



**April 14, 2024**

Living in the Certainty of God  
*Free Grace Presbyterian Church*

## SOME THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION:

Faith is a leaning on, a trusting in, a resting on God in Christ instead of on ourselves. It is clear that faith is more than just a momentary decision. It is also clear that faith is more than the acceptance of intellectual propositions. Faith involves not only the whole person but also the whole of life.

Anthony Hoekema  
20<sup>th</sup> century Reformed theologian

Both the humility and the hope of the prophet provide appropriate direction for the Church through the ages. God's ways are higher than man's ways. Only by revelation can the genuine perplexities of God's dealings with human beings be comprehended.

O. Palmer Robertson  
Presbyterian OT scholar

And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

**Genesis 15:6**

For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for "The righteous shall live by faith."

**Galatians 3:10-11**

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

**Romans 1:16-17**

O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest. Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

**Psalms 22:2-5**

Faith gives reality to objects of hope, which seem to be unreal.

John Chrysostom  
4<sup>th</sup> century bishop of Constantinople  
known as "Golden Mouth"

The righteous are those courageous enough to accept God's word of promise in a world dominated by the horrors of Babylonian power... The righteous are also those whose lives correspond to God's leadership. The righteous are not perfect, but they do live according to their relationship with God. To be righteous means to meet the demands of a relationship.

Waylon Bailey  
OT scholar and Baptist pastor

All... who indulge themselves in their own counsels deserve to be forsaken by God, and to be left by him to be driven up and down, and here and there, by Satan; for the only unflinching security for the faithful is to acquiesce in God's word.

John Calvin  
16<sup>th</sup> French-Swiss Reformed pastor and theologian

# GOD SUMMONS US BY HIS GRACE

Leader: Remember to extol his work, of which men have sung. All mankind has looked on it; man beholds it from afar.

Job 36

**People:** Behold, God is great, and we know him not; the number of his years is unsearchable.

Leader: For he draws up the drops of water; they distill his mist in rain, which the skies pour down and drop on mankind abundantly. Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds, the thunderings of his pavilion?

**People:** Behold, he scatters his lightning about him and covers the roots of the sea.

Leader: Praise the LORD, all nations! Extol him, all peoples!

Psalms 117

**People:** For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD!

## We sing to the Lord and declare his glory

"Immortal, Invisible"

1. Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise; in  
2. Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light; nor  
3. Great Fa - ther of glo - ry, pure Fa - ther of light, thine  
5 light in - ac - ces - si - ble, hid from our eyes; most  
want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might; thy  
an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing in their sight; all  
9 bles - sed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days, Al -  
jus - tice like moun - tains, high soar - ing a - bove; thy  
praise we would ren - der; O help us to see; 'tis  
13 migh - ty, vic - tor - ious, thy great name we praise!  
clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.  
on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee.

In worship we are part of "the large congregation" where all the writers of Scripture address us, where hymn writers use music to express truths that touch us not only in our heads but in our hearts, where the preacher who has just lived through six days of doubt, hurt, faith and blessing with the worshippers speaks the truth of Scripture in the language of the congregation's present experience.

Eugene Peterson


"Praise the Lord (Psalm 117)"



Chorus: Praise the Lord, all you na - tions, ex - tol him, all you peo - ples, for



3  
great is his love for us. — Praise the Lord- he is faith - ful; His



6  
love en - dures for - e - ver, and great is his love for us. — \*



9  
1. Sing a song of praise to God en - throned on high;  
2. Bold-ly shout his praise for he has res - cued us;



11  
bow be - fore the King of the an - gels. His  
sin and death no more can en - slave us. His



13  
mer cy and His love, his ju stice will be known;  
beau ty and his pow'r, dis - played at Cal - va - ry,



15  
lift a song of praise to the Lord!  
lift a song of praise to the Lord!

Praise the LORD, all nations! Extol him, all peoples! For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD!  
Psalm 117

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# GOD SANCTIFIES US BY HIS GRACE

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## **God declares what he requires, and it is beyond our ability**

And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

Luke 10

Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.

