

September 7, 2025

Without a Doubt: What I Can Do

Free Grace Presbyterian Church

### SOME THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

When the devil throws our sins up to us and declares that we deserve death and hell, we ought to speak thus: 'I admit that I deserve death and hell. What of it? For I know One who suffered and made satisfaction on my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, Son of God, and where He is, there I shall be also.

Martin Luther
16th century Reformer, pastor, and theologian

Our faith is not to be founded on our feelings, but on the sure word of God.

Archibald Alexander

19th century American Presbyterian theologian,
professor at Princeton Seminary

Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.

Romans 4:7-8

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 John 2:1-2

Faith rests upon the promises, not upon probabilities. Faith will not rest upon anything but God's Word.

Thomas Watson

17th century Puritan pastor and author

The only way to be safe is to rest simply on the finished work of Christ, and to take the whole benefit of His righteousness and death.

J.C. Ryle

19th century Anglican evangelical pastor and writer

God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?

Numbers 23:19

### GOD SUMMONS US BY HIS GRACE

Leader: Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in

heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

People: Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make

a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

Matthew 11

Psalm 95

#### We come to praise the Lord, the rock of our salvation!



Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Psalm 103

### GOD SANCTIFIES US BY HIS GRACE

#### God proclaims that our sins separate us from him

Romans 3

"None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Joel 2

"Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments." Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.

justify | jəstə fī|

to declare or make righteous

### We confess our turning aside, and hiding behind fig leaves of our own making

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.

### God declares that in Christ we have assurance of a full pardon

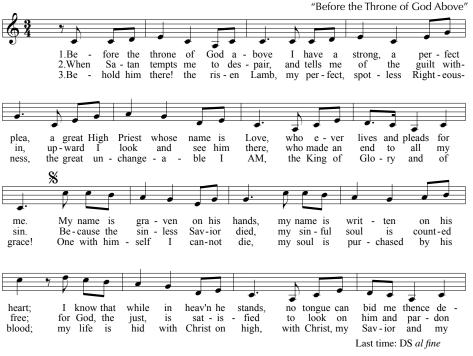
1 John 1

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.

1 John 2

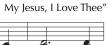
My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

# We respond to God's assurance of love, resting in our Savior who ever lives and pleads for us



de bid part, no tongue can me thence part. par to look him and don me. me. on God. God. with Christ, my Sav - ior and my

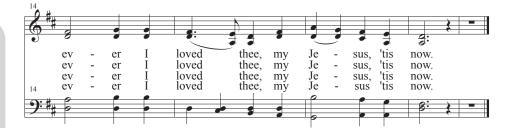
Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses. but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4



9: -1.MyJe thee, Ι thou art for sus love know mine; thou hast 2.I love thee be cause first lov - ed and me 3.I'll love thee in life, and I'11 love thee in death; I'11 4.In man sions of glo and end less de light, I'll ry

thee all the fol lies, of sin re sign. My pur chased my par don on Cal va ry's tree. I thou praise thee as long as lend est me breath: and thee dore in hea bright; and ev er a ven SO

if Sav Re gra love cious deem er, my ior art thou; thee for wear ing thorns on thy brow; if the if when the death cold say dew lies on my brow: if with the glit ter - ing brow: sing crown on my



God declares to us that Jesus Christ, who once had His side pierced, today has His heart open, as it were, that we may have assurance of the love that He bears us; ... as once He shed his blood, so today He wishes us to be plunged within it."

### GOD SPEAKS WITH US BY HIS GRACE

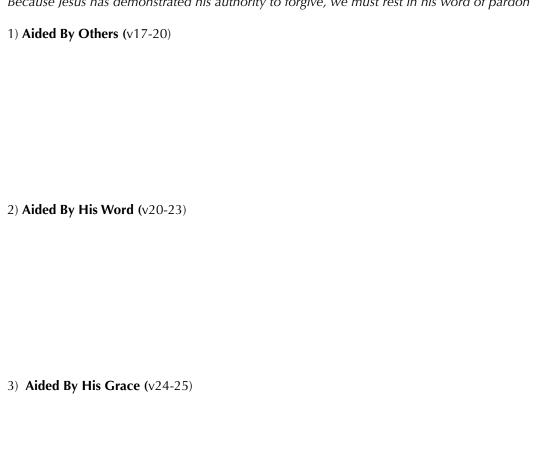
[17] On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal. [18] And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, [19] but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. [20] And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." [21] And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" [22] When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts? [23] Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? [24] But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the man who was paralyzed—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home." [25] And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God. [26] And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

