

Grace Produces Thankfulness



Grace (Part 13)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, as I continue to share with you on our special theme summed up in one beautiful word of measureless meaning: Grace.

In my talk yesterday I explained that one main function of Grace is to teach us. That's something which many Christians don't properly understand. Law teaches from without but grace teaches from within. And the teaching of law doesn't work, not because there's anything wrong with the law, but because there's something in us that's incapable of responding to the law. There's a rebel in us that just doesn't obey what the law says.

But when grace comes, the first thing that grace does is begin to work upon that rebel that's within and change the nature of that rebel. And then as the rebel is changed and he loses his rebelliousness, grace begins to teach that converted rebel how to live as a true believer. So grace teaches us from within. And grace teaches us one thing, really, that sums up it all, grace teaches godliness. Grace will always make us increasingly godly as it operates in our lives. And anyone who is living a loose, careless, ungodly life is not living in the grace of God.

Well, today I'm going to speak about the first and most characteristic fruit of grace. What grace will produce in our lives as it operates in us and as it teaches us there will be certain specific manifest results. And I'm going to speak about the first one today. It's very definitely the first definite result of grace.

I've pointed out already that when we receive Christ, in Him we receive the grace of God. And that in Him we receive grace for grace. In other words, every grace that's in Jesus begins to be manifested in us. For every grace in Jesus, there's a corresponding grace that begins to operate in our lives. One vital area, the primary area that is affected when grace begins to operate in us, is the area of our lips. It's our speech that's changed.

I want to go back to the Old Testament to Psalm 45 verse 2 for a prophetic picture of Christ. This is what the Psalmist says. He's looking forward in the Spirit of God to the coming of the Messiah and to what He will be like, and he sings a

beautiful song of praise to him. This is what he says:

> "Thou art fairer than the sons of men; Grace is poured upon Thy lips; Therefore God has blessed Thee forever." (NASB)

Notice, the first most beautiful aspect of the Messiah that the Psalmist sees in Revelation. He sees the grace of God upon this beautiful person. And the first area that strikes him is the lips of Jesus. "Grace is poured upon thy lips..." Do you remember at one time the man who was sent to arrest Jesus by the religious leaders? They returned without Him and the leaders said, "Why didn't you bring Him?" Their reply was, "No one ever spoke like this man." That was grace poured upon His lips.

And the Psalmist goes on to say after that: "God has blessed thee forever." It's important to notice that "therefore." Jesus was not blessed because He was a favorite son. Jesus was blessed because He met the conditions to be blessed. And the first condition was, "the beauty of his lips," the grace of his speech. And because of that grace upon his lips, God blessed Him forever. And you see, with the corresponding grace upon our lips, we qualify for the same blessing, because Jesus didn't get it out of favoritism. He got it out of qualifying for it. And when we qualify we receive the same blessing.

This brings out a connection which is basic and fundamental between two phrases, to have grace and to be thankful. And I want to bring it out by quoting one verse in Hebrews chapter 12, verse 28. I'm going to quote this verse from two different versions. The first one is the King James and the second is the New American Standard, and I want you to notice a significant, apparent difference. First of all in the King James Version of Hebrews 12:28:

> "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." (KJV)

Notice, again, grace produces godliness. There's no other way to see it but that. But notice the phrase, "let us have grace, whereby we may serve God." Now I'll give you the same verse in the New American Standard version:

> "Therefore since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we many offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe." (NASB)

You see the difference? The King James says, "let us have grace"; the New American Standard says, "let us show gratitude." You say, "What's wrong with the translators? Why couldn't they agree?" Well they did agree. They just took different aspects of the same word. In the Greek language at the time of Paul to have grace meant to say thank you. It was the standard phrase for being thankful. So what I'm trying to bring out is, that you cannot have grace without being thankful. An unthankful person is out of the grace of God.

I have studied to some extent a number of languages. I started with Latin and then Greek, and I've also learned a number of modern languages. There's a whole group of languages called the "romance languages" which come out of Latin and if you know any of them, I think if you check in your mind, you'll find that in every one of them the word for "thank you" is directly related for the word for "grace." For instance in French, "thanks be to God" is grace a Dieu. "Grace" is thanks. In Italian if you want to say "thank you" you say grazie. In Spanish, which I never can pronounce, you say, gracias. I can't say that but you know what I am trying to say.

