

March 8, 2020

A Church Committed
Free Grace Presbyterian Church

SOME THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION:

Commitment is an act, not a word.

Jean-Paul Sartre
French Existentialist philosopher

God's people need instruction in the faith. It was in the wake of this teaching that believers were first called "Christians." The truth affected them in such a way that their lives portrayed the doctrines they espoused. They not only talked about Christ, but also resembled him in their actions. It was evident to all that they belonged to Christ.

Derek Thomas
Welsh Presbyterian pastor

Now
the full number of those
who believed were of one heart
and soul, and no one said that any of the
things that belonged to him was his own, but
they had everything in common. And with great
power the apostles were giving their testimony to the
resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was
upon them all. There was not a needy person among
them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold
them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and
laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each
as any had need. Thus Joseph, who was also called by
the apostles Barnabas (which means son of
encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus,
sold a field that belonged to him and
brought the money and laid it at the
apostles' feet.

Acts 4:32-37

And
whatever you do,
in word or deed, do
everything in the name of
the Lord Jesus, giving
thanks to God the Father
through him.

Colossians 3:17

You can be committed to
Church but not committed
to Christ, but you cannot be
committed to Christ and not
committed to church.

Joel Osteen
inspirational author and speaker

And
every day, in the
temple and from
house to house, they did
not cease teaching and
preaching that the
Christ is Jesus.

Acts 5:42

There is a gap between an intellectual recognition of who Jesus is and a commitment to Him. Logically, it would seem that anyone who admits that Jesus is the Son of God should be willing to follow Him and obey Him. It is a truth which ought to transform their lives. But in fact there are many people who will give at least verbal assent to the proposition "Jesus is God," but who do not seem to care very much about Jesus, or even pay Him much attention. It is clear then that what is necessary to become a Christian is not merely acceptance of a proposition on the basis of evidence, but a change in a person's whole orientation to life.

C. Stephan Evans
philosopher

GOD SUMMONS US BY HIS GRACE

Leader: Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

People: **When his breath departs, he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish.**

Psalm 146

Leader: Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever.

People: **Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.**

We sing praises to the Lord

"Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah"



1. Hal - le - lu - jah, praise Je - ho - vah, O my soul, Je -
 2. Hap - py is the man that choos - es, Is - rael's God to
 3. Food he dai - ly gives the hun - gry, sets the mourn - ing
 4. Hal - le - lu - jah, praise Je - ho - vah, O my soul, Je -



ho - vah praise; I will sing the glo - rious prais - es of my God through
 be his aid; he is blest whose hope of bless - ing on the Lord his
 pris - her free, rais - es those bowed down with an - guish, makes the sight - less
 ho - vah praise; I will sing the glo - rious prais - es, of my God through



all my days. Put no con - fi - dence in princ - es, nor for help on
 God is stayed. Heav'n and earth the Lord cre - a - ted, seas and all that
 eyes to see. Well Je - ho - vah loves the right - eous, and the stran - ger
 all my days. O - ver all God reigns for - ev - er, through all ag - es



man de - pend; he shall die, to dust re - turn - ing,
 they con - tain; he de - liv - ers from op - press - ion,
 he be - friends, helps the fa - ther - less and wid - ow,
 he is King; un - to him, thy God, O Zi - on,



and his pur - po - ses shall end.
 righ - teous - ness he will main - tain.
 judg - ment on the wick - ed sends.
 joy - ful hal - le - lu - jahs sing.

It is the joy of God's people to sing praises to him. There is none like him and one day his glory will be clearly seen and all people will come and worship him, acknowledging that he alone is God. Our worship this morning is a taste of that day.

"The God of Abraham Praise"

"As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire."

Daniel 7

1. The God of A - braham praise, who reigns en - throned a - bove, An -
 2. The God of A - braham praise, at whose su - preme com - mand from
 3. He by him - self has sworn, I on his oath de - pend; I
 4. The whole tri - um - phant host gives thanks to God on high; "Hail

5
 cient of ev - er - last - ing days and God of love. Je -
 earth I rise, and seek the joys at his right hand. I
 shall, on ea - gles' wings up - borne, to heav'n as - cend. I
 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost!" they ev - er cry. Hail

9
 ho - vah! Great I AM! by earth and heav'n con - fessed; I
 all on earth for - sake, its wis - dom, fame, and pow'r, and
 shall be - hold his face, I shall his pow'r a - dore, and
 Ab - braham's God and mine! I join the heav'n - ly lays; all

13
 bow and bless the sa - cred name, for - ev - er blest.
 him my on - ly por - tion make, my shield and tow'r.
 sing the won - ders of his grace for - ev - er more.
 might and ma - jes - ty are thine, and end - less praise.

