

- I. Session 50: The Grace of God Part 2: The Triune Gracious God and Salvation by Grace in the New Testament
- a. Purpose: In this session we shall explore the attribute of the grace of God as taught in the New Testament and also draw implications for the Christian life. Specifically, (1) we will see God's grace as an attribute found in the members of the Trinity, (2) and the grace of God in salvation of sinners.
 - b. What is the grace of God?
 - i. The words in the New Testament
 1. Noun is *charis*, adjective is *chrestos*.
 2. "As to charis, it has the basic meaning of 'good,' 'favor,' and 'fortune' in secular Greek...As to chrestos, when used of God it means that he is 'mild,' 'kind,' or 'helpful' in his attitudes and action towards us."¹
 - ii. Summarizing definition:
 1. John Frame: "Grace in Scripture refers to God's benevolence."²
 2. John Feinberg: "As for the concept of grace, it is best understood as unmerited favor. That means that something good happens to you even though you have done nothing to merit or earn it"³
 3. That is, when we talk about God's grace we are talking about God as one who gives favor even when people do not deserve it.
 - c. Some words about the relationship of the Old Testament in relations to the New Testament concerning the Grace of God
 - i. Last session we have already established that the God of the Old Testament and the New Testament is the same God and He is a God of Grace both in the Old and as we shall see, in the New.
 - ii. There is continuity between the Old and the New but we also see that given that the Bible has progressive revelation, we should expect the New Testament to reveal God's grace in more details.
 - d. What does the Bible teaches about the grace of God in the New Testament?
 - i. Grace is an attribute of all three members of the Trinity
 1. Note: Recall our sessions in the past that the doctrine of the Trinity was anticipated in the Old and manifested most clearly in the New Testament. We thus expect the New Testament to discuss more about the members of the Trinity and how each persons of the Trinity possess the attributes of Grace.
 2. The Father possesses Grace
 - a. Note: Sometimes people even Christians think of Jesus as full of grace but not the Father, whom some think as merely a harsh judge; but is this view accurate?

¹ Ibid, 353-54.

² John Frame, *Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2002), 424.

³ John Feinberg, *No One Like Him* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 354.

- b. The salutations in Paul's epistles affirms grace is an attribute of the Father: "*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*" (Romans 1:7b, 1 Corinthians 1:3, 2 Corinthians 1:2, Galatians 1:3, Ephesians 1:2, Philippians 1:2, Philemon 1:3)
 - i. The source of grace is "*from God our Father*"
 - ii. Obviously God the Father must possess grace in order to give it.
 - iii. We must not neglect the significance of this exact phrase of greeting being used again and again by Paul demonstrating that this truth is so commonly accepted its used as a greeting to bless others.
 - c. A greeting from the Apostle John shows He likewise believed the same thing as Paul: "*Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.*" (2 John 1:3)
3. The Son possesses Grace
- a. Note that when we discussed the salutations in the New Testament epistles earlier the grace wasn't only from the Father but they say "*and the Lord Jesus Christ.*"
 - b. "*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*" (John 1:14)
 - i. The Word here of course is Jesus Christ since He is "*the only begotten from the Father*"
 - ii. Notice here Jesus is "*full of grace and truth*"
 - c. "*For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth [p]were realized through Jesus Christ.*" (John 1:17)
 - i. Astounding words: Grace is realized through Jesus Christ!
 - ii. If we don't come to Christ, we won't realize God's grace and truth!
 - d. "*But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.*" (Acts 15:11)
 - i. In context this is Peter's speech to the Jerusalem council.
 - ii. Note Peter says "*we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus,*"
 - iii. If there is saving grace from Jesus then obviously grace is a characteristic of Jesus.
4. The Spirit possesses Grace
- a. "*How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God,*

and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? (Hebrews 10:29)

- i. Note this Spirit is a person since He can be “*insulted*” and therefore is not an impersonal force as some cults believe about the Holy Spirit.
- ii. Notice this verse stating “*the Spirit of grace,*” showing the Spirit possesses grace.
- b. Other demonstration of the Spirit having the attribute of grace can be seen from the Spirit’s work of grace especially with salvation and sanctification.
- ii. The Grace of God is shown in the work of God for sinners’ salvation
 1. Our expectations:
 - a. We should not be surprised that the New Testament’s description of salvation would be one characterized by God’s grace given how grace is an attribute of the Triune God as we have just established.
 - b. We should not be surprised to see that the works of our salvation involves the grace of God, something predicted in the Old Testament. But now as we look at the New Testament we see that grace described in more details than in the Old Testament.
 2. General statement in the New Testament that salvation is by grace:
 - a. A well known verse: “*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and [a]that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;*” (Ephesians 2:8)
 - b. “*For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.*” (John 1:16)
 - i. This passage is talking about Christ coming down as a man.
 - ii. Remember that Christ came for to accomplish salvation according to Titus 2:11: “*For the grace of God has appeared, [a]bringing salvation to all men*”
 - iii. Notice in John 1:16 the emphasis of the extent of grace: “*grace upon grace.*”
 - iv. Thus, we conclude Christ came to bring about salvation by much grace.
 3. For our salvation, God’s choice to save sinners is an act of grace: “*In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice.*” (Romans 11:5)
 - a. People often get upset at the idea of God’s choosing people for salvation but this verse shows God’s choice is a gracious one.

- b. We should see God's election, predestination and choice as works of God's grace rather than a frightening doctrine to explain away.
 - 4. For our salvation, Christ' suffering death is an act of grace: "*But we do see Him who was made [a]for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.*" (Hebrews 2:9)
 - 5. For our salvation, our justification is an act of grace: "*being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;*" (Romans 3:24)
 - a. Justification is the legal of declaring someone legally righteous. In order for God to save us from His judgment, we need to be declared legally righteous.
 - b. Good news: Sinners can be "*justified as a gift by His grace!*"
 - c. This is "*through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus*" which here should be understood also as God's gracious act.
 - 6. For our salvation, our redemption is an act of grace: "*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace*" (Ephesians 1:7)
 - a. Redemption involves purchase of change of ownership, from sin to God.
 - b. Here we see explicitly redemption is "*according to the riches of His grace*"
 - c. How is God's grace demonstrated in redemption? It is "*through His blood*"
- e. Implications
 - i. Have you ever thought of the members of the Trinity being each possessing grace? Does that truth causes you awe?
 - ii. Do you have a wrong view of God the Father as being harsh and merely a judge that needs to be corrected?
 - iii. Have you experienced the saving grace of God? If not, repent and trust in Him today!
 - iv. Are you thankful for your salvation that's accomplished God's grace?
 - v. Have you told others about God's grace?
 - vi. Have you pondered deeply how does a person's life look differently if they understand God's grace? Does that look like your own life?