

February 2, 2025

That's Not Fair

Free Grace Presbyterian Church

SOME THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION:

It is not impartiality that characterizes God's grace... but rather the sheer abundance of God's grace. God's love cannot be used up.

Stanley Hauerwas
theologian and ethicist

If there is any sentiment that has no place in the Christian heart, it is the sentiment that God owes us something. he owes us nothing.

R. C. Sproul
Presbyterian theologian

And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

1 Peter 1:17-19

Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

Philippians 4:1

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.

1 Corinthians 3:5-6

One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Luke 23:39-43

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.

Psalms 103:10-14

The love of God in all its fulness is poured out on sinners, and they receive infinitely more than they deserve... God's way is always the way of grace.

Leon Morris
Australian NT scholar

GOD SUMMONS US BY HIS GRACE

Leader: Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy! For the Lord, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth.

Psalms 47

People: God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

Leader: Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

People: For God is the King of all the earth.

Leader: All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your saints shall bless you! They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

Psalms 145

People: Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

We speak of his glory and shout to him with loud songs of joy

“Rejoice, the Lord is King”

1. Re - joi - ce, the Lord is King; your Lord and King a - dore! Re -
2. Je - sus the Sa - vior reigns, the God of truth and love; when
3. His king - dom can - not fail, he rules o'er earth and heav'n; the
4. He sits at God's right hand till all his foes sub - mit, and
5. Re - joi - ce in glor - ious hope! Our Lord, the Judge, shall come, and
6
joy, give thanks, and sing, and tri - umph ev - er more.
he had purged our stains, he took his seat a - bove.
keys of death and hell are to our Je - sus giv'n.
bow to his com - mand, and fall be - neath his feet.
take his ser - vants up to their e - ter - nal home.
10
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Re - joi - ce, a - gain I say, re - joi - ce!

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.

"Jesus, Everlasting King"

Je - sus, ev-er-last - ing King, ac-cept the_ tri - bute_ which_ we_ bring;

ac-cept the_ well - de-served re-nown_ and wear our_ prais - es_ as your crown.

1. O send your Spir - it to im - part
 2. The glad - ness of re - demp - tion's day;
 3. May ev - 'ry time of wor - ship see
 4. O that the months would roll a - way

rest and re - pent - ance to our hearts,
 our hearts would wish it long to stay,
 your grace re - vealed more rich and free,
 and bring the cor - o - na - tion day;

like the dear hour, when from a - bove,
 nor let our faith for - sake its hold,
 till we are raised to sing your name
 the King of grace shall fill the throne

we first re - ceived your pledge of love.
 nor com - forts sink, or love grow cold.
 at the great sup - per of the Lamb.
 with all his Fa - ther's glo - ries on.

But the LORD is
 the true God; he is
 the living God and
 the everlasting
 King.
 Jeremiah 10

GOD SANCTIFIES US BY HIS GRACE

God proclaims what he requires of us and our failure to do it

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD?

Deuteronomy 10

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 sin, that we do not walk in all his ways

O God of grace,

in Jesus Christ, you have become our sin

that we might become your righteousness.

You have clothed us with a bridegroom's robe
and decked us with jewels of holiness.

But in our Christian walk, we are still in rags;

our best prayers are stained with sin;

our penitential tears are so much impurity;

our confessions of wrong are so many aggravations of sin.

We repent of our repentance.

We have no robe to bring to cover our sins,

no loom to weave our own righteousness;

We stand always clothed in filthy garments

and by grace are always receiving a change of raiment.

We continually go into the far country,

always returning home as prodigals,

always saying, "Father, forgive me,"

and you are always bringing forth the best robe,

the robe of Christ's righteousness.

Every morning, let us wear it;

every evening return in it,

go out to the day's work in it,

be married in it,

be found in death in it,

stand before the great white throne in it,

and enter heaven in it shining as the sun.

Thank you, Father, for the celebration that attends

our being found by your grace.

May we rejoice with you

at the finding of each lost sheep,

each lost coin,

at every prodigal that comes home

and receives new raiment from you.

Draw us into that heavenly celebration

through Jesus Christ,

the good shepherd who found us.

Amen.

