



The Channel

Grace Through Faith

Compiled by God and Written by the Phoenix

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**For by grace are ye saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.**

Ephesians 2:8

Salvation is by Grace, and always has been. However if you will note; that Faith is that channel by which grace flows. Grace through faith, the channel of God's saving grace for:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. -Ephesians 2:8

Does this make salvation a salvation by works? No. Salvation is a gift. It cannot be earned. When Paul wrote these words to the church at Ephesus, and wrote that it is not of yourselves, he was writing in reference to ritualistic Mosaic Law. Not to be confused with God's moral law or morality, for we are not at liberty from God's moral law. More on that subject later (Galatians 5:13,18-21). And also is reflected in the following verses from Matthew:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. - Matthew 7:21-23

This also becomes quite clear in Paul's letter to the Galatians Chapter 5: Paul throughout the Book, has been addressing the subject of Grace vs justification by the Law. The Church at Galatia had been beset with a false teaching and heresy: they were seeking salvation initially by Grace through Jesus Christ, then adding that final justification is through adherence to the ritualistic law. A combination of Christianity and Judaism.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. - Galatians 5:1-5

Now in verse 4 he concludes this thought with: ***Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*** That whosoever will be justified by the law is fallen from Grace. Remember Paul is writing to Christians within the Galatians assembly or church. They have embraced a teaching that combines both law and grace, and have departed from the full gospel that once was given to them. Once as a Christian, has received full knowledge of the truth, they cannot return to the inferior way of the law, such is destruction (See Hebrews Chapter 10), a falling away or back into perdition. By embracing this doctrine they were making a willful decision to depart from the Gospel first delivered to them, and thus had fallen from grace.

In the original Greek language of the New Testament: Ekpipto— fallen ; Charis - Grace. Strong's numbers provided : 1601 ekpipto ek-pip'-to, , 5485 charis khar'-ece.

But without faith it is impossible to please him : for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. - Hebrews 11:6

Is it possible to disrupt our "channel" of faith? Most definitely. And is mirrored throughout the New Testament. Often the emphasis is placed solely upon grace, leaving the second part of the formula or equation so to speak, out of the picture. Entirely forgotten. Leave off the aspect of our faith, the faith, and the channel by which grace flows becomes disrupted.

In a counter to the false teaching that exists today: Let us remember and never forget, that all scripture is given by inspiration of God (God Breathed). It is perfect and without error, as scripture also tells us in Titus 1:2 that God cannot lie. Any other interpretation is a lie, and a doctrine of men, not of God.

That is why "once saved always saved" is such a false and dangerous doctrine. Often confused with the security that we have in Jesus Christ for those that overcome the world, or persevere; it discounts any ability to lose ones salvation, a fall from grace: which is not biblical truth. For any turning away from biblical truth or the word delivered to us is just that a falling away to another doctrine not first delivered to us. "Once Saved Always Saved", discounts our free will, the "who so ever will", and often is used as a license to sin. Once we have made that decision to follow Christ, and receive Him, we continue to possess that free will. Being made in God's image with the ability of choice; we do not cease to be in that image, upon that moment that we receive Jesus Christ. If that where true, we would be likened to mere "puppets" on a sting, without the ability of choice.

And now on the subject of Grace... to this I would not wish you to be ignorant.

Grace: 5485 cariv charis *khar'-ece*.

The unmerited or undeserved favor of God. God become flesh as Christ Jesus, and was crucified: nailed to a tree for our sins. Through our acceptance of Him and His atonement, through faith (which includes our willingness to follow Him), we are given the great comforter. The Holy Spirit that indwells in all Christians.

For the first time in the history of our race, God no longer is "Behind the Veil" but indwells within us. Within our mortal bodies, God's Spirit, so grieved and quenched when we "miss the mark": now if that is not unmerited favor, Grace, I don't know what is. Think about it. We have become a "new creature", not in the ability to no longer sin as some believe; nor as some believe and hold true, the ability and license to sin without penalty of perdition; but a living walking Holy Temple of the Lord.