James 2

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

1 John 1

## **We confess our sins that he would forgive us according to his promise**

*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.*

The Bible says that all people are sinners, fleeing from God, but in Jesus Christ we find peace and healing. In his death on the cross, he took our sin and paid the price for it. And so we come to him in faith, confessing our sin and need for him, trusting in his death alone to bring us life.

## **God declares his love to us, giving us life in Jesus Christ**

As one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous... where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord...For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 5 & 6

The joy of faith in Jesus Christ is that we can cry "It is well with my soul" with perfect assurance, knowing that it is only because of his life and death that it can be well with our souls no matter the circumstances of life.

## We praise the Lord, finding peace in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ

"It Is Well with My Soul"

1. When peace, like a riv - er, at - tend - eth my way,  
 2. Though Sa - tan should buf - fet, though tri - als should come,  
 3. My sin— O the bliss of this glo - ri - ous thought!—  
 4. O Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight,

when sor - rows like sea bil - lows roll; what - ev - er my lot, thou hast  
 let this blest as - sur - ance con - trol, that Christ has re - gard - ed my  
 my sin, not in part, but the whole, is nailed to the cross and I  
 the clouds be rolled back as a scroll, the trump shall re - sound and the

taught me to say, "It is well, it is well with my soul."  
 help - less es - tate, and has shed his own blood for my soul.  
 bear it no more; praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!  
 Lord shall de - scend; "E - ven so"— it is well with my soul.

### REFRAIN

It is well with my soul; it is well, it is well with my soul.  
 It is well with my soul;

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## GOD SPEAKS WITH US BY HIS GRACE

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Habakkuk 1:12-2:20

<sup>12</sup>Are you not from everlasting,  
O LORD my God, my Holy One?  
We shall not die.

O LORD, you have ordained them as a judgment,  
and you, O Rock, have established them for reproof.

<sup>13</sup>You who are of purer eyes than to see evil  
and cannot look at wrong,  
why do you idly look at traitors  
and remain silent when the wicked swallows up  
the man more righteous than he?

<sup>14</sup>You make mankind like the fish of the sea,  
like crawling things that have no ruler.

<sup>15</sup>He brings all of them up with a hook;  
he drags them out with his net;  
he gathers them in his dragnet;  
so he rejoices and is glad.

<sup>16</sup>Therefore he sacrifices to his net  
and makes offerings to his dragnet;  
for by them he lives in luxury,  
and his food is rich.

<sup>17</sup>Is he then to keep on emptying his net  
and mercilessly killing nations forever?

**2** <sup>1</sup>I will take my stand at my watchpost  
and station myself on the tower,  
and look out to see what he will say to me,  
and what I will answer concerning my complaint.

<sup>2</sup>And the LORD answered me:

“Write the vision;  
make it plain on tablets,  
so he may run who reads it.

<sup>3</sup>For still the vision awaits its appointed time;  
it hastens to the end—it will not lie.  
If it seems slow, wait for it;  
it will surely come; it will not delay.

<sup>4</sup>“Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright  
within him,  
but the righteous shall live by his faith.

<sup>5</sup>“Moreover, wine is a traitor,  
an arrogant man who is never at rest.

His greed is as wide as Sheol;  
like death he has never enough.  
He gathers for himself all nations  
and collects as his own all peoples.”

<sup>6</sup>Shall not all these take up their taunt against him,  
with scoffing and riddles for him, and say,

“Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own—  
for how long?—  
and loads himself with pledges!”

<sup>7</sup>Will not your debtors suddenly arise,  
and those awake who will make you tremble?  
Then you will be spoil for them.

<sup>8</sup>Because you have plundered many nations,  
all the remnant of the peoples shall plunder you,  
for the blood of man and violence to the earth,  
to cities and all who dwell in them.

<sup>9</sup>“Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house,  
to set his nest on high,  
to be safe from the reach of harm!

<sup>10</sup>You have devised shame for your house  
by cutting off many peoples;  
you have forfeited your life.

<sup>11</sup>For the stone will cry out from the wall,  
and the beam from the woodwork respond.

<sup>12</sup>“Woe to him who builds a town with blood  
and founds a city on iniquity!

<sup>13</sup>Behold, is it not from the LORD of hosts  
that peoples labor merely for fire,  
and nations weary themselves for nothing?

