

The following outlines an excellent 17-18 weeks Sermon (or Sunday School) Series

What I Wish I Had Known About God 25 Years Ago

There is logic, order and depth to the things of God! Yet, for whatever reason, when people finally get up the nerve to go to Church no one offers [not thinking?, lazy? Don't know themselves? . . .] to walk them "through" the basics so, if they continue attending (which most do not), they may never "get it."

Forever is a long time – thus, we would be wise to use here and now the best we can!

1. What is the point?

. . . the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls ^{1Pe 1:9}

2. How are we saved?

. . . it is by grace you have been saved ^{Eph 2:5 & 2:8}

3. What is grace?

. . . it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. ^{Eph 2:9}

4. What is the specific grace by which we are saved?

. . . it is by grace you have been saved, through faith ^{Eph 2:8}

"Salvation is found in no one else [other than Jesus Christ], for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." ^{Ac 4:12}

5. How do we receive this grace?

God . . . gives grace to the humble. ^{Pr 3:34, Jas 4:6 & 1Pe 5:5}

6. How do we "do" humility?

. . . Repent!

God's kindness leads you toward repentance. ^{Ro 2:4}

God exalted Jesus Christ to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give [grace] repentance and forgiveness of sins. ^{Ac 5:31}

7. What is the **only** reasonable expectation and evidence we are, in fact, saved?

We are spiritually alive.

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." ^{Jn 3:3}

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ. ^{2Co 5:17-18}

8. How "broad" is grace?

Any expectation that grace is simply for "spiritual" (forever) and not material (now) issues is wrong and foolish.

I [Jesus] have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ^{Jn 3:12}

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! ^{2Pe 3:17}

9. What grace is not!
· When we begin to think what we are doing somehow benefits God, not us.
And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to observe the LORD'S commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good? ^{Dt 10:12-13}
<u>Wrong!</u> --> Our thinking or saying to God: "I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow." ^{Luke 19:21}
"Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" ^{Ro 11:35}
· Expect or think grace is supporting, condoning or confirming us in sin.
10. If we are saved by grace, how are we "kept" until we die?
It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. ^{Gal 5:1}
All who rely on observing the law are under a curse. ^{Gal 3:10}
You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. ^{Gal 5:4}
11. If salvation is by grace (a gift) are we to (can we) do anything?
Typically grace works through us - giving us the power to do what God wants us to do that we could not otherwise do without His grace.
Offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. ^{Ro 12:1}
"Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock." ^{Mt 7:24}
... we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do ^{Eph 2:10}
Jesus said, "Whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God." ^{Jn 3:21}
12. How do we accomplish the good works God has prepared in advance for us to do?
I can do everything through him who gives me strength. ^{Phil 4:13}
"I [Jesus] am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." ^{Jn 15:5}
13. What is the #1 work we are to do and pursue?
Jesus said, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one [Jesus] he has sent." ^{Jn 6:29}
14. How are we supposed to find the time to adequately pursue all of this grace?
Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things [all our material needs] will be given [graced] to you as well. ^{Mt 6:33}
15. What is the foundation for seeking first God's kingdom and righteousness?
The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. ^{Heb 4:12}
16. Just the <i>New Testament</i> ?
"He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'" ^{Lk 16:31}
17. What is the purpose and value of the Law?
The law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. ^{Gal 3:24}