

The Gospel of Grace

What Was Lost Has Been Recovered In the Knowledge of the Truth

By B. D. Tate

We Got The Memo Of Grace Four Years Ago; Better Late Than Never.

We could have missed it all of our lives. We may have only understood the fullness of grace when we arrived in heaven. There is a saying that goes like this, ***“I wish I’d known then what I know now.”*** Some refer to this issue as, “Life is wasted on the young.” It means that it takes many of us all of our lives to get smart, wise up, and understand how things were meant to be. Still others refer to this life experience as the ***“school of hard knocks.”*** This means making it through life the hard way.

How many of us can think of things we have lived without because of ignorance? We just didn’t know or understand about ***call waiting***. We just didn’t know about ***system restore*** on our computer. We didn’t know or understand how ***GPS*** works. I was mowing my son in law’s lawn for him while we were visiting Holly because he was away on a week of training. He bought a new mower and as I was using it I thought to myself “Why did he buy this mower? It is hard to push. Furthermore, you have to empty out the bag when the grass clippings fill it many times. That means you have to stop and unload every so often. In contrast, my mower is light, easy to push and is a mulching mower which means it deposits the clippings back into the lawn. When we talked about my experience with his new mower he asked, “How did you like the new mower with the self propelling feature?” I said, “Well, what do you mean?” He said, “Dad, didn’t you use the extra lever at the top of the handle to help propel the mower?” I said, “Uh, no. I didn’t know what that was for...” I wish I’d known then what I know now!

How silly I felt thinking that he'd made a mistake going with this super heavy mower only to find out it is self propelled. **I'd spent the time pushing something that was made to be self "pushing."** It is entirely funny and I wondered if he couldn't help himself in bringing it up at work or with his friends. I mean, how silly for his father in law to completely miss that feature on his mower and spend the time pushing (and I mean it wasn't easy to push), to mow his lawn. Also, the mower has a mulching setup and meant I didn't need to keep emptying the collection bag of clippings. In other words, his mower is superior to my mower in every way. The problem was I didn't know or understand it. **My ignorance meant I was missing out and I was doing things the hard way.**

The gospel of grace can be just like this. Many of us have grown up understanding Christianity requires of us to push and push hard—in fact the more you push the more spiritual you are considered. We've been taught that God is demanding of us to love Him with all our heart and our neighbor as our self (Matt. 22:37). We've understood that the Ten Commandments are to be kept as much as possible. We've understood that we are to deny ourselves and pick up our cross to follow Jesus (Luke 9:23). We've understood that we must not love our family, father, mother, brother, sister, sons, and daughters, more than God (Luke 14:26). We've grown up knowing that we must perform making sure we pray, read the bible, go to church, and witness to our faith among many other things. We've grown up in others words, **commanded to push and push hard.**

I've heard some people say, *"When I was a sinner it was easier; I just did whatever I felt like."* Then most of us have responded by saying or thinking things like, *"Well, that is the cost of serving the Lord."* All of us have been pushing ourselves to pick up our cross and follow Jesus knowing that He said, "Unless you are willing to forsake all you cannot be my disciple."

We remember the old mower and how light and easy it was compared to the difficulty of being a true Christian. Then we look at the new life in Christ and it is supposed to be superior in every way to the old one. **We haven't experienced it like that but we know that's what the Word of**

God means. So, we live our Christian life as best we can and at times we experience joy, love, and peace. We look forward to the time in heaven when all of this burden will be over and we can rest. Have you ever driven by a cemetery and seen the large letters “RIP?” Did you think to yourself, “I wish that was me?”

I had the opportunity to mow my son in law’s lawn again. I got his mower out and re-examined that lever. I turned it on and then pulled on that lever and “pow” that mower lurched forward and I almost had to run to stay with it. It was like an eager dog wanting to go on a walk that I had to hold it back. What a huge difference it was and the burden of pushing that mower was a thing of the past. I remembered thinking when I had mowed the front yard the first time that I had a little dread of mowing the back yard because it was twice the size. This time, using the self propelling option, I looked forward to it because it was fun.

Only The Apostles Revealed Grace—Especially Paul

The gospel of grace is an amazing revelation found only in the letters written to the churches. Paul the apostle is the one who profoundly changes the gospel from works to grace. Can you imagine the struggle Paul might have had in presenting this truth? He’d been trained in the Old Testament Law. Listen to His description:

Phip. 3: If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, **I more so:**

5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a **Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;**

6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; **concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.**

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

It must have been mind blowing to him to receive from Jesus the revelation of grace. He was fully convinced of the need to keep the law in every possible way. He grew up basing his whole life on reading it,

studying it, living to it, and teaching others to do the same. Now, after having a miraculous encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus (Acts 9), he is sent away to understand the new creation. Then, after receiving revelation of it he begins to preach and write saying things that practically no one else was saying like:

Ro 3:20 **Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified** in His sight, **for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**

Ro 3:21 **But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed**, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

Ro 3:27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. **By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.**

Ro 3:28 Therefore we **conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.**

Ro 7:6 **But now we have been delivered from the law**, having died to what we were held by, **so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit** and not in the oldness of the letter.