Luke 5:17-26

#### Sermon Rev. Adam Lee

# Without a Doubt: What I Can Do

That You May Be Certain



**Conclusion (**v26)

#### We rest in the blessed assurance of Christ's word to us

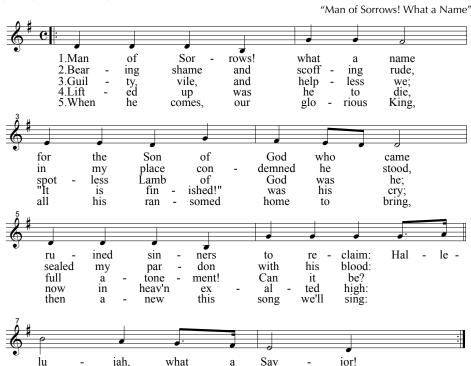


I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

# GOD STRENGTHENS US BY HIS GRACE

#### We celebrate the Lord's Supper, the sign and seal of his declared word of pardon

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.



In the Lord's
Supper, the
believer is
strengthened and
fed. In keeping the
sacrament as a
sign, we gain from
it a strengthened
faith; as a seal of
God's covenant,
we gain increased
assurance of
salvation and
communion with
God.

#### We declare our confidence together in the sure work of God in our lives

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised— who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written,

Romans 8:31-39

"For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In prayer, we come in faith to our heavenly Father, through Christ our mediator

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 is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.
Westminster Shorter Catechism 98

# GOD SENDS US BY HIS GRACE



#### God extends his peace to all those who rest in his Word.

Leader: Depart in peace, according to God's word; for your eyes have seen his salvation that he has prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to his people Israel.

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

Quote Ref

Luke 2



#### 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**

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.

Beth Almquist, piano; Shannon VanDyke, voice; Andrew Schanck, bass; Abigail Lee, violin

- "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" Public Domain. Words: Joachim Neander, 1680. Music: traditional German melody.
- "Before the Throne of God Above" ©1997 Sovereign Grace Worship. Words: Charitie Lees Bancroft, 1863. Music: Vikki Cook, 1977.
- "My Jesus, I Love Thee" Public Domain. Words: William Featherstone, 1864. Music: Adoniram Gordon, 1876.
- "Blessed Assurance" Public Domain. Words: Fanny Crosby, 1873. Music: Phoebe Knapp, 1873.
- "Man of Sorrows! What a Name" Public Domain. Words and Music: Philip Bliss, 1875.
- "It is Finished Part II" ©2006 Red Mountain Music. Words: Attributed to Jonathan Evans, 1784 & Benjamin Francis, 1787. Music: Jeff Koonce, 2005; arranged by Beth Almquist, 2012.



# **SUNDAY**

Scripture – Luke 5:17

**Reflection:** Luke uses a little phrase in Greek, καὶ ἐγένετο ("and it happened"), to string together scenes in this part of his Gospel. Like pearls on a necklace, each one distinct but joined to the others. The great catch of fish (5:1–11) showed Jesus' call and authority. The cleansing of the leper (5:12–16) displayed his power to make clean. In this string of pearls, this is the centerpiece.

A shining jewel: the authority of Jesus to forgive sins. This is the issue you cannot ignore. If it is not true, Jesus has spoken blasphemy. But if it is true, then God himself has come with power to pardon. And Luke wants us to know this "without a doubt." We will follow this string to its end in the weeks to come, but for now, we must study this beautiful jewel of pardon.

**Our Common Weakness:** Like Adam, we want to sew our own fig leaves. We try to manage our guilt, cover ourselves, and prove ourselves instead of resting in Christ's word.

**Christ Connection:** Christ, the Son of Man, has come with divine authority on earth to forgive sins. By his word alone, he declares the guilty clean and grants pardon that no accusation can overturn.

#### <u>Isaiah 43:25.</u> Psalm 130:3–4. Hebrews 10:11–14

How do these verses together highlight that forgiveness cannot be earned or achieved by us, but is God's gracious initiative?

What do these passages reveal about the uniqueness of God's authority to forgive compared to human attempts at atonement or rituals?

How do these verses help us see why Jesus' declaration of pardon in Luke 5 is trustworthy "without a doubt"?

**Prayer** Heavenly Father, thank you for making atonement for my sin and extending pardon to me through the declared word of Christ. Help me to rest upon that word, to build my life upon it, and when death comes, to trust with confidence that it is the only vessel that can bear me home to you. Thank you for so sure a repose. Amen.

