



September 18, 2022

Living the Incomparable Greatness of God

Free Grace Presbyterian Church

SOME THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION:

Humility is the obverse side of confidence in God, whereas pride is the obverse side of confidence in self.

John Baillie

early 20th century Scottish minister and theologian

And the LORD said to [Rebekah], "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger."

Genesis 25:23

He deprives of speech those who are trusted and takes away the discernment of the elders. He pours contempt on princes and loosens the belt of the strong... He takes away understanding from the chiefs of the people of the earth and makes them wander in a trackless waste.

Job 12:20-21, 24

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

Ephesians 6:10

When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom.

Proverbs 11:2

If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

The proud spirit must be habitually conversant with things meaner than itself, and the humble with things nobler than itself. But we always tend to be assimilated to what our vision dwells on. Thus we learn that pride is the groveling, the degrading temper, and humility the exalting one. Pride is the vulture which may exult in sailing a little above the tree-tops, because its eye is fixed on the earth and the foul garbage with which it desires to glut itself, while it becomes foul itself and loathsome as its food. Humility is the eagle soaring into the upper sky, yet never judging itself to have risen high, because its eye is fixed upon the distant sun.

Robert Lewis Dabney

19th century Presbyterian pastor and theologian

If anyone would like to acquire humility, I can, I think, tell him the first step. The first step is to realise that one is proud. And a biggish step, too. At least, nothing whatever can be done before it. If you think you are not conceited, it means you are very conceited indeed.

C.S. Lewis

20th century English literary critic, author, apologist, and author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*

Humility...is a gateway virtue. It stands at the gateway to a relationship with God and is vital for Christian conversion and growth. Without humility we do not know God, we relate only poorly to one another, and we take our stand knee-deep in self-deception.

Dick Keyes

pastor, author, and former director of L'Abri Fellowship in Southborough, Massachusetts

GOD SUMMONS US BY HIS GRACE

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.

Psalms 146

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.

Leader: Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.

Psalms 145

People: I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever.

We praise the greatness of our God

"How Great Thou Art"

1. O Lord, my God, when I in awe-some won-der con-sid-er
 2. When through the woods and for-est glades I wan-der, and hear the
 3. And when I think that God, his Son not spar-ing, sent him to
 4. When Christ shall come with shout of ac-cla-ma-tion and take me

all the worlds thy hands have made; I see the stars, I hear the rol-ling
 birds sing sweet-ly in the trees; when I look down from loft-y moun-tain
 die, I scarce can take it in, that on the cross, my bur-den glad-ly
 home, what joy shall fill my heart! Then I shall bow in hum-ble ad-o-

thun-der, thy pow'r through-out the u-ni-verse dis-played. Then sings my
 gran-deur, and hear the brook and feel the gen-tle breeze.
 bear-ing, he bled and died to take a-way my sin.
 ra-tion, and there pro-claim, my God, how great thou art!

soul, my Sav-ior God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art! Then sings my

soul, my Sav-ior God, to thee: how great thou art, how great thou art!

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 is a taste of that day.

"Come, Let Us Sing unto the Lord"

1. Come, let us sing un - to the Lord
2. The great sal - va - tion of our God
3. He called to mind his truth and grace
4. All lands to God lift up your voice;

new songs of praise with sweet ac - cord;
is seen through all the earth a - broad;
in prom - ise made to Is - rael's race;
sing praise to him, with shouts re - joice;

for won - ders great by him are done,
be - fore the hea - ven's won - d'ring sight
and un - to earth's re - mo - test bound
with voice of joy and loud ac - claim

his hand and arm have vic - t'ry won.
he has re - vealed his truth and right.
glad tid - ings of sal - va - tion sound.
let all u - nite and praise his name!

Oh sing to the
LORD a new song,
for he has done
marvelous things!
His right hand and
his holy arm have
worked salvation
for him.

Psalms 98

GOD SANCTIFIES US BY HIS GRACE

God calls us to humble ourselves before him, comparing ourselves not to others but to him alone

Jesus also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Luke 18

We humble ourselves, acknowledging our sin to God

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.

When we humble ourselves, we confess our sins and our need for Jesus Christ and God responds assuring us that Christ's death paid the price of our sin once for all. We are not forgiven again, rather we are reminded that Christ's sacrificial death guarantees our forgiveness once for all.

God exalts the humble, declaring they are forgiven in Christ

And when they had carried out all that was written of Jesus Christ, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead... Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.

