

Ephesians. The Identity of the Church that Overcomes.

Part 8: The Incomparable Riches of His Grace

Houses of Light Church • August 4, 2024 • Pastor Netz Gomez & Ilse Marquez

Focus: Ephesians 1:7-10

Since we are now joined to Christ, we have been given the treasures of redemption by his blood—the total cancellation of our sins—all because of the cascading riches of his grace. This superabundant grace is already powerfully working in us, releasing all forms of wisdom and practical understanding. And through the revelation of the Anointed One, he unveiled his secret desires to us—the hidden mystery of his long-range plan, which he was delighted to implement from the very beginning of time. And because of God’s unfailing purpose, this detailed plan will reign supreme through every period of time until the fulfillment of all the ages finally reaches its climax—when God makes all things new in all of heaven and earth through Jesus Christ. **Ephesians 1:7-10** (TPT)

I. Review: The riches of God’s grace

- A. Paul highlights that all of the redemption we’ve been talking about happens according to the “cascading riches of His grace.” (v. 7) This is important to note because in verse 6, Paul highlights that the end goal of everything is “for the praise of His glorious grace.” This is the primary purpose of our lives and all of history: to exalt the riches of the glory of God’s grace. *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—**by grace you have been saved**— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**” Eph. 2:4-7*
 1. God’s love has been expressed in His mercy and grace towards those of us who were lost by making a way for us to be seated in heavenly places! He is rich in grace — so much so that Paul says it is “immeasurable.”
 2. Understanding the fullness of His grace ought to bring us to deep gratitude and a longing to grow in friendship with Him! The more we see Him, the more we love Him — this is how we take part in praising His grace!
 3. God’s grace is so glorious that it will take AGES for us to see it! We will spend eternity admiring His love, mercy, and grace!
- B. This grace is “in the Beloved” (Eph. 1:6) — the One the Father has loved since before the foundation of the earth:
“And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.” John 17:5
(Note: Jesus didn’t come to the earth to earn glory — He already had it!)
- C. His grace is an overflow of the love in the Trinity. They have been together for eternity, enjoying deep fellowship and perfect love. It’s from that place of joy and delight that God’s grace *overflows*. God didn’t need to do any of the things He did (create the world, us, send His son, etc.). His love had to go somewhere, and it pleased Him to choose us.

II. Grace makes a way for us to really know Him (and His plans).

- A. In Eph. 1:3, Paul says that God has *“blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.”* He then explains that those blessings are: (v. 4-9)
1. We were chosen to be holy and blameless before Him.
 2. He chose us before time began to be adopted as His sons and daughters.
 3. He redeemed us from our past transgressions by paying for them with the blood of Jesus.
 4. **The outpouring of God’s grace *“is already powerfully working in us, releasing all forms of wisdom and practical understanding.”***
- B. This is where Paul lands in verse 9: God’s grace is poured out when He allows himself to be known.** To know Him and understand Him (even just a little bit) is to experience His grace. It is not by our wisdom, intellect, or the effectiveness of our study that we get to know Him better. **Grace releases understanding.**
1. We cannot know God without the revelation and wisdom of His grace — we need to be “born again,” to receive revelation that can come from Him alone.
*“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” **John 3:3***
*“Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.” **Matthew 16:17***
- C. It takes God to love God. It takes God to *know* God. None of our relationship with Him is based on our qualifications or merits, but rather is initiated by the abundance of His love that leads us to move towards Him in response.

III. Everything happened because of His will

“God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ.

This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.” Ephesians 1:5 (NLT)

- A. “He wanted to.. and it gave him great pleasure”** — The deepest reason we were chosen and God set this plan into motion was because He wanted to do so. We are chosen and adopted according to the purpose of the mystery of the will of God.
*“In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will...” **Ephesians 1:11***
- B.** God is revealing the mystery of His will here — this revelation is what Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, considers to be part of “the riches of God’s grace” towards us:
*“assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.” **Ephesians 3:2-6***
1. God gave Paul the knowledge of the mystery of His will and it comes to us through an inspired apostle who has a grace to understand the mystery of Christ. We do not have the same level of revelation that Paul had but when we read what he wrote, we receive what was revealed to him. This highlights the grace and the power of reading Scripture!
- C.** This is the grace we receive that is *“releasing all forms of wisdom and practical understanding.”* (v. 1:8) Here we find that this is the mysterious will of God: that the Gentiles are co-heirs with the redeemed Jews, members of the same body and partakers of the promise of the Messiah through the gospel.

1. This grace is poured out upon us with the knowledge of mysterious and glorious things. They are mysterious not because they are strange or occult but because they were once hidden and are now revealed, letting us know that God's will is for us to be adopted as His children just as Jesus said in John 10:16 - *"And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd."*
2. We must realize that knowing the will of God that was hidden and is now revealed is part of the riches of His grace. This should move us to continue growing in understanding His glorious and then join His mission to call everyone to come to Christ (1 Tim. 2:4).

John Piper defined the concept of grace in these verses this way:

"Grace is God's disposition to save His elect ones based on nothing in us but on the good pleasure of His will alone. So whenever you ask (and you should), 'Why me Lord? Why? Why am I alive? Why am I believing? Why am I saved? Why am I chosen? Why am I predestined?' Don't ever answer 'Because I was smarter than my brother or my sister. I was wiser. I was more spiritual. I was more humble. I was more receptive, because it really did terminate finely on something in ME.' No, don't ever answer like that. Not in view of what we are seeing here... rather answer: grace. [I was chosen by grace] rooted in the good pleasure of God's will alone."

This is different than the religion we're used to, and it takes great humility to receive this truth. God didn't need us, He wanted us. We can't understand Him without His grace, and we are chosen because He desired us to be. Our only part is to respond to His love. How will you respond today?

IV. Reflection questions:

- A. Why is God's grace so glorious?**
- B. Why did God choose you?**
- C. According to the teaching today, why is reading Scripture so powerful? How can you start to be more intentional about it?**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 1. Beach Baptisms on August 10th at 10 AM.** (Baptism class on August 7th at 6 PM). Email hello@housesoflight.org for more information! Sign up at the table outside!
Meet us at Zuma Beach (lifeguard tower 12): 6260 Seadrift Cove, Malibu, CA, 90265
- 2. You're invited to join us for our annual conference, *Passion for Jesus!* Sept. 4-6.** Sign up at heartbeatprayerroom.la.
- 3. Don't forget to join a friendship group!**