***Super Grace  
  
Colossians 1:3-8  
  
COL-056***

Our subject is "Thanksgiving for the Colossians," segment number 34. Our passage is Colossians 1:3-8.

The apostle Paul, at the end of verse 6, has been pleased to observe the fact that the Colossian Christians understood the grace of God in truth (in reality). God is eager to exercise His grace toward every individual in the human race. The grace of God is what motivated Him to pay the penalty of death for sin, which was demanded by the justice of God. He did this through Jesus Christ, His Son, the God-Man.

In Hebrews 2:9, the writer says, "But we do see Him (Jesus), Who has been made for a little while lower than the angels (because He took on a human body), namely Jesus, because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God, He might taste death for everyone." What a magnificent statement: "That by the grace of God, He might taste for everyone." There is no fear in the human race so great that Satan holds over human beings as the fear of death: the fear of going out of this life, and what's on the other side. Men are very bold; men are very arrogant; and, men are very self-confident until they face the moment that the whole-body system is going to shut down, and the spirit and the soul now must leave, and go out into that eternity, fully alive, and fully conscious, and face that fully present God. There is death awaiting on that side unless somebody else has done the dying in your behalf. And that is what has motivated the grace of God to do so much for us, so that we do not have to die that eternal death in the lake of fire.

God is now free, because of Christ, to exercise His grace to save the lost unbelievers, and to transform them into the image of Christ as the royalty of God. It is the resurrection of Jesus Christ that has broken the power of Satan over death, and it ensures that we too will be raised. It ensures our eternal life in heaven – all we who have trusted in Christ for salvation.

Again, Hebrews 2:14-15 says, "Since then the children share flesh and blood, He (Christ) Himself likewise, also took of the same; that through death he might render powerless him who had the power of death; that is, the devil, and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all of their lives." It is the grace of God that has freed us from being enslaved to doing evil. It is the grace of God that has given us a system by which we can defeat the appeals of our sin nature; the appeals from our society (the world system); and, the appeals of Satan himself.

It is God's grace that has given us a system that makes us: "more than conquerors through Him Who loved us, and gave Himself for us" (Romans 8:37). Jesus Christ has satisfied the justice of God towards sinners so that He is free to express His love toward the lost by saving them from the lake of fire by His grace.

Hebrews 2:17 says, "Therefore, He (Jesus) had to be made like His brothers in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation (satisfaction) to the justice of God; propitiation for the sins of the people."

So, here's the first point of magnificence about the grace of God. This is the first thing of the reality of God's grace. God has died in our place. Christ had to take on a human body so that He could die. He tasted death. He went the full gamut, and into the tomb, and then was raised as a sample of what we will be when we too are raised.

That is no small thing for you to understand – that it is the grace of God that makes that possible. And the devil is always running around telling people it's not just the grace of God: it's what you do; it's how you behave; and, it's how you commit yourself to this thing and that thing.

I heard Billy Graham giving the invitation at the end of one of his television programs recently, and as he told people how to be saved, twice he used the word "commitment:" "Make your commitment to Christ." That's the Lordship's salvation idea. Commit yourself that you are going to be true to God; that you're going to live in a certain way; and, that you are going to be compatible with the laws of God, and the moral laws of God, and then you will be saved. And if we see that you do not live that way, the implication is that we know that you are not saved.

So, those of you that have been guilty of these external overt sins, and perhaps one that you are persistent in the mind with, you're not saved. You have not committed yourself to Christ. But the minute you talk like that, that's no longer grace. That's deserving; that's works; that's merit; and, that is not the Word of God. Some very big-time radio teachers who are sound in the Bible are falling into that trap. And what are they are telling us? They don't understand the grace of God.

So, this is no trivial thing when we glory in understanding the truth of the reality of the grace of God. It was no small thing when Paul was so euphoric that these people in Colossae, in that strategic city of the ancient world, were influencing the religious world with the demonstration of knowing what the grace of God can do for a human being. This is what makes the difference between one person and another. This is what makes the difference between a clod in the Christian life and a person of royalty.

