

# BE GRATEFUL FOR THE SOVEREIGN GRACE OF GOD

JANUARY 28, 2024

## WORSHIP

Your Grace Is Enough,  
This Is Amazing Grace, You  
Alone Can Rescue, When I  
Speak Your Name

## WELCOME

Do you consider yourself a  
person of grace (a gracious  
person)? Why or why not?

## WORD

### ROMANS 11:1-6 (READ THE REST OF THE VERSES UP TO VERSE 26)

I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. <sup>2</sup> God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? <sup>3</sup> “Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE.” <sup>4</sup> But what is the divine response to him? “I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.” <sup>5</sup> In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice. <sup>6</sup> But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

If grace is given to those who don’t deserve it, how do we then view God’s sovereignty? Paul uses Israel to explain God’s sovereignty. It’s the only nation that has the most accurate, complete historical and genealogical background recorded! A showcase of God’s sovereignty, the Jewish people knew exactly how their nation began, how they were blessed and ascended into power. History shows their fall, the destruction of the Jewish nation, including God’s temple. Against all odds, this nation was restored on May 14, 1948, even as a land without a flag, nor their own territory – it became a nation again. This proves the Word of God is dependable and true. All glory to GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY! We are told to BE GRATEFUL FOR GOD’S SOVEREIGN GRACE!

What can we be thankful for? God is on the throne, directing all the affairs of the world, working all things after His own will (**Ephesians 1:11**), and He is absolutely independent, He is God! **Jerry Bridges** said, “**no plan of God can be thwarted; when He acts, no one can reverse it... God is not only sovereign, He is perfect in love and infinite in wisdom.**”

Gratitude is an attitude for what others have done for you. It is learning to appreciate all things in your life today, and it brings satisfaction and restedness. What are three important truths about God’s sovereignty that we can be grateful for?

### 1. GOD’S ELECTION

**Romans 11:1**- when Paul was writing this, the Israelites didn’t even own Israel or Jerusalem. Paul’s point when he raised two examples to prove that God has not rejected Israel –the church is not going to take its place in God’s sovereign plan. Example number one– Paul was Jewish, of the Tribe of Benjamin. The second example was Elijah who faced the height of paganism and the worship of Baal (**1 Kings 18-19**). It was the lowest point of Israel’s history when it comes to religious purity. Yet by God’s sovereign grace, He has kept 7,000 men who have not bowed down to any foreign god – He protected them physically and spiritually!

What is sovereign grace? It is not justice, which is getting what you deserve. Grace is getting more than you deserve. It is unmerited favor, not an obligation. Further, it does not contradict justice, as Paul mentioned in **verses 5-6**. There we see the word REMNANT – a part, chosen by grace (**Gk. ekloge**) and not by works. Jesus illustrated this in a parable (**Matthew 20:1-16**). What an amazing display of grace!

The word **ELECTION (Gk. ekloge)** was also used in other verses like **1 Peter 1:1-2** and **2:9-10** –translated as CHOSEN – depicting that the choice and sanctification was done by God, in handing over mercy. Even Jesus said that the elect may have to go through tribulation

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and hardships, and yet they will be saved (**Matthew 24:21-22,31**)! We should be grateful for this assurance!

### 2. GOD'S WISDOM

Kay Arthur says that “**God is in control, and therefore in EVERY THING I can be thankful**”. Henry Thomas Hamblin also says that “...all is well, because you believe in the sovereignty of God.” We face various problems in life, but if we remember that God, in His wisdom, is allowing this to happen, we can continue to TRUST that God is in control. We cannot control what happens to us most of the time, but we can control our response. In the good and bad, we must see the big picture. Paul brings this to focus in **Romans 11:7-10**. The Jewish people’s prosperity became traps for them and caused them to fall greatly. In **vv.11-12**, Paul asks if that was the end of Israel, and he also answered it with a resounding “no”. In God’s wisdom, He used the Jews’ stumbling, so that by it, grace and salvation were extended to the Gentiles (**Acts 13:46, 18:6**). Why do you think we received the gospel now? How come many of the Jews are not believers? They show the progression towards a hardened heart – you hear the truth, but you reject it; before long, you become insensitive, and start justifying your wrong behavior, and your heart hardens. It is for this reason that Paul’s reaches out to Gentiles as commanded by God (**vv. 13-15**). Yet if the Jews would come to acknowledge Jesus, the new age will come!

### 3. GOD'S KINDNESS AND SEVERITY

The kindness of God reflects benevolence in action. Sometimes, He will use problems to train and develop us. God is patient, but His patience has limitations too –one day there will be judgment! Paul used dough and agriculture (**vv. 15-26**) to exemplify how the Jewish people were cut off, and Gentiles were grafted into Christ. The warning for God’s people is very obvious – a true Christian will not take the grace of God for granted! Paul warns the believers in **2 Corinthians 6:1** to “not receive the grace of God in vain”. If we hear the gospel and not do anything about it, that is taking that gift in vain. A grateful person will never dishonor the person who gave him grace! **Titus 2:11-12** tells us that this grace empowers us to deny ungodliness too. If such is the grace of God, what should we do? **Hebrews 10:31** tells us that “**it is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God**” – to fall out of His hands is terrifying! Partial hardening has happened to Israel (**vv. 25-26**)– cultural brainwashing, the teachings of the rabbis which reinterpreted the Old Testament, forcing out of the truth about Jesus, and the historical abuse of Jews by Christians like the Crusaders and Hitler. But more and more Jews are becoming followers of Jesus! There will be grace unto them as well (**Zechariah 12:10** and **Revelation 1:7**) – but we need to reach the “fullness of the Gentiles”. Are we sharing the gospel truth to others as a way of life? Bring forth Jesus the Messiah – the Savior of the world!

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

#### 1. Self-Check.

What are you thankful for about God’s sovereign grace?

#### 2. Setting It Right.

What situations in your life are you encouraged to trust God’s wisdom more?

#### 3. Living It Out.

How will you apply the truth of God’s kindness and severity in your life?

## WORKS

### PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for those who have not yet embraced the amazing grace of God offered to them through Jesus Christ. Be gracious to those around you, especially with family and friends who may not be easy to get along with. Share the gospel of truth and grace to them this week so that they too can be grateful for the sovereign grace of God!

## WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- Recovery and restoration for places devastated by recent typhoons and hurricanes.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.

### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

### IV. CCFE Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Retreat and Shelter

### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

## MEMORY VERSE

### ROMANS 11:6

But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.