Empowered for the first time with an ability to fight sin in our lives: if we "who so ever will" walk in and by the aid of that spirit, and not of the flesh.

Let it no longer be such a "great mystery": This Grace. Such Grace indeed.

The "Channel" can be disrupted in many ways, failure to follow Jesus Christ (a sin of omission), false teaching, willfully sinning and perhaps the worse by modern standards, failure to persevere or overcome the world. we will now explore a few more of them. More on each subject will be made available from our library archive, located on our site map page. Now a few more "nuggets" of perfect truth:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: - Ephesians 2:8

Faith: 4102 pistis *pis'-tis*

4102 pistis *pis'-tis* from 3982; persuasion, i.e. credence; moral conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), especially reliance upon Christ for salvation; abstractly, constancy in such profession; by extension, the system of religious (Gospel) truth itself:--assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity. see GREEK for 3982

Think my beloved, like a Hebrew, or an Apostle... it is not hard. This concept of faith.

Perhaps it is most evident in that we as a nation, and yes in most of the world, have now come to equate "believing" at it's worse case scenario: "I believe I will have another beer". Talk about missing a mark... missing a mark indeed. Explore the deep root of faith through the eyes of an Apostle; into truth, and yes life more abundantly. The deep root of faith grounded in love: a faith no longer of complacency. But a faith of action; as stated by our brother in Christ - James, in the same book bearing his name.

Tear down this veil about your eyes, and know that we war not with flesh and blood. Nor with each other. But we war with the powers of darkness, and their ability to cloud men's minds: for the thoughts you possess may not be your own. Avoid deception. Place and turn all thought unto obedience to Christ; follow Him and the Holy Word. Measure and place each thought upon the scale of God's word; the only true measure of truth.

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. - Matthew 1:20

Of which of the senses that we possess, did the angel communicate to Joseph? Taste, Touch, Sight, and Sound? Smell? None of these... he used thought. He appeared to Joseph in a dream. My beloved brethren, Satan is a fallen angel... and the father of lies and deception. The battlefield is in the mind. And..

Satan works best when he is unrecognized.

Renew your minds.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. - Romans 12:2

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. - Galatians 5:13

In service and in love. For there is no greater love than to lay one's life down for another. In service. Using our called liberty, for the building up and advancement of the body. Crucifying self; the flesh...it is only then that true liberty can be fulfilled, and obtained. True liberty obtained is gain. Gaining by losing. Our loss then becomes our gain.

To crucify flesh, and gain or regain our capacity to love. Perfect love; the very nature of God.

For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. - Galatians 5:14

"I HAD A DREAM".

One night I had a dream. I dreamed I was with the Lord. He looked at me, and said "Pick up your cross and FOLLOW ME". We walked and walked and walked. After a while I looked up, and He was nowhere in sight. Finally I spotted Him on a hillside far away. I ran to him and said "My Lord, What Happened"? With eyes of pain and anguish, He looked at me. And then He replied, "You Didn't Follow Me". - "the Phoenix"

The above "I Had a Dream" was the first message God ever gave me to preach in a small Missionary Baptist Church in Batesville, AR. Originally I had another message prepared, but some 72 hours prior to when I was to preach he gave me "I Had A Dream". Now three years later, how it rang so true. For all of the congregation. The pastor there when asked if he would ever leave his full time job to pastor the church, replied: "No, I like my daytime job too much". Not quite overcoming the world, wouldn't you agree? Nor putting Jesus Christ, and God's kingdom first.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? - Mark 8:35-37

No small wonder perhaps why this pastor has been set with health problems of late. God will sometimes remove one's capability at secular employment, so that persons energies may be redirected to the advancement of the kingdom.

