

Chapel Flock



Open Water Ministries

~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

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Worship Music

[As I Am-Chill Aguilar](#)

[Now That I Have Held
Him In My Arms-
Michael Card](#)

[Mary Did You Know-
Go Fish](#)

Prayer

Lord, because You have given me the promises of Your Word and the right to use Your name, I refuse to let the devil bombard my mind any longer. Right now I stand up to resist him, oppose him, and put him on the run. Devil, you will no longer have free access to my mind and emotions, for I am standing up to resist you. You better put on your running shoes, because if you stick around me, I intend to prosecute you with the full authority of God's Word! I tell you to GO in Jesus' name! And, Heavenly Father, I thank You so much for giving me the great privilege of using Your Word and the authority of Jesus' name. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

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“ Overwhelmed By God's Holiness For Me ”

Steve Mays

Chapel Flock.....text a prayer..... request telephone number.....

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If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

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Cathe Laurie](#)

1 WHEN KING David dwelt in his house and the Lord had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, 2 The king said to Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells within curtains. 3 And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is in your heart, for the Lord is with you. 4 That night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, 5 Go and tell My servant David, Thus says the Lord: Shall you build Me a house in which to dwell? 6 For I have not dwelt in a house since I brought the Israelites out of Egypt to this day, but have moved about with a tent for My dwelling. 7 In all the places where I have moved with all the Israelites, did I speak a word to any from the tribes of Israel whom I commanded to be shepherd of My people Israel, asking, Why do you not build Me a house of cedar? 8 So now say this to My servant David, Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be prince over My people Israel. 9 And I was with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like [that] of the great men of the earth. 10 And I will appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and be moved no more. And wicked men shall afflict them no more, as formerly 11 And as from the time that I appointed judges over My people Israel; and I will cause you to rest from all your enemies. Also the Lord declares to you that He will make for you a house: 12 And when your days are fulfilled and you sleep with your fathers, I will set up after you your offspring who shall be born to you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My Name [and My Presence], and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. When he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the stripes of the sons of men. 15 But My mercy and loving-kindness shall not depart from him, as I took [them] from Saul, whom I took away from before you. 16 And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before you; your throne shall be established forever. 17 In accordance with all these words and all this vision Nathan spoke to David. 18 Then King David went in and sat before the Lord, and said, Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that You have brought me this far? 19 Then as if this were a little thing in Your eyes, O Lord God, You have spoken also of Your servant's house in the far distant future. And this is the law for man, O Lord God! 20 What more can David say to You? For You know Your servant, O Lord God. 21 Because of Your promise and as Your own heart dictates, You have done all these astounding things to make Your servant know and understand. 22 Therefore You are great, O Lord God; for none is like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all [You have made] our ears to hear. 23 What [other] one nation on earth is like Your people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be a people for Himself and to make for Himself a name? You have done great and terrible things for Yourself and for Your land, before Your people, whom You redeemed and delivered for Yourself from Egypt, from the nations and their gods. 24 And You have established for Yourself Your people Israel to be Your people forever, and You, Lord, became their God. 25 Now, O Lord God, confirm forever the word You have given as to Your servant and his house; and do as You have said, 26 And Your name [and presence] shall be magnified forever, saying, The Lord of hosts is God over Israel; and the house of Your servant David will be made firm before You. 27 For You, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, have revealed this to Your servant: I will build you a house. So Your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to You. 28 And now, O Lord God, You are God, and Your words are truth, and You have promised this good thing to Your servant. 29 Therefore now let it please You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue forever before You; for You, O Lord God, have spoken it, and with Your blessing let [his] house be blessed forever.

Chapter 7

Now it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all of his enemies; [Now he's established, he's strong, he's powerful.] That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, Look I'm dwelling in a house of cedar, but the ark of God is dwelling there in the curtains. Nathan said to the king, Go, and do all that is in your heart; for the Lord is with you (2Sa 7:1-3).

