

# GOD'S GRACE IN ACTION!



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God's grace reaches further than our worst mistake! He is so merciful, kind, patient, and good in dealing with His own people that He responded to their *wickedness* with *goodness*. It was man at his *worst* and God at His *best*.

If there are any good virtues in us, it will be known when we meet a hard test. Many people are patient, kind, and good when everything goes to suit them, but when offended or hurt, then resentment, bitterness, and anger can quickly come to the surface.

The kindness and goodness of God, however, is beyond our comprehension. *Romans 11:33* "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! <sup>34</sup>For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? <sup>35</sup>Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?"

The greatest evidence of God's mercy and grace is when man did his worst to God's greatest Gift. It proved that our hearts are "desperately wicked" from the beginning. Man showed his true character, but God turned it around to show His true mercy, love, and grace.

It would be proper justice that man be sentenced to death with no mercy or leniency shown—but this most evil *act* ever perpetrated, gave God the opportunity to give the greatest

*blessing* to everyone! When man did his *worst*—God gave His *best*!

We *should* know right from wrong; scriptural from unscriptural—and Jesus told us what attitude to maintain—*Luke 6:27* "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, <sup>28</sup>Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." We turn man's wicked acts into a display of God's goodness and grace, when we follow the Lord's instructions.

God requires that we *not* resent; that we do *not* get back at someone; that we are *not* to avenge our wrongs; and that we are *not* to get even for mean things done to us or our children. It is *required* that we *Luke 6:35* "Love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest."

Even when His *people* murdered His *Son*—the most wicked act ever committed; the worst demonic control ever seen; and the worst crime from the evil within the human heart—it was the first-degree murder of the Lord Jesus Himself—God forgave man's most wicked act and turned it into a display of His goodness! God canceled their crime and sin of murder.

The first *deliverance* from Satan and the first *offer* of mercy, was given to those who murdered His Son—and God even made excuses for the Jews. *Acts 3:14* "Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; <sup>15</sup>And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. <sup>16</sup>And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. <sup>17</sup>And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."

After their horrible crime against the Son of God, and after the man is healed through faith in the Name of Jesus, the apostle says *Acts 3:19* "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; <sup>20</sup>And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: <sup>21</sup>Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

The Lord turned their wicked crime against *Him*, into a blessing for *them*; He used their evil act to *cancel* all the sins they ever committed, and to *cancel* every sin anyone else ever committed, by making a perfect *sacrifice* of atonement for everyone at Calvary.

It would seem there would be no hope for anyone who murdered God's Son, but *Romans 11:33* "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Even though they committed the worst *sin* and most heinous *crime* in history, God offers them His mercy and grace—still they would *not* accept the Atonement and pardon offered to them. *Matthew 22:14* "For many are called, but few are chosen." This is an outstanding revelation of His love, mercy, forgiveness, and grace—it is God returning *good* for evil and forgiveness for wickedness.

When the Jews *reject* God's offer of pardon for the worst sin ever committed; when they *refuse* His offer of mercy and continue in wickedness, rebellion, and unbelief, God turns to the *Gentiles* and makes the offer to *them*.

We are wild olive branches—not having His mercy or grace at first, but God used the *wickedness* of the Jews and their *refusal* to repent, to offer the forgiveness, restoration, and the blessing

of a Savior—just through a believing faith in the sacrifice of His Blood!

A similar situation is presented during the Millennium—most Gentiles are not only going to *reject* the Lord Jesus as the Jews did, but the Gentiles will *accept* the Antichrist. They throw God's mercy to the winds by *rejecting* the true Christ of God, and *accepting* the false Antichrist of the devil. God will eventually *use* that, however, to bring about the binding of the devil, and establishing the Millennial kingdom on earth.

God deals with individuals in like manner. 1 Peter 1:3-5 "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*"

There is not an evil thing we could *do*, or a desperate place we could be *in*, that God would *deliver* us from—if *we* will repent. It is encouraging to know that God *responds* to our mistakes like that. Romans 2:4 "*Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*"

The grace of God places the *destiny* of our souls on us. There is nothing stopping us from repenting; and nothing stopping us from turning our life over to God—we are *not forced*, but we are *responsible* to *do* that by choice!

*God's grace in action* is often experienced—if we make a *mistake*; get away from the *Cross*; do things in our *own* strength, or are just not *trusting* God, the devil tempts us to get discouraged. It is easy to *profess* faith in Christ, but fail to *do* what is *required*—to *act* in faith on the Blood of Christ.

Nevertheless, God can use our worst *mistake* to reveal His best love, mercy, and power. He will bestow more spiritual *light* than we had before; He will show the *cause* of our failure—how we depended on our own ability or strength; or how we allowed something to get between us and God.

When this is revealed and we *accept* God's offer of mercy, we will see a demonstration of God's love and power. All that He asks *of* us and all that He wants *from* us, is a willing heart that will *allow* Him to work—just open the door and let Him in. This takes all merit away from us.

When we have tried our best and failed, then we are ready to give it to God—which He can use as an avenue of blessing—even *more* than we have known before. Romans 11:33 "*Oh, how inexhaustible are God's resources and God's wisdom and God's knowledge!*"

The message of the Bible is that we *learn* what God is like and of His mercy toward His creation. Everyone needs to *know* and *say*: Job 42:5 "*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.*"

Peace and rest are the result of actually *seeing* the character of God. Since the *devil* knows that, he tries to keep our sight on anything and everything *but* God. The devil tries to hinder us from finding anything out about God. Therefore, we must give our full *attention* to God; to think about His *promises*; to ponder His *grace* in action—then we will *not* be upset by anything people say or do.

God is more interested in those things we worry about than *we* are—and only *He* has the power to change them anyway. Our *worry* only *hinders* God from working. If we really understood the *mercy* and *grace* of God, we would really rest in His peace concerning everything. If we really believed God was as loving and merciful as He really is—we would *know* that all our interests are safe in His hands.

Whatever David wanted to do, he always made sure that the Lord was with him. He wrote Psalm 16:8 "*I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.*" When we *rest*, God *works*; when we are *burdened*, the *devil* works. When we look to *God* and refuse to *worry*, our burden is *lifted* and God can help us.

During the time when Saul of Tarsus was an enemy of Christ—persecuting and imprisoning Christians, the *mercy* and *grace* of God gave him an opportunity to repent. He *could* have been struck with *death*, but he was struck by *light* instead—and asked: Acts 9:4 "*Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*"

Jesus meant, *Everyone you harm, is the same as harming Me. You are only hurting yourself.* Saul responded: Acts 9:6 "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*" He was ready to allow the Lord to do great things for him. "*It shall be told thee what thou must do.*" God took His *enemy* and made him His *friend*. God returned *good* for evil. Saul was not *seeking* God, but God was *still* seeking *him*.

No one should blame God when they deliberately *refuse* His love and mercy. The Blood of *Jesus* has placed the power of *God* at our service, without any merit on our part—even in the face of our *worst* mistakes and *wrong* attitudes—God is willing to forgive and take us back.

Saul was *converted* and *commissioned* to the Gentiles Acts 26:18 "*To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*" It was *God's Grace in Action!*



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