

## DEFENDERS OF GRACE

**Request:** “I hear you say that one of the doctrines that you constantly defend is grace. Could you do a study on grace and what you mean by defending it?”

Both the Hebrew word (chen) and Greek word (charis) are interpreted as “favor freely given without claim or expectation of return” and “the unmerited favor of God” in theology.

“The idea of grace more than any other idea binds the two testaments, Old and New together into a complete work, for the Bible is the story of the saving work of God, that is, of the grace of God.” (Theology Word Book of the Bible, pg.101)

We will begin by examining our lesson text by the following three homiletical points.

- Different gospel (Acts 15:1-4; Gal.1:6-7)
- Divisive gospel (Acts 15:2, 5; Gal.2:4-6; Rom.4:2-5)
- Defenders of gospel (Acts 15:2, 22-25; Gal.1:10; 2:16)

**This lesson will study five aspects of the importance of being Defenders of Grace.**

### **1. Grace depends completely upon the character, plan, and work of God and never upon the character, plan, or work of man.**

“And after you have suffered for a while, **the God of all grace**, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.” (1 Pet.5:10)

“Grace proceeds entirely from within God and is no way conditioned by anything in the object of His favor.” (I.S.B.E, pg.129)

Therefore grace is not conditioned by anything in the object and always glorifies God. “But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace.” (Rom.11:6)

Grace is God’s freedom to be gracious towards man without jeopardizing His character because of the gospel of Jesus Christ – “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!” (2 Cor.9:15)

### **2. It is important to have a simple definition of God’s grace:**

“Grace is all that God is free to do for man on the basis of the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Cor.15:3-4; Rom.1:16; Eph.2:8-9).”

“Who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, **but according to His own purpose and grace** which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.” (2 Tim.1:9; Rom.5:1-2)

“But we see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, **that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.**” (Heb.2:9)

**3. There are six categories of God's grace that are important to the church age believer's life.**

- **Saving grace** (Acts 13:43; 15:11; Rom.4:16; 5:15-17; Eph.2:8-9)  
“For the **grace** of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men.”(Titus 2:11; 3:7)
- **Living grace** (2 Cor.12:9- 10; Phil.4:19; Heb.4:15-16)  
“My **grace** is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” (2 Cor.12:9a)
- **Spiritual grace gifted ministry** (1 Pet.4:10-11; Eph.4:7-8; Rom.12:3, 6)  
“As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold **grace** of God.” (1 Pet.4:10)
- **Spiritual growth grace** (2 Pet.3:18; Heb.5:11-14; 13:9; 1 Pet.2:2)  
“But grow in the **grace** and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Pet.3:18a)
- **Dying grace** (2 Pet.1:13-15; Phil.1:20-23; 2 Tim.4:7-8)  
“As sin reigned in death, even so **grace** might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom.5:21)
- **Surpassing grace** (Eph.2:5-7; 1 Pet.1:13; 2 Pet.1:11)  
“In order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His **grace** in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.” (Eph.2:7)

**Every believer is the total product of God's grace:** “But by the **grace** of God I am what I am, and His grace towards me did not prove vain; but I have labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.” (1 Cor.15:10)

**4. Therefore, God's grace opposes all forms of human effort or energy of the flesh to achieve, salvation, spiritual, or divine good (Rom.4:14-16; Gal.2:16).**

Grace is on the basis of gift and not reward or wages (Rom.4:4-5; 5:15; Eph.2:8-9). “I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Cor.1:4)

This means that the unsaved is unable to work or merit himself out of the slave market of AOS (Rom.2:10-28). “Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.” (Rom.3:23)

This means that the saved is unable to work or merit himself into spirituality or divine good (Gal.5:16-17; 2 Pet.3:18).

“Now to the one who works, his wages is not reckoned as a favor (grace), but as what is due (debt). But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.” (Rom.4:4-5)

“Grace rules out all human merit. Grace perfects for ever the saved one in the sight of God because of the saved one's position in Christ.” (Unger, pg.430; 2 Cor.5:17)

**“An act done with any expectation of return from the object on which it is wrought or one on which is meted out as a matter of justice recompense, or reward, is not an act of grace.”**

(Synonyms of OT, pg.108)

This can be illustrated by the two prodigal sons of the parable of Luke (Lk.15:15-24, 28-30).