

Grace of God III

The ultimate grace of God is to convert the mind inside out with His Spirit

Fred R. Coulter—October 30, 2021

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services! We've got a lot to cover today, so let's get with it. First of all I want to announce about these three In-Dept Studies with CDs:

1. Grace Upon Grace

That is a real eye-opener!

2. God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping

The world things that if you have grace you can do anything you want to, but that's not true!

3. Grace of God

That's basically the Grace of God in the Bible!

These are transcript books with CDs. Let me also give a long distance warning: *If you use nothing but the websites, the day will come when you won't be able—nor anyone else—to do so!*

You need to plan now and we're going to send out in December another (updated) catalog for you. That lists all of our publications and CDs that we have available. When you have the hardcopy you don't need batteries or be online. You have it right there. Same way with *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version!* You need to have the hardcopy, *because it's batteries never run out of steam!*

Rom. 2:4 is where we left off last time and this is a very important and profound verse when you come to understand it.

Romans 2:4: "Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?"

God is involved in your life! When He begins leading you to understand His Word and repentance. One of the things that Jesus said in John 6 was **'The Father draws you!'** Stop and think about that! The God Who is the greatest being in the universe upholding everything through the Word of Jesus Christ.

He involved Himself directly with you! Probably through one of the seven eyes that Jesus controls ***to lead you to repentance!*** Generally it is at a time when you are at your wits end, and you don't know what to do. You cry out to God! He'll hear prayers like that.

Look at the grace of God this way: *You have:*

- the love of God
- the grace of God
- the mercy of God

Those three go together! God expects us to love Him back with all our heart, mind, soul and being. Grace extends further covering:

- repentance of sins
- forgiveness of sins on His part

Then God wants you to really come to Him and He will give you:

- grace upon grace

Now let's look at some important things that we need to understand concerning repentance. It is stopping breaking the Laws of God. Repentance is mental and emotional, and a deep spiritual experience between you and God.

When you look at the Ten Commandments and you understand what you've been doing, and you understand how sin has affected your life and you're broken up. You have a very hard time really grasping how good God is to you to lead you in this way.

The whole study of the book of Job is quite complex, and most people don't understand it. The reason is because they don't know what Job was doing, even though it was the will of God. Job accredited everything that he did to *his own ability and righteousness*, which it wasn't because it came from God.

When God finally spoke to him, as we saw, he understood how terribly sinful that human nature is, even in doing good when you do not give God credit for it.

None of us has had a conversation like this with God, but here's what Job said from the height of self-righteousness to the depths of repentance:

Job 42:1: "And Job answered the LORD and said, 'I know that You can do all things, **and that no thought can be withheld from You**'" (vs 1-2).

Think about that for a minute. That shows you how directly involved God can be with all of us.

Verse 3: "*You asked, 'Who is he who hides counsel **without knowledge?**' ..."*

I was having a discussion about how this is great time for business with Christmas coming. If you don't keep Christmas, 'you're not a Christian.' Well, Jesus never kept it! So, if it's supposed to be for Jesus, why did He never keep it? *Because it's a satanic holiday!* "...**without knowledge**..."

"...Therefore, I have spoken that which I did not understand; *things* too wonderful for me; yea,

which I did not know. Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak; *You said*, ‘I will ask of you, and you will declare to Me.’ I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; **but now my eye sees You**” (vs 3-5).

How about that! Many people have heard of God by the hearing of the ear.

What do they know about God? *Because they’ve heard something about God, a lot of people think they know about God! **But they don’t!***

- How many people reject God?
- How many people reject everything in the Bible?

The whole Word, the Truth of God, they throw out as ‘full of lies,’ but it’s *their lies* that they live by, which helps destroy their lives in the world.

Notice that this is deep repentance, *coming to see what human nature really, really is!* That your human nature is exactly as the Bible says. You can have a façade of being nice, but as it says, *God knows your thoughts!*

Verse 6: **“Therefore, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”**

That’s what Job was sitting in. remember that he was sitting there with all those boils; broken potsherds, scraping the boils with the pus running out, flies coming around and throwing ashes on himself. So, ***there is Job completely repentant!*** This is what God wants **us** to do!

