



Module : Understanding, Accessing & Growing in GRACE

Session 5 : God's Word - Grace's Conduit

Focus : God's Word is the Pre-eminent Container and Communicator of Grace

'Every WORD from your LIPS is sheer GRACE'

Psalm 45:2b - Message Bible

In this segment, we consider the primary method by which grace is communicated to us. How exactly is grace imparted to us? In what packaging does grace come to us? Specifically if we are to grow fully into it, then how do we do this? This depends essentially on two factors, viz. ...

- a. Your exposure to TRUTH, i.e. THE WORD OF GOD.
- b. Your internal ATTITUDE.

The primary manner in which grace is imparted is through the WORD OF GOD - and specifically in reference to the accurate, relevant and timely Word, teaching or instruction delivered to you through a credible spiritual father in the Lord, who is himself an authentic apostolic resource or at least is solidly connected to one. I will illustrate this point partly in this session and more so in the next. Apart from this reality, one increases in grace through the establishment of very specific internal attitudes or dispositions within you, e.g. humility; generosity in giving; etc.

One of the factors that caused Jesus to proceed undauntedly from a position where He GREW (Grk. - 'auxano' - Luke 2:40) in grace with grace being 'UPON HIM', to the position where He KEPT INCREASING (Grk. - 'prokopto' - Luke 2:52) in grace, was His willing subjection to the words and counsel communicated to Him through Joseph and Mary, who represented His spiritual parents in the Lord - i.e. spiritual fathering. As God in the flesh, Jesus did not come to the earth automatically endowed with all the possibilities that the grace of God was meant to afford Him. He came as a man to show us by His own example how we too, would have to adopt a position where we consistently hear the Words of God through those whom God has placed over us in the Lord. We also learn from Him how to adopt specific dispositions or behavior patterns within our being in order to grow into the fullness of the grace of God.

In our present focus, let us consider how the hearing and obeying of God's Word to us is the primary methodology by which grace is designed to come to us and increase in us.

IMPORTANT: The biblical foundation for the ideas expressed below have been thoroughly laid out in the following topical teaching series sets available on my website in both pdf and audio formats: The Primacy of the Word; Meditation; The Spiritual Man; The Prosperity of the Soul. I encourage you to consult these materials so as to cement your understanding.

Consider the Following:

- God is spirit.ⁱ
- Grace is the compositional make-up of spirit.ⁱⁱ
- God expresses His being through Words. God's nature is expressed through His Words.
- His Words, like His being, which is 'full of grace', is also spirit and life.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Thus His words, which are spirit, communicate grace, the constituent element of spirit.^{iv}
- The life and nature of God is vested in His words.^v
- The hearing of God's Word impart grace to our spirits.
- The Word, which is spirit, communicating grace, must be received in humans within their spirits. The destination of grace impartation is the human spirit.^{vi}
- God, a being of spirit, communicates grace - the constituent element of spirit - through Words, which are spirit and life. This grace is communicated to our human spirits, so that we too, like Christ, can be life-giving spirits through the words we speak to our world.^{vii}
- When we hear the word with the mind of our spirit, we are enlightened and cleansed.^{viii}
- The Word of grace received in the spirit must be IMPRESSED upon the soul, leading to the souls' daily renewal progressively.^{ix}
- The active obedience of the word purifies and perfects the soul, thus bringing the soul into a state compatible and compliant with the already enlightened position of the spirit.^x
- In their bodies, the sons of God can now express the GLORY of God before men.

Unique grace intended specifically to help father, watch over and mature your soul, is given to individuals we generally call spiritual fathers. Spiritual fathers watch over your soul by feeding your spirit the Word of God. They are stationed in your life as an important means to facilitate your maturation in Christ.

Heb. 13:17a Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account ...

Heb. 13:7a Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you ...

Apart from accessing grace through the Word of God in a general sense, more specifically, one needs to connect to, hear and obey the specific Word of grace that flows forth from the person which God in His wisdom has determined to watch over your soul so as to progressively lead it into total renewal by the reception of grace in your spirit. Once this reality is in place, to receive the Word effectively so as to maximise the reception of the intended grace deposit, you must adopt certain attitudes within you in reference to the Word of God and to the one through whom the Word is delivered to you.

