

# STRONG IN GRACE

July 2, 2017 | Pastor Randy Remington

Grace, for many, has been reduced to a short definition; but there is so much more. As we start our study this week with Hebrews 12:15, we will all be the first to admit we don't know everything this verse contains. Nevertheless, as we read it, notice the urgency and emphatic message it delivers

***"See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many." Hebrews 12:15***

"Grace is much greater than is suggested in the common definition of 'unmerited favor.' Grace is a word that expresses a radical view of life and of relationship with God"

When we end up with a graceless life we will become bitter ("a bitter root") toward others and God. The writer of Hebrews is saying; "don't miss this", "don't let this one get by you". This has to be kept at the forefront, but the bottom line is it's very difficult to describe and define;

"Grace is practically unexplainable, but it is experiential"

Grace, especially in the gospels, are best seen in stories as life unfolds. We see Grace in the story of the "woman caught in adultery", in the parable of the "prodigal son". In these stories, and many more, we see Grace in action. Jesus never said the word 'grace', but He lived it every day, in fact He was the perfect balance of Grace and Truth. As we read, we begin to wonder if He did it for them, He can do it for me/us.

Grace > \_\_\_\_\_

So we use a common mathematical formula for "greater than". Think about your own life. What is it for you in your life? What keeps you up at night? Fill in the blank, whatever it is for you, Grace is greater!

Luke 7 records the story of a woman who washed the feet of Jesus with perfume and her hair. She had violated the cultural rules by even being there, let alone do what she did in the Pharisee's home. But Jesus saw and spoke toward the Grace in her life when He said:

***"Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little." Luke 7:47***

## 1. Grace > Sin and Shame

***"When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned. Yes, people sinned even before the law was given. But it was not counted as sin because there was not yet any law to break. Still, everyone died—from the time of Adam to the time of Moses—even those who did not disobey an explicit commandment of God, as Adam did. Now Adam is a symbol, a representation of Christ, who was yet to come. But there is a great difference between Adam's sin and God's gracious gift. For the sin of this one man, Adam, brought death to many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of forgiveness to many through this other man, Jesus Christ." Romans 5:12-15 NLT***

***"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast" Ephesians 2:8-9***

Grace awaits us at the front door and entry into his family and his Church. Once we are in, the church will historically surprise us with a "works based" emphasis. It will be a demand to "clean up your act"; but in truth it is a "Grace work" in our lives that brings real change.

***"For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. And we are instructed ("teaches us") to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness, and devotion to God." Titus 2:11-12***

God knew we would be a lifelong project. "Grace teaches us" is present tense truth and ongoing.

Jesus invites us in, and what brought us in will sustain us and change us...a result of his Grace.

## 2. GRACE > WEAKNESS

*WBut he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."  
2 Corinthians 12:9*

"When I say, "I cannot", God says "I can." To grow in grace is to learn more and more to surrender to God"

Grace has come to us and will be shown through us. Through our weaknesses and the most difficult and challenging of situations.

## 3. GRACE > CIRCUMSTANCES

*"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:18*

*"You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 2:1*

Many times we think or say "If I had..." "If only this was different..." "If only this would change..."

God's Grace is greater than any of our circumstances. Don't focus on things in your life, situations or yourself:

"Grace makes us strong because it takes the attention off of ourselves and puts it on Jesus...it puts Christ in my place. Grace makes me see my weaknesses and depend on Christ for strength. This includes the resources to do whatever God asks me to do"

These simple three words will help us remember what we've studied today;

Need >>> strength

Supply >>> grace

Source >>> Jesus Christ

"There is strength in grace; there is grace in Christ"

So in conclusion, what did you put in the blank line at the beginning of our study?  
Because Grace is greater than anything we can experience in this life;

Grace >

- My addiction
- My pride
- An affair
- An abortion
- Abuse
- A Divorce
- A fear of dying
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Damage I've done to my marriage
- A bully at school

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Grace in the scriptures, holds a very important place in our relation with God and with others. In this lesson we will learn that it is much more than the simple definition of "unmerited favor". Without any embarrassment, what has been your understand of "Grace" and what does this statement mean to you; "Grace is a word that expresses a radical view of life and of relationship with God"
2. We can try to define Grace, but as Randy showed us that (especially in the gospel's) Grace is best seen in stories, as life unfolds. Can you think of biblical stories showing us God's Grace in action or in your experience? This quote helps us wrap our thinking around this truth; "Grace is practically unexplainable, but it is experiential"
3. It is overwhelming to think about the Grace we received for our salvation. But also for our lives when we fail, come up short or even hurt people. But we also discussed the need to be people who allow His Grace to flow through us towards people who have offended or hurt us, in our relationships, our vocations, our neighborhoods, etc. Discuss times, in your life, when you allowed His Grace to flow through you, even to a person who did you wrong or hurt you.
4. Refer to your notes concerning how Grace > your "sin and shame". Discuss Grace's role not only for entry into God's family but how; "Grace teaches us". We learned that thus word is present tense truth, but is also ongoing. Also, discuss how "Jesus invites us in, and what brought us in, will sustain us and change us...a result of his Grace".
5. The next point is that "Grace > our weaknesses".  
What does this statement say to you; "When I say, "I cannot" God say's "I can."  
To grow in grace is to learn more and more to surrender to God"?
6. Lastly, "Grace > my Circumstances". Beginning on page 3 of your notes; what sticks out to you in this area?  
Also at the beginning of our lesson we had a mathematical formula; Grace > \_\_\_\_\_.  
So to end our lesson today, take time to pray and fill in the blank. What in your life do you need to see on this line?  
Make sure you take time to pray for one another as we learn to walk in Grace.