

ULC Sermon Study Resource

Basic // What is Grace?

Pastor Marcus

September 18, 2022

Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: What's the best meal you've had recently?

Reading: Ephesians 2:1-10

Outline:

- I. Our Situation
 - A. Paul reminds us of our enslavement to sin and how *no one* is able to save themselves from our sinful situation. *Everyone* is subject to this dire situation.
 - B. Under this domination of sin, gentiles are not pushed to the margins, and Jews are not given special status. No matter what we do, whether that be through moralism or other means, we cannot save ourselves. However, sin often deceives us into thinking that we can save ourselves.
Q: Do you ever fall into "saving yourself" from sin? How does this usually happen?
- II. Our Salvation
 - A. God sees our sinful situation and delivers us from it through divine intervention. God is rich in mercy and love, which he showed by sending His son for us.
 - B. Although we should remember that the grace God offers to us is undeserved, that doesn't mean it was given begrudgingly. Jesus went to the cross with joy out of love for us. God's love means we can be free to fail and that His love doesn't depend on our perfection.
Q: Do you ever fall into using the idea of God's grace to over-emphasize our sinfulness and thereby harm our self-worth? How can you avoid doing so?
- III. Our Strength
 - A. Now that we have received God's grace, our works no longer have to be intended solely to please God, but instead they can just be good. God's grace makes our good works gifts from Him.
 - B. Our lives are completely covered in grace, which means every right or wrong moment in our lives is covered by grace. In our failings, God's grace wipes them away. In our success, God's grace is the source. No matter where we are in life, our only hope is God's grace.
Q: What are some times in your life where God's grace has been most evident?

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) How does God's grace empower us to live out the Gospel?
- 2) How can we balance thinking of God's grace as an undeserved gift while also valuing our self-worth?
- 3) Do you ever find yourself making your motivation for actions solely to please God out of necessity? How do you/can you remedy that thinking?
- 4) In what ways do you see others trying to "save themselves" from their sin? What is the result of these efforts?

Suggestions for further study:

- Colossians 3:1-4 Q: How do these verses relate to our change in reasoning for good works under God's grace?
- Titus 3:4-7 Q: How do these verses help remind us of our self-worth under God's grace?

Closing Prayer:

God, the grace you freely and willingly give us, and for your richness in love. We ask that you not only help remind us of our self-worth in you, but also remind us that our entire lives are covered by grace. Please empower us to live out the gospel faithfully so that you may continue to make us Your new creations. Amen.