THE 'WORD OF GOD' AND GRACE

John 1:1,14,16-17

- 1 In the beginning was the **Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 14 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.**
- 16 For of **His fullness we have all received**, and **grace upon grace.**
- 17 For the Law was given through Moses; **grace and truth** were realized through Jesus Christ.

Jesus, in His time on earth as human, was the 'Word' made flesh. When the Word becomes incarnate and is lived out, the glory attendant with it in the obedient person becomes apparent (v.14. 'we saw'). This manifest glory will be clearly marked or filled with two things, viz. 'grace and truth'. The grace of God and the Word of God cannot be separated, for inherent within the Word of God is the grace of God. Jesus, the Word, was full of grace. Grace comes to us packaged in the Word of God. You cannot seek to want grace without desiring and prioritising the pre-eminent conduit of grace, i.e. God's Word. Grace comes to you through the Word of God spoken to you. When you obey this Word, the "Word becomes flesh" - and then the glory of God become observable.

So then, embodied in the Word of God, whenever it comes to you through the one sent to you to deliver it, is the very substance of God we call 'grace'. Thus the Word of God becomes the primary means through which grace is imparted and received. The Word of God is the container of grace. Grace comes couched in the Word of God. You can never receive grace without receiving His Word. God's rhema Word will impart grace to you. You cannot access grace apart from accessing His 'now' or 'present-truth' Word.

Paul spent three years ministering to the church at Ephesus DAILY. In this time he literally held back nothing from them, but declared "the whole counsel of God" (NASB) or "the whole purpose and plan of God" (AMP) - Acts 20:27. When Paul left Ephesus, he informed them that they would never see his face again. He reminds them to watch carefully over the flock of God and cautions that some, even from within their ranks, will emerge to do harm to the saints there. The Ephesian elders weep with him at his departure. What could Paul possibly leave with them for all the work, effect and influence he has had on these leaders as he leaves them? What would Paul say to them as his final and parting words, knowing he would never see them again? Paul calculatedly and poignantly selected his words and says the following to them:

Acts 20:32 "And now **I COMMEND 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 are sanctified."

Paul realised that in his absence, what would keep and sustain the Ephesian elders and their people is GRACE, that proceeds from God's WORD - the WORD of His Grace.

Paul **commends** these elders first to God, and then to the Word of God's grace. This implies that **any commendation to the grace of God is a commendation to God Himself**, and the way in which you get commended to God and His grace is **through His Word!**

Commend = **paratithemi** = To put or place near someone

The Greek word, 'paratithemi' is made up of the two parts 'para' meaning 'near' and tithemi' meaning to 'put or place strategically'. Paul commends or places them strategically near the Word of God's grace. Finding proximity to God's Word is crucial to accessing grace. This implies that you should position yourself regularly near the WORD, in the sense of your being exposed to the hearing of it. One should take advantage of listening repeatedly to messages which have been recorded in audio format. Rehearsing your own written notes is also highly recommended. Bear in mind that Paul had spent three years expounding the totality of God's counsel to these Ephesian elders. In commending them to the Word, he is also implying that they hold on to the truth he has already communicated to them.

This Word of Grace does two things: 1. It is able to build you up.

2. It is able to secure your inheritance.

Acts 4:13 Therefore they spent a **long time there speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord, who was testifying to the word of His grace**, granting that signs and wonders be done by their hands.

This is the point: Grace for building yourself up, for securing your inheritance in God and for signs and wonders, comes directly through the medium of the Word of God.

Now, one can access grace via one's own enquiry and study into the Word. This is important and requires consistent and diligent study of the Word. **But most often**, grace is imparted to you through the spiritual father or leader that God places over you. This is the 'sent one' in your life that communicates God's thoughts and Word to you via preaching, teaching, speaking, counsel, writing, etc. Open-ness to this individual and pure connectedness to him/her is absolutely essential for grace to flow in full measure, uninhibited. As your spiritual father in the Lord opens his mouth to speak - when you hear and obey his words, which in essence is the Word of God - grace is imparted. You will discover yourself being built up and firmly established and aspects of the multi-faceted inheritance in God will begin to be accessed in a practical way. The issue of our INHERITANCE is discussed in my series on Firstborn Sonship available on my website^{xi}. I encourage you to study it.

