

**Called by Grace**

The Word “GRACE” is translated from the Greek word “*Charis”* meaning “*Gift*”.

The Biblical definition of the word Grace is: **“Unmerited favor”, meaning; a gift that you’ve not earned.**

**GALATIANS**

* Letter to Galatians (49AD)
* This is a circular letter intended to be passed around to the group of churches in Galatia (Antioch, Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe – all those that he planted and visited in middle Acts (14-16).
* This region is in modern day Turkey (*just in time for Thanksgiving* : )
* The Galatians churches are mixed between Jews and Gentiles.
* The Gentiles are just beginning to learn about the law, and how Jesus fulfilled it.
* The Jews are having a hard time not reverting back to the law.

**Ephesians 2:8** “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God”

**Salvation** - How are you made right with God, a righteousness that results in justification and eternal life.

**It Is NOT by WORKS! Something you do or don’t do.**

**It IS by GRACE? Something He did for us.**

**GRACE = GIFT**

**Gal. 1:15** “God, who set me apart from my mother’s womb and called me by his grace”

**Romans 12:6** “We have different gifts (Charisma) , according to the grace (Charis) given to each of us”

We are all given gifts [Charisma - special abilities],

according to the grace [Charis -undeserved favor]

 given to each of us.

**Galatians 1:11-24, 2:1-10**

**11**I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. **12**I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

**13**For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. **14**I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. **15**But when God, who set me apart from my mother’s womb and called me by his grace, was pleased

**16**to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being. **17**I did not go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went into Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus.

**18**Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas (Peter) and stayed with him fifteen days. **19**I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord’s brother. **20**I assure you before God that what I am writing you is no lie.

**21**Then I went to Syria and Cilicia. **22**I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. **23**They only heard the report: “The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.” **24**And they praised God because of me.

**2:1-10**Then after fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also. **2**I went in response to a revelation and, meeting privately with those esteemed as leaders, I presented to them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. I wanted to be sure I was not running and had not been running my race in vain.

**3**Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek. **4**This matter arose because some false believers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. **5**We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you.

**6**As for those who were held in high esteem—whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not show favoritism—they added nothing to my message. **7**On the contrary, they recognized that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised.

**8**For God, who was at work in Peter as an apostle to the circumcised, was also at work in me as an apostle to the Gentiles. **9**James, Cephas (Peter) and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. **10**All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I had been eager to do all along.”

* **Conversion** – When he encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9)
* **Calling** – “Called by Grace” (Gal. 1)
* **Commissioning** - Sent out by the Apostles (Gal.2)

**CALLING:**

**Gal. 1:15** “God, who set me apart from my mother’s womb and called me by his grace”

**Anointing before appointing**

**COMMISSIONING:**

**Gal.2:9** “James, Cephas (Peter) and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the *grace* given to me.”

**Gal. 1:11** “I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. **12**I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.”

When Jesus saves us and fills us with His Holy Spirit he also empowers us with special giftings to lead others to him.

His desire is for you to use those gifts, not stuff them.

The enemy tries to deceive us into thinking that we are inadequate, or our gifts are inadequate. He tried to invalidate us so he can discourage us, because he knows how powerful we can be.

A sad thing that I’ve observed is that new Christians seem to evangelize more, witness more and bring more people to the Lord than older Christians. Why is that?

I think it’s because as we get more involved in church culture, we start to view these things as sanctioned ministries, instead of free-flowing grace. We look to preachers and ministers who have been “trained and ordained” to be the ones that are set apart to do things, not common Christians.

This is simply not true.

Paul tells the *ordinary, common* Christians in the Roman church…

**Romans 12:4-8** “For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, **5**so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. **6**We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with yourfaith; **7**if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; **8**if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.”

Once the early churches understood this, they thrived. They did not just wait for the apostles to come around and do these things, THEY ALL did them.

Which of these is YOUR gift?

Prophesy – Speaking for the Word of God

Serving – Making things happen and come together

Teaching – Clarifying Truth

Encouraging – Inspiring Others

Giving – Finding resources to advance the things of God.

Leading – Organizing and implementing things

Mercy – Seeking out and coming alongside people who need comfort and compassion.

For *our* church to thrive, it will mean that each of us finds their spiritual gift, offers it to the Lord and goes forth using it in the power of the Holy Spirit within you.

If God has “called you by Grace”, it means he’s given you free gifts to use freely.

*Don’t let it become COMPLICATED.*

* Jesus Says: “*Freely you have received; freely give*.” (Mark 10:8)
* Paul Says concerning the “gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church.” (1 Cor 14:12)
* Should you pursue training? *Yes.*
* Should you learn to develop your gift to be more effective. *Yes*.
* Should some of you who are called to ministry pursue Consecration or Ordination. *Absolutely.*
* Should we wait to use our gifts until we complete all these things? *Absolutely Not!*

Closing:

**1st Peter 4:10-11**

**“**Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. **11**If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen!”