Now David is expressing his desire to Nathan to build a house for God. "Look Nathan, I'm dwelling in this beautiful palace, the ark of God is still in that tent. I want to make a house for God. Nathan, the prophet is taken with the idea, "Ah, David that's great do all that is in your heart."

But when Nathan went home, that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shall you build a house for me to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought the children out of Egypt, even to this day, but I have walked in a tent, and in the tabernacle. In all of the places wherein I have walked with the children of Israel did I ever ask anyone to build me a house? Now therefore so shalt thou say to my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took you from the sheepcote, from following after the sheep, and I made you the ruler over my people, over Israel: And I was with thee wherever you went, and I've cut off all of your enemies out of your sight, and I've made you a great name, like the name of the great men which are upon the earth. Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and I've caused you to rest from all of your enemies. Also the LORD tells you that he will build you a house. And when thy days are fulfilled, and you sleep with your fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy loins, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever (2Sa 7:3-13).

Now in Acts chapter two, verse thirty, Peter is making a commentary on this particular passage of scripture, the word of the Lord to David. Peter tells us there that being a prophet, and knowing that God has sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit upon His throne. David understood that God was promising that the Messiah was gonna come through his loins. It was a glorious promise of God.

Disappointment of David, "You can't build a house for Me, but good news David, I'm gonna build you a house, from you the Messiah shall come."

[And the Lord said,] I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: and thy throne shall be established for ever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, Nathan related to David faithfully. And when king David went in, and he sat down before the LORD, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that you have brought me to this place (2Sa 7:14-18)?

God reminded him of his past. That "You were just a shepherd, I took you from following after the sheep, and I made you the king, the ruler over My people."

"Who am I oh Lord God, and what is my house? My family was nothing that You should make me the king." He was just looking at the goodness that God had shown to him. "That You should bring me to this place of ruling. Who am I oh Lord God?"

And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but you have spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come (2Sa 7:19).

In other words, "Lord, this is not a small thing, this is tremendous, but that isn't all, You now start to talk to me about my house for a great while to come. You start telling me of the future."

You look at what God has done for you. As David said, "He brought me up out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, He established my feet upon the rock, and He established my going" (Psalm 40:2). God redeemed me from my sin. He's made me His son. "Beloved now are we the sons of God. It doesn't yet appear what we're gonna be, but we know that when He appears, we're gonna be like Him, for we are gonna see Him as He is."

In other words, God has already done this for us, but then God gives us fabulous promises of the future. Of the kingdom of God, where we shall dwell with Him in righteousness in joy, and peace, in the everlasting kingdom, and we shall be heirs with Him, joint heirs with Christ. We shall reign with Him. Oh, the glorious things of God that's spoken of your future. It's not a small thing that God has already done; it's fabulous what God has already done for us. When you think of what God took us from and what He has made us now, as children of God, in the fellowship with Him. But then He just doesn't stop there, He goes on and He speaks about your eternal blessedness in His kingdom as you're living with Him forever and ever. "Is this the manner of man O Lord God?" No, it isn't the manner of man. This is divine grace of which we know so very little, and experience as far as man is concerned.

And what can David say more to these things (2Sa 7:20)?

"God I'm just speechless, I don't know what, I don't have words to express what I feel about Your grace."

Paul said, "And what shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who shall be against us? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God who is justified. Who is he that condemneth, it is Christ who has died, yea rather is risen again, and is even at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for you. What can you say about it?"

Number one, God is for you. So many times we think, "God's against me." No God is for you. If God is for you, who can be against you? Well, Satan can be against you, but who is he against God? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God who is justified. God's not laying any charges against you. "Oh how blessed is the man to whom God does not impute sin." God isn't laying any charges.

Now Satan is constantly charging you with failure, weakness, and so forth. But God isn't charging you with these things. He's justified you. He considers you as though they never happened. Who is he that condemneth? Jesus isn't condemning you.

