

He is!

An Expository Exploration of the Attributes of God

Sermon 3: He is Gracious

Ephesians 2:1-10

January 19, 2020

Opening Illustration: Take a minute to think about your life in terms of what you have done and what you have failed to do. Take a second to think about all the ways you have disobeyed and dishonored God...especially in ways that only God Himself knows. Think about what your life and what your eternity would be like if God punished every single failure...every single disobedience. Seriously, how would you do?

Secondly, take a minute to think about your life in terms of what you have received. How many sunshiny days have you seen? How many nights have you slept in safety, nice and warm in a comfortable bed? How many times have you exploded in laughter so powerful that your stomach hurt when you were done? How many of you have experienced the life-altering power of love and have been blessed with a spouse or with a parent or with somebody whose love has overwhelmed you and granted you sweet security?

What would your life be if right now God decided to treat you only as your thoughts, your works and as your life would deserve?

I. Introduction/Review

A. Review

B. God is gracious

1. What is grace?

a) A simple definition—Grace is unmerited favor.

(1) Grace is unmerited—It is the opposite of something owed.

(2) Grace is favor—It is an inner sense of delight and love to one extent or another.

b) “Grace is the good pleasure of God that inclines Him to bestow benefits upon the undeserving. It is a self-existent principle inherent in the divine nature and appears to us as a self-caused propensity to pity the wretched, spare the guilty, welcome the outcast, and bring into favor those who were before under just disapprobation.” Tozer, A.W.. *The Knowledge of the Holy*.”

Point: Pink, in his book, limits his treatment of the grace of God to the saving grace of God, and makes a differentiation between “grace” and “mercy” or “goodness”. Those distinctions may be helpful (I’m not sure that they are), but we will include in the concept of God’s grace His mercy and His goodness.

c) “Divine grace is the sovereign and saving favor of God exercised in the bestowment of blessings upon those who have no merit in them for which no compensation is demanded from them. Nay, more; it is the favor of God shown to those who not only have no positive deserts of their own, but who are thoroughly ill-deserving and hell deserving. It is completely unmerited and unsought and is altogether unattracted by anything in or from or by the objects upon which it is bestowed.” Pink, *Attributes*, page 85

2. To whom is God gracious?

a) Even to unbelievers [Common Grace]

(1) What do we mean by the term “Common Grace”?

(a) It is important not to get caught up in the nomenclature.

b) To believers [Saving Grace]

II. God is extravagant in His common grace. Matthew 5:44-45

A. His common grace is manifested even though people are unaware.

1. **Hosea 2:8** For she does not know that it was I who gave her the grain, the new wine and the oil, And lavished on her silver and gold, Which they used for Baal.

B. His common grace is manifested even though people are ungrateful.

1. **Romans 1:20-21** For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.²¹ For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

C. His common grace is manifested even though people are undeserving.

1. **Acts 14:16-17** [speaking to Gentiles]¹⁶ "In the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."

III. God is extravagant in His saving grace. Ephesians 2:1-10

A. Remember what you were (vv. 1-3)

1. You were dead in your sins. (Ephesians 2:1)
2. You were living according to the Devil's values, not God's (v. 2-3a)
3. You were by nature children of wrath (v. 3)

Have them turn to Romans 5:6-11

4. You were helpless (Romans 5:6)
5. You were ungodly (Romans 5:6)
6. You were sinners (Romans 5:8)
7. You were enemies of God (Romans 5:10)

B. Remember what He did (vv. 5-6)

1. He made us alive together with Christ (v. 5)
2. He raised us up together with Christ (v. 6a)
3. He seated us with Christ (v. 6b)

C. Remember why He did it (vv. 4, 7)

1. So that we may be the eternal recipients of His grace.
2. Not only this, but that we would also be the eternal monuments of His graciousness.

ILL: Gettysburg is filled with monuments. Why? So that as people walk around they can be reminded that something significant happened where they are standing and something bears remembering. These monuments serve as a way to celebrate the valor of those who fought there. Similarly, we will eternally be reminders to the angels and to each other that God is infinitely gracious.

D. Remember what this means (vv. 8-10)

1. We are saved by His grace.
2. We are saved through His gift.
3. We are saved despite our works.
4. We are saved unto good works.

IV. Conclusions—What will you do with this grace?

A. God lavishly pours His grace out on all people—How will you respond to Him for these things?

B. God scandalously pours out His grace upon those who believe—How will you respond to that?

1. **Hebrews 2:2-3** For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?