Anyhow, what I am trying to bring out is, the word for "thanks" is the word for "grace." So going back to our verse, Hebrews 12:28, the King James translates it, what I would say, literally: "Let us have grace." The New American Standard and most of the other modern versions say, "Let us show gratitude." But the point I'm trying to bring out is, and it's very, very important, you cannot have grace without gratitude. The words are tied together.

So the first manifestation of grace is being grateful. When we are not any longer truly thankful, we are out of grace.

I want to follow on just little further with this theme of how the grace of God will affect our speech. I want to read in Colossians chapter 3, verses 15 and 16:

> "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. [Notice that's a commandment. 'Be thankful.' The next verse goes on:] Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God." (NASB)

But again, the King James translation says, "...singing with grace in your heart." The same word. What a truth is brought out there. That if you're in the grace of God, you will be thankful. It's a necessary result of the grace of God. It cannot

be otherwise.

I pointed out yesterday that the grace of God teaches us. Paul takes this a step further today. He points out that when we're in the grace of God we can teach others. So he says, "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God." A person in the grace of God will be thankful, he'll be full of praise, he'll want to sing, he'll give vocal expression to what's in his heart, and he'll have something to pass on to his fellow believers. He'll be able to teach and admonish his fellow believers out of the grace of God that's operating in his heart and expressing itself primarily through thankfulness.

And then let's look at one more statement about grace that's made by Paul in Colossians. Grace in our speech, he says is like salt in our food. Colossians 4:6:

> "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person." (NASB)

What's the function of salt when we add it to our food? It's to make it flavorful. It's to make it attractive. It's to bring out the various flavors in that food that we want to savor to the full. And grace has the same function in relationship to our speech. It's like salt sprinkled on our lips. It brings out the flavor. It brings out the attractiveness. It makes our words attractive. It creates appetite in those who hear. They want more.

So as you go into this New Year, let me give you this piece of advice - practice being thankful. Let the grace of God be poured upon your lips. Don't be a grumbler. Don't be a complainer. Don't be always emphasizing the negative. Don't be critical and unthankful. Let the grace of God make you thankful, fill your lips with praise and enable you to admonish and teach your fellow believers.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time sharing another aspect of God's amazing grace.

Radio Program

Transcript: TS-R077-103-ENG
Last Updated: 12 Apr 2023
Website: derekprince.com

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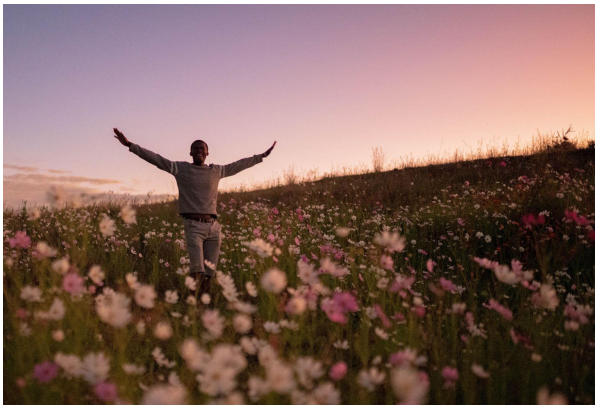

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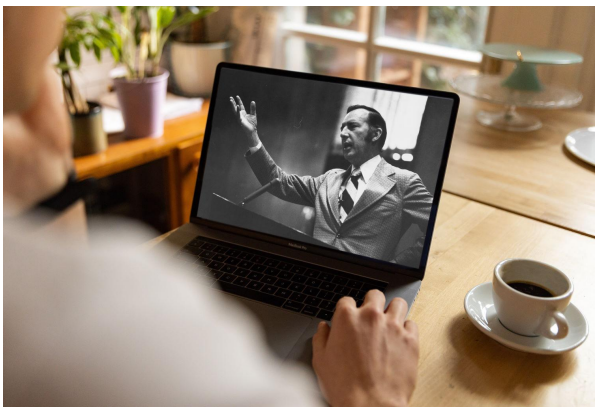

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