He said, "Hey I didn't come to condemn the world, but that the world through Me might be saved. He that believeth," note carefully "is not condemned. There is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus. He that believeth is not condemned. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ who died, yea rather is risen again and is at the right hand of the Father making intercession for you."

Jesus is there tonight before the throne of God interceding in your behalf, because of your weaknesses and your failures, and your stumbling. He's there to intercede for you, not condemning you, He's not saying, "Oh Father, look at that. Fell again; didn't he? Why don't we wipe him out, why don't we just forget him. Let's go to somebody else Father." Not at all.

As you stumble, He says, "Father, just put that one to my account, lay that one on Me. Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." He's there interceding, not condemning, but interceding for you, pleading your cause.

"Hey, if God is for us."

"What can you say to this?"

Just, "Oh Lord You're too much, too much." We become just speechless when we realize the greatness of God's love and grace towards us. What more can David say, the most literate of all people? A guy who is so gifted at expression of himself, his heart, his feelings. I love to read the Psalms because of David's gift of expression. He's able to say the things that I feel that I can't say. He's able to articulate feelings of the soul and spirit, that I've only been able to feel, never articulate.

"As the deer thirsted after the water, so pants my soul after Thee O God. My soul thirsteth for thee as in a dry and barren land." Oh, you go on and oh, that's beautiful. I love it. This guy who was so articulate, man he got to the place where he was just speechless. "God, You're too much. What You've already done, You've made me the king. I was just a little kid following sheep. You've made me the king of Your people. If this wasn't a small thing, Lord You've spoken now of my house for a great while to come. You've promised the Messiah coming. The Messiah's coming, Lord what can I say. What do I say?"

For thy word's sake, and according to your own heart, have you done these great things (2Sa 7:21),

He said, "Hey Lord, I know it's not me, it's not because I'm somebody great or I'm so good, it's for Your word's sake, and according to Your own heart You've done these things. These things proceed from Your righteousness, not from mine. They proceed from Your goodness, not from my righteousness." God's grace is never a reward for your goodness or righteousness. God's grace always proceeds from His heart, and for His own word's sake He does for you. Not because you're worthy, not because you're especially nice, or especially good, now you're going to get this special blessing. Never. It's just because He loves you, and that's His nature, and that's His heart to show His love to you, and just to totally overwhelm you, though you realize how totally undeserving, and how unworthy you are. It is just the hardest thing to do, just accept grace gracefully.

My son came up he called me Wednesday morning, he said, "Dad, I need to talk to you."

So I said, "Okay."

He said, "I'll be up there about two-thirty this afternoon."

I said, "Fine, I'll wait for you."

So he came in, and he sat down, and he said "Dad, I'm really worried."

I said, "What about?" He began to tell me of all of the blessings that had been laid upon him lately. Just God has just opened up, and began to pour out blessings on that kid, so much so that he said, "I just worry. You know God has given me so much, I'm just getting worried." The church bought them a new washer and dryer, and just a lot of neat things. He was just concerned. I said, "It's really hard to accept grace gracefully isn't it?" That was his problem. Just accepting God's goodness.

"Surely this is too much for me. I truly don't deserve this." Just when God begins to pour it on, it gets hard to take. You're thinking, "Oh no it's just too much for me. I don't deserve that." That's one thing though that we have to learn, is just to accept grace gracefully.

God loves you, and He does it for you just because He loves you, not because you deserve it, not because you're worthy. "Lord, it's for Your word's sake, and because of Your heart, I know that You've done these things. It isn't because David is so good, or so deserving God, I know that."

Wherefore Lord thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. ["Lord, You're just great, there's no one like You, or any other God beside You."] And what one nation in all of the earth is like your people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and awesome, for thy land, before the people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee forever: and thou Lord, are become their God. And now, O Lord God, the word that you've spoken concerning your servant, concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as you have said. And let your name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts is God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee. For thou, O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee a house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto you. And now, O Lord God, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and you have promised this goodness unto thy servant: Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever (2Sa 7:22-29).