There is the ever-present danger for a born-again, saved person to fall away from the grace of God into an act of sin – not to fall away from salvation. The Bible is clear about that. John 10:28-29 tells us: "Nobody can take you out of God's hands, not even yourself." But there is ever-present danger of falling into sin. And this is what's so bad about the Christian life when you do not understand, and when you deviate from the grace of God. When you start running your life apart from the Word of God, you're going to get in trouble.

Just think to yourself: what is a terrible thing? What kind of sin do you consider gross sins, which is kind of an oxymoron? If it's sin, it's gross. They're all gross in God's evaluation. But what do you think is really a terrible sin – the kind of thing you would never do? Well, I guarantee you that when you start compromising your relationship to the grace of God, you're fully capable of doing that, and you will be given the opportunity. We have a lot of godly, self-righteous people walking around, who are that because they never had a chance to do some good healthy gross sinning. But if you give opportunity, you'll be right in there, if you are not walking in the capacities of the grace of God. You can never let your guard down against the sin nature; against the devil; or, against the world system around us. And that's probably the worst one – the whole cult around us. There are monstrous, sinful things that Christians will do, and you say, "How could they do that?" It is mostly because they got acclimated. They're moving in a context, and they're moving in a group where evil is the norm. So, pretty soon, they think that's okay to do. Unless they have grasped what the grace of God does in the grace system of perceiving spiritual things, and unless they are consistently loyal to that system, they will go down. There's this ever-present danger.

In Hebrews 2:12-13, the writer says, "I will proclaim Your name to my brethren. In the midst of the congregation, I will sing Your praise. And again, I will put my trust in Him. And behold, I and His children, whom God has given me." The Word of God makes it clear that God has made a provision, for those who are the children of God, for Him to carry through the time of great temptation.

Hebrews 3:12-13 say, "Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God." Now, let's let the Bible say what the Bible says. Let's not pretend that you're going to readjust this to mean something that you want it to mean. It says, "Take care, unsaved bozos." No, it says, "Take care, brethren." So, we are talking to believers: "Take care, born-again believers, lest there should be in any of you an evil unbelieving heart in falling away from the living God." And, of course, when we step out of God's ways, and we step into sin, what are we doing? We're falling away from the living God.

Hebrews 3:12: "But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called 'today,' lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." And sin is so deceitful, and it makes us so hardened against God. This passage is speaking about callouses upon the soul. This is putting callouses upon your mind toward God; your emotions toward God; and, your will toward God. This is hardness within you toward God. And what should we do? We should be encouraging one another as long as it is still called "today." Encouraging one another to do what? To do the things that enable us to function on the grace of God. And what indeed enables us to function more on the grace of God than attending the worship services and the church services.

You are here, and are to be commended because you are here, because you are encouraging one another in doing today what will enable you to avoid the hardening and being trapped by the deceitfulness of sins – to find that you are falling away from the living God. This is why, when we do good things spiritually, and when there are good things that are being done by the local church ministry, it deserves your support. It deserves your presence, because it's a right and proper thing for you to encourage believers to participate in and to benefit. And you might not particularly get a great kick out of being there.

Suppose that somebody runs an adult social some evening. And like one person said, "I just don't like to sit there playing games and being there having fun. But there are brethren who delight in your presence when you do that. So, how terrible is it for you to say yes, "I'll go in there, and I'll hit that volleyball over the net, and I'll just watch Bob Short miss it every time, and I'll just be there?" What a great sacrifice! And yet, Christians who are always rubbing shoulders with the pigs and the dogs of American society, who pose under religious guise – here they are for a chance to come together for Christians to ennoble each other socially, and having an enjoyment with one another together in Christ, and you don't want to be a participant.