Acts 13

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4

We rest humbly in the truth: all we bring to God is our sin, but in his love he gave his Son for us

“How Deep the Father’s Love for Us”



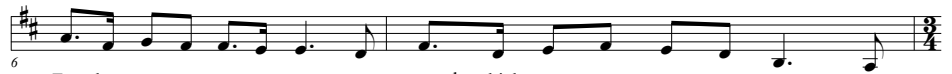
1. How deep the Fa - ther's love for us, how
 2. Be - hold the man up - on a cross, my
 3. I will not boast in an - y - thing: no



2 vast be - yond all meas - ure, that he should give his on - ly Son to
 sin up - on his shoul - ders; a - shamed, I hear my mock - ing voice call
 gifts, no pow'r, no wis - dom; but I will boast in Je - sus Christ: his



4 make a wretch his treas - ure. How great the pain of sear - ing loss; the
 out a - mong the scof - fers. It was my sin that held him there un -
 death and res - ur - rec - tion. Why should I gain from his - re - ward? I



6 Fa - ther turns his face a - way as wounds which mar the cho - sen One bring
 til it was ac - com - plished; his dy - ing breath has brought me life; I
 can - not give an an - swer; but this I know with all my heart: his



8 man - y sons to glo - ry.
 know that it is fin - ished.
 wounds have paid my ran - som. Why



12 should I gain from his re - ward? I can - not give an an - swer; but



14 this I know with all my heart: his wounds have paid my ran - som.

GOD SPEAKS WITH US BY HIS GRACE

¹The vision of Obadiah.

Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom:
We have heard a report from the LORD,
and a messenger has been sent among the nations:
“Rise up! Let us rise against her for battle!”

²Behold, I will make you small among the nations;
you shall be utterly despised.

³The pride of your heart has deceived you,
you who live in the clefts of the rock,
in your lofty dwelling,

who say in your heart,
“Who will bring me down to the ground?”

⁴Though you soar aloft like the eagle,
though your nest is set among the stars,
from there I will bring you down,
declares the LORD.

⁵If thieves came to you,
if plunderers came by night—
how you have been destroyed!—
would they not steal only enough for themselves?

If grape gatherers came to you,
would they not leave gleanings?

⁶How Esau has been pillaged,
his treasures sought out!

⁷All your allies have driven you to your border;
those at peace with you have deceived you;
they have prevailed against you;
those who eat your bread have set a trap beneath you—
you have no understanding.

⁸Will I not on that day, declares the LORD,
destroy the wise men out of Edom,
and understanding out of Mount Esau?

⁹And your mighty men shall be dismayed, O Teman,
so that every man from Mount Esau will be cut off by slaughter.

Obadiah 1-9

In Scripture we not only hear the Word of God, we also find the Word made flesh in Jesus Christ. So we fill our worship and our lives with his Word that we would constantly be drawn to God through Jesus Christ.

Sermon

Rev. Per Almquist

Living the Incomparable Greatness of God

Mine! Living Like You Belong to Jesus

Scripture is God's word to us, not human words about God. Reading scripture as if it were the writings of various persons throughout history giving their ideas or experiences of God, is perhaps the commonest mistake that is made in reading scripture. And the deadliest.

Eugene Peterson

We live the incomparable greatness of our God looking to him alone

"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 - ner 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 better to take
 refuge in the LORD
 than to trust in
 man. It is better to
 take refuge in the
 LORD than to trust
 in princes.

Psalm 118

GOD STRENGTHENS US BY HIS GRACE

But far be it from
me to boast except
in the cross of our
Lord Jesus Christ,
by which the world
has been crucified
to me, and I to the
world.
Galatians 6

We celebrate the Lord's Supper to humble ourselves, looking to his death on the cross as our only hope

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. The bread is gluten-free; the purple cups are for those that have dietary restrictions.

"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
save in the death of Christ my God:
all the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down:
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

**We live the incomparable greatness of God as we give our tithes, our offerings,
and our lives to him, proclaiming his greatness**

There is but one only, living, and true God,
who is infinite in being and perfection,
a most pure spirit,
invisible, without body, parts, or passions;
immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty,
most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute;
working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous
will,
for his own glory;
most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering,
abundant in goodness and truth,
forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin;
the rewarder of them that diligently seek him;
and withal, most just, and terrible in his judgments,
hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.

Westminster Confession of
Faith 2.1

We pray for God to work true humility in us through Jesus Christ

*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.

The Westminster Confession of Faith was written in England in the 1640s. It is both disciplined theologically and deeply pastoral. As part of our doctrinal standards it expresses what we believe Scripture teaches, framing it for the needs of the people of God. We use these words to join us with the church around the world and through the ages.