A full prayer of confession acknowledges that our sin is more than an isolated example of bad judgment; it is a way of life. Sin is our response to God—fleeing from him and running to other things. We confess that we are sinful people, and we live in need of a Savior.

God declares his mercy and grace to sinners

Psalms 103

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

Ephesians 2

God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

We respond to his grace and come to Jesus Christ

“Come, Ye Sinners”



1. Come, ye sin - ners, poor and wretch - ed,
 2. Come, ye need - y, come and wel - come,
 3. Come, ye wea - ry, hea - vy la - den,
 4. Let not con - science make you lin - ger,
 5. Lo! the in - car - nate God, a - scend - ed,



weak and woun - ded, sick and sore;
 God's free boun - ty glo - ri - fy;
 bruised and bro - ken by the fall;
 nor of fit - ness fond - ly dream;
 pleads the mer - it of his blood;



Je - sus read - y stands to save you,
 be - lief and true re - pen - tance,
 if you tar - ry till you're bet - ter,
 all the fit - ness he re - qui - res
 ven - ture on him, ven - ture whol - ly,



full of pi - ty joined with power.
 ev - ry grace that brings you nigh.
 you will ne - ver come at all.
 is to feel your need of him.
 let no oth - er trust in - trude.



He is a - ble, he is a - ble,
 With - out mon - ey, with - out mon - ey,
 Not the righ - teous, not the righ - teous;
 This he gives you, this he gives you,
 None but Je - sus, none but Je - sus



he is will - ing; doubt no more.
 come to Je - sus Christ and buy.
 sin - ners Je - sus came to call.
 'tis the Spir - it's ris - ing beam.
 can do help - less sin - ners good.

But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”
 Matthew 9

GOD SPEAKS WITH US BY HIS GRACE

¹For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.' ⁵So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. ⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.' ⁸And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.' ⁹And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, ¹²saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?' ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first last."

Matthew 20:1-16

Scripture is the ongoing rapport between heaven and earth, between Christ and his church, between God and his children. It does not just tie us to the past; it binds us to the living Lord in the heavens. It is the living voice of God.

Herman Bavincck

Sermon

That's Not Fair

Rev. Dr. Bryan Chapell

Bryan Chapell is the Stated Clerk of the PCA. He is President Emeritus of Covenant Theological Seminary and Pastor Emeritus of Grace Presbyterian Church in Peoria, IL. He is the author of one of the standard textbooks on expository preaching and the host of a daily radio program broadcast in 80+ countries. An avid fisherman, his wife, Kathy, is the one that did not get away. They have four grown children and an increasing number of grandchildren.

We rest and rejoice in God's amazing grace

"Amazing Grace"

1. A - ma - zing grace! how sweet the sound, that saved a
2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my
3. Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I have al -
4. When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright shin - ing

7
wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am
fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that grace ap -
rea - dy come; 'tis grace has brought me safe thus
as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's

12
found, was blind, but now I see.
pear the hour I first be - lieved!
far, and grace will lead me home.
praise than when we'd first be - gun.

In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.
Ephesians 1

GOD STRENGTHENS US BY HIS GRACE

We celebrate the Lord's Supper, proclaiming the amazing grace of God that all the benefits of Christ's death on the cross are ours by faith

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 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.

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

"Down at the Cross"



1. Down at the cross where my Sa - vior died,
2. I am so won - drous - ly saved from sin;
3. Come to the foun - tain, so rich and sweet;



down where for cleans - ing from sin I cried;
Je - sus so sweet - ly a - bides with - in;
cast thy poor soul at the Sav - ior's feet;



there to my heart was the blood ap - plied sing - ing,
there at the cross where he took me in, sing - ing,
plunge in to - day and be made com - plete, sing - ing,



1.
"Glo - ry, Glo - ry, Glo - ry to his Name."
"Glo - ry, Glo - ry, Glo - ry to his Name."
"Glo - ry, Glo - ry, Glo - ry to his Name."



2, 3.
me." There to my heart was the blood ap - plied sing - ing,
me."



"Glo - ry, Glo - ry, Glo - ry to his Name."



There to my heart - was the blood ap - plied sing - ing,



"Glo - ry, Glo - ry, Glo - ry to his Name."