"All right God, You've said it, You're gonna do it, have at it. Go ahead Lord, fulfill Your promise. I know that You've said it, and now Lord, I want You to do it, establish the house forever." So David's response to that glorious promise of God. The establishing through him the coming Messiah.

We'll pick up with chapter eight next week in our study. Shall we stand?

May God bless you and give you a very profitable week. May your heart be knit to Him in love. May you be open to God that you might receive those blessings that He is desiring to bestow upon you just because He loves you. For no other reason, but just He thinks you're tops. May you just experience that blessing of God, flowing into your life. May you wait upon the Lord, and seek His guidance in all things, looking to Him for direction, for the leading, for the timing. Thus may you walk in the Spirit, and thus have a very profitable, beautiful week, in Jesus' name.

CONCERNING DELIVERANCE FROM SINNING

IN THIS PLACE I would say a plain word or two to those who understand the method of justification by faith which is in Christ Jesus, but whose trouble is that they cannot cease from sin. We can never be happy, restful, or spiritually healthy till we become holy. We must be rid of sin; but how is the riddance to be wrought? This is the life-or-death question of many. The old nature is very strong, and they have tried to curb and tame it; but it will not be subdued, and they find themselves, though anxious to be better, if anything growing worse than before. The heart is so hard, the will is so obstinate, the passions are so furious, the thoughts are so volatile, the imagination is so ungovernable, the desires are so wild, that the man feels that he has a den of wild beasts within him, which will eat him up sooner than be ruled by him. We may say of our fallen nature what the Lord said to Job concerning Leviathan: "Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?" A man might as well hope to hold the north wind in the hollow of his hand as expect to control by his own strength those boisterous powers which dwell within his fallen nature. This is a greater feat than any of the fabled labors of Hercules: God is wanted here.

"I could believe that Jesus would forgive sin," says one, "but then my trouble is that I sin again, and that I feel such awful tendencies to evil within me. As surely as a stone, if it be flung up into the air, soon comes down again to the ground, so do I, though I am sent up to heaven by earnest preaching, return again to my insensible state. Alas! I am easily fascinated with the basilisk eyes of sin, and am thus held as under a spell, so that I cannot escape from my own folly."

Dear friend, salvation would be a sadly incomplete affair if it did not deal with this part of our ruined estate. We want to be purified as well as pardoned. Justification without sanctification would not be salvation at all. It would call the leper clean, and leave him to die of his disease; if would forgive the rebellion and allow the rebel to remain an enemy to his king. It would remove the consequences but overlook the cause, and this would leave an endless and hopeless task before us. It would stop the stream for a time, but leave an open fountain of defilement, which would sooner or later break forth with increased power. Remember that the Lord Jesus came to take away sin in three ways; He came to remove the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and, at last, the presence of sin. At once you may reach to the second part--the power of sin may immediately be broken; and so you will be on the road to the third, namely, the removal of the presence of sin. "We know that he was manifested to take away our sins."

The angel said of our Lord, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Our Lord Jesus came to destroy in us the works of the devil. That which was said at our Lord's birth was also declared in His death; for when the soldier pierced His side forthwith came there out blood and water, to set forth the double cure by which we are delivered from the guilt and the defilement of sin.

If, however, you are troubled about the power of sin, and about the tendencies of your nature, as you well may be, here is a promise for you. Have faith in it, for it stands in that covenant of grace which is ordered in all things and sure. God, who cannot lie, has said in Ezekiel 36:26:

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

You see, it is all "I will," and "I will." "I will give," and "I will take away." This is the royal style of the King of kings, who is able to accomplish all His will. No word of His shall ever fall to the ground.