GOD SENDS US WITH HIS GRACE

We sing out the longing of our hearts: that we would look to God alone in life

“Be Thou My Vision”



1. Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
2. Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
3. Rich - es I heed not, nor man's emp - ty praise,
4. High King of hea - ven, my vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art;
I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord;
thou mine in - her - it - ance, now and al - ways:
may I reach hea - ven's joys, O bright hea - ven's Sun!



thou my best thought by day or by night,
thou my great Fa - ther and I thy true son;
thou and thou on - ly, first in my heart,
Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wa - king or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
thou in me dwell - ing, and I with thee one.
High King of hea - ven, my trea - sure thou art.
still be my vis - ion, O Rul - er of all.

Based on an Irish poem believed to have been written between the 6th to the 8th centuries, this hymn is a prayer that at every moment of our lives, God would be our vision above all else.

God blesses us with himself

Revelation 19, 21

Leader: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb... Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with you, and you will be his people, and God himself will be with you as your God.

People: Amen

Please stay and join us for a time of 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

Cover artwork: *Humility*, artist unknown, serpentine stone. <https://uniqerockart.com/>

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Dan Crawford, *voice*; Joanne Crosby, *flute*; Beth Almquist, *piano*

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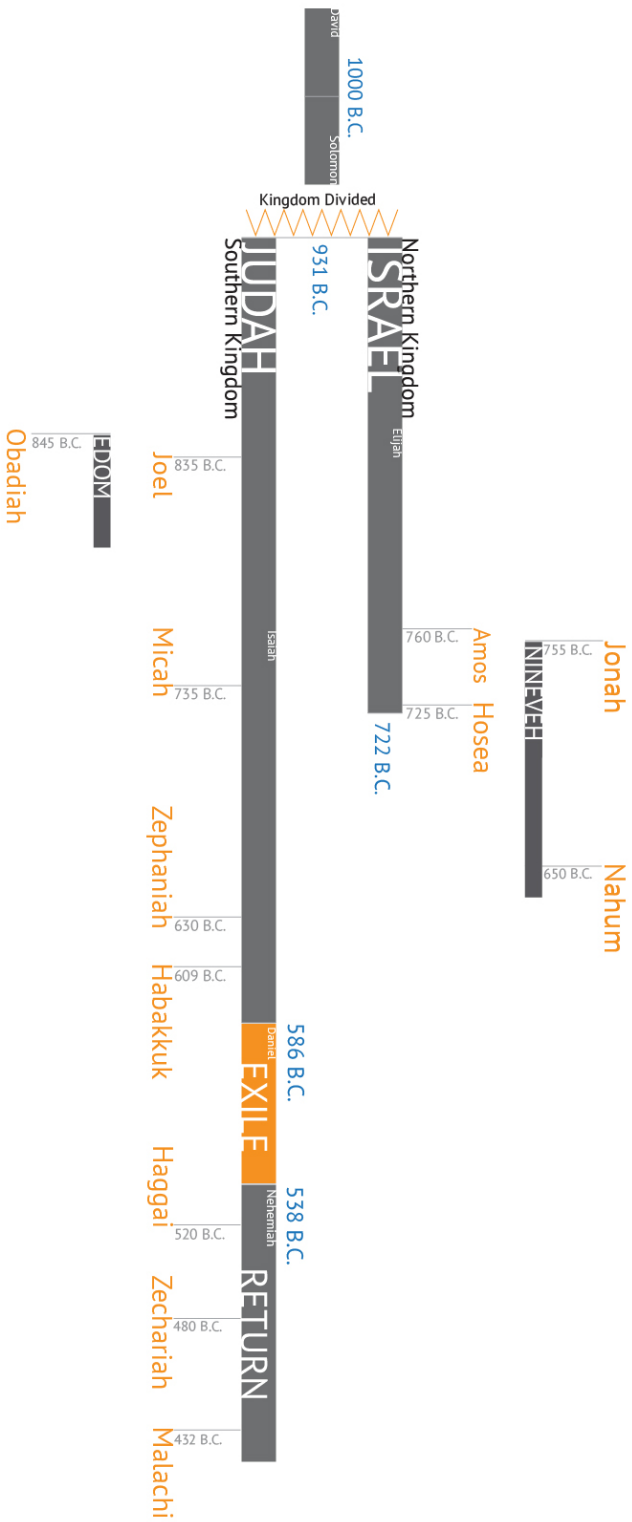
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broken people
bound together in Christ
for God's glory