

HWMR: ONE ACCORD AND CRUCIAL ASPECTS OF THE BOOK OF ACTS
(Week 6)

Scripture Reading: John 1:14, 16-17; Acts 4:33; 11:23; 13:43; 14:3, 26; 15:11, 40; 20:32

Grace in Acts

- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), **full of grace and reality**.
- John 1:16 For of His fullness we have all received, and **grace upon grace**.
- John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; **grace and reality came through Jesus Christ**.
- Acts 4:33 And with great power the apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and **great grace was upon them all**.
- Acts 11:23 Who, when he arrived and saw the **grace of God**, rejoiced and encouraged them all to **remain** with the Lord with purpose of heart;
- Acts 13:43 And when the synagogue gathering had been dismissed, many of the Jews and the devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who spoke to them and urged them to **continue in the grace of God**.
- Acts 14:3 Therefore they spent a considerable amount of time **speaking with boldness** in the Lord, who testified to the **word of His grace** by granting signs and wonders to be done through their hands.
- Acts 14:26 And from there they sailed away to Antioch, where they had been **commended to the grace of God** for the work which they fulfilled.
- Acts 15:11 But we believe that **through the grace of the Lord Jesus** we are **saved** in the same way also as they are.
- Acts 15:40 But Paul chose Silas and went out, having been **commended to the grace of the Lord** by the brothers.
- Acts 20:32 And now I commit you to God and to the **word of His grace**, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who have been sanctified.

Day 1

- Ephesians 2:7** - That He might display in the ages to come the **surpassing riches of His grace** in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
- 1 Corinthians 15:10** - But by the **grace of God** I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the **grace of God which is with me**.

- I. We need to know, experience, and enjoy the grace of God—Eph. 2:7; 1 Cor. 15:10:**
- A. The **grace of God** is a matter of tremendous significance.
 - B. According to the New Testament, **grace** is actually **what God is to us for our enjoyment**—John 1:16-17; 2 Cor. 12:9.
 - C. The New Testament reveals that grace is mainly not the work God does for us; **grace is the Triune God Himself** dispensed into our being and **experienced as our enjoyment**.
 - D. Grace came **through Jesus Christ** (John 1:17); this indicates that **grace is a person**.
 - E. The personification of **grace is God Himself**; Paul realized this when he said, “Not I but the grace of God which is with me”—1 Cor. 15:10.

- F. When **God is enjoyed by us**, that is grace.
- G. **Grace is God in His Son Jesus Christ** to be our portion so that **we may enjoy** all that He is.
- H. Grace is not merely **Christ Himself**; it is also Christ **moving**, Christ **working**, Christ **reigning**, Christ **convincing**, Christ **subduing**, Christ **saving**, and Christ **uplifting**.
- I. There are different **aspects of grace**:
 1. **Great** grace—Acts 4:33.
 2. **Visible** grace—11:23.
 3. Grace **saving** us—Eph. 2:5; Titus 2:11; 2 Tim. 1:9.
 4. Grace **empowering** us—2:1.
 5. Grace **imparted**—Gal. 2:9.
 6. The **real** grace—John 1:14, 16-17.
 7. Commended to the **grace of God**—Acts 14:26.
 8. Grace to **function**—Eph. 3:8.
 9. Grace for **timely help**—Heb. 4:16.
 10. **Abounding, reigning** grace—Rom. 5:2, 15, 20-21.
 11. **Justified** by His grace—3:24.
 12. How to **receive** grace—Lam. 3:55.
 13. **Gifts** according to the grace—Rom. 12:6.
 14. **Sufficient** grace—2 Cor. 12:9.
 15. The **grace of the Lord Jesus Christ**—13:14.
 16. Grace **with our spirit**—Gal. 6:18; 1 Cor. 16:23; 2 Tim. 4:22.
 17. “The grace of the Lord Jesus be **with all the saints**. Amen”—Rev. 22:21.

Ephesians 2:7 Paul indicates that God will “*display in the ages which are coming the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*” To **display** the riches of God’s grace is to **exhibit** them to the whole universe. The **riches of God’s grace surpass every limit**, for they are the riches of **God Himself** for our enjoyment. The riches of God’s grace will be **publicly displayed for eternity**.