<sup>14</sup>For the earth will be filled  
with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.

<sup>15</sup>“Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink—  
you pour out your wrath and make them drunk,  
in order to gaze at their nakedness!

<sup>16</sup>You will have your fill of shame instead of glory.  
Drink, yourself, and show your uncircumcision!  
The cup in the LORD's right hand

will come around to you,  
and utter shame will come upon your glory!

<sup>17</sup>The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you,  
as will the destruction of the beasts that  
terrified them,  
for the blood of man and violence to the earth,  
to cities and all who dwell in them.

<sup>18</sup>“What profit is an idol  
when its maker has shaped it,  
a metal image, a teacher of lies?

For its maker trusts in his own creation  
when he makes speechless idols!

<sup>19</sup>Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake;  
to a silent stone, Arise!

Can this teach?

Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver,  
and there is no breath at all in it.

<sup>20</sup>But the LORD is in his holy temple;  
let all the earth keep silence before him.”

## Sermon

Rev. Dr. Per Almquist

## Living in the Certainty of God

Mine! Living Like You Belong to Jesus

Habakkuk 1:12-2:20

Living by faith is living in the certainty of God, living in his:

1. truth (**1:12-17**)

2. loyalty (**2:1-3**)

3. trust (**2:5-20**)

Preaching exists,  
not for the  
propagating of  
views, opinions  
and ideals, but for  
the proclamation  
of the mighty acts  
of God.

James Stewart



# We seek to live in faith, in the certainty of our God

"Call Jehovah Your Salvation"



1. Call Je - ho - vah your sal - va - tion, rest be - neath th'Al - migh - ty's shade;  
2. From the sword at noon - day wast - ing, from the noise - some pes - ti - lence,  
3. Since, with pure and firm af - fec - tion you on God have set your love,



in his se - cret hab - i - ta - tion dwell, and ne - ver be dis - mayed:  
in the depth of mid - night blast - ing, God shall be your sure de - fense:  
with the wings of his pro - tec - tion he will shield you from a - bove:



there no tu - mult shall a - larm you, you shall dread no hid - den snare:  
he shall charge his an - gel le - gions watch and ward o'er you to keep;  
you shall call on him in trou - ble, he will hear - ken, he will save;



guile nor vi - o - lence can harm you, in e - ter - nal safe - guard there.  
though you walk through hos - tile re - gions, though in des - ert wilds you sleep.  
here for grief re - ward you dou - ble, crown with life be - yond the grave.

Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.

Psalm 91

# GOD STRENGTHENS US BY HIS GRACE

Communion is, of all the actions of worship, a uniquely corporate event. We can sing alone, or study Scripture alone, or pray alone, but nobody does Communion alone for it is our celebration that we are united to Jesus Christ, and in him, to each other.

## As we celebrate the Lord's Supper, declaring that life is found only in the Rock: the truth of Jesus' death on the cross

*We celebrate God's free grace to us in Jesus Christ by observing the Lord's Supper each Sunday. 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 are acknowledging 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.*

"Behold the Lamb (Communion Hymn)"



1. Be - hold the Lamb who bears our sins a - way, slain for us,
2. The bod - y of our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ, torn for you,
3. The blood that cleans - es ev - 'ry stain of sin, shed for you,
4. And so with thank - ful - ness and faith we rise to re - spond



and we re-mem - ber the pro - mise made that all who come in faith find for -  
eat and re-mem - ber; the wounds that heal, the death that brings us life paid the  
drink and re-mem - ber; He drained death's cup that all may en - ter in to re -  
and to re-mem - ber our call to fol - low in the steps of Christ as His



give - ness at the cross. So we share in this bread of life, and we drink of His  
price to make us one. So we share in this bread of life, and we drink of His  
ceive the life of God. So we share in this bread of life, and we drink of His  
bo - dy here on earth. As we share in his suf - fer - ing, we pro - claim Christ will



sac - ri - fice as a sign of our bonds of peace a - round the ta - ble of the King.  
sac - ri - fice as a sign of our bonds of love a - round the ta - ble of the King.  
sac - ri - fice as a sign of our bonds of grace a - round the ta - ble of the King.  
come a - gain! And we'll join in the feast of heav'n a - round the ta - ble of the King.