We will see that there are two kinds of repentance:

- 1) repentance of the world
- 2) repentance toward God

Paul had to write a very stinging letter—part of it is in 1-Cor.—to put away a man from the congregation who was committing incest with his step-mother. That’s a grievous sin of itself, but in the Church of God it is horrendous!

So, Paul told them to put him out and that he needed to be repented of it. He’s writing to them about their repentance and what it did to help solve the problem.

2-Corinthians 7:8: “For if I caused you to sorrow by the epistle, I do not repent, even if I did regret *it at first*, because I see that that epistle caused you to sorrow for only a short time. And **so I rejoice**—not because you were caused to sorrow, **but because you sorrowed unto repentance...**” (vs 8-9).

Sorrow for what you do leads you to repentance to confess your sins to God!

“...for **you sorrowed in a Godly manner...**

[the right kind of repentance] ...so that you were not injured by us in any way. For **sorrow unto repentance before God works out salvation not to be repented of...**” (vs 9-10).

That salvation is through grace, and the connection is still with God.

“...but **the sorrow of the world works out death**” (v 10).

People do things, and say, ‘Oh, I’m sorry!’ But they’re just trying to get out of some sort of penalty. They’re really not sorry for it.

Let’s go on and see what we are to do. What happened in Acts 2 when the truth was known about Jesus Christ being the Son of God resurrected from the dead? A lot of those who were there on the Day of Pentecost were some who were in the crowd asking that Jesus be crucified.

After Peter preached this sermon, he said... And this is what we need to do. This is one of the most important things with the grace of God. It begins with His love by giving His only Begotten Son, and then the effect of His life, death and resurrection brings about grace in this particular manner.

Acts 2:36: “Therefore, let all *the* house of Israel know with full assurance that God has made this *same* Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.’ Now, after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart...” (vs 36-37). *That means very deeply sorrowful and repentant!*

- What do you do with that?
- What do you do after that?

That is necessary! God wants that!

“...and they said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’” (v 37).

This is right at the very beginning of the preaching of the Gospel. This had not been done before. Yes, there was baptism with John the Baptist for the remission of sins, but they were to believe on the One Who followed him: Jesus Christ. Here’s what Peter said, and this is absolutely necessary:

Verse 38: “Then Peter said to them, **‘Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’**”

That one paragraph tells you everything about starting to be engaged with God through the grace of God:

- repentance
- baptism

- receiving the Holy Spirit

All of those things are by the grace of God!

From the booklet: *Grace of God in the Bible* {truthofGod.org}

GRACE AND THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

When we, upon repentance, in faith...

You have to believe that Jesus lived His life, died by crucifixion, was in the grave three days and three nights and rose from the dead. You can find all that information in our book *A Harmony of the Gospels, The Life of Jesus Christ*.

...accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as full payment for our sins, those sins are put upon Him...

He bore them because He has human nature, yet, never sinned!

...because **He alone** paid the price for our sins through His crucifixion, death and resurrection. When through the grace of God we are led to this repentance, we must then be buried into the death of Jesus Christ through water baptism.

When you examine what the Protestant world does, they just say that if you believe and accept Him, you're saved. ***NO!*** After you repent and are baptized, you need to receive the Holy Spirit of God, which is also an act of grace to give to you. We'll see what that does in just a little bit.

Paul wrote about this. You must be baptized in order to receive the Holy Spirit of God. Here's what happens.

Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?"

Just because sins are forgiven through the grace of God doesn't mean that you can live in sin. So, Paul says:

Verse 2: "MAY IT NEVER BE!..."

Here's what happens, when you are baptized and put under the water, that is a symbolic death, because now you're going to be in covenant with God. A covenant is a special relationship between two or more parties.

In this case it's a direct relationship through grace between you and Jesus Christ and God the Father. You receive the Holy Spirit of God. ***When you receive the Holy Spirit of God, you are under grace!***

We will see a little later on that gives you constant ability:

- to pray to God
- to understand His Word
- to grow in grace and knowledge

How important is this?

A lot of people say they look at Acts 10 because Cornelius and all of those in his household, who were all Gentiles. This was the first time that they heard the Word of God. Peter was the one who spoke it to them. I don't know how long he spoke, but when he got to a certain point, all of those who were there with Cornelius receive the Holy Spirit.