There are plenty of things that we do that deserve the merit of your support, because this verse says that we should encourage one another as long as today is still here such that we can do that, so that we become sensitive to the things of God, and not hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. When those people are here associating with you, and you are demonstrating the grace of God in your life, and the love of Christ in your life, they're picking it up. And when you are not here at something that we are sponsoring, where are they? They're out there in the world system. They're sitting before their television set, and being degraded. They're out there associating with con men and lowlife types that are convincing them that good is evil and evil is good. They're out there being deceived, and being hardened toward Christ.

So I find it very interesting that this passage in dealing with falling away from the living God is your responsibility. And I don't take it lightly, when some Christian falls away from the living God because he turns his back upon the principles of God, and upon the conduct befitting a child of God. I don't just take it lightly that that person is really a stupid do-do to do such a thing. No, some of us have missed the boat someplace. Somehow we were not there when we should have been there to help that person be attracted more to the things of God than the things of the world system. Yes, it is ultimately your own responsibility. And if you are not here in the attendance of these services, then you're asking for trouble. And certainly, if there ever was a church on the face of the earth that deserved your support and your unmitigated presence, this one is it. And if you don't think that's true, you're going to find out someday exactly how true that is. And you will also be able then to trace, because you made that mistake, all of the things that might have been that you missed to carry through eternity as part of your heritage in Christ.

The Exodus generation of Israel had been freed from slavery in Egypt – Egypt, the symbol of sin. But they just could not trust God to carry them into the Promised Land. So, the writer of Hebrews 3:15-17 says, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your heart as when they provoked me." These people in the Exodus generation just kept belly-aching, and whining, and complaining against God for carrying them out of slavery into freedom. And they actually preferred being back in their slavery.

Hebrews 3:16: "For who provoked Him (God) when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses?" They just aggravated God, and provoked Him to the point of wrath.

Hebrews 3:17: "And with whom He (God) was angry for 40 years. Was it not with those who sinned – whose bodies fell in the wilderness?" There is the ever-present danger of a Christian falling away from the principle of godliness. That is a fact of life. And it does not mean that you're not saved. It means that you're not functioning on the grace provision that God has given you. You don't understand how to work on the grace system of perception, to build a spiritual maturity structure in your soul, so that you go up to super-grace living.

Consequently, for these people, while God's grace desire to bless them, their lack of trust in God's promises and obedience to His laws robbed them of entering into the rest that He had planned for them in the Promised Land. They were hardly out of Egypt. And while Moses is in the very act, on Mount Sinai, of receiving the codification of the wisdom of God which was to guide them and the conduct of life for them, that they were back into a mass orgy of immorality worshiping a God made of gold – a calf. Where do they get that idea? From the Egyptians that they had just left.

So, don't tell me that people who know God, and who should know better, cannot descend to the most degraded kind of conduct. The Bible says it very simply, doesn't it?" "Let him that thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall." Yes, you may stand at any moment. When you are functioning upon the grace system, you certainly are standing. And you're solid, and you're as good as gold. That can evaporate almost instantly. These people simply could not rise to the opportunity that they had. They just could not expect God to carry through.

So, Hebrews 3:18-19 says, "And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? And so we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief."

**The Grace System of Perception**

Well, today, God's love has made it possible for any Christian to experience the realities of God's grace. This is based on the capacity of the believer to understand doctrine through a system of understanding called the grace system of perception – perceiving spiritual things by grace. The elements in this system are provided by God for the functioning of the grace system of perception for learning spiritual phenomena, included several things.

One: first of all, it includes the completed inerrant Bible of the Old and New Testament containing the doctrinal revelations of God. Do you understand that? The first step in operating in the grace life, and operating under the guidance of God, and operating in a successful satisfying life for now and eternity is to understand that the Bible is the Word of God, and it is inerrant, and it is provided by Him. You don't know how terrible it is not to understand that.