The Lord knows right well that you cannot change your own heart, and cannot cleanse your own nature; but He also knows that He can ~~do both~~. He can cause the Ethiopian to change his skin, and the leopard his spots. Hear this, and be astonished: He can create you a second time; He can cause you to be born again. This is a miracle of grace, but the Holy Ghost will perform it. It would be a very wonderful thing if one could stand at the foot of the Niagara Falls, and could speak a word which should make the river Niagara begin to run up stream, and leap up that great precipice over which it now rolls in stupendous force. Nothing but the power of God could achieve that marvel; but that would be more than a fit parallel to what would take place if the course of your nature were altogether reversed. All things are possible with God. He can reverse the direction of your desires and the current of your life, and instead of going downward from God, He can make your whole being tend upward toward God. That is, in fact, what the Lord has promised to do for all who are in the covenant; and we know from Scripture that all believers are in the covenant. Let me read the words again:

A new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give an heart of flesh. (Ezekiel 11:19).

What a wonderful promise! And it is yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us. Let us lay hold of it; accept it as true, and appropriate it to ourselves. Then shall it be fulfilled in us, and we shall have, in after days and years, to sing of that wondrous change which the sovereign grace of God has wrought in us.

It is well worthy of consideration that when the Lord takes away the stony heart, that deed is done; and when that is once done, no known power can ever take away that new heart which He gives, and that right spirit which He puts within us. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance"; that is, without repentance on His part; He does not take away what He once has given. Let Him renew you and you will be renewed. Man's reformations and cleanings up soon come to an end, for the dog returns to his vomit; but when God puts a new heart into us, the new heart is there forever, and never will it harden into stone again. He who made it flesh will keep it so. Herein we may rejoice and be glad forever in that which God creates in the kingdom of His grace.

To put the matter very simply--did you ever hear of Mr. Rowland Hill's illustration of the cat and the sow? I will give it in my own fashion, to illustrate our Saviour's expressive words--"Ye must be born again." Do you see that cat? What a cleanly creature she is! How cleverly she washes herself with her tongue and her paws! It is quite a pretty sight! Did you ever see a sow do that? No, you never did. It is contrary to its nature. It prefers to wallow in the mire. Go and teach a sow to wash itself, and see how little success you would gain. It would be a great sanitary improvement if swine would be clean. Teach them to wash and clean themselves as the cat has been doing! Useless task. You may by force wash that sow, but it hastens to the mire, and is soon as foul as ever. The only way in which you can get a sow to wash itself is to transform it into a cat; then it will wash and be clean, but not till then! Suppose that transformation to be accomplished, and then what was difficult or impossible is easy enough; the swine will henceforth be fit for your parlor and your hearth-rug. So it is with an ungodly man; you cannot force him to do what a renewed man does most willingly; you may teach him, and set him a good example, but he cannot learn the art of holiness, for he has no mind to it; his nature leads him another way. When the Lord makes a new man of him, then all things wear a different aspect. So great is this change, that I once heard a convert say, "Either all the world is changed, or else I am." The new nature follows after right as naturally as the old nature wanders after wrong. What a blessing to receive such a nature! Only the Holy Ghost can give it.

Did it ever strike you what a wonderful thing it is for the Lord to give a new heart and a right spirit to a man? You have seen a lobster, perhaps, which has fought with another lobster, and lost one of its claws, and a new claw has grown. That is a remarkable thing; but it is a much more astounding fact that a man should have a new heart given to him. This, indeed, is a miracle beyond the powers of nature. There is a tree. If you cut off one of its limbs, another one may grow in its place; but can you change the tree; can you sweeten sour sap; can you make the thorn bear figs? You can graft something better into it and that is the analogy which nature gives us of the work of grace; but absolutely to change the vital sap of the tree would be a miracle indeed. Such a prodigy and mystery of power God works in all who believe in Jesus.

If you yield yourself up to His divine working, the Lord will alter your nature; He will subdue the old nature, and breathe new life into you. Put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and He will take the stony heart out of your flesh, and He will give you a heart of flesh. Where everything was hard, everything shall be tender; where everything was vicious, everything shall be virtuous: where everything tended downward, everything shall rise upward with impetuous force. The lion of anger shall give place to the lamb of meekness; the raven of uncleanness shall fly before the dove of purity; the vile serpent of deceit shall be trodden under the heel of truth.