People do make mistakes. And our Heavenly Father is forgiving. But there is a drastic difference between a mistake and a lifestyle. A current lifestyle of sin and/or a constant omission or failure to follow Jesus Christ, and following the guidelines given to us in His word. A failure to love as deeply, as our hearts can

muster, in full increase of capacity, and without prejudice. I believe you know what I mean.

And in the case with the aforementioned pastor, if I never spoke out against such train of thought, and the deception of Satan: If I never said a word, how could I profess to love this man. All men and women? What price do you place upon a soul? You cannot, for each and every soul is priceless. I war not against flesh and blood. I war against the powers of darkness and the deception of Satan. Remember Satan works best when he is unrecognized. I war against "religious tradition" and false teaching, and stand upon truth. With faith, the truth of God's Holy Word.

In the words of the great reformers. "Corum Deo" - Meaning the eyes of God are upon us. Upon us all.

Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; ²⁰Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. - James 5:19-20 (KJV)

My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth, and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins. - James 5:19-20 (NAS)

And what of the following scripture from Mark Chapter 8:

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? - Mark 8:35-37

A person who keeps his or her life in order to satisfy desires and goals apart from God, and His goals for the furtherance of His Kingdom, ultimately loses life. Not only does that person lose the promise of eternal life, he or she loses the fullness of life promised to those who believe. Life upon this material world and is but for a fleeting instant; eternity is forever.

What shall a man, or woman, give in exchange for his/her soul?

Of the 24 hours in a day, how many hours on the average are spent by Christians, and people like yourself, to the furtherance of His kingdom? 2? 4? Perhaps more? Or perhaps much, much less...

Is this the loosing of one's life that Jesus Christ, your Lord and Savior spoke of? Do not be deceived. No it is not. These are truly the latter days. What is your level of commitment?

Perhaps, as most now day have forgotten, or never really known what it has meant to follow Christ. In a Gallop Poll, 80% of Americans profess to be "Christian". However on the other hand, "or wing shall I say" only 4% of those same Americans, are "practicing Christians"; the remaining 76% are nominal at best. The latter figure was obtained by placing such questions to them as:

Do you steal supplies from your office or workplace? Have you ever cheated, and do you cheat? Have you ever told a lie? Recently? Even to protect someone's feelings? Do you attend church regularly? Do you tithe? (Only 15 percent of those 80% polled faithfully do). I think you get the point. As to the tithe, many today consider that a part of "legalism", the law of Moses. And then for that reason it should not be followed or is not necessary. May I remind everyone, about Abram and the tithe, (Genesis 14:20), prior to the law. He gave the 10% to Melchizedek, the High Priest.

Just as Cain and Abel gave an offering of first fruits, and ok, well we all know how that ended up. The reason the tithe was placed into the "Law" was that it existed and had been established by God, prior to the Law.

Let us now continue: Ad that some have pursued money, above even at times; God.

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. - I Timothy 6:10

Money is a necessary fact even in ministry. But one must be careful. And briefly now an address to the "Seed Faith" of the televangelists. Yes, it is true that God wishes to prosper His children, and yes money must always be placed so to further His kingdom, However...

Receiving a financial blessing from God is about giving more. Give not to receive wealth; but give from love and a pure heart, and for the furtherance of the kingdom of God. If and when God blesses you with increase; increase your giving as you have been blessed. We are bought and paid for with a price and are not our own. Every good thing comes from God, and yes belongs to him. I truly believe, if I hear another "give a gift amount to match this bible verse, prosperity pledge" (such as \$66.12 for Psalms 66:12) I will spue.