# **MONDAY**

Scripture: Luke 5:18–19

**Reflection:** God's grace often comes to us through the faith and love of others. The paralyzed man could not reach Jesus on his own; he was carried. His friends bore him to Jesus. And yet, we should not miss that his own weakness was also used to bear witness of Jesus' authority to forgive sins. Jesus used his paralysis itself as a means of grace for the Pharisees and teachers who were watching. Both the strong and the weak, both action and affliction, become instruments in the Redeemer's hands.

**Our Common Weakness:** We resist dependence. We want to carry ourselves, and we struggle to believe that our weakness could ever help someone else.

**Christ Connection:** Jesus meets us where we are, using the aid of others and our own afflictions, to enlighten our eyes to his power to pardon.

**Ecclesiastes 4:9–10** — What do these verses teach about the value of companionship and mutual support in the life of faith?

**Galatians 6:2** — How does bearing one another's burdens fulfill the law of Christ, and what kinds of burdens does this include?

**2 Corinthians 12:9** — Think also of your own story — how has God used your weaknesses to help others? Write down the names of some who have aided you in your faith and consider sharing with the group.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, I thank you for aiding me in my faith by the grace of others in my life. I thank you specifically for (name those in mind) and the way you used them to lead me closer to you. I thank you also for demonstrating that even in my weakness, you are glorified. Thank you that my pain and suffering is not wasted, but in your hands is used to aid others in their faith. Amen.

# **TUESDAY**

Scripture: Luke 5:20-23

**Reflection:** Jesus would not allow this healing to be an "empty sign." As our confession remind us (*WCF 27.1; WLC 162*), a true sign is never bare—it always signifies and seals a greater reality beyond itself. The healing of the paralytic was not an end in itself. That is why Jesus did not simply heal, but spoke a word of pardon aloud—in order that he might point to something far greater. By this word of enlightenment, Jesus graciously guided even the doubters to see that the visible sign of healing confirmed an otherwise invisible truth: that he, the Son of Man, has authority to pardon sin.

**Our Common Weakness:** We are quick to trust what we can see and slow to rest in what is unseen. We look for signs but forget the reality they signify.

**Christ Connection:** By his Holy Spirit, Christ enlightens our minds to be able to see what would otherwise remain hidden from our sight.

**Digging Deeper:** In the same way that Jesus would not allow the healing of the paralytic to be an "empty sign," God has always given his people visible signs that signify and seal invisible grace. None of these signs are empty; they draw our eyes to Christ himself.

#### Genesis 17:11 Romans 6:3–4 1 Corinthians 11:25–26

**Question for Meditation:** How do these passages help us see that God's signs are never empty, but always direct us to Christ himself? How does this shape the way you think about Jesus' miracles — and about the sacraments you receive today?

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, thank you for the grace you have provided by giving to us the sacrament of Baptism and The Lord's Supper. Thank you that these signs point to a greater truth than the ordinary elements they are made up of. Thank you that by your Holy Spirit, you take these ordinary elements and cause them to be a seal of the truth they signify. Help me to reflect on this often and be strengthened by your grace conferred. Amen.

# WEDNESDAY

Scripture: Luke 5:24-25

**Reflection:** Jesus did not have to explain himself to the Pharisees. He could have healed the paralytic and walked away. Yet he spoke for their sake: "But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." This is grace upon grace. Even toward doubters and skeptics, Jesus patiently provides proof, removing every excuse for unbelief. He wanted them to know — not only the paralytic, not only the crowd, but even the Pharisees. His heart is full of compassion, even for those who resist him.

**Our Common Weakness:** We often doubt the word of pardon, in hopes that we will be given a more sure word.

**Christ Connection:** Jesus spares nothing to demonstrate his power to forgive sins—going so far as death on the cross, and confirming it with the greatest sign of all: his resurrection—so that we may know without a doubt that he has authority to forgive sins.

**Matthew 12:39–40** – How do Jesus words here, communicate that no greater sign could be given than that which he would soon provide?

**1 Corinthians 15:3–4** – Why does Paul call Christ's death and resurrection "of first importance" for our faith?

**Isaiah 43:25 & 1 John 1:9** How does knowing that Jesus gave the greatest sign of all - his resurrection - help you rest more confidently in his promise to pardon?

**Prayer:** Lord, I thank you for your gracious and kind mercy, even toward those who resist you. Thank you for providing clear testimony that you have the power to pardon sin. Thank you, above all, for the greatest sign — your death and resurrection — so that we may know without a doubt that the gospel promises are true. Amen.

### **THURSDAY**

**Scritpure** – *Luke 5:26* 

**Reflection:** Amazement seized them all. Do you remember what Jesus told Peter in verse 11? "From now on you will be catching men." This is what is happening. Jesus is the light cast out over the waters, and he uses ordinary people — flabbergasted fishermen, lepers, paralytics — as his instruments. Truly, the gospel in us is extraordinary. Allow the Lord to use you so that the world may see it and be seized with awe too.

