

Christian Seeking Identity

A Ministry of Alpha & Omega International Ministries

September 2022.

Greeting Family & Friends,

It seems like we will have an early Fall according to all the leaves that I have seen falling from the trees around our home. I know it will be a beautiful time non the less. Suzan and I have been occupying ourselves with helping our friends Pastor David and Cheryl Smith with their ministry Meet me at the Bridge that ministers to the homeless. It was quite the treat for me as a very dear friend and pastor from India was the speaker at the event this past month-Pastor Moses Choudary. He ministered to the attendees with the word of God and his personal testimony. How a Hindu boy whose father had died after being taken to many witch doctors with no results and then left alone with his widowed mother to navigate through life with not much at all. Afterwards he became sick and his mother started to seek this Jesus who she heard of from some westerners who were going around preaching about him and how he healed all that were sick. Pastor Moses with deep compassion and love ministered to the people as he shared and they received from the Lord through him.

Many times, I find myself teaching and encouraging persons from every walk of life that I come in contact with, as well as the Charis Bible College students that we host on their mission trips, about the power and the importance of their personal testimony. It says in Rev 12:11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony..."; we have a powerful weapon and satan knows it, that's why he lies and deceives us into thinking the opposite.

We need to have faith in believing that God's grace is sufficient for anything that I have need of. In this month's teaching I wanted to share with you what the Lord has been revealing to me through His word. I pray it will bless you and help you in your everyday walk with Him. I pray the Lord's continued blessing upon you each and every day of your long life!

God Bless you!

Your friends,

Mickey & Suzan



God's Grace-Your Faith

Ephesians 2:8 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. We are saved by grace through faith. (Passion Bible) Eph 2:8 For it was only through this wonderful grace that we believed in him. Nothing we did could ever earn this salvation, for it was the gracious gift from God that brought us to Christ! What is grace and how do we get the faith to believe are questions that have kept the minds of Christians occupied for years. The English Dictionary defines grace as the free and unmerited favor of God, that manifests itself in salvation and blessings in the lives of Christian believers. Although this seems to be the most commonly used definition, it has not always been accepted.

Have you ever heard of cheap or costly grace? A Lutheran pastor by the name of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was executed by the Nazis in WW II wrote a book entitled The Cost of Discipleship. He lived in a time in which he thought Christians were living in a manner that cheapened the Grace of God. Here is a quote from his book: "Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ living and incarnate. Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock.

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Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it cost a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son; “you were bought at a price” and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon His Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered Him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God.” Grace is unmerited. We don’t deserve it! It is costly and it has been cheapened. But I believe that we have missed the whole point. Grace goes beyond intellectual discussions. Grace is what produces the power of change in our lives. Look at the definition according to Strong’s Concordance: an act (abstract or concrete; literal, figurative or spiritual; ***especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life***; including gratitude): - acceptable, benefit, favour, gift, grace (-ious), joy liberality, pleasure, thank (-s, -worthy). For me it is God’s inner motivational force. It is the change in my heart that motivates me to act. Grace is the living presence of God within us. It is the life-giving source which gives birth to the kingdom of God within. The kingdom cannot come until grace precedes it for it is grace that gives it life. What is the kingdom of God? According to Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. So, it is grace that’s like a cleansing balm that sweeps through our souls and washes away the guilt and shame of our sinfulness. Grace has the power to make us whole and to rescue us from a lifetime of brokenness. Just like the wind, which cannot be seen, it makes itself known by the effect of its presence. Many times, people ask me, Mickey, I know that God’s promises are true, but how can I be sure that His promises will come true in my life?” My friend, if you want God’s promises to be sure in your life, you cannot depend on yourself. If you depend on yourself (i.e., your obedience, goodness, service or even your faith) you will not be able to receive God’s promises. But when you get a revelation of God’s grace and depend on God’s grace and His favor toward you, a favor that you cannot work to get, or work to earn, or accomplish in life, that is when His promises become sure in your life. Jesus said in John 17:4, I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. The word glorified, according to *Vines Complete Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, means a revelation with a manifestation. This was true of the woman with the issue of blood. (Matthew 9:20–22) She dealt with this for 12 years and had gone to a number of doctors but none could heal her. It was at this point that the grace of God began to minister to her. She heard testimonies of how Jesus, healed this one and that one. She began to see Jesus as her healer. She didn’t go around saying, “I must have faith, I hope that I have enough faith, I will have faith, I will not lose faith.” No, she just saw herself touching the hem of his garment and becoming healed. When she came behind Jesus and touched the hem of His garment, she was healed. At that same moment, Jesus stopped, turned around and said to her, “Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.” You see, when the woman saw His grace, she declared her healing and God saw her faith! And so it was by grace, through faith, that God’s promise became sure in her life. God wants you to see His grace. When you see His grace, and through faith you exercise what you see, what you see will manifest itself in your life.