I have seen with my own eyes such marvellous changes of moral and spiritual character that I despair of none. I could, if it were fitting, point out those who were once unchaste women who are now pure as the driven snow, and blaspheming men who now delight all around them by their intense devotion. Thieves are made honest, drunkards sober, liars truthful, and scoffers zealous. Wherever the grace of God has appeared to a man it has trained him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world: and, dear reader, it will do the same for you.

"I cannot make this change," says one. Who said you could? The Scripture which we have quoted speaks not of what man will do, but of what God will do. It is God's promise, and it is for Him to fulfill His own engagements. Trust in Him to fulfill His Word to you, and it will be done.

"But how is it to be done?" What business is that of yours? Must the Lord explain His methods before you will believe him? The Lord's working in this matter is a great mystery: the Holy Ghost performs it. He who made the promise has the responsibility of keeping the promise, and He is equal to the occasion. God, who promises this marvellous change, will assuredly carry it out in all who receive Jesus, for to all such He gives power to become the Sons of God. Oh that you would believe it! Oh that you would do the gracious Lord the justice to believe that He can and will do this for you, great miracle though it will be! Oh that you would believe that God cannot lie! Oh that you would trust Him for a new heart, and a right spirit, for He can give them to you! May the Lord give you faith in His promise, faith in His Son, faith in the Holy Spirit, and faith in Him, and to Him shall be praise and honor and glory forever and ever! Amen.

BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

"By grace are ye saved, through faith" (Ephesians 2:8).

I THINK IT WELL to turn a little to one side that I may ask my reader to observe adoringly the fountain-head of our salvation, which is the grace of God. "By grace are ye saved." Because God is gracious, therefore sinful men are forgiven, converted, purified, and saved. It is not because of anything in them, or that ever can be in them, that they are saved; but because of the boundless love, goodness, pity, compassion, mercy, and grace of God. Tarry a moment, then, at the well-head. Behold the pure river of water of life, as it proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb!

What an abyss is the grace of God! Who can measure its breadth? Who can fathom its depth? Like all the rest of the divine attributes, it is infinite. God is full of love, for "God is love." God is full of goodness; the very name "God" is short for "good." Unbounded goodness and love enter into the very essence of the Godhead. It is because "his mercy endureth for ever" that men are not destroyed; because "his compassions fail not" that sinners are brought to Him and forgiven.

Remember this; or you may fall into error by fixing your minds so much upon the faith which is the channel of salvation as to forget the grace which is the fountain and source even of faith itself. Faith is the work of God's grace in us. No man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost. "No man cometh unto me," saith Jesus, "except the Father which hath sent me draw him." So that faith, which is coming to Christ, is the result of divine drawing. Grace is the first and last moving cause of salvation; and faith, essential as it is, is only an important part of the machinery which grace employs. We are saved "through faith," but salvation is "by grace." Sound forth those

words as with the archangel's trumpet: "By grace are ye saved." What glad tidings for the undeserving!

Faith occupies the position of a channel or conduit pipe. Grace is the fountain and the stream; faith is the aqueduct along which the flood of mercy flows down to refresh the thirsty sons of men. It is a great pity when the aqueduct is broken. It is a sad sight to see around Rome the many noble aqueducts which no longer convey water into the city, because the arches are broken and the marvelous structures are in ruins. The aqueduct must be kept entire to convey the current; and, even so, faith must be true and sound, leading right up to God and coming right down to ourselves, that it may become a serviceable channel of mercy to our souls.