One of our men yesterday called me on the phone, chatting with me. He had been to a Bible class in a United Methodist Church. Now, if you don't know your way around the religious world, the United Methodist is the liberal of the liberals in the theological realm. The teacher of the class said something that our man recognized was not biblically true. So, he raised his hand and quoted a passage from Proverbs and said, "What you have said is not really exactly what the Scripture presents. Here's what Proverb says on that." The teacher of the class said, "Well, we don't know if that's true." And he said, "How do you know it's true?" And our man said, "I do know it's true. It's from the Word of God. It's in the Bible." And the man said, "Well, do you know who wrote it? We don't know who wrote this." And we're talking about the Bible. And this is a church, and there are no empty seats in church this morning, I'll guarantee you. And there are not people drifting off, chasing will of the wisp and chasing rabbits of exciting Christian spiritual experience. The place is loaded with money and people and programs.

Well, this man said, "You don't know who wrote this." And our man said, "Yes I do. And he wanted to tell him, but he was cut off. So being the sneaky person that he is, he waited for an opportunity to interject a little later. He raised his hand and said, "By the way, that passage from Proverbs was written by Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived under God's instruction."

Now, our man is a persona non grata in that class. The teacher of that class hates him. The members of the class hate him. Everybody worth anything in that church (that has any social relationship and standing) – they hate him, because he thinks that the Bible is the Word of God, and that it has been transmitted to us in total accuracy so that we may quote it as: "Thus says the Lord," and, therefore, it is true.

So this simple little provision is where the devil has broken down the whole system of living by grace. Once you have undermined the fact that the Bible is a book that can be read in plain, simple English because that's what it means, then you have the whole system collapse.

Furthermore, God has given us the local church organization as a source of instruction in the divine viewpoint of Bible doctrine. God has given to every church one pastor-teacher who has the spiritual gift of communicating Bible doctrine phenomena to the congregation as God's wisdom.

The fourth provision is the permanent indwelling of every believer by the Holy Spirit to teach that believer doctrine so that he understands what God thinks.

The fifth provision is that God, at the point of salvation, gives us a living human spirit in which to store categories of doctrinal truth as full knowledge.

The sixth provision is the universal priesthood of all believers so that we may deal privately with God about ourselves and our relationship to the Word of God.

The seventh provision is the filling of the Holy Spirit to guide every believer through doctrine, and to empower that believer in serving God with divine good works.

**The Soul Guided by Doctrine**

And the eighth is a provision of the mind, and the emotions, and the will of the soul, to be capable of being guided by the doctrine that comes from the human spirit. Now that is a tremendous provision. The Jews never knew that in the Old Testament. They never had anything like that. But we have it. Now, how does it work – the functioning of this grace system of perception in a believer's life?

The pattern is very simple. People of a local congregation gather in a church service. The pastor-teacher stands up to give a monologue. In the local church meetings, he communicates Bible doctrine from the scripture via the HICED technique of his own study. If you don't have a preacher who is studying, you have a preacher who can't tell you anything. So, he has learned the Word of God. He is now prepared to teach the Word of God. And he does. You sit there, and you listen, and you hear, and the Bible recall that "knowledge." The Greek word is "gnosis." This doctrinal information is made clear to you by the indwelling Holy Spirit while you are in temporal fellowship; that is, you are filled with the spirit; all known sins are confessed; and, therefore, the Spirit of God can teach you. And you sit and you say, "Yeah, okay, I understand that." And you grasp that particular doctrinal truth.

This is the perceptive quality of your mentality. Your mind has two qualities. It has what it can perceive, and then it makes decisions. So, one way of looking at is the perceptive quality and the directive quality. Now you have a knowledge of a doctrine that has been taught to you. But anything that's up in the perceptive mind cannot be used spiritually. That's what you have to understand. Doctrinal information received is understood by the teaching ministry of the Spirit of God. So, now you have grasped the understanding of the doctrinal principle.

Now, you might want to say "yes" to that, or "no." I've mentioned a number of doctrinal principles already today. One was on Lordship salvation. I've mentioned a number of qualities. And you may sit there and say "No, that's not true." And when you say that, the system stops. Nothing more happens with that information. You have it up in your head. Do you wonder why people can go to the church for years and learn all kinds of things of the Bible, and yet they live like the pigs and the dogs? It is because all they've done is gone negative to the Word of God. Therefore, it's all up in the head. And you cannot use doctrinal principles from your head.