So, the Protestants look at that and say that you don't need to be baptized. Not so!

Acts 10:47: "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have also received the Holy Spirit as we *did*?"

This was a special one-time thing from God to show Peter that he was going to begin dealing with the Gentiles, which He [God] had not done before. This was quite a thing that took place.

Why is it necessary to have the Holy Spirit of God? *Here's where we start, right here:*

Romans 8:7: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*. But those who are in *the flesh* cannot please God" (vs 7-8).

You must have the Holy Spirit, and the only way to receive it is with baptism and the laying on of hands.

Verse 9: "However, you are not in *the flesh*, but in *the Spirit*, if **the Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you...**"

That's an important point, and the reason is because before Jesus was arrested He had the Passover with His disciples. He told them that He was going to be crucified and that the Holy Spirit was ***with*** them. But after His resurrection the Holy Spirit would be ***within*** them.

The Holy Spirit of God uniting with the spirit of our mind. That's important because there are a lot of people who ***think*** they are Christian, ***claim*** that they are Christian and are never baptized and do not keep the commandments of God. ***They are all deceived!*** How? *Because it took centuries to develop all of these false doctrines!* Now they believe them!

Verse 9: "However, you are not in *the flesh*, but in *the Spirit*, if *the Spirit of God* is indeed dwelling within you. **But if anyone...** [absolutely dogmatic; man or woman, young or old] ...**does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him**" (v 9).

Think about that for a minute! Think about how many people are in the world and claim to be Christian. Yes, a lot of them are, as far as society is concerned, good and decent people. That is true! But they're not converted!

They may be far different than other people in the world who know nothing about God at all, or atheists like that. Certainly they're better people, but that's not measuring conversion. Conversion is measured by: Do you have the Spirit of God or not? **IF you are not baptized and have not had hands laid on you**—and all of this is according to the grace of God—**you do not have the Holy Spirit of God!**

Another thing about the Spirit of God that Peter told the Sanhedrin: ***God gives the Holy Spirit who obey Him!***

Think on that! This is important! Now, for those of us who have been in the Church of God a long time and we look back and see how many people dropped out. That tells you that if you do not have the Spirit of God you don't belong to Christ!

We're going to see something in addition to it right here, because there are two aspects of the Holy Spirit of God; this is verified by John 14.

Verse 10: "But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness."

That is through the grace of God. The Spirit of God will lead you:

- to be obedient
- to keep the commandments of God
- to do the works of the Spirit

All that we have read in these verses to this point is the Spirit of Christ *in you!* But notice what Paul says:

Verse 11: "Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you..." ***There are the two aspects of the Holy Spirit of God:***

1. from Christ, the mind of Christ
2. the begetting from the Father to become a son or daughter of God

dwelling within you! If that's the case, look at this promise, which is based upon grace:

"...He Who raised Christ from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you" (v 11). *Follow this along step by step:*

- repentance/confession of sins
 - baptism/burial in the water
- when you come out of the water*
- receive the Holy Spirit of God

Now you are in covenant with God! Covenant is a very profound and important thing, which basically means that ***you are covenant that cannot be broken!*** God never changes His mind. He has given His Spirit so you can become His son or daughter.

Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; **but are being justified...**" (vs 23-24).

- What does justify or justification mean? *That means you are put in right standing with God! Think about that!*
- What did we read in Rom. 8? *Before you're converted you are an enemy of God!*

You might say that you haven't been an enemy of God, but:

- Have you hated?
- Have you lied?
- Have you bowed down to idols?
- Have you broken the Sabbath?

Etc., *and all of those things are sin!*

"...being justified freely... [How?] ...by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (vs 24).

Redemption means that you are bought back! From whom? *Satan the devil who controls this world!* Remember what we read in Rom. 8 that **IF you do not have the Spirit of Christ in you, you do not belong to Him!** This is what God does.

Verse 25: "Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood... [His shed blood for the forgiveness of sin] ...in order to demonstrate His righteousness in respect to the remission of sins that are past."