In **Ephesians 2:8** Paul goes on to say that we are **saved by grace**. In Ephesians grace denotes God dispensed into us. Therefore, to be saved by grace means **to be saved by God dispensed into us in Christ**. Most Christians, however, regard grace as a thing, not as a person. To them, grace is merely a gift freely given. According to this concept of grace, we were sinners who did not deserve God’s salvation, but God saved us freely by giving us His unmerited favor. This, however, is a superficial understanding of what it means to be saved by grace. Ephesians reveals that **saving grace is God Himself in Christ wrought into our being**. Hence, to be saved by grace actually means to be saved by the dispensing of the Triune God into us.

According to Ephesians, salvation is the **transmission of God into us as grace**. It was not a simple matter for God to be transmitted into us as grace. It was **necessary for Him to be processed** through incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. By being processed in this way, He is now able to transmit Himself into us. When the processed God is transmitted into us, He becomes saving grace to us in our experience. This grace is not only **amazing grace**; it is **abounding grace**. Grace is the processed God transmitted into our being.

If you read Ephesians 1 and 2 with much prayer, you will see that **God processed and transmitted** into our being is the saving grace and the abounding grace. We have been saved by the transmission of this processed God. In His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus, God has saved us by His grace. In the ages to come—in the millennium and eternity—God will display this grace publicly to the whole universe.

In 1 Corinthians 15:10 Paul speaks three times concerning grace. Twice he speaks of the grace of God, and once, of “His grace.” In this verse **grace is the Triune God becoming life and everything to us**. It was by this grace that Saul of Tarsus, the foremost of sinners, became the foremost apostle, laboring more abundantly than all the apostles.

First Peter 4:10 speaks of the **varied grace of God**: “*Each one according as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God.*” The varied grace of God is the **rich supply of life**, which is the **Triune God ministered to us in many aspects**. As good stewards, by the gift we have received we should minister to the church and to the saints such grace, not mere doctrine.

In **1 Peter 5:10** we have a word concerning “the God of all grace.” In this verse “all grace” refers to the riches of the bountiful supply of the divine life in many aspects ministered to us in the many steps of the divine operation in God’s economy. The term “the God of all grace” is unique; it is found in the New Testament only in 1 Peter 5:10. Peter does not say merely that God is the God of grace; he says that **God is the God of all grace**. As believers, we should be encouraged by the fact that our God is the God of all grace. This divine grace is an outstanding attribute of our God who has favored us with it in Christ. (*Conclusion of the New Testament message 10*)

Day 2

1 Timothy 1:14 - And the **grace of our Lord superabounded** with faith and love in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 9:8 - And God is able to make **all grace abound unto you**, that, in everything always having all sufficiency, you may abound unto every good work;

- J. As believers in Christ, **we need to experience the grace** of the Lord as revealed in the New Testament:
1. Having **faith** and **love** through the Lord’s **superabounding grace**—1 Tim. 1:14.
 2. Having obtained **access into** and **standing in** God’s **abounding grace**—Rom. 5:2a.
 3. Enjoying **eternal comfort** and **good hope in grace**—2 Thes. 2:16.
 4. **Coming forward with boldness** to the **throne of grace** to find grace for timely help—Heb. 4:16.
 5. Receiving God’s **abounding supply of all grace**—2 Cor. 9:8.
 6. Constantly enjoying **God’s multiplying grace**—1 Pet. 1:2b; 2 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 22:21.
 7. Enjoying God’s **greater grace by being humble**—James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5.

Peter speaks of the grace that multiplies in the believers' daily life in the full knowledge of God and of Jesus their Lord. In the full knowledge of God and the Lord, the **onfold grace multiplies again and again**. When a believer becomes mature in the divine life, he will enjoy a multiplication manyfold. **Grace is unlimited just as God is unlimited**. When we were regenerated, we received God into us, but we had only a small amount of God. Gradually, as God increases within us through the years, we will be weighty with the measure of God. This is because God as grace will be increased in us.

Peter also speaks of the **grace of life** that is the **inheritance of all the believers**, whether strong or weak. Peter teaches the believing brothers to love and to sympathize with their wives because the wives as the weaker vessels are fellow heirs of the grace of life. The wives are weaker than the husbands, but both of them **inherit the grace of life**. This life is the Triune God Himself as our life, living in us to be our inheritance.

First Peter 4:10 speaks of the **varied grace of God** that indicates the riches of the grace of God in its varieties ministered by the saints to one another. You minister to me one variety of grace, and I minister to you another variety.

