**Lesson #4 Righteousness By Grace Through Faith**

*The central theme of today’s lesson is how we are righteous by grace through faith and how these words: righteous, grace and faith are all intertwined.*

*There are predominantly two different overriding viewpoints among most Christians. One is that we are saved by faith. The other is that we are saved by grace. Today we are going to look at what the Bible says about both. Let’s answer 3 Questions:*

*What is Righteous? RIGHTEOUS = Right Standing With God. When we are righteous, we are in right standing in the eyes of God.*

*What is Faith? FAITH = The gift of God persuading my heart and thereby me placing my trust in Him.*

*What is Grace? GRACE = God’s divine favor extended into my life providing for every need without my merit.*

*All 3 of these words are NOUNS. A noun is a person, place, thing, or idea. A noun is NOT something that you do. It is something that just ‘is.’ Example KINDNESS: Kindness is. I don’t have to be kind for kindness to exist. Kindness exists apart from me and is not dependent upon me… this noun kindness, just ‘is.’*

Romans 3:24 being justified *(made right, acquitted, approved, cleared of all charges*) freely **by His grace** (noun) through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Romans 4:16aTherefore *it (the promise) is* of faith (noun) that *it might be* **according to grace** (noun),…

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

Romans 5:17 For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more **those who receive abundance of grace** (noun) **and of the gift of righteousness** (noun)will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

Romans 5:21so that as sin (noun) reigned in death, even so **grace** (noun) **might reign through righteousness** (noun) to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:14 For sin (noun) shall not have dominion over you, for **you are not under law but under grace** (noun).

*It is important to acknowledge here that sin in Romans 6:14 is a noun. In the book of Romans the word sin is used 48 times. Forty-six of those times sin is a noun, meaning as a whole, not as an action. Sin is not something you did that made you become a sinner. Sinner is the nature we were born into (handed down from Adam). Once we are born again, we are no longer driven by sin, we are led by grace… because our New Creation nature is righteous.*

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

2 Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin (noun) *to be* sin (noun) for us, **that we might become the righteousness** (noun) **of God in Him.**

*These two verses in 2 Corinthians are talking about an identity change. A change in the very nature of a person. Jesus Christ literally became sin (noun) so that our sin (noun) our nature could be killed. (Colossians 3:1-4) He placed in its stead God’s righteous (noun) Spirit. We are literally a New Creation. We are born again righteous… in right standing with God.*

*All that God came to do for us in Jesus Christ, He did for us before we were born. His grace, righteousness, faith … all of these are His and He freely gives them to us… as a gift. We cannot earn a gift. We cannot add to a gift. We cannot be good enough to get it to us. We cannot be bad enough to fling it from us. It is the heart of God to make us available for relationship with Himself.*

Galatians 2:21 I **do not set aside the grace of God**; for if righteousness *comes* through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

*The law was a system of earning, working, trying… Christ is the end of keeping the law to be righteous. This verse in Galatians 2:21 says that if we are trying to be righteous by ‘doing’ then we are setting the grace of God aside. If it’s set aside, it’s not operative on our behalf. We’re still saved but maybe not experiencing some of the benefits.*

Ephesians 2:8 For **by grace you have been saved through faith**, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the **gift** of God,

*What is the gift of God? All of it. The grace. The faith. The salvation. It’s all a gift from God.*

Philippians 3:9 KJV And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is **through the faith of Christ**, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

*In Strong’s Greek definition of faith, it says that faith is a gift. We have to see our utter inability to access God or receive anything from Him through our own doing, our own strength, our own work.*

*Then what does a person have to ‘do’ to be saved? To be standing in this place of freedom where grace, faith, and righteousness are freely poured into their life?*

Acts 16:30-31 And he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” 31 So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

*When the Holy Spirit reveals to us our need of God, we have the choice to accept or reject Him. Belief and faith are closely related. And though faith is provided for us it is not forced upon anyone. We always have the choice to believe (place our trust in) what we are learning… or not. As we respond (yes God, I believe this!) to revelations we receive from God our faith grows and the benefits begin to flow into our life. It is always our choice. Being born again is a choice. Growing up in the Lord is a choice. Walking and communing with God each day of our lives is our choice. When we believe God, our tendency is to lean into Him. As we lean into Him our faith activates and His life flows freely in us.*

*THESE DEFINITIONS ARE ABREVIATED. FOR FULL DEFINITIONS SEE THE STRONG’S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE.*

*\*\*\*\*\*RIGHTEOUSNESS Strong’s #1343 Part of Speech: Noun*

**Definition:**righteousness, justice
**Usage:**(usually if not always in a Jewish atmosphere), justice, justness, righteousness, righteousness of which God is the source or author, but practically: a divine righteousness.

("the *approval* of God") refers to *what is deemed right by the Lord* (after His examination), i.e. what is *approved in His eyes*.

*RIGHTEOUS = Right Standing With God. When we are righteous, we are in right standing in the eyes of God.*

*\*\*\*\*\*FAITH Strong’s #4102 Part of Speech: Noun*

**Definition:**faith, faithfulness
**Usage:**faith, belief, trust, confidence; fidelity, faithfulness.

properly, *persuasion* (be *persuaded*, come to trust); *faith*.

Faith (4102*/pistis*) is always a *gift from God*, and *never*something that can be produced by people. In short, 4102*/pistis*("faith") for the believer is "God's *divine persuasion*" – and therefore distinct from human belief (confidence) yet involving it. The Lord continuously *births faith*in the yielded believer so they can know what He prefers, i.e. the *persuasion of His will* (1 Jn 5:4).

*FAITH = The gift of God persuading my heart and thereby me placing my trust in Him.*

*When God divinely persuades our hearts of a biblical truth, we then become steadfast standing on His promise.*

*\*\*\*\*\*GRACE Strong’s # 5485 Part of Speech: Noun*
**Definition:**grace, kindness
**Usage:**(a) grace, as a gift or blessing brought to man by Jesus Christ, (b) favor, (c) gratitude, thanks, (d) a favor, kindness."*favor, disposed to, inclined*, *favor*able towards, *leaning towards* to share benefit") – The Lord's *favor* – freely *extended to give Himself* away to people (because He is "always leaning toward them").

*GRACE = God’s divine favor extended into my life providing for every need without my merit.*