Ga 2:16 **"knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.**

Ga 3:2 This only I want to learn from you: **Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?**

Ga 3:5 **Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? --**

Ga 3:11 **But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith."**

Ga 3:12 **Yet the law is not of faith**, but "the man who does them shall live by them."

Ga 3:24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, **that we might be justified by faith.**

Ga 5:4 **You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.**

Ga 5:18 **But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.**

Php 3:9 and be found in Him, **not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;**

Paul, John, and Peter, all preached and wrote of this new way in Christ; this new way of grace and the gift of righteousness. **God is giving to us what we could never earn on our own.** If righteousness is up to us we will all perish.

Ro 4:16 **Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed**, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

God who is rich in mercy and loving us with an everlasting love, sent His only begotten son to fulfill the law and take away its claims against us. Jesus defeated the power of the law to judge us by satisfying all of its demands. Then once having taken away our sins, our reproaches, and guilt; Jesus sat down at the right hand of God and ever lives to make intercession for us (Heb 9:25). This intercession is not here and there, once in a while, or only when we fall or need it; **this intercession is twenty-four hours seven days a week and in full session always.** Jesus has become our life (Col. 3:4). Jesus is our victory and right standing with God always. When we come to Him we have come to the **Self Propelling One!** If our Christian experience has been overwhelming, difficult, hard, and always a struggle, we need to re-examine the lever—the lever of grace!

We no longer are under the old ways because they have been satisfied and now have passed away—they are no longer valid. We live to the new life in Christ Jesus.

Col. 2: 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,** 14 **having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us,** which was contrary to us. **And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.** 15 **Having disarmed principalities and powers,** He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

The Law Demands; But Grace Has Supplied

The law demanded of us “Thou shalt not.” The requirements were beyond our natural ability to meet them. The law found fault always; but grace has established in us righteousness because of Jesus. The law burdened us and put the responsibility for our actions upon us; grace has taken the burden from us and is responsible to give us all things in Christ freely. Under the law we had to earn our way; under grace our way is given to us in Christ. Under law we never really rested in our relationship to God because it was so conditional upon our obedience; under grace it’s not our obedience to the law but our obedience to faith in His Grace!

Ro 3:24 **being justified freely by His grace** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Ro 5:2 through whom also we have **access by faith into this grace in which we stand,** and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Ro 5:15 **But the free gift** is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, **much more the grace of God and the**

gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

Ro 11:6 **And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace.** But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

This is profound good news that we are no longer under the examination of the law. We are no longer being judged by God as those who are fallen. We are under grace because of Jesus. **What Jesus did for us is finished and complete.** When we become born again we are set free from this life and its burdens to walk in newness of life. What is this newness of life?

Matt. 11: 28 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, **and I will give you rest.**

29 "**Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me,** for I am gentle and lowly in heart, **and you will find rest for your souls.**

30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Jesus said for us to become linked with Him. He has taken all of the need, the burden, the requirements, and condemnation upon Himself.

John 12:32 "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, **will draw all (Judgment) to Myself."**

Then, having died to it (condemnation for sin) for us has been raised from the dead to new life in God. When we become born again, we too have been raised from the dead with Him. **We now live to resurrected life;** therefore, there is now no condemnation to those who walk according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:1).

Ro 6:5 **For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,**

We Are Identified With His Resurrection

What does this life look like? It casts away the law and the old man (the old marriage) and turns to the new man (new marriage) and lives to Jesus. We no longer live to regulations and laws we live to a new relationship in Christ. This is grace and when lived to fulfills Jesus promise ***“I will give you rest! Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me; For I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and my burden light!”***

How do we find rest for our souls? We find it in His grace that has accomplished our righteousness in this life (1 John 4:17). We find it by letting go of the law to become yoked with Him (Gal. 5:4). We find it by stop pushing (and pushing hard) for it to rest in the gift of right standing. By faith we hold onto the new lever and let the Spirit propel us—the resurrection life within us. We stop judging and being judged ***to rest*** in Jesus as our righteousness not just for a moment but always. We have been justified and we stand in His grace always.

We are no longer ours but belong to Him. He has become our life and as we live to our relationship to Jesus we are freed from the law. We are no longer under its claims and its curse (Gal. 3:13); we are under grace and the liberty of the blessings of Jesus. God no longer sees us as sinners but He sees us (in Jesus) as sons and daughters!