But when you say "amen" (truly) to that, faith comes in, and you say, "I believe it," and now the Spirit of God takes that information, and he stores it down in your human spirit, which is your point of contact with God. That becomes what the Greek calls "epignosis" or "full knowledge." Everything that that passage means now becomes intelligible to you. Your positive response to the instruction causes this truth to be stored in your human spirit. This is the point of contact that you have with God. This is what guides your life. Now you have doctrine, and now it can affect your life. Now you can use it.

Now, someone may tell you that here's a moral principle, and this is what God requires of your conduct, and you put it up into your perceptive mind, and you understand it, and you may say, "Yes, I understand what God is saying, but gee, I don't know. Boy, look at these people around me. These are wonderful people."

I once had a college student tell me that the people who were on pot and dope up in his dormitory were all highly intelligent people. They said, "These are really intelligent people." I said, "No, they're stupid people." They don't understand the principle of your body being a temple of the Holy Spirit, and therefore, you treat it with respect, and care for it accordingly. And that young man sat here in our services, and he understood it. He understood the principle, but he said "no" to it. He didn't like that idea. Why? Because he'd have to say, "These guys are ignorant intellectuals." He wanted to look upon them as wise people to associate with. They were ignorant intellectuals.

Well the time came when his own practice of participating in the marijuana drug culture, which was so popular in the sixties and following, that he found it relaxing. In fact, he found it so relaxing that he could never concentrate again on his studies. He could not settle down to concentrate. His mind drifted off, and he went into a total disaster of life.

Now, who was smart, and who was stupid in this system? But he said "no" to a principle of doctrine – that drugs are debilitating to the body, and the physical body is to be treated as God's temple, and is to be cared for. When he said no to that, that information was nothing. It was useless. But those who say "yes," down it comes, and it's stored in various categories and compartments of truth. Negative response makes it unusable.

Now, as the need arises in your life for guidance, God the Holy Spirit will send appropriate doctrinal information. You're filled with the Holy Spirit. Here comes something that your sin nature says, "Hey let's do this. This will be fun." Is it fun to sin? You betcha. It's lots of fun. That's why Hebrews, in observing the loyalty of Moses to God, said, "Moses chose not to enjoy the pleasures of Egypt for a season, but to go with the people of God." What is that telling you? Moses was up in the royal family. And if you're royalty, there's lots of fun. Royalty knows how to have a lot of sin nature fun. They're very good at that. The British royalty is particularly competent in that respect. They are well-trained in sin nature fun. And it is fun to be sinful. And what you have to decide is: do you want to pay the price? Because that fun is going to turn to ashes in your mouth.

So, what happened here is that the filling of the Holy Spirit gives you information. It says, "No, don't do that old sin nature thing." Bingo! Here's the information; here's the doctrinal principle; and, here's the frame of reference now – the divine viewpoint. Here is the information to your conscience to act correctly on that. So, as the need arises, the Holy Spirit sends appropriate doctrinal information from the human spirit to the believers' directive mind – that function of the mind that makes decisions. And because you are filled with the Spirit, you get the information.

Now you have the direction you need. It'll never come from the perceptive mind over to the directive mind. It'll never come from "gnosis" over to the directive side. It always has to go through the human spirit, where the Spirit of God is the point of contact to give you guidance. That's grace, and it works. And what happens is you'll have guidance for making decisions on spiritual things, and you'll have guidance for making decisions on temporal things.