The Catholics sell what are called 'indulgences.' What are they? *Permission to sin!* You buy them. If you make a pilgrimage to Rome, you can get how ever many indulgences depending on how much you give to 'papa.'

That is absolutely false, because there is no such thing as forgiveness ahead of time of future sins. How do you know what you're going to do? If you buy the indulgences, you plan to sin and do what you want to do against God. The pope says:

Because you've paid me enough money and you have this endorsement written on paper that you have indulgences, you're free to go ahead and do it.

- That's not grace!
- That's not truth!
- That's not of God!
- That's not from the Word of God!

Sins that are past!

You're going along and you sin, the instant that you sin it's already past. Have you ever watched a clock and whenever it comes to 59 seconds/minutes and it goes back to zero, that minute/hour is already past, done and over with. Same way when you sin, it's in the timeframe of now, and right after it is a past sin. That's why it says *remission of sins that are past!*

There's nothing you can do about most of those. Maybe you can make up some things to someone you offended, that would be true. But now you love God more, keep His commandments and do all of these things that God wants.

Why would God want to do this? *Because He wants you as a son/daughter in His Kingdom to have eternal life and live in New Jerusalem!* How is that for a goal?

Think about that! It's not just a calling to a church or religion so that now you can become a better person in this society. Yes, we are to be better people in this society, that is true! ***But that's not the goal!*** The goal is:

- conversion
- growing in grace and knowledge
- coming to the first resurrection
- be granted eternal life and live forever with
 - ✓ God the Father and Jesus Christ
 - ✓ all the saints and patriarchs in New Jerusalem

That's what it's all about!

Many times when we get all bogged down in what we're doing day-by-day, week-by-week, month-by-month. We don't think about that! That's why we have the Sabbath Day, so we can come together and think about it.

Verse 26: "Through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare His righteousness in the present time, that He might be just, and the One Who justifies the one who *is* of the faith of Jesus." *That's what grace is all about!* You must:

- believe on Jesus
- His sacrifice
- His shed blood

Now what do you do?

(break@36:42)

You can see that this Grace of God series covers everything in our relationship with God: God's graciousness to lead us to repentance, baptism and the receiving of the Holy Spirit. God's justification to put us in right standing with Him.

Let's look at some more Scriptures concerning it and how tremendous this is, that God gives this to us. As a matter of fact, think about this: the Sabbath Day is a day of grace. Why? *Because this is the day that God told us to come before Him, and we will learn from Him!* This is why every elder and teacher needs to teach the Word of God. Teach the brethren how to live their lives through the grace of God, the love of God and to be justified and in right standing with God.

Titus was one of the helpers of Paul, and this book was written quite late in Paul's life, probably right after he was released from prison in Rome the first time. Notice how Paul writes it.

Titus 3:3: "For **we**..." *including himself!*

The truth of the matter is that the more that you have the love of God, the Spirit of God and are standing in His grace, the more you're going to understand how much that the human mind is really wicked.

The first time you hear Jer. 17:9 you say, 'Oh no! That can't be me!'

Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things..." *That includes us, because:*

- Have you lied to yourself?
- Have you lied to others?
- Have you cheated?
- Have you done all of this before God called you?

YES!

"...and desperately wicked; who can know it?" (v 9).

Titus 3:3: "For **we** also were once foolish, disobedient... [doing dumb things and disobeying God] ...deceived..."

That's the hardest thing to admit! That we were deceived!

"...serving all kinds of lusts... [if you don't believe that just look at television] ...and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful *and* hating one another" (v 3).

Doesn't that sound like a description of today? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 4: "But when the graciousness and the love of God our Savior... [this tells us that Jesus Christ is God] ...toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we practiced..." (vs 4-5).

I want to stop here and mention something that I watched part of which is called *The Brotherhood of Blood!* The name sound gruesome, and it is! This is a Catholic organization in Spain.

They all wear masks and never disclose who they are. They are from all levels of society, but they believe in self-flagellation! The more that you suffer... They have these flagellation whips that they whip their backs so they can bleed and all of this. But these were the ones in the 15-1600s who were the ones carrying out the Inquisition.

It showed all of the terrible weapons that they had to try and make those who would not accept the pope and the doctrines of the Catholic Church recant. Some of them were evil! They made the Nazis look like kindergarten players. That's how evil and terrible they were!