Peter speaks of the all grace by which God, who has called the believers into His eternal glory, perfects, establishes, strengthens, and grounds them through their sufferings. The **all grace is the perfecting grace**, establishing grace, strengthening grace, and grounding grace. God perfects, establishes, strengthens, and grounds us by grace through the channel of sufferings. Because of my weakness, nearly every day is a suffering day for me. But God has perfected, established, strengthened, and grounded me through sufferings. (CWWL, vol. 1, "Crystallization Study of the Epistles to Romans")

Day 3

Ephesians 3:2 - If indeed you have heard of the **stewardship of the grace of God** which was given to me for you,

Ephesians 4:29 - Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give **grace to those who hear**.

8. **Experiencing** the perfecting of the **Lord's sufficient grace**, Christ's overshadowing power, in our weakness—2 Cor. 12:9.
9. Being **perfected, established, strengthened**, and grounded by God's **all grace** after having suffered—1 Pet. 5:10.
10. Carrying out the **stewardship** of the grace of God entrusted by Him—dispensing to people the riches of **Christ as the grace of God**—Eph. 3:2, 8.
11. In our living, speaking words for building up and thus **giving grace to people**—4:28-29.
12. Reigning in life by receiving the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness—**grace reigning unto eternal life**—Rom. 5:17b, 21b.
13. **All the believers having grace upon them** and the church being built up; the grace received by the believers being visible—Acts 4:33; 11:23.

The law is weak and impotent. It could not accomplish anything because of the weakness of the flesh. **Grace is strong and powerful**; it **accomplishes everything for us**. The initial accomplishment of grace is to **save us**. We are all saved by grace.

New Testament believers are not under law but **under grace**. Therefore, we should not return to the law to live under the law and to keep the letter of the ordinances of the law. We should **live under grace, following God and His life within us to live and act**.

We have died through Christ to the law, so we have been discharged from the law to serve the Lord in newness of spirit, not in oldness of letter. If we serve the Lord in oldness of letter, we are living under the law. **We must serve the Lord according to the Spirit and the life in our spirit in order to live under grace**. Thus, we should not care for the letter of the law but only for the **Spirit and life in the Spirit**. We live to God in spirit because we have died to the law.

The law is a child-conductor to lead us to Christ so that we may live under grace. Since we have entered into Christ and are under grace, we are no longer under the child-conductor, so we should not live under the law. Therefore, any thought or action of returning to live under the law is a great mistake. In the New Testament age any teaching that tells people **to live under the law is a confusion of the truth and is heresy**. Believers should not receive such teachings.

We have entered into grace by faith, so we should not return to the law. **We should stand in grace and continuously live in grace**. (CWWL 1932-1949, vol. 4 “Crucial Truth in the Holy Scriptures, chapter 40)

Day 4

Acts 4:33 - *And with great power the apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.*

Acts 11:23 - *Who, when he arrived and saw the grace of God, rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain with the Lord with purpose of heart;*

II. We need to see **grace in Acts**—4:33; 11:23; 13:43; 14:3, 26; 15:11, 40; 20:32:

- A. “With great power the apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and **great grace was upon them all**”—4:33:
 1. We appreciate the phrase *great grace was upon them all*.
 2. This happened at the time of Pentecost; thousands of people were being brought to the Lord—2:41; 4:4.
 3. This was a situation in which people could realize that **great grace was upon the believers**.
 4. This grace was nothing less than the living Jesus **moving, convincing, subduing, releasing, uplifting, and transcending**.
 5. “He [Barnabas] arrived and **saw the grace of God**”—11:23a.
 6. When he saw the grace, he “rejoiced and encouraged them all to **remain** with the Lord with purpose of heart”—v. 23b.
 7. The grace that was seen by Barnabas must have been the **Triune God received and enjoyed** by the believers and **expressed** in their salvation, change in life, holy living,

- and the gifts they exercised in their meetings, all of which could be seen by others.
- B. “Paul and Barnabas...spoke to them and urged them to **continue in the grace of God**”—13:43:
1. To continue in the grace implies that **we have already received this grace**.
 2. Having received the grace of God, we now need to **continue** in it:
 - a. Actually, the believers **received the holy and faithful things** in verse 34.
 - b. Then these holy and faithful things became the **grace of God** in verse 43.
 - c. Hence, the grace of God is **compounded** of all the holy and faithful things.