Paula White and TBN (Air time July 2005) were more like a carney hawking their goods, then a bearer of the gospel of peace. Step right up, lay down your money and win the prize! I am sure that a lot of the work Mrs. White does is truly a good

work for the Lord, however she needs to reassess this one. In fact she needs to stop perverting scripture for worldly gain, as most “prosperity” preachers do. Just what will a man or woman gain, if they gain the whole world, to only lose their soul? And this is not the only message Paula White has perverted as well. Avoid her. To Mrs. White, your story on the turkeys was great. And yes God did increase the woman’s business. After the woman helped cook them, and didn’t ask for a return. An example of a pure heart toward giving. I trust that your vision will clear and you can see the difference. Brothers and Sisters, give not in the spirit, to obtain material wealth as some teach:

Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place . - Psalms 66:12

For...going through fire and water is a reference to going through trial and tribulation and then being brought into a place of abundance. A well watered place, a place of overflow. However, please note that in Psalms 66:13 the Psalmist sings:

I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows, - Psalms 66:13

Payment of the vows of worship and personal commitment. After they have been delivered to the place of abundance. What has this to do with paying \$66.12 to Paula White and TBN? Not much, in fact nothing at all. For if we really look at true prosperity verses prosperity as to worldly gain, they are as if night and day. For what is true abundance, but that abundance of the spiritual kingdom... abundance in faith... abundance in hope... and above all abundance in love. Abundance of that “peace” that only Jesus Christ can provide. The Overflow of the Spirit. And the Fruits There Of. The True Overflow. The Overflow of Grace. I believe that you can grasp what I mean. It is plain, as let’s say, “The Writing On The Wall”. As I believe that those that twist scripture and teach worldly wealth and gain over that of the spiritual, can perhaps grasp this:

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. - Revelation 3:15-18

And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his

goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? - Luke 16:1-11

And now a bit of back up and commentary for my preaching; courtesy of Barnes New Testament Notes, on Luke 16:11:

True riches. The graces of the gospel; the influences of the Spirit; eternal life, or religion. The riches of this world are false, deceitful, not to be trusted the treasures of heaven are true, faithful, never-failing, (Barnes)

I believe perhaps you can see or grasp the point. Which will you dear reader reach out and grasp for? Unrighteous mammon and wealth of the world... or the true riches? Dear reader, I am only but trying to lift you up... a notch or two higher than perhaps you are. Go deep. Go deep into the word of God. Have vision. See the Unseen. Go Deep.

If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. - I Timothy 6:3-6

No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. - Luke 16:13

But give cheerfully and with love. Give as you have been blessed, above the tithe. Those that give the minimum will receive their portion. And above all,

brothers and sisters **give of your time and natural and spiritual gifts to the building up of the Body of Christ**, and the furtherance of His kingdom. **Be a "channel" yourselves.** Any other purpose is disrupting a channel of faith. The channel of faith.

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? - James 2:20

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. - James 2:26

A living faith that manifests itself daily. Not to be confused with salvation by works. One cannot give only in the hope or purpose of receiving wealth; for to covet after money is to err from the faith. Channel broken. And planting a "seed" of money can never replace personal evangelism and commitment to Christ. It can never replace Love. Ye cannot serve both God and (wealth) Mammon . Oh Oh, guess the TV preachers forgot that one. Brothers and Sisters, always look at what all of the Bible says on a topic.

It quite amazes me sometimes many of the televangelists with their high priced sets. I am not speaking of visual teaching aids, but to the glitz and "eye candy". Just not quite my cup of tea at all, nor do I believe what our Lord had in mind. Give me the "trenches" any day. I would be blessed if my 1973 Ford F100 ("The Old Girl"), or 1986 Horizon where just mechanically sound. But God provides, and most of the time they get me where I need to be. Praise the Lord for that spit, string, wire and duct tape.

I am led... (and when I say led, I mean by our Lord) that yes a modest income and modest housing is fine for those in full time ministry; although that is more than our Lord had Isn't it?

But when Dr. Frederick K. C. Price stands and boasts of his 5 checking accounts... I believe he misses the point. In all fairness, yes he is correct, that when you tithe and yes give offerings to God, you shall prosper. And yes, Satan will use the lost sometimes to deplete your resources, of both time and money. True, discernment must be used, as there are abusers and users out there. I believe in helping people whole heartedly, and do so. However people must be willing to help themselves. But...how do you stand before Jesus Christ at judgment, with 5 checking accounts and children (innocents) starving in the world? Or anyone else truly in need? That one is beyond me. Or any Christian, professing to be Christian, (the light and salt) reclining back on their coffer. I believe our Lord said to lay our treasures up in heaven, and not here on earth. Just glad I am not in his/their shoes.