Furthermore, they did not believe that Jesus died. Yet, they are an accepted organization within the Catholic Church. Think about that for a minute! **"...not by works of righteousness, which we practiced..."**

They think they're righteous in killing and torturing! They think they're doing good! *None of the works that we do are righteous!* They may be good as far as society is concerned, but they're not righteous according to God.

"...but according to His mercy He saved us..." [saved us from this] ...through *the* washing of regeneration... [baptism] ...and *the* renewing of the Holy Spirit" (v 5). *That's what's important! This will:*

- change your life
- change your mind
- change how you think
- change everything in your life

Verse 6: "Which He richly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace..." (vs 6-7). *Always pointing toward the goal!*

"...we would become heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life" (v 7).

Let's look at some other things that we go through, which are stated in Rom. 5. I was talking with someone the other day about trials and difficulties. We all have them, but didn't Jesus go through the worst of all? *Yes, He did!*

What's the purpose of it. This person said that we should count them as a blessing. I said, 'No, you should count overcoming as the blessing. The trial is the mechanism to bring you to overcoming.

Romans 5:1: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God..."

Remember Rom. 8. that when we were enemies of God... *Now we have peace with God!*

"...through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through

Whom we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand..." (vs 1-2).

Just like an umbrella over us. That's quite a thing. We have:

- God's grace
- God's love
- God's mercy
- God's Spirit
- God's help

All of that comes!

"...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God" (v 2).

That's just what we read in Titus, *eternal life!* For us it's very hard being human beings to think of eternal life. That's a whole other realm of living. Just like little children and infants. Even though they have parents, they have no clue as to what it's going to be like when they grow up. It happens over a period of years.

God shows that at age 20 you are in adulthood, just starting. Now you have the rest of your adult life. Now we have something greater:

- the greatest goal
- the greatest promises
- the greatest blessings

All from God!

Verse 3: "And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations, realizing that **tribulation brings forth endurance.**"

If you look at any kind of sport, the winner endures. The same principle applies in overcoming. We have to have endurance. There's a lot for us to do. The ultimate grace of God is to convert the mind inside out with His Spirit. Not outside in; that doesn't work. It's got to be inside with God's Spirit and then that is reflected in your behavior.

Verse 4: "And endurance *brings forth* character... [that's what God wants] ...and character *brings forth* hope.... [because you understand the plan of God] ...And the hope *of God* never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us" (vs 4-5).

That's quite a thing! Look at everything that right there in these few verses. Given to us! Poured out to us! Given of His Spirit in everything that we do.

The book of Ephesians is really quite a wonderful book. One of the best ones that Paul has written for real spiritual Christian growth and inspiration in ***what God is doing to us, with us and through us!***

What God wants is to perform His work within us by our choices and agreement with God and love of God, so that our mind is converted. That's the whole goal of grace.

Paul does this in every one of his epistles, starting out this way. What for? *As an introduction to the epistle showing that it is directly a message from God through Paul to the ones he's writing to!*

Ephesians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus... [to the church that was there; then a prophetic statement]: ...and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus."

That's carried out in time, so this epistle is not just to the Ephesians alone to be set aside and forgotten. It's for all the faithful down through time. Notice what we are to receive from God:

Verse 2: "**Grace and peace** be to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ."

You don't want to be fighting God. Maybe people have never looked at it this way, but those who do not keep the Sabbath and keep Sunday:

- Are they fighting against God?
- Do they have peace with God?
- How can you have peace with God when you're living a lie and trying to worship the God of Truth with a lie?

Won't work!

Verse 3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ."

That's also a prophetic perfect! That means that these things will be completely given to us at the resurrection. Notice how Paul makes the calling even more personal. This is quite a thing here:

Verse 4: "According as **He has personally chosen us...**"

It was translated that way because there's a special verb in the Greek called *the middle voice verb*, which is *the subject is also the object*. You figure that! God is doing this to increase His Family, so it comes out from God and comes through us and back to God so that we can be ready for the resurrection.

"...**for Himself...**" (v 4).