Now, as a result, you will have a good conscience; you'll produce divine good works; and, you'll have a godly lifestyle. Your volition will be positive, and divine good works and godliness will be the form. But the believer who's out of temporal fellowship has no guidance for the Holy Spirit. But he responds to what the sin nature tells him. If you are out of temporal fellowship, the Spirit of God doesn't lead. Now you have the old sin nature. And you have a problem. You have a decision. Here's a temptation from the world system. Here's something that you've seen on television. Here's something that the circle that you move in says, "This is where it's at. This is what you should do. Everybody does this." And the old sin nature kicks up and says, "Yes." That gives you an evil frame of reference. It says go for it.

So, what happens? That information hits the negative volition, and out comes human good and acts of sins, both of which are evil before God. So, the old sin nature sends up human viewpoint disorientation to guide the mind. The mind then guides the emotions on human viewpoint, in spiritual things, and in temporal things. It guides to negative volition and the whole life is a disaster. I'm talking about Christians. I'm talking about people like ourselves.

The result is that you'll have a bad conscience; human good works; and an evil lifestyle in dealing with spiritual and temporal things. This is the normal pattern for unbelievers. It is also the pattern for carnal Christians.

A Christian can operate on the sin nature just like anybody else. And if that's the way you want to live, instead of under the grace protection of God, you're going to have the consequences. It's up to you to make the choice. You can do it either way. But a Christian is admonished, therefore, to feed regularly on instruction in doctrine in order to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, because it's all what's down in the human spirit that makes it work. God's grace gives you the information, and if you receive it, it goes into your human spirit. But if you're sitting at home, you're not going to get it. If you're off someplace else, you're not going to get it. And this is why Satan has been hitting against churches. He says, "Get away from doctrinal information. It's confrontational. It makes people feel like they're sitting in school. They're having the study to learn things." That's right. And this is why churches are being bombarded to deemphasize the dignity of the Lord's Day. And the business world treats Sunday no differently than any other day.

**Sundays**

Now, for Christians, it ought to have some difference. Certainly, it should be the day devoted, as the Sabbath day was among the Jews, to the study of the Word of God. So, I run my eye through the schedule of activities of churches around town. And one thing you'll see is that they no longer have time for applied Christianity meetings such as Training Union and Sunday nights. There are only a minority of churches who still say that Sunday evening is the Lord's Day, and we're going to use it for that. We're not going to stay at home. We're not going to watch stupid television programs. We're not going to go out shopping. We're not going to rent a video and sit at home. And we're not going to tell our kids that you have to get your homework done. We're going to tell our kids that they're going to get burned for not having done their homework. And we're not going to tell our kids that they can stay home Sunday night, and it won't make a difference. It will make a difference. The worst part is that you've told them how to think and how to act. And what they're going to get is a poverty down in this human spirit reservoir.

If you have little children, make it clear to them that this is the lifestyle. That's the lifestyle style of a winner. But if you want to raise a kid who's a loser, you just trained that child that it's not important to be in Training Union. And certainly, it's not important to be in Sunday evening service. Church after church all over this city are running their services as early as they can, so that Sunday night can be a jumping and jiving time.

Yet, what does Hebrews 10:25 say? "Not forsaking your own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more, as you see the day drawing near." What? If I go to church, I encourage somebody else. Now, that puts a burden on me that I don't think I want to bear. Does that mean if people walk in, and they look around, and they don't see me, that I have hurt them spiritually? You betcha, Buster. That's exactly what it means: "Forsaking your assembling together." You may say, "Well, I have to go off and do this. I have athletic events on Sunday nights you understand. I have work events that I could schedule at other time, but I choose to do it on Sunday nights." What kind of evil is this? And why should we be careful about that assembling together?

Look up at Hebrews 10:24: "Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds." And when you are in church, that's exactly what you're doing. You're encouraging those believers. When we look out there and see you, we are encouraged to have a spirit of mental goodwill, and of devoting ourselves to a life of divine good service: to be sacrificial; to enter into the things of God; and, to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, because we do not forsake assembling ourselves. It's an encouragement. 2 Peter 3:18, "Grow in the knowledge and the grace of Jesus Christ."

