need to quit calling yourself an old sinner and start believing in the fullness of God's saving grace.

When you refuse to receive the gifts that God is trying to bestow on you, you insult the blood of Jesus and reject the grace of God. You need to make up your mind that you're not going to do that anymore!

I want to remind you that God is no respecter of persons. Everything that He has ever done for Jesus, He will do for you. Everything He has ever given Jesus, He will give to you. Remember: *"If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"* (Romans 8:31-32).

We are joint heirs with Jesus and His Anointing. We are one spirit with Him. Everything that Jesus has is ours, and we access these blessings by faith. If we say, "I believe," grace says, "You can have it all!"

THE EXERCISE OF FAITH

Of course, there's no such thing as grace without faith. The grace is there, but it takes faith to activate it in your life. Grace and faith run together, and both must be present in a human life for abundance and prosperity to come. As Romans 4:16 says: *"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed...."*

The grace to inherit the promises of God depends entirely on faith. It has to be settled in our spirits and minds before it can work in our lives.

When Jesus was raised from the dead and stood before God in the Holy of Holies, He was incorruptible and immortal, untouchable by sin or death. Our covenant, which we call the "New Testament," was formed between Almighty God and this Immortal Man, Jesus. When we place our trust in Jesus, we tap into His side of the covenant.

This covenant is immovable, unbreakable and incorruptible. You and I can violate it, but God and Jesus can't.

Grace and peace are the terms of the covenant. "Grace and peace from God the Father and from His Son, Jesus of Nazareth," the Bible says, over and over again. Grace gave birth to the covenant, and peace is its guarantee. It is our access to wholeness and prosperity.

I don't want to count every sin that's been laid to you, God is saying to us. If you'll just begin to have faith in what I say, I'll treat you like you were Jesus. I'll treat you like you never sinned.

The thing that I am about to say is hard to teach because we tend to pull away from it, but it is part of what God is telling us. He's saying, I'll treat you like you went to the Cross and paid for it yourself. On earth, it is written that Jesus did that, but heaven has it written that you did it. In the Lamb's Book of Life, it is credited to you.

ABOUNDING IN EVERY FAITH

In 2 Corinthians 8:7, we are told to “abound in every faith.” We are encouraged to abound in every utterance and all the knowledge of God. So, has the Church abounded in “every” faith? I don’t think so.

We’ve abounded in the grace of salvation and in the assurance that we are going to heaven. We haven’t doubted that. We’ve abounded in the grace of faith, knowledge, utterance, diligence and love.

In 2 Corinthians 8:9, the Bible says that Jesus, who was very rich, for our sakes became poor so that we, through His poverty, might become rich. He did it so that we would be abundantly supplied.

In this hour, God is urging us to abound in this grace, too. Jesus has given us everything heaven has to offer, and He wants us to step into our wealthy place in Him (Psalm 66:12).

Sadly, when most Christians hear that news, they respond as Pop did. “I can’t wear that. It’s too nice for me.” Don’t be guilty of grieving God’s heart in this way.

Receive God’s promise of abundance by faith so that you might abound in His grace.

God loves it when you find out what is yours. Look deeply into The WORD and get a clear revelation that you are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. Then start walking in the grace to receive.

FAITH ACTIVITIES

Speak this truth aloud and receive the grace of God!

I am a receiver. The gifts God has given me, I receive. I refuse fear. I refuse doubt and unbelief. I believe that I receive God's grace that was poured out on Jesus. God is giving it to me, and I take it!

Watch and Listen

Make the decision to look for God's grace at least once each day.
How have you seen His grace today?

Speak the Promises

Ask God to open your eyes to His gifts that come to you day-by-day. Continue to search God's WORD for promises that tell of His grace. Here are some to get you started.

- **I believe that I am saved by the undeserved grace of The LORD Jesus (from Acts 15:11).**
- **God saved me by His grace when I believed. I don't take credit for this; it is a gift from God (from Ephesians 2:8).**
- **Yet God freely and graciously declares that I am righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when He freed me from the penalty for my sins (from Romans 3:24).**
- **Sin is no longer my master. Instead, I live in the freedom of God's grace (from Romans 6:14).**

We look forward to hearing about the gifts of grace God gives you. Please send them to us by visiting kcm.org/testify.

We're Here For You!

Your growth in God's WORD and victory in Jesus are at the very center of our hearts. In every way God has equipped us, we will help you deal with the issues facing you, so you can be the victorious overcomer He has planned for you to be.

The mission of Kenneth Copeland Ministries is about all of us growing and going together. Our prayer is that you will take full advantage of all The LORD has given us to share with you.

Wherever you are in the world, you can watch the Believer's Voice of Victory broadcast on television (check your local listings), the Internet at kcm.org or on our digital Roku channel.

Our website, kcm.org, gives you access to every resource we've developed for your victory. And, you can find contact information for our international offices in Africa, Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe, Ukraine and our headquarters in the United States.

Each office is staffed with devoted men and women, ready to serve and pray with you. You can contact the worldwide office nearest you for assistance, and you can call us for prayer at our U.S. number, +1-817-852-6000, 24 hours every day!

We encourage you to connect with us often and let us be part of your everyday walk of faith!

Jesus Is LORD!

Kenneth and Gloria Copeland