**Our Common Weakness:** We often underestimate how God can use ordinary people like us, imagining that only the strong or gifted can make an impact for Christ.

**Christ Connection:** Jesus is the light who draws people to himself. By his grace, he uses even our weakness, our scars, and our ordinary lives so that the world may see his gospel and be filled with awe.

**1 Corinthians 1:27–29** – How does Paul show that God delights to use what the world considers weak or foolish? What does this mean for how you view your own usefulness in God's kingdom?

**2 Corinthians 4:6–7** – Paul says we are "jars of clay" holding the treasure of the gospel. How does this image remind you that the power belongs to God and not to you?

**Acts 9:36–42** – How did God use the life and testimony of Dorcas (Tabitha) to lead many to believe in the Lord? What encouragement do you find here for how God might use your ordinary faithfulness?

**Prayer** Our Father, how great Thou art! That You would take a jar of clay such as me and place within it a glorious treasure, so that when its light shines forth, You receive the praise and not the vessel. Thank You for granting me a share in the wonderful work of the gospel. Amen.

# FRIDAY- CATECHISM CORNER

#### Q. #86 What is faith in Jesus Christ?

**A.** Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.

**Reflection:** Faith is not complicated: it is receiving and resting on Christ's word of pardon. Just as the paralytic rested on Jesus' declaration, so we rest on the gospel. His resurrection confirms that our trust in him is never misplaced.

**John 6:68–69** How does Peter's confession show what it means to "receive and rest upon" Christ alone and not seek another source of comfort and assurance?

**Romans 5:1** – What does this verse teach us about the result of resting on Christ's word of pardon rather than our own works? What is the fruit?

**2 Corinthians 1:20** How does this verse assure you that every promise of forgiveness and life is trustworthy in Christ?

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, thank you that you offer yourself freely in the gospel. Teach me to receive and rest upon you alone, trusting your word of pardon as my sure foundation. Keep me from sewing fig leaves of self-reliance, and anchor my soul in your finished work. Amen.

# PRAYER/PRAISES

Your elders are praying over the following matters and invite you to join us in seeking the Lord's help:

1) Pray that the Lord would raise up deacons from within our congregation.

In this season, many practical needs are being met by your elders, which can stretch the time we have for our primary calling—prayer and the ministry of the Word. We are trusting the Lord to provide co-laborers who can share in the care and service of Christ's body."

Use this space to track things you are praying for this week:

#### This Week In Focus:

# Sunday, September 7th -

Congregational Meeting- 15 minutes after worship service.

Prayer Meeting- 6:00pm at the church

### Wednesday- September 10th –

**Conversations in Grace-** 7:00pm – At the church (bring your worship folder)

# Friday, September 12th-

**Youth Group -** Fridays, 7:00pm – At the church

# Saturday, September 27th-

Isaac Marston's Memorial Service- 11am- East Auburn Baptist Church

### Saturday, October 4th-

**Discussion about Ladies Discipleship Opportunities-** 1:30pm at the VanDyke home. Please contact Shannon FMI about the purpose and vision of this time.

If you do not know the address of any event, or the contact information for any event, please contact either Pastor Adam at <a href="mailto:adam.lee@freegrace.us">adam.lee@freegrace.us</a> or Linda at the email address below.

If you would like to be added to our church-family email where you can keep in touch through the week, or if you would like to be added to the church directory, please email Linda at linda.morris@freegrace.us

<u>If you are a member of Free Grace</u> and are not using the church directory app, you are missing out on a very useful tool. Please reach out to Linda to see how to download it to your phone.

# **Regular Rhythms of Grace**

# **Weekly Gatherings**

**Conversations in Grace -***Wednesday 7:00pm – At the church(conversation about the weekly devotional).* 

**Youth Group -** Fridays, 7:00pm – At the church

**Prayer Meeting -** *Sundays*, 6:00pm – At the church

# **Monthly Gatherings**

**First Friday Fires -** 1st Friday, 5:45pm – Lee Family Home Bring a side dish, and dress appropriately for the weather.

**Second Sunday Discussions -** 2nd Sunday, 15 minutes after worship ends Family-style conversations on a rotating topic.

Women's Breakfast - 2nd Saturday, 9:30am - Cosgrove Family Home

Men's Night - 3rd Friday, 7:00pm – Location varies

Praying for Prodigals - 3rd Sunday, 8:30am – Church building

broken people bound together in Christ for God's glory