So, doctrine stored and accumulated in the believer's human spirit is the base system for the erection of a spiritual maturity structure in the soul. This is referred to in Ephesians 4:20-24. "But you did not learn Christ in this way." And the context deals with how to break your spiritual maturity structure down, which we will look at on another occasion: "You did not learn Christ in this way (to bust up your spiritual maturity structure), if indeed you have heard Him, and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit; that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and, put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and in the holiness of truth."

What do you do with your children? You do what you do. You are their example, and they will fit your pattern. And you should alert them that their life is doctrine, and doctrine, and doctrine. And don't tell me that you can go out any place and find a church that does that. That is a lie. And you should not impose that lie on your children. You're hardly going to be able to find a church that is really teaching the deep things of the Spirit of God. So, do you want to raise a bum for a son, or for a daughter? Fine. Just encourage them to sit under baloney teaching. And they'll give you baloney back in their life sooner or later. They ought to at least have a chance. And you should see to it that, while they're under your authority, which is until they're out of high school, when the time comes for the church doors to be open, this is where they are, and no excuses are made. That happens to be the truth.

Now, you've been hit with something up in your "gnosis," and in your directive mine, you're going to say "Yes," or "No, I won't believe that. I don't believe these assembly Scriptures. I don't believe that I had to assemble for the teaching of doctrine. I will assemble for inspiration. I will assemble because there's a social life. I will assemble because I have fun doing it." The Word of God says that this is to enable you to survive in the devil's world.

So, that's the system and we are admonished to see to it that we develop a spiritual IQ. What is your spiritual IQ? It's determined by how much "epignosis" full knowledge you have stored down there in that human spirit system.

Now, the spiritual maturity system in the soul of the believer is the product of the doctrine stored. That's how you grow spiritually. You create a pentagon of defense, as we looked at last time – a defense against the world system, and the sin nature, and all these basic sources of temptation. This pentagon is also a base for your attack in the angelic warfare in which you're engaged.

**The Spiritual Maturity Structure**

There are several facets that evolve in this spiritual Pentagon. As a result of the system we've already looked at: God; the Bible; the pastor-teacher; the filling of the Holy Spirit; the mind; and, right down the line – faith storing in the human spirit: out of all of that evolves the spiritual maturity structure. It's called spiritual edification in the Bible.

**The Facts of the Spiritual Maturity Structure**

It is composed of grace orientation, which is dealing in life with situations and relationships. There is no trying to please God by human willpower, but just acting under the capacity of God to carry you through.

There is the mastery of the details of life. The mastery of the details of life has to do with being stable in dealing with your poverty, and your prosperity, and your possessions.

It develops a relaxed mental attitude in loving rapport and emotional attachment in dealing with people; with yourself; and, with your family, and is expressed by a forgiving spirit. God help the Christian who can't have a relaxed mental attitude. That person will be shot through with bitterness instead of an emotional love, and he will be brought down.

There's the capacity to love in terms of mental attitude goodwill. And what is the core of mental attitude goodwill? Kindness: kindness toward God; kindness toward your mate; and, kindness towards your friends. And when Christians do not demonstrate kindness toward those who especially don't deserve it, for what they've done, then you can be sure that that person has a weak capacity to love in his spiritual maturity.

The final facet is inner happiness. Your eyes are on the Lord. They're not on people, and circumstances, and things. Therefore, your soul is free of spiritual calluses. This is happiness that is inner happiness, and that is from the Lord, such that there may be a storm around you, but that happiness never breaks down. No matter whether your employer; your friends; your family; or, your nation creates that storm, you are stable in inner happiness.

**Super Grace**

This is the spiritual maturity structure, and it is dealt with in several Scriptures. There is, however, a climax to this maturity. And that is referred to in James 4:6 as super grace. This is the objective of every Christian's life – not serving God; not doing this; and, not doing that. The objective is to build a spiritual maturity structure in your soul. Now how in the world do you think your kids are going to do that if you've got them off someplace else, and they're not sitting here and having access to the information that only Scripture can give them – and that only a competent pastor-teacher (PT) who knows how to operate the HICEE technique, and is willing not to be afraid of proclaiming the truth that people need to know, and not what they want to know.