GOD SANCTIFIES US BY HIS GRACE

God calls us to come and worship, recognizing his glory and our sin, the failure of our strength and the things of this world to save us

For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel,

“In repentance and rest you shall be saved;
in quietness and in trust shall be your strength”...

Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you,
and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you.

For the Lord is a God of justice;
blessed are all those who wait for him.

He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry.
As soon as he hears it, he answers you.

Isaiah 30

We repent, confessing our sin and resting in his mercy alone

We use this time in God's presence to confess our sins and our need for God's grace, silently, personally before him alone. We invite you to join us in sorrow over your sin and joy in his grace and mercy in Jesus Christ.

We confess our sins in order to give glory to God. We confess our failures, our rebellion, our striving after our own glory so that we can proclaim the glory of his grace to us in Jesus Christ, who became sin that we might become the righteousness of God.

God proclaims his mercy, the mystery of Christ – that he takes our sin that we might become his righteousness

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time...For our sake God made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

1 Peter 1
2 Corinthians 5

In the strange mercy of God the cup of his righteous wrath is given into the hands, not of his enemies, but of his beloved Son. And he will drink it, down to the dregs until the moment comes when "I thirst" gives place to "It is finished".

Lesslie Newbigin

We rejoice and rest in the mystery of Christ

"A Debtor to Mercy Alone"



A debt - or to mer - cy a - lone, of
The work which his good-ness be - gan, the
My name from the palms of his hands e -

3
cov - e - nant mer - cy I sing; nor fear, with thy
arm of his strength will com-plete; his prom - ise is
ter - ni - ty will not e - rase; im - pressed on his

6
righ - teous-ness on, my per - son and of - fring to bring. The
yea and a - men, and nev - er was for - feit - ed yet. Things
heart it re - mains, in marks of in - del - i - ble grace. Yes,

9
ter - rors of law and of God with me can have no - thing to do;
fu - ture, nor things that are now, not all things be - low nor a - bove,
I to the end shall en - dure, as sure as the ear - nest is giv'n;

12
my Sav - ior's o - be - dience and blood hide
can make him his pur - pose for - go, or
more hap - py, but not more se - cure, the

15
all my trans - gres - sions from view.
sev - er my soul from his love.
glo - ri - fied spir - its in heav'n.

GOD SPEAKS WITH US BY HIS GRACE

¹⁹Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. ²⁰But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. ²¹And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. ²²The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. ²³When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, ²⁴for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. ²⁵So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

Acts 11:19-30

²⁷Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). ²⁹So the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. ³⁰And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

God has given us the ability to hear him speak through his word, the Bible.

We turn to it throughout our worship to hear God speak to us about who he is and who we are.

Sermon

Rev. Per Almquist

A Church Committed

The Church that God Built

The penetrating power of the Bible resides not only with its nature as God's Word but also its purpose in God's hands. It is the Holy Spirit that makes it an active energy within the soul.

We stand as the Church and declare our commitment to Jesus Christ

"The Church's One Foundation"



1. The chur - ch's one foun - da - tion is Je - sus Christ, her Lord; she
2. E - lect from ev - 'ry na - tion, yet one o'er all the earth, her
3. 'Mid toil and tri - bu - la - tion, and tu - mult of her war, she
4. Yet she on earth hath un - ion with God the Three in One, and



is his new cre - a - tion by wa - ter and the Word: from
 char - ter of sal - va - tion: one Lord, one faith, one birth: one
 waits the con - sum - ma - tion of peace for - e - ver more; 'til
 my - stic sweet com - mu - nion with those whose rest is won: O



heav'n he came and sought her to be his ho - ly bride; with
 ho - ly name she bless - es, par - takes one ho - ly food, and
 with the vi - sion glor - ious her long - ing eyes are blessed, and
 hap - py ones and ho - ly! Lord, give us grace that we, like

1. 2. 3.



his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.
 to one hope she press - es, with ev - 'ry grace en - dued.
 the great church vic - tor - ious shall be the church at rest.
 them, the meek and low - ly, on



high may dwell, that they will dwell, that we will dwell with thee.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.
 Ephesians 2

GOD STRENGTHENS US BY HIS GRACE

The Word leads us
to Christ by the
ear; the
Sacraments lead
us to Christ by the
eye.
Robert Bruce

We celebrate the Lord's Supper experiencing God's commitment to us in Jesus Christ as we proclaim our commitment to him

We invite to the Lord's Table all those who are baptized followers of Jesus Christ, under the authority of Christ and his body, the Church. By eating the bread and drinking the cup, you proclaim that you are in covenant relationship with God, that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. If you have any doubts about your participation, please speak to one of the elders after the service. Wine and bread are the elements of the supper as instituted by Jesus Christ and so we follow his example.