Still, I again remind you that faith is only the channel or aqueduct, and not the fountainhead, and we must not look so much to it as to exalt it above the divine source of all blessing which lies in the grace of God. Never make a Christ out of your faith, nor think of as if it were the independent source of your salvation. Our life is found in "looking unto Jesus," not in looking to our own faith. By faith all things become possible to us; yet the power is not in the faith, but in the God upon whom faith relies. Grace is the powerful engine, and faith is the chain by which the carriage of the soul is attached to the great motive power. The righteousness of faith is not the moral excellence of faith, but the righteousness of Jesus Christ which faith grasps and appropriates. The peace within the soul is not derived from the contemplation of our own faith; but it comes to us from Him who is our peace, the hem of whose garment faith touches, and virtue comes out of Him into the soul.

See then, dear friend, that the weakness of your faith will not destroy you. A trembling hand may receive a golden gift. The Lord's salvation can come to us though we have only faith as a grain of mustard seed. The power lies in the grace of God, and not in our faith. Great messages can be sent along slender wires, and the peace-giving witness of the Holy Spirit can reach the heart by means of a thread-like faith which seems almost unable to sustain its own weight. Think more of Him to whom you look than of the look itself. You must look away even from your own looking, and see nothing but Jesus, and the grace of God revealed in Him.

FAITH, WHAT IS IT?

WHAT IS THIS FAITH concerning which it is said, "By grace are ye saved, through faith?" There are many descriptions of faith; but almost all the definitions I have met with have made me understand it less than I did before I saw them. The Negro said, when he read the chapter, that he would confound it; and it is very likely that he did so, though he meant to expound it. We may explain faith till nobody understands it. I hope I shall not be guilty of that fault. Faith is the simplest of all things, and perhaps because of its simplicity it is the more difficult to explain.

What is faith? It is made up of three things--knowledge, belief, and trust. Knowledge comes first. "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" I want to be informed of a fact before I can possibly believe it. "Faith cometh by hearing"; we must first hear, in order that we may know what is to be believed. "They that know thy name shall put their trust in thee." A measure of knowledge is essential to faith; hence the importance of getting knowledge. "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live." Such was the word of the ancient prophet, and it is the word of the gospel still. Search the Scriptures and learn what the Holy Spirit teacheth concerning Christ and His salvation. Seek to know God: "For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." May the Holy Spirit give you the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord! Know the gospel: know what the good news is, how it talks of free forgiveness, and of change of heart, of adoption into the family of God, and of countless other blessings. Know especially Christ Jesus the Son of God, the Saviour of men, united to us by His human nature, and yet one with God; and thus able to act as Mediator between God and man, able to lay His hand upon both, and to be the connecting link between the sinner and the Judge of all the earth. Endeavour to know more and more of Christ Jesus. Endeavour especially to know the doctrine of the sacrifice of Christ; for the point upon which saving faith mainly fixes itself is this--"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Know that Jesus was "made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Drink deep of the doctrine of the substitutionary work of Christ; for therein lies the sweetest possible comfort to the guilty sons of men, since the Lord "made him to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Faith begins with knowledge.

The mind goes on to believe that these things are true. The soul believes that God is, and that He hears the cries of sincere hearts; that the gospel is from God; that justification by faith is the grand truth which God hath revealed in these last days by His Spirit more clearly than before. Then the heart believes that Jesus is verily and in truth our God and Saviour, the Redeemer of men, the Prophet, Priest, and King of His people. All this is accepted as sure truth, not to be called in question. I pray that you may at once come to this. Get firmly to believe that "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, cleanseth us from all sin"; that His sacrifice is complete and fully accepted of God on man's behalf, so that he that believeth on Jesus is not condemned. Believe these truths as you believe any other statements; for the difference between common faith and saving faith lies mainly in the subjects upon which it is exercised. Believe the witness of God just as you believe the testimony of your own father or friend. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater."