Here's what James 4:6 says: "But He (God) gives greater grace." This word "greater" is the Greek word "meizon" (mide'-zone), M E I Z O N. And it's a comparative word. It means that He gives extra, super-abounding. He gives super grace. "Therefore, it says: "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble." This Scripture says that there is a grace which is beyond the grace that God gives the ordinary Christian. All of us live under the grace of God. But for some of you, your life can be immersed in such an enormous volume of the grace of God that you will not be able to restrain yourself from shouting "Hallelujah," as you see the things of your life falling together: the prosperity, and, the physical good health – all of the things that pull together. He gives greater grace.

**Humility**

This verse is saying that God the Holy Spirit desires to control the Christian's life. He is envious of any other control. Look at James 4:5: "Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose? He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us?" Or a better translation: "~The Spirit, which He has made to dwell in us, jealously desires us." The Holy Spirit wants to direct us by the grace system of perception, and by the spiritual maturity structure which we have created in our soul. The humble believer is such because he has a mature spiritual maturity structure in him. And it is to such a Christian that God gives super grace. A super grace Christian is a humble person. He doesn't put on airs. He's not snotty. He's not arrogant. He doesn't think of himself more highly than he ought to think. That's one of the big signs. A spiritual super grace Christian is a person of considerable humility. It's a concept in scripture that indicates that the humble has spiritual maturity. The proud in James 4:6 are those who don't.

So, grace goes beyond a normal measure. It only comes to the Christian, however, who has the capacity to receive it. What is the capacity? What is the container for this? Here is a cup. It is a container. It is an empty container. Here is the spiritual maturity structure that you build. Most Christians have no container at all. Nobody has ever taught them the Word of God in the system such that they can even build one. Most young people don't have it. They're empty hollow shells. They don't have the hardcore, manly, womanly quality of being able to build a container. And other Christians who may have built something have got a bunch of holes in it, because they've let it get corroded by sin and evil, so it has all kinds of holes to pour out. But does it make any difference. No. They're just as arrogant, and just as proud. They walk around, and they're just as pleased with themselves wherever they are. And if they're in a stupid church, they're being made over.

**"My Cup Overflows"**

What God gives in super-abounding grace is poured into the container in the soul, which is the spiritual maturity structure. So, what happens is that, as you function on the grace life, here God is filling up. And He fills up. And the container gets filled more and more. And the blessings of God keep coming over until what do they do? Does the Bible say what happens? Does it say that it does really overflow – grace beyond your capacity, so super that you can't handle it. Psalm 23:5: "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies (doctrine). You anointed my head with oil (the Spirit of God to lead me and guide me in that grace system of perception); my cup overflows." What's he talking about? That is not just poetic imagery. He's talking about the grace of God that is flowing so that your cup can no longer contain what God is doing for you.

So, you can go ahead and grovel around as a poor, sorry, little Christian, whether you're young or old. And you can teach your children to grow up to be poor, sorry, little Christians that never know what it is to have the super-abounding grace of God overflowing their lives. This is what makes a real man. This is what makes a real woman. It is not the things that our society tells us makes that. All this is the provision of God's grace for meeting life at the prime of life stage. When you have achieved super grace, you are at the prime of your life. You're at the prime of spiritual life. And when you keep being present in these services, and you keep being fed upon the deep things of the Word of God, and you are being reinforced in doctrine in that human spirit, the Word of God takes off like a skyrocket. And there is nothing but over abounding joy. That spiritual maturity structure pentagon is strong (fully mature), and you're out there doing the work of God. You are nobody's fool. And most Christians are everybody's fool. But with super grace, you understand people; you understand righteousness; and, you understand the principles by which God works. And your integrity is untarnished. The result is that you have built a container in your soul, and you will not be able to hold the blessings that God will shower upon you. Father, we thank You for this, the Word of God.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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