When we see Jesus in all is grace towards us; God sees us in faith.

What does grace do for us? It sets us free from the burden and the labor of being on our own. **We no longer are responsible except to remain grace minded. We live to grace...**

The Fruits of Grace

The fruits of understanding and walking in this ***forever truth*** are the ***removal of fear***. We lose the fear of judgment and of failure—for we died with Him on the cross. We lose the fear of not pleasing the Lord. We are forgiven of all our sins, past, present, and future. **We stand in**

His righteousness because we accepted Jesus as our Lord. **Live to Jesus this pleases the Lord always.**

We are ***no longer lost in discouragement*** because Jesus is our life. The expectations of our life have died with the old sin nature and now we live to the new creation (II Cor. 5:17). We are to live by faith in what God has done for us in Jesus. We are one in the Lord (I Cor. 6:17). We are never alone or forsaken again. When God sees us; He sees us in Jesus. When we live, we live to the One who died for us. All that we do now that is by faith in His grace counts; all that we do back under the law is of no value—a waste of time. What we do ***for*** God's blessing is nothing (without Christ); what we do ***because*** of God's blessing is everything (in Christ).

We lack nothing because we have the greatest being there is living in us. What do we lack that is not in Him? God has supplied all that we need in Him (Phip. 4:19): wisdom, righteousness, redemption, sanctification, healing, provision, guidance, protection, and peace. God has helped us (II Cor. 2:6). God has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness (II Pet. 1:3). We have the greatest gift there is, we have the divine nature in us...this means as we understand and assert these things into our life (as a gift to us); **we are accessing grace...**

God is not calling us back to obey the law; He is calling us to obedience of faith. This is faith that hears the gospel of grace, believes it, stands in it, and asserts it into our life. This is ***works of righteousness(John 6:29)***, to believe in Him in us! He is our life, our peace, our strength, our truth, our righteousness, what we do with Him are the treasures of God! These are the works that we do ***because*** of Jesus in us (James 2:20).

Not Experiencing It?

If we are not experiencing the fullness of grace in our lives it is because we are ***still*** under works (sometimes subtly), under the law, and pushing and pushing hard...sometimes it's because we didn't know or understand how grace operates. We can miss grace because we don't

believe, because we are ignorant, and because we don't stand in it. **We can miss grace because we don't apply or assert it into our lives.**

If we are feeling burdened with Christianity we have gotten the message wrong. If we hear that we are no longer under the law and think that we are free to do whatever we want as in sin or anything ungodly, **we are listening with the flesh and sin nature—not by the Spirit.** If we are still under guilt, shame, reproach, fear, and condemnation; **we are not accessing grace. We are still pushing and pushing hard to earn something we have been given already in Christ.** We are still pushing the mower that was made to self propel. **Christ is our life and our propellant.** Grace leads us to life, to overcome all sin and addiction, to live in the liberty of the Spirit. Grace leads us to freedom from sin by God's Spirit.

Ro 6:7 **For he who has died has been freed from sin.**

For some there is the need to “get off the fence.” For some of us we simply have not believed. We are still **babes in Christ** and not exercising faith in God's grace. We still talk the old ways; we still think and act as if nothing has changed **in what we see in us.** For some the idea is expressed as *“what if it doesn't work?”* Or, *“I tried it and it didn't work.”* These comments reflect that there is still too much “unbelief” happening in our heart. The unbelief outweighs faith and makes us timid, doubtful, and unwilling to be bold. **Where does boldness come from?** It comes from being convinced (established) of the truth and acting upon it. When we are convinced by the Word of God through the revelation of the Spirit these comments won't matter anymore. We won't be worried about it failing **we'll be pressing on to stand in the victory of the truth.** We won't be held back by failure **but overcome it to see results.**

Conclusion: The Gospel of Grace Produces Rest

We rest in His grace. We let the Spirit do the work and stop pushing. When I pushed the lawn mower the self propelling feature was not being used. When I used the feature, I no longer needed to push. Grace

works this way. When I push, try to do, and put the burden on me, God's life in me (the self propelling feature of grace), is not at work. When I trust in the Lord and lean on His grace, I'm activating this self propelling feature of Christ in me. If I'm working God isn't; if I let God work I no longer need to—**that's rest**. If what I'm describing seems farfetched, out of touch with our reality, distant, or void; it is because we are still carnal and are not living to the revelation of the Spirit. We are still pushing...we are still operating as babes in Christ. God wants us to understand the new creation and the **kingdom of God that is it solely based upon His grace**. When we are in grace we are in peace and rest. We rest from worry, fear, judgment, condemnation, and failure. We rest in His love poured out into our hearts based not on what we have done or will do; but based upon what Jesus has done.