**We bring our tithes and offerings to God to declare our faith: our loyalty and trust in our covenant God who is from everlasting** "Whate'er My God ordains is Right"



1. What - e'er my God or - dains is right:  
 2. What - e'er my God or - dains is right:  
 3. What - e'er my God or - dains is right:  
 4. What - e'er my God or - dains is right:



5  
 ho - ly his will a - bid - eth;  
 he nev - er will de - ceive me;  
 though now this cup, in drink - ing,  
 here shall my stand be tak - en;



9  
 I will be still what - e'er he does,  
 he leads me by the prop - er path;  
 may bit - ter seem to my faint heart,  
 though sor - row, need, or death be mine,



13  
 and fol - low where he guid - eth.  
 I know he will not leave me.  
 I take it, all un - shrink - ing.  
 yet I am not for - sak - en.



17  
 He is my God; though dark my road,  
 I take con - tent, what he hath sent;  
 My God is true; each morn a - new  
 My Fa - ther's care is round me there;



25  
 he holds me that I shall not fall:  
 his hand can turn my griefs a - way,  
 sweet com - fort yet shall fill my heart,  
 he holds me that I shall not fall:



29  
 where - fore to him I leave it all.  
 and pa - tient - ly I wait his day.  
 and pain and sor - row shall de - part.  
 and so to him I leave it all.

"Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word."  
 Luke 1

**We run to the Lord with our questions, taking our stand to wait on his answer**

*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.*

Prayer involves struggle, but the struggle is not that of persuading our God. Rather, it is the struggle involved in being subdued by God, coming out of the dark and secret places in which we have been hiding the truth about ourselves, and laying the whole of our lives before him.

Sinclair Ferguson

# GOD SENDS US BY HIS GRACE

**We live in faith, in the certainty of God that allows us to see the promised land of life with him for eternity**

“On Jordan’s Stormy Banks”

On Jor - dan's stor - my banks I stand, and  
 All o'er those wide ex - ten - ded plains shines  
 No chill - ing winds nor pois - onous breath can  
 When shall I reach that hap - py place, and

3  
 cast a wish - ful eye to  
 one e - ter - nal day; there  
 reach that health - ful shore;  
 be for - ev - er blessed; when

5  
 Ca - naan's fair and hap - py land, where  
 God the Son for - ev - er reigns, and  
 sick - ness, sor - row, pain, and death are  
 shall I see my Fa - ther's face, and

7  
 1 my pos - ses - sions lie. I am  
 scat - ters night a way.  
 felt and feared no more.  
 in his bos - om rest.

10  
 bound, I am bound, I am bound for the prom - ised Land. I am

14  
 bound, I am bound, I am bound for the prom - ised Land.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”  
 Revelation 21

## God declares the promise

**Leader:** He has loved you with an everlasting love; therefore he will continue his faithfulness to you...The Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one...Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all.

**People:** Amen

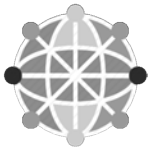
Jeremiah 31  
 2 Thessalonians 3



## 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. Dr. Per Almquist (pastor)  
Brian Cosgrove  
Adam Lee  
Ken Morris  
Ben Van Dyke



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Jocelyn Crawford, *voice*; Connor Crawford, *voice*; Abi Lee, *violin*; Beth Almquist, *piano*

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" Public Domain. Words: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1867. Music: Traditional Welsh melody.

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A missionary was sitting at his desk, looking desperately for a word. He was translating the gospel of John into the language of the African tribe with which he was working, but he didn't know their word for "faith." While he was pondering, a member of the tribe came into the missionary's hut, threw himself into a chair, and uttered an expression which meant, "I'm leaning all my weight on this chair." At once the missionary leaped up, dancing with joy, exclaiming, "I've got my word! Faith is leaning all your weight on Christ!" More can be said about faith than this, but surely this is at the heart of it.

Anthony Hoekema  
20<sup>th</sup> century Reformed theologian

broken people  
bound together in Christ  
for God's glory