

**Aveleigh's Fifth Sunday In Lent, April 2 2017**

**Series: Greatest Bible Words**

**Sermon: A GRACIOUS CONVERSION**

**Texts: Eph. 2:8-9 p.1254 Rev. 3:14-21 p.1326**

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God not of works that no one can boast. Eph. 2:8-9 NIV*

**INTRODUCTION GRACE IS:** Charis χάρις came to signify “favor,” “goodwill,” and “lovingkindness” — especially as granted by a superior to an inferior. In the New Testament, “grace” (156 times) takes on a special **redemptive sense** in which God makes available his **favor** on behalf of sinners, who actually do not deserve it. Theologically, A shorthand for what grace is - “mercy, not merit.” Grace is the opposite of karma, which is all about getting what you deserve. Grace is getting what you don’t deserve, and *not* getting what you do deserve. Christianity teaches that what we deserve is death with no hope of resurrection. Grace is unconditional love toward a person who does not deserve it.”

## **1. THE BIBLE OFFERS GRACE**

**2 Corinthians 13:14**, May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**Ephesians 1:7**, In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace

**Ephesians 2:8**, For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God no one can boast.

**Colossians 4:6**, Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

**Titus 3:7**, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

**Hebrews 2:9**, But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

**Hebrews 4:16**, Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

## **2. CHRIST OFFERS GRACE TO LAODICEA**

(Rev. 3:14). Jesus comes with deep love: “Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent” (v. 19).

“I know your deeds,” Jesus says, “that you are neither cold nor hot.”

### **3. THE LAODICEANS CRISIS**

“You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked” (v. 17).

So how had the Laodiceans assimilated? What made them lukewarm?

### **4. SO WHAT DOES JESUS OFFER ALL LAODICEANS?**

“I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see” (Rev. 3:18).

#### **THREE GIFTS:**

Gold refined by fire

White garments

Eye salve

**Conclusion:** “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me” (Rev. 3:20).

PRAYER: Holy God, your grace is a mystery that is incomprehensible to us. It draws us to you, inviting us into your presence. It allows us to experience your delight in us and helps us to trust your love which we do not deserve. It's only by your grace that we dare to hope for eternal life with you. Thank you for this vast mystery. Thank you for grace that amazes, convicts, invites and consoles. May our lives be our grateful response for your extravagant gift. Amen.

#### **FOUR FOR YOUR ROAD AHEAD**

**1, What did this sermon teach you about GRACE?**

**2, How has this sermon fed your own soul?**

**3, Does spiritual numbness need attention? If so how?**

**4, Which aspect of grace will you share with the next 3 people you meet? The next 300? 3000?**

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**Prayer of confession**

Father, you know that we have sinned. You know that we have hurt each other, been unkind, and thought only of ourselves. You have given us such grace; help us to extend the same to our brothers and sisters. Free us from holding grudges, from gossip, from passing judgment. Let us never pour shame upon another, but instead heap grace upon grace to all. Help us walk with each other towards forgiveness and restoration. Thank you for the beauty you will bring to our relationships because we have received Your grace. We are Yours, Father. Amen.

Be Grace is most needed and best understood in the midst of sin, suffering, and brokenness. We live in a world of earning, deserving, and merit, and these result in judgment. That is why everyone wants and needs grace. Judgment kills. Only grace makes alive.

Benediction, Grace is most needed and best understood in the midst of sin, suffering, and brokenness. We live in a world of earning, deserving, and merit, and these result in judgment. That is why everyone wants and needs grace. Judgment kills. Only grace makes alive.