We respond to the grace of God given to us in Christ with the poor gifts of our tithes, offerings, and lives

"My Maker and My King"

My Ma - ker and my King, to thee my all I owe; thy
 The crea - ture of thy hand, on thee a - lone I live; my
 Lord, what can I im - part when all is thine be - fore? Thy
 O let thy grace in - spire my soul with strength di - vine; let

3
 D C Em D C
 sover - eign boun - ty is the spring whence all my bless - ings flow; thy
 God, thy ben - e - fits de - mand more praise than I can give; my
 love de - mands a thank - ful heart, the gift, a - las! how poor, thy
 ev - 'ry word and each de - sire and all my days be thine; let

5
 D Em C D
 sover - eign boun - ty is the spring whence all my bless - ings
 God, thy ben - e - fits de - mand more praise than I can
 love de - mands a thank - ful heart, the gift, a - las! how
 ev - 'ry word and each de - sire and all my days be

7
 G Bm Em Cmaj7 G
 flow.
 give.
 poor.
 thine.

For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it; he did not create it empty, he formed it to be inhabited!): "I am the LORD, and there is no other... To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance."
 Isaiah 45

In prayer, we come to the God who came to us and gave us more than we could ask or imagine, that he would work in and through us

*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 BY HIS GRACE

We sing out for his grace to bind our hearts to him in all of life for all of eternity

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen and called its name Ebenezer;* for he said, "Till now the LORD has helped us."
1 Samuel 7

*Ebenezer means stone of help

1. Come, thou fount of ev-'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy
2. Here I raise my Eb-en - e - zer; hi - ther by thy help I'm
3. O to grace how great a debt - or dail - y I'm con - strained to
grace; streams of mer - cy, ne - ver ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est
come; and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at
be; let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan - d'ring heart to
praise. Teach me some me - lo - dious son - net, sung by
home. Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan - dering
thee. Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to
flam - ing tongues a - bove; praise the mount! I'm fixed up -
from the fold of God: he, to res - cue me from
leave the God I love: here's my heart, O take and
on it, mount of God's un - chang - ing love.
dang - er, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
seal it, seal it for thy courts a - bove.

God declares the good word of his grace upon his people through Christ

Ephesians 3

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.

People: Amen

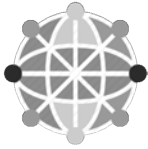
*Please stay and join us for a time of enjoying each other's company.
This is a time to share in life together as the gospel calls us
as we reconnect with those we know, and as we meet someone new*



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. Dr. Per Almquist
Brian Cosgrove
Rev. Adam Lee
Ken Morris
Ben Van Dyke



Credits

Cover artwork: *Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard*, Lawrence W. Ladd, watercolor and pencil on paper, ca. 1880.

Scripture quotations are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*, copyright ©2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

All songs are used by permission. All rights are reserved by the copyright holders. All are used according to CCLI license #11100390.

Meredith Stevens, *voice*; Shane Stevens, *percussion*; Judah Paris, *guitar*; Jacob Paris, *guitar*

"Rejoice, the Lord is King" Public Domain. Words: Charles Wesley, 1746; alt. Music: John Darwall, 1770.

"Jesus, Everlasting King" ©2003 detuned radio music. Words: Isaac Watts, 1707, alt. Music: Matthew S. Smith, 2003.

"Come, Ye Sinners" ©2000 Detuned Radio Music (ASCAP). Words: Joseph Hart, 1759. Music: Matthew S. Smith, 2000.

"Amazing Grace" Public Domain. Words; John Newton, 1779. Music: traditional American melody, arr. by Edwin Excell, 1900.

"Down at the Cross" ©2012 St. Andrews Hymns. Words: Elisha Hoffman, 1878, Music: Brian T. Murphy, David Zevac, and Matt O'Shields, 2012.

"My Maker and My King" ©2001 Parson John Publishing (ASCAP). Words: Anne Steele, 1760. Music: Brian Moss, 2001.

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" Public Domain. Words: Robert Robinson, 1758. Music: Asahel Nettleton, 1825.

I have mercies new every morning, steadfast
love, the Holy Spirit, Christ pleading for me, all
undeserved by me. So why do I whine that
others have the same?

broken people
bound together in Christ
for God's glory