I want you to watch the DVD *True Fellowship with God!* {online at **truthofgod.org**} Watch it again and listen to it very carefully, because this will help you, especially if you have a trial. Or if your discouraged and think things have gone totally

backward and upside down in your life. Where is God in your life? *He's still there!* It covers the things and leads to the finality of all of God's plan.

"...**before the foundation of the world...**" (v 4).

People look at that and say that's pre-destination. The only pre-destination is that God decided before He created the earth that there would be those whom He would call. That was in His plan! But none of us existed until we were conceived in the womb of our mother and subsequently born.

"...in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love; **having predestinated us for sonship...**" (vs 4-5).

Those who repent, are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit and are faithful to the end have been pre-destined to sonship. The *King James* says 'adoption.' ***It is sonship, the son or daughter of God!***

"...**to Himself...**" (v 5). *Think about that! Think about how great God the Father is that He is doing this with His people today!*

- through His grace
- through His love
- through His mercy
- through His goodness
- through His kindness

"...through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will To *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*" (vs 5-6).

This will be after we're resurrected and all of those who come into the Kingdom of God through the first resurrection are going to understand that those in the Church of the Firstborn will be the Church of the Firstborn forever!

Verse 7: "**In Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace,** which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence" (vs 6-8).

Here's what God wants to do once you've been justified and put in right standing with God. *You're:*

- keeping the Sabbath
- keeping the Holy Days
- loving God
- loving the brethren
- loving your neighbors
- loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being

What is all of this going to end in? *Here's the*

process that He wants us to follow:

Verse 9: “**Having made known to us the mystery...**”—*secret!*

Think about that for a minute! The greatest secret in the world is God’s secret plan for His Family, to become the sons and daughters of God. The world doesn’t know this. They say, go to heaven and have the beatific vision. Just look at this great glob of a son that’s supposed to be God and that’s your reward in heaven. **NO!** God has created the whole universe for something spectacular for us. That’s why I want you to view that DVD again: *True Fellowship with God!*

Verse 9: “**Having made known to us the mystery of His own will...**” *Think about that!*

Many of you have seen on Fox News what is called *Water’s World*. He goes out with his microphone and asks questions. They don’t even know who the Vice-President is. Sometimes they don’t even know who the President is. They’re so wrapped up in themselves and dumbed down, so given to their pleasures and their own things, they don’t know.

So, if you ran a survey and asked people, ‘What is the secret of God? Do you know what the secret of God is?’ *I wonder what some of the answers would be!*

The secret of God, of His own will “...according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself” (v 9).

This is His plan, God the Father’s plan Himself with Jesus Christ for doing what we’re doing now, having the Word of God to know, grow and overcome.

Verse 10: “That in *the Divine* plan for the fulfilling of *the* times, He might bring all things together in Christ, both the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth.”

That’s something! This section here and Eph. 3 go together. This is what God is doing. To us, sometimes we have so much going on that it’s difficult to keep it in mind. That’s why we have the Sabbath, so we can.

Verse 11: “Yes, in Him, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestinated according to His purpose, Who is working out all things according to the counsel of His own will; that we might be to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ; in Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the*

praise of His glory” (vs 11-14). *That redemption is going to be at the resurrection!*

Let’s see how Col. 2 fits in with what God wants us to do. After we receive the Holy Spirit of God, there is something that happens to our mind that takes away the hatred and carnality that we have as human beings. This is something that happens spiritually! You will see that the theme of Paul follows through with all of this.

Colossians 2:1: “Now, I want you to understand what great concern I have for you, and for those in Laodicea, and as many as have not seen my face in *the* flesh; that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding...” (vs 1-2).

- that’s why we have brotherly love
- that’s why we love each other
- that’s why we love God
- that’s why we love Jesus

All of those wrapped up together!

“...unto *the* knowledge of the mystery of God, and of *the* Father, and of Christ” (v 2).

That’s a summary of what we’ve covered so far. Human beings, theologians and men always try to improve upon God. I was thinking about that when I was preparing for this message. Theologians, most who have any faith, keep Sunday. But when they write, in order to get their doctorate degree, which says that you’ve graduated to the level that you will follow whatever you’re told.