EVERY REVELATION OF CHRIST THROUGH HIS WORD IMPARTS GRACE

To the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, Christ revealed Himself not by appealing to physical evidence of His resurrected body, but by explaining and leading Himself out from the Scriptures – see Luke 24. The Scriptures reveal Christ, and every time Christ is revealed, grace is imparted or received. Grace comes to us every time we receive new revelation or understanding of Christ.

1 Peter 1:13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the GRACE to be BROUGHT TO YOU at the REVELATION of Jesus Christ.

The phrase “which is brought to you” is literally rendered in the original Greek as **‘which is announced to you’**. The preaching of the Word of God is a heralding or announcement of divine truth, which always brings with it a deeper understanding of the nature of Christ. When this occurs, grace flows forth.

Paul was convinced that through the medium of preaching the Word, he was able to give understanding of the mystery of Christ to the Gentiles:

Ephesians 3:8-9

8 To me, the very least of all saints, **THIS GRACE WAS GIVEN**, to **PREACH** to the Gentiles the unfathomable **riches of Christ**,
 9 and to **bring to light** what is the **administration of the mystery** which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things;

The immeasurable riches of Christ are communicated to men through the act of preaching. Grace is that treasure in Christ, the depths of which are unfathomable (‘riches of His grace’ – Eph.1:7; ‘the surpassing riches of His grace’ – Eph. 2:7). Through the medium of preaching, the Word of grace containing the riches of Christ is dispensed to people.

Jesus said, “I am the Truth” - John 14:6. Truth is more than a doctrine or set of accurate kingdom principles - truth is ultimately a person – Christ Himself. Every facet of biblical truth should always enhance our understanding and comprehension of the nature and character of Christ. Truth that is not Christo-centric and which does not reveal Christ, is not truth at all. Wherever Christ is revealed through His Word, the riches of His grace, the substance of Deity, is imparted. Grace and Truth go hand in hand; grace always attends truth; truth provides the basis for grace; God’s Word is truth revealing the person of Christ, full of grace.

GRACE THROUGH WORDS

Many portions of Scripture link the SPEAKING FORTH of the Word with the release and impartation of GRACE. Psalm 45 is a 'Messianic Psalm', i.e. it is prophetic of Jesus.

Psalms 45:2 You are **fairer** than the sons of men; **Grace is poured upon Your lips**;
Therefore God **has blessed You forever**.

Message Bible : 'every **word from your lips is sheer grace**'

NIV : 'Your **lips** have been **anointed with grace**'

Fairer = yapah = To be bright, beautiful; excellent.

Jesus here is described as 'fairer' and afterwards the text indicates that grace pours forth from His lips. 'Yapah' - 'fairer' - indicates excellence and splendour in both an ethical and moral sense. The factor that distinguishes Christ and by implication His sons as well, is the degree to which words or speaking is characterised by grace. By speech is grace imparted. But the impartation by speech is only possible by one who has become the Word in his flesh (i.e. he lives obediently according to the Word). We only receive grace upon grace from His fullness, when He, the Word, has become flesh. The same will apply to us also.

Note the emphasis in the text: 'Grace is poured upon His lips'. The lip is part of the mouth which is used to frame, formulate and sound out 'words', specifically the Word of God. Jesus is still speaking Words of grace to us through His servants that He has placed over us. They speak on His behalf to us. The following scriptures confirm this.

Matt. 10:20 "For it is **not you who speak**, but it is the **Spirit of your Father who speaks in you**."

Matt. 10:40 "He who **receives you receives Me**, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

John 13:20 "Truly, truly, I say to you, **he who receives whomever I send receives Me**; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

Luke 10:16 "The **one who listens to you listens to Me**, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me."

Gal. 4:14 and that which was a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus Himself.

2 Thes.2:13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

Grace is found in the words on the lips of the one that God has sent to you with HIS WORDS!

HEEDING THE WORD FROM A SPIRITUAL FATHER IMPARTS GRACE FOR RULERSHIP AND REIGNING

Prov. 1:8,9 Hear, my son, your FATHER'S instruction And do not forsake your mother's teaching; Indeed, they are a GRACEFUL wreath to your head And ornaments about your neck.

