

# Reflections on the Possibility and Necessity of Stacking Grace

How many times have we been given Grace that we didn't act on and, as a result, lost it in reverting to our previous way of faulty thinking – “I need to . . .” “I have to . . .” finding us back where we began (or worse)?

The main cause for this? Not understanding the “basics” of Grace. For with (every?) Grace comes associated Grace-faith to use, grow and protect this Grace for its God-designed and intended purposes. You will notice many of the following *Bible* verses were also used as support for the previous *Can We Know How & Where We Stand with God? Is There a Reliable Test?* Posting because Grace and Salvation are so inextricably linked that in essence and conclusion: true special and personal Grace is the ultimate sign in anyone's life that they are an authentic Christian – saving and growing (“stacking”) Grace until death. And this is not (as too often mistakenly taught and thought) measured by “common” grace, the level of a person's accumulated “things” that last only until death – God's special and personal Grace is salvation followed by His personally assigned and provided for good works He prepares in advance, personally and specifically, for all Christians leading to His promised eternal life (glorification) at death. So we can reasonably say that God's special and personal Grace is how we know where we stand with God.

We may, however, mistakenly act as if Grace is the end-goal and answer of any current and earthly need or want – the reality is that Grace is a new beginning, a starting place of The Holy Spirit working through us to do the “good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Eph 2:10

## These good works?

- “Those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son.” Ro 8:29  
We must have God's Grace to read and understand His Word, to hear and follow His Voice – because/to:

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is [Grace] from God. 2Co 5:17-18

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! 2Pe 3:18

All our good works “which God prepared in advance for us to do” (any meaningful good works we do) are based on a Grace foundation.

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.” Mt 7:24-25

Or looked at another way, if we break Life into its 10 commonly considered elements, these personal Grace goods works are meant to help and make us Better in one, or more, ways - spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally, relationally, in work, rest, finances, cleaning & upkeep, leisure & entertainment and personal grooming & hygiene – we are each a “handful” needing a lot of Grace in all areas of Life!

- Are based on “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.” Jn 6:29
- Are completed with and through God's associated specific Graces given for their completion (not on anything we supposedly “give” or “sacrifice for” Him):

God is able to [and will – He has to if we are doing the good works He planned for us to do!] make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work [He planned in advance for us to do]. <sup>2Co 9:8</sup>

Jesus said and promised:

“Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. <sup>Jn 6:27</sup>

“Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things [all our earthly needs – our food, clothes, shelter . . . everything we need to live] will be given [Graced] to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” <sup>Mt 6:33-34</sup>

- **Requires God’s wisdom-Grace:**

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives [Graces] generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given [Graced] to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does. <sup>Jas 1:5-8</sup>

- **Is active**, requires repentance to take God’s new path for us versus our old ways:

Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. <sup>Phil 3:13-14</sup>

One key sign of growing and maturing Grace is reducing the number of times God has to give us the same Grace before we take and use it for its intended purpose rather than failing to take it or, worse yet, taking and hoarding it to our ultimate damage versus the benefits to ourselves and others.

- Grace can be thought of as the talents God gives and holds us responsible for properly using – Jesus, in one of His several promises, tells us “the kingdom of heaven will be like” . . .

“A man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. **But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.**

“After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.’

“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

“The man with the two talents also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.’

“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

“Then the man who had received the one talent came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. [You never Graced me anything! What I have I earned myself – and gave you some!] So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’

“His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

“‘Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’” Mt 25:30

Great pictures of the difference between living by Grace and faith versus living by and for self – wrongly considering Grace [Christ] as “only if really, really needed.”

However, Grace is not a choice of an authentic Christian, but a daily and ever-increasing basic need and reality. This is how we “stack” Grace rather than considering and treating Grace as isolated (“one-off”) gifts; for Grace does not work without the support of other, more and increasing, Graces – we are to stack God’s Grace high and wide!

“Hit or miss” Grace is like hit or miss exercise, it does not result in or build anything meaningful or lasting – both require discipline. For Grace this mean “stacking” of Grace in our growing in God’s Grace so we will find the following true of and for us:

The righteous will flourish like a palm tree,  
they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon;  
planted in the house of the LORD,  
they will flourish in the courts of our God.  
They will still bear fruit in old age,  
they will stay fresh and green. <sup>Ps 92:12-14</sup>

Those who hope in the LORD  
will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint. <sup>Isa 40:31</sup>

Neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow [by His Grace]. <sup>1Co 3:7</sup>

### A Great Promise for Those (and Only Those) in God’s Grace

Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the

incomparable riches of his **grace**, expressed in his kindness **to us in Christ Jesus**.

Eph 2:4-7