But then again, I prefer my sandals anyway.

Not being critical, I love everyone! If I didn't, please trust, I wouldn't bother. God just lays this stuff on me. "It's A God Thing". I even had to look up coffer in the dictionary.

Have you ever skipped weekday church or bible study to watch your favorite show on television? Wednesday nights "Lost" viewers are perhaps just that. I find it quite non coincidental that ABC should schedule it's airing on Wednesday evening. Have you just had to watch that episode of a Soap Opera, Oprah or Dr. Phil, that football or basketball game, and missed and/or set aside bible study? Ever watch risqué television programming, or perhaps violence? The true sadness is that many viewers watching this are supposed to be Christian.

Or perhaps the "Reality" television that has swept the nation. Reality? Send them to the trenches of the poor and afflicted, of the alcoholic and the drug addict, and of the homeless and hungry, of the widows and orphans; of the streets and yes even the suburbs throughout our nation, and then they will find reality.

Reality? But then again, this world is the true dramatic, and the word of God, and His kingdom, the true reality. This is the reality. All else is the dramatic; or mere fantasy.

Now in all fairness, a decent and good "reality" show is Extreme Makeover Home Edition; sort of a secular Habitat for Humanity, with a bit of added drama. Airing at Sunday 7pm central time, get your vcr's ready for this one. Several episodes have featured prayer, and acknowledgement of God; praise God for small wonders indeed. I will tip my hat to the design team and ABC for this one, and the work they do. To Ty Pennington and the rest of the design team; it is in many ways a work or labor of love. But then again a labor of love is not really a labor after all. No, not at all.

And now once again to those Christians in name only:

What happened to come out and be ye separate? Drink a little bit to much? On occasion? Unforgiving? Harbor a "Root of Bitterness"? Ever wish that you had anything of your neighbor's? (Coveting). Ever gossip? - Perhaps one of the most detrimental to the Body of Christ. Ever place anything before God in your life? Such is idolatry.

No small wonder that the church as a whole is loosing ground. But to everything there is a season, and yes seasons do change. But "the Channel" must be and can be repaired, so grace may flow. And to the repair tool? In many instances genuine Repentance. Turning one's life around.

Recall the parable of the Prodigal Son. And return. Repair the channel, and once again return to the grip of Grace. "In the Grip of Grace". The past is but the past.

Rise above it. The past cannot be changed, forget the past, God lovingly awaits... with your future.

Trust in Him and have "faith". And I promise He will fill you, and give you the "run" of your life.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: - II Timothy 4:7

Run your course well...and keep "the faith". That "Channel" of faith open.

And yes... we must always overcome our flesh and the world. And yes many need to remember in many instances, it can be the little foxes that spoil the vine.

My brothers and sisters, turn from "religious denomination traditions", and back to the God of the Bible. If it contradicts scripture, it is not of God. But of man.

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. - II Peter 2:1

And my prayer:

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. - Ephesians 3:17-19

But beloved, beware:

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. - I Corinthians 10:12

"Follow Jesus". And in the words of the great reformers. "Corum Deo" - Meaning the eyes of God are upon you.

Those that know me personally know that quotations or bits of wisdom are one of my favorite things. In closing I would like to leave you with one of my favorites, one that graces the wall of my office above my desk:

"Who will, can; Who tries, does; and Who loves, lives". -Anne McCaffrey

Who loves lives. No other commentary should be necessary.

“the Phoenix”

I strongly urge everyone to visit our archives page. The link to it is in the top left margin of this page. Located there are additional studies, and “the stones”. I have no doubt that they will be a blessing to many, if not all.