As our grace, He functions to do everything for us. Brothers often try to be strong and to not appear weak in any way. Sometimes the saints, especially the young people, may get the wrong impression that the co-workers, elders, and responsible brothers are on a higher level; however, the fact is **that we all are weak**, and we should not despise our weakness. Actually, **our weakness is an opportunity for the Lord to do a fine work of grace in us**. For a long time I considered myself to be strong and capable. As a result there was a period of time when I actually considered that I did not need the Lord that much. I knew that I needed the Lord, and I loved the Lord, but I felt that I could be self-sufficient and independent. At a certain point He brought me through a series of events, including a very serious car accident, after which I was in intensive care for a week. That was a “wake-up call” to me. When they were about to start a full-body MRI on me, the doctor walked into the emergency room. As I was there looking up at him and he was looking down at me, he said, “The good Lord must have something in store for you to pull you through this.” At that point I realized that the Lord was in the room with me. My impression was that He was waiting for me to realize that I needed to be **dependent**, that it was time for me to recognize and accept my need.

All of us are in a process; none of us can claim that we have arrived. We thank the Lord for our weaknesses and our failures. We do not seek out failure, but failure will come. **The Lord can operate in the midst of those failures and weaknesses**. Many who have passed through the full-time training may have placed an expectation on themselves. They may think, “Since I have been through two years of training, I should be doing a lot better than this in my church life and my family life.” We need to realize that our weaknesses and our failures are altogether **under the Lord’s sovereignty**. We experience these with the view that they would cause us to open more definitely to the Lord and to receive the grace from Him that He is eager and desirous to dispense into us. After all, He went through a process with the steps of death, resurrection, and ascension to minister this grace to us. Now that we have Him and are one with Him, He brings us through these situations of weakness and failure so that we can experience grace in a definite and practical way. We thank the Lord for His ways, His economy, grace, and even our weaknesses. Anything that will cause us to become more dependent on Christ is actually a blessing. Let us not overly worry about being strong or weak, being good or bad, or having failure or success. Instead, **we need to open our hearts to the Lord to receive the sufficient grace**. That this grace is sufficient indicates it is more than adequate to meet our need. (*The Ministry of the Word*, vol. 29, No. 5, chapter 6)

Day 5

- Acts 14:3** - Therefore they spent a considerable amount of time speaking with boldness in the Lord, who testified to the **word of His grace** by granting signs and wonders to be done through their hands.
- Acts 14:26** - And from there they sailed away to Antioch, where they had been **commended to the grace of God** for the work which they fulfilled.

- C. “They spent a considerable amount of time speaking with boldness in the Lord, who testified to the **word of His grace**”—14:3:
1. We need to see the significance of the expression *the word of His grace* in verse 3.
 2. The phrase *the word of His grace* denotes **certain dispensational points**; the word of the Lord’s grace **replaces the law**.
 3. This phrase is a strong indication of a **change of dispensation**, of a change of God’s arrangement in His economy.
- D. “They had been **commended to the grace of God** for the work which they fulfilled”—v. 26:
1. Grace is the **Triune God becoming life and everything to us**.
 2. The grace that motivated Paul and operated in him was a **living person**, the **resurrected Christ**, the embodiment of God the Father who became the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit, who dwelt in him as his everything—1 Cor. 15:10.
- E. “We believe that through the **grace of the Lord Jesus** we are saved in the same way also as they are”—Acts 15:11:
1. This grace comprises the **Lord’s person and His redemptive work**—Gal. 2:21; Rom. 3:24.
 2. Peter and the Jewish believers were **saved by this grace**, **not** by keeping the law of Moses.

Day 6

Acts 15:40 - But Paul chose Silas and went out, having been **commended to the grace of the Lord** by the brothers.

Acts 20:32 - And now I commit you to God and to the **word of His grace**, which is able to **build you up** and to give you the **inheritance** among all those who have been **sanctified**.

- F. “Paul chose Silas and went out, having been **commended to the grace of the Lord** by the brothers”—Acts 15:40:
1. Paul was **commended to the grace of the Lord**.
 2. The fact that Paul was commended to the grace of the Lord by the brothers indicates that **he had taken the right way**.
- G. “I commit you to God and to the **word of His grace**, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who have been sanctified”—20:32:
1. The word of God’s abundant grace is able to **build up the saints**.
 2. The word of God’s grace functions to **give us the inheritance** among all those who have been **sanctified**:
 - a. This **inheritance** is the **Triune God Himself** with all that He has, all that He has done, and all that He will do for His redeemed people.
 - b. Our **eternal inheritance** is related to the **divine life**, which we have **received** through regeneration and which we are **experiencing and enjoying** through our entire Christian life.
 - c. To participate in God’s inheritance requires us to be **sanctified**, and to be sanctified requires the **word of God’s grace**.