So far you have made an advance toward faith; only one more ingredient is needed to complete it, which is trust. Commit yourself to the merciful God; rest your hope on the gracious gospel; trust your soul on the dying and living Saviour; wash away your sins in the atoning blood; accept His perfect righteousness, and all is well. Trust is the lifeblood of faith; there is no saving faith without it. The Puritans were accustomed to explain faith by the word "recumbency." It meant leaning upon a thing. Lean with all your weight upon Christ. It would be a better illustration still if I said, fall at full length, and lie on the Rock of Ages. Cast yourself upon Jesus; rest in Him; commit yourself to Him. That done, you have exercised saving faith. Faith is not a blind thing; for faith begins with knowledge. It is not a speculative thing; for faith believes facts of which it is sure. It is not an unpractical, dreamy thing; for faith trusts, and stakes its destiny upon the truth of revelation. That is one way of describing what faith is.

Let me try again. Faith is believing that Christ is what He is said to be, and that He will do what He has promised to do, and then to expect this of Him. The Scriptures speak of Jesus Christ as being God, God is human flesh; as being perfect in His character; as being made of a sin-offering on our behalf; as bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. The Scripture speaks of Him as having finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness. The sacred records further tell us that He "rose again from the dead," that He "ever liveth to make intercession for us," that He has gone up into the glory, and has taken possession of Heaven on the behalf of His people, and that He will shortly come again "to judge the world in righteousness, and his people with equity." We are most firmly to believe that it is even so; for this is the testimony of God the Father when He said, "This is my beloved Son; hear ye him." This also is testified by God the Holy Spirit; for the Spirit has borne witness to Christ, both in the inspired Word and by divers miracles, and by His working in the hearts of men. We are to believe this testimony to be true.

Faith also believes that Christ will do what He has promised; that since He has promised to cast out none that come to Him, it is certain that He will not cast us out if we come to Him. Faith believes that since Jesus said, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life, it must be true; and if we get this living Water from Christ it will abide in us, and will well up within us in streams of holy life. Whatever Christ has promised to do He will do, and we must believe this, so as to look for pardon, justification, preservation, and eternal glory from His hands, according as He has promised them to believers in Him.

Then comes the next necessary step. Jesus is what He is said to be, Jesus will do what He says He will do; therefore we must each one trust Him, saying, "He will be to me what He says He is, and He will do to me what He has promised to do; I leave myself in the hands of Him who is appointed to save, that He may save me. I rest upon His promise that He will do even as He has said." This is a saving faith, and he that hath it hath everlasting life. Whatever his dangers and difficulties, whatever his darkness and depression, whatever his infirmities and sins, he that believeth thus on Christ Jesus is not condemned, and shall never come into condemnation.

May that explanation be of some service! I trust it may be used by the Spirit of God to direct my reader into immediate peace. "Be not afraid; only believe." Trust, and be at rest.

My fear is lest the reader should rest content with understanding what is to be done, and yet never do it. Better the poorest real faith actually at work, than the best ideal of it left in the region of speculation. The great matter is to believe on the Lord Jesus at once. Never mind distinctions and definitions. A hungry man eats though he does not understand the composition of his food, the anatomy of his mouth, or the process of digestion: he lives because he eats. Another far more clever person understands thoroughly the science of nutrition; but if he does not eat he will die, with all his knowledge. There are, no doubt, many at this hour in Hell who understood the doctrine of faith, but did not believe. On the other hand, not one who has trusted in the Lord Jesus has ever been cast out, though he may never have been able intelligently to define his faith. Oh dear reader, receive the Lord Jesus into your soul, and you shall live forever! "He that believeth in Him hath everlasting life." omments here

"ALL of GRACE" An Earnest Word with Those Who Are Seeking Salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ
By C.H. SPURGEON; "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."Romans 5:20

(19 June 1834 – 31 January 1892) was a British Particular Baptist preacher. Spurgeon remains highly influential among Christians of different denominations, among whom he is known as the "Prince of Preachers". He was a strong figure in the Reformed Baptist tradition, defending the Church in agreement with the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith understanding, and opposing the liberal and pragmatic theological tendencies in the Church of his day

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 424-426)

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