Note here that a **father's instruction** is likened unto two things, viz. a GRACEFUL WREATH on your head, and ornaments (chains) on your neck. The wreath on the head is symbolic of victory. Chains around the neck are symbolic of **eminence, dignity and delegated authority** (see Gen. 41:42). Exposure to and application of an instruction from a father imparts GRACE to you and positions you for victorious living.

When we hear and obey God words as they are communicated in and through our spiritual leaders, the grace imparted actually positions you to REIGN IN LIFE and come to be known as 'fairer' among men, with a sense of beauty, regality, dignity and authority.

Rom 5:17 For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the **ABUNDANCE OF GRACE** and of the gift of righteousness will **REIGN IN LIFE** through the One, Jesus Christ

The name '**Stephen**' means '**crowned**', denoting rulership and honour, and the Scriptures indicate in the NASB that he was **full of GRACE** (Acts 6:8). Grace crowns you and will afford you rulership and dominion in life. Rule by grace!

A 'THRONE' denotes the position from which a king issues forth decrees and expedites His purposes within his realm of influence. God's throne is described as a 'THRONE OF GRACE' (Heb. 4:16). You cannot separate rulership from grace. Where grace is operative in the life, rulership and victory is granted to subjugate any principle or state that stands in contradiction to God's will. Also, grace not only causes us to reign, but as we reign, our rule is characterised by God's grace. All rule, should be graceful.

GRACIOUS WORDS FLOW FROM THE ONE IN WHOM THE WORD IS 'FULFILLED' AND WHAT IS DECLARED CAN BE EXPERIENCED BY THE HEARERS

In the passage below, in verse 22, the phrase '**gracious words**' should be rendered as it is in the original Greek as '**words of grace**'.

Luke 4:17-22

- 17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And **HE OPENED THE BOOK** and found the place where it was written,
- 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are oppressed,
- 19 To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord."
- 20 And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and **the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.**
- 21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been FULFILLED in your hearing."
- 22 And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at **THE GRACIOUS WORDS** which were **FALLING FROM HIS LIPS**; and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?"

The reading of this portion in the 'book' by Jesus (V.17) released grace to the hearers. Perhaps in times past, others have read the same passage with no impartation of grace. It is essential that the one (the spiritual father or leader) to whom you relate, the one that speaks forth the Word to you, is sent from God. Otherwise no grace will be released. You might hear what he says but there will be no attendant grace deposit. There was a distinct difference in the words of Jesus heard by people present at this meeting in the synagogue. They marvelled and wondered at the words of grace that they heard.

Note that Jesus read a passage within the context of a prophetic word over His life being fulfilled before their eyes. Grace is imparted through a true sent one bearing the Word to you most powerfully when there is an apostolic anointing that is focused on incarnating the Word - i.e. actually bringing the Word to pass in your life.

Also, it is essential for the spiritual father who is meant to impart grace to his spiritual sons, to be living and obeying that Word which he releases. Jesus said, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing". He was a living fulfillment of the Word He just released, and through this dynamic, grace was released. Those servants of God meant to impart grace to you through the speaking of the

Word of God, must themselves be living examples of that Word made flesh in their own lives, in order for grace to be dispensed from their words to you.

Grace dripped forth from the mouth of Jesus as He spoke the Word. The grace imparted in the Word He released would have manifested in specific results, for example, the release of captives, recovery of sight to the blind, freedom to those who are oppressed, etc. Grace impartation will be obvious by the many effects it would produce in the lives of those who receive the Word.

IMITATING THOSE WHO SPEAK GOD'S WORD TO YOU STRENGTHENS YOUR HEART BY GRACE

Hebrews 13:7-9

- 7 Remember **those who led you**, who **SPOKE THE WORD OF GOD** to you; and **considering** the **result of their conduct**, imitate their faith.
- 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.
- 9 Do not be carried away by varied and **strange teachings**; **for it is good for THE HEART to be STRENGTHENED BY GRACE**, not **by foods**, through which those who were so occupied **were not benefited**.