We commit ourselves to God wholly and completely as we give our tithes and offerings to him

"He Will Hold Me Fast"

A A/C# D D E A A

1. When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast; when the
 2. Those he saves are his de-light, Christ will hold me fast; pre-cious
 3. For my life he bled and died, Christ will hold me fast; jus-tice

A/C# D D E A F#m E/G# E

tempt-er would pre-vail, He will hold me fast. I could nev-er
 in his ho-ly sight, he will hold me fast. He'll not let my
 has been sat-is-fied; he will hold me fast. Raised with him to
 instead of ourselves.

A D D C# F#m F#m E/G# E A

keep my hold through life's fear-ful path; for my love is of-ten
 soul be lost; his Prom-is-es shall last; bought by him at such a
 end-less life, he will hold me fast 'til our faith is turned to

D D E A D E F#m F#m E/G#

cold; he must hold me fast.
 cost, he will hold me fast. He will hold me fast, he will hold me
 sight, when he comes at last!

A A Bm7 A/C# D D E A

fast; for my Sav-ior loves me so, he will hold me fast.

We give our offerings to God as a public demonstration of our faith, putting our money where our mouths are. In this action we show what we claim, that our lives are organized around God and lived for him instead of ourselves.

We come to God in prayer seeking and receiving the grace to live committed to Jesus Christ in all things

*During this time we live in faith, trusting in the power of his grace,
 placing our lives and our church in his hands.*

We ask that he would work in us and through us for his glory.

GOD SENDS US WITH HIS GRACE

We hear God's call to commitment to him and respond

"We are God's People"

Unison

Know that the
LORD, he is God!
It is he who made
us, and we are his;
we are his people,
and the sheep of
his pasture.
Psalm 100

1. We are God's peo - ple, the cho - sen of the Lord, born of his
2. We are God's loved ones, the Bride of Christ our Lord, for we have
3. We are the Bod - y of which the Lord is Head, called to o -
4. We are a tem - ple, the Spir - it's dwell - ing place, formed in great

Spir - it, es - tab - lished by his Word; our cor - ner - stone is
known it, the love of God out - poured; now let us learn how
bey him, now ris - en from the dead; he wills us be a
weak - ness, a cup to hold God's grace; we die a - lone, for

Christ a - lone, and strong in him we stand: O let us live trans -
to re - turn the gift of love once giv'n: O let us share each
fam - i - ly, di - verse yet tru - ly one: O let us give our
on its own each mem - ber los - es fire: yet joined in one the

par - ent - ly, and walk heart to heart and hand in hand.
joy and care, and live with a zeal that pleas - es heav'n.
gifts to God, and so shall his work on earth be done.
flame burns on to give warmth and light, and to in - spire.

God assures us of his commitment to his Church in Christ Jesus

Leader: Now may Christ dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever.

Ephesians 3

People: Amen

Please stay and join us for a time of refreshment and enjoying each other's company.

*This is a time to share in life together as the gospel calls us
as we reconnect with those we know and as we meet someone new.*



Welcome to Free Grace

We are a broken church full of broken people. We know we need God's free grace. Some of us have accepted this grace, some are exploring what it's all about. All of us are still trying to understand it. We are a church that seeks to proclaim this free grace of God with both our words and our lives. Not satisfied with simply talking about it, we want to live it out. We invite you to come, explore, and live God's free grace with us.

Our Connections



Free Grace is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), a family of churches that seeks to be faithful to the Scriptures, true to the Reformed faith, and obedient to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

Our Leadership

Free Grace is lead by her elders, men called by God and set apart by the church to care and lead her as individual members, families, and as a whole. Our elders are:

Rev. Per Almquist (pastor)
Brian Cosgrove
Paul Martin
Ken Morris
Ben Van Dyke



Credits

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Connor Crawford, *voice*; Beth Almquist, *violin, voice*; Wagner Sgobbi, *piano*; Shane Stevens, *percussion*; Meredith Stevens, *voice*

"Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah" ©1982 Darwin Jordan Music. Words: Psalm 146, *The Psalter*, 1912. Music: Darwin Jordan, 1982.

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"He Will Hold Me Fast" ©2013 Getty Music Publishing and Matt Merker/BMI. Words: vv.1-2 Ada Habershon, alt. & words v3. Matt Merker, 1906, 2013. Music: Matt Merker, 2013.

"We Are God's People" ©1976 Fred Bock Music Co. Words: Bryan Jeffery Leech, 1976; Music: Johannes Brahms, 1876, arr. Fred Bock, 1976.

If you were dragged into court and accused of being a Christian, could your life—your checkbook and credit cards, your reputation at work, how you spent your time, and how you treated others— be summoned as evidence against you? Would there be any doubt as to the outcome of the trial?

broken people
bound together in Christ
for God's glory