They always have to mention other theologians by name and quote their works, compare their works and then you give your opinion. That’s not the way to do it. What you do in studying is take a subject, look through the Scriptures you can use concordances to find out where other verses help substantiate what you have. You use the knowledge of God to interpret the Word of God. This is why Paul says:

Verse 3: “In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Now, this **I say so that no one may deceive you by persuasive speech**” (vs 3-4).

Isn’t that what happens? Try to persuade you of something that is not true in the Scriptures, but they read the Scriptures and twist them to make it seem like it is real. *That’s called philosophy!*

How did God solve the problem of philosophy in Athens? *Athens was the center of all religion for the Greeks!* The philosophers were the sophists. ‘Sophia’ is philosophy! Guess where the Greeks got it? *From Babylon! Then they refined it!*

Remember when Paul came into Athens, what did he see? *All these idols to all the gods then he found one monument that said: To the Unknown God.* So, he comes up to all of these learned, very intelligent people. To be invited to Mars Hill is like invited to the highest level of religion, which it was.

So, Paul said to them, 'I'm going to preach to you about the Unknown God.' Then He says, 'Even as one of your writers has written: *in Him we live, move and have our being, and now He's calling all men to repentance!* Right to the top minds in Greece at the time. "**...that no one may deceive you by persuasive speech**"!

Verse 5: "For though I am indeed absent in the flesh, yet, I am with you in spirit, rejoicing and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him" (vs 5-6).

Walking in God's way! If we say that we love Him we ought to be walking in His footsteps!

Verse 7: "Being rooted and built up in Him, and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ" (vs 7-8)

What is Paul building to? *To a very important event that takes place when we receive the Holy Spirit of God!*

Verse 9: "For in Him [Christ] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power" (vs 9-10).

Having Christ and God the Father there's:

- no greater power
- no greater understanding
- no greater teaching

That can come from any other source! It's right here in the Word of God!

But you go to Catholicism and what do you study? *Catechisms!* And they may mention some Scriptures in it.

Verse 11: "In Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands..."

What is that? *Taking away the hostility of your mind toward God, just like cutting out part of your mind!*

"...in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ... [then Paul tells you how that happens]: ...**having been buried with**

Him in baptism... [that's a symbol of your death] ...by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead" (vs 11-12).

This is quite a thing; this all an operation of the grace of God, the conversion and changing of the heart and mind. This is spectacular! There's a whole lot more as we go along in this series.

Verse 13: "For you, who were *once* dead in your sins..."

In other words, when you're living in the world and living in your sins, ***you are as good as dead spiritually!*** The wages of sin is death! Now through Christ we're made alive. Through Christ we now have:

- the Spirit of God
- the hope of God
- the grace of God
 - ✓ to keep us in right standing with God
 - ✓ to bless us
 - ✓ to lead us
 - ✓ to teach us
 - ✓ to help us

In everything that we do! That's all through the grace of God!

"...and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses. He has blotted out the note of debt against us... [this is the right translation] ...*with the decrees of our sins...*" (vs 13-14).

Where is that "...note of debt..."? ***In your mind!*** Every sin you've ever done is there written in your mind. That's got to be erased! We'll talk about that next time, ***how God converts our mind!*** This is quite a thing, and it takes a lot of work on our part and on God's part!

"...which was contrary to us; and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross" (v 14).

He didn't nail the commandments to the cross. ***He nailed the note of the debt of our sins to the cross!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 2:4
- 2) Job 42:1-6
- 3) 2 Corinthians 7:8-10
- 4) Acts 2:36-38
- 5) Romans 6:1-2
- 6) Acts 10:47
- 7) Romans 8:7-11
- 8) Romans 3:23-26
- 9) Titus 3:3
- 10) Jeremiah 17:9

- 11) Titus 3:3-6
- 12) Romans 5:1-5
- 13) Ephesians 1:1-14
- 14) Colossians 2:1-14

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 6; 14
- Ephesians 3

Also referenced:

In-Depth Studies:

- Grace of God
- God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping
- Grace Upon Grace

Booklets:

- Grace of God in the Bible
- Rome's Challenge to the Protestants

Book: *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

DVD: True Fellowship with God {truthofGod.org}

FRC:bo

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