'Food' in the text above is indicative of false doctrine or teaching. Note that your heart can be **strengthened** ('established' – kjv) by grace (v.9) when you hear the WORD OF GOD (v.7). But this is only possible if three things are in place:

- (i) If the conduct of the leader/spiritual father is 'considered' by you – and deemed reflective of the Word they preach.
- (ii) If you imitate their faith – obedience to what you have heard.
- (iii) If what they teach is not a false 'strange' teaching – ensure that what you hear is accurate doctrine reflective of and revealing the nature of Christ.

When you bring yourself under the hearing of the one who speaks the accurate Word of God to you, you will get an impartation of grace. But the greatest degree of impartation of the grace that is attendant with the Word released, is when you actually **obey** that Word – incarnate it ('imitate their faith').

Point three cited above places a serious personal responsibility on all of us to adopt the 'more noble Berean' attitude where we consistently and penetratively enquire into the Word of the Lord to validate the accuracy of what we hear taught to us (see Acts 17). This is important because grace will only be imparted through accurate doctrine.

2 Peter 3:17,18

- 17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the **error of unprincipled men** and ***fall from your own steadfastness,***
- 18 **but GROW IN GRACE and knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Unprincipled = athesmos = Lawless, that is, wicked; One who breaks through the restraint of law and gratifies his lusts; Not in conformity to acceptable custom; Deviation from conduct that is accepted as good and adopted as a law or rule of custom; Contrary to what is right, i.e., illegal.

Steadfastness = sterigmos = firm condition, stability; of mind.

Peter here highlights the fact that there is a certain calibre of men who seduce others – leading them astray with false or erroneous doctrine. These men are further described as ‘unprincipled’, i.e. they are ‘without law’ – who deliberately transgress known and well established codes of acceptable behaviour befitting sons of God (see 2 Pet. 2:18). They adopt a licentious pattern of behaviour in which they are given to all kinds of lewd and perverse activity. The effect produced in those that are their victims is that they ‘fall from their own steadfastness’. They become unstable, and are no longer firmly rooted and consistent in their commitment to Christ and to truth. **This instability also manifests in an absence of grace.** Hence Peter positions ‘growing in Grace’ in the same context as the remedy for not ‘falling from a steadfast’ position because of exposing yourself to inaccurate teaching through those whose lives are not true reflections of the nature of Christ. You will not fall from your own steadfastness if you consistently grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, a process which demands that you access the Word of God through an authentic and legitimate servant of Christ.

Doctrine that does not lead to an increase in the experiential and subjective knowledge of Christ will not impart grace to you.

In 2 Peter 1:2 we learn that grace is multiplied **‘IN’** the knowledge of God and of Jesus, our Lord.

2 Peter 1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you **IN** the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

It is through our growth in knowing God that grace is multiplied, and our knowledge of God grows primarily through His Word. It is through the Word that Christ reveals Himself.

Recall that the Greek word, AUXANO, translated as GROW in the phrase 'GROW in GRACE', implies that for something to grow in grace, it must be acted upon by an outside power or have the element of life within him or it. In our quest to excel in grace, we need the influence of God's Word upon us. God's Word is the external power that must come to us and then it must become us.

Further, the many-sided grace of God will express its varied expressions and effects designed to benefit you, through the person (spiritual father/ apostolic resource) uniquely positioned in your life by the Heavenly Father to represent Him to you. The Word carries grace but the Word is communicated through a leader to you. This leader will be grace-endowed in an extraordinary sense. Your submission to this person and to the Word he/she carries will determine the flow of God's grace to you. We will take up and demonstrate this issue more fully in our next session.

Be commended to God and to the Word of His Grace.

With love in Christ, Randolph

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END NOTES

ⁱ John 4:24

ⁱⁱ John 1:1,14,16-18; Zech. 12:10; Heb.10:29; Zech. 4:6-7

ⁱⁱⁱ John 6:63; 1 Pet.3:7; John 1:14-18

^{iv} Psalm 45:2; Luke 4:22

^v 2 Peter 1:4; John 1:1,14; 5:39

^{vi} Philemon 1:25; 2 Tim.4:22

^{vii} 1 Cor. 15:45; Eph. 4:29

^{viii} Psalm 18:28; 119:105; Prov. 20:27; Job 29:3; John 15:3

^{ix} Deut. 11:18; Rom.12:1,2

^x 1 Pet.1:22; Prov.20:27

^{xi} www.randolphbarnwell.com