

# Grace or Curse?

## *The Fine Line*

✚ The misguided Pentecostal will swear that their desire for more money and possessions is the grace and will of God. ✚ The “flaming” religious homosexual will confidently boast God made them like that and by and through His grace loves and accepts them “as they are.” ✚ Many professing Christian Fundamentalists gradually, yet boldly, return to the daily material issues of life because they have been saved – and doesn’t everyone know that “once saved always saved?”

The examples of similar thinking are endless, all with the same core theme – they define and measure grace by its fulfilling MY immediate desires, cravings and wants. Some who are the most confident (calling it “faith”) are in great error and danger!

And ALL of us are, in one way or another, led astray by our Pentecostal, professing Christian Fundamentalists, religious homosexual . . . leanings.

There is indeed a fine line between grace and a curse, one we often fail to distinguish to our harm.

The temptation is to “seek first” grace rather than “seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness” (seeking first the Grace-Giver) – and, paradoxically, this temptation more often comes after having received real grace, after extended times of blessings.

✚ If something is good, we reason, why not make every effort get more?  
Because a good gift is measured precisely by the Gift-Giver for our good.

. . .give me neither poverty nor riches,  
but give me only my daily bread.  
Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you  
and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’  
Or I may become poor and steal,  
and so dishonor the name of my God. Pr 30:8 - 9

Food is good and necessary, but too much is unhealthy and damaging.  
Money and time are important, but too much causes all kinds of problems!  
There is a difference between sex with a wife and with a prostitute!

✚ Why not try to obtain grace as easily and “directly” as possible?  
Because the greater part of delight is based on its’ Source and understanding, God not only is the sole source of all true grace, He controls our delight in everything, good or bad. Grace, like happiness, is

not received directly, but indirectly – true grace is the product of “seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be given [graced] to you.”

If God is for us, He will not let us enjoy counterfeit graces. While those He has not chosen may enjoy false grace since:

God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. <sup>32</sup>

Ro 1:24 – 32

These are the things they enjoy! Many, in fact, call it God’s grace, but it is, in fact, their curse! They have mistaken the “gift” (what they lustfully crave and enjoy) as grace because they failed to heed the instructions of the Jesus Christ – which we ALL do from time to time!

It is only by grace that God does not “give” ALL of us “over . . .”

✚ “I am saved! Praise God!” Since I have “found” salvation maybe the necessity of

“seeking” is not as great as it once was.

Life is not meant to become more trouble-free (with fewer trials, temptations and difficulties), but we are expected to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” <sup>2 Peter 3:18</sup> so the harder things we do encounter become easier!

Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge,  
but he who hates correction is stupid. <sup>Pr 12:1</sup>

Meaningful and growing disciplines, focused more and better on “seeking first . . .,” are the key, and only way, to face life’s ever-increasing trials, temptations and difficulties successfully – success being measured

by our growing "grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." How else do we expect, in the end, our lives to be measured?

*Isaiah 12* is a very short, but rich, chapter – outlining our increasing need for salvation, a Savior and His grace:

In that day you will say:

"I will praise you, O LORD.

Although you were angry with me,  
your anger has turned away  
and you have comforted me.

Surely God **is** my salvation;

I will trust and not be afraid.

The LORD, the LORD, **is** my strength and my song;

he has **become** my salvation."

With joy you will draw water

from the wells of salvation.

In that day you will say:

"Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name;  
make known among the nations what he has done,  
and proclaim that his name is exalted.

Sing to the LORD, for he has done glorious things;

let this be known to all the world.

Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,

for great is the Holy One of Israel among you."

The greater part and need of salvation is in the present and future. Our past salvation is great, but only to the extent it is ready and available for the present and future.

To be saved, we must remember:

All gifts are not grace.

The devil is ready and willing to tempt, and lead us astray, with "good gifts."

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. <sup>James 1:17</sup>

Other passages in Isaiah focus on the immediate and daily need of God's true grace and the "key to this treasure":

O LORD, be gracious to us;  
we long for you.

Be our strength **every** morning,  
our salvation in time of distress. Isa 33:2

The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high;  
he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness.  
He will be the sure foundation for your times,  
a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge;  
the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure. Isa 33:5 - 6