

TOUCHED BY *Grace*

📖 Romans 5:20

Sabbath School Lesson

Touched By Grace:
Heaven's Revelation of Jesus

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amen

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The central theme of the Bible is God's love in the context of the great controversy between good and evil in the universe.

God's very nature is love.

(1 John 4:8)

God's love manifest in God's grace is the essence of the gospel and the central theme of the Bible. God's love contrasts with the selfishness of Satan. In His life and death, Jesus revealed the Father's love. Grace toward fallen humanity flows from the heart of a loving God. There is nothing more that God wants than to save us in His kingdom and that is the purpose of His grace extended freely to each one of us. In this lesson we will study the divine aspects of God's grace.

1. **Read Romans 3:23,24, Ephesians 2:4,5 and Hebrews 4:15,16.**
What do these passages tell us about God's grace?

Every human being on the planet needs God's grace. Without God's grace every one of us would be eternally lost but thank God His grace revealed in Christ is sufficient for all. It is not the exclusive domain of a few "super saints". It is God's gift in Christ for all of us.

Without using the expression “unmerited favor” how would you define God’s grace?

God’s grace is mentioned approximately 150 times in the New Testament with two-thirds of these times mentioned by the apostle Paul. Grace is mentioned 24 times in the Book of Romans alone. To understand grace is to understand the essence of the Christian faith. God’s grace pardons our past, empowers our present, and assures our future. In Christ, all of the blessings of heaven are ours. Living in God’s grace we have a new identity. We are sons and daughters of God, citizens of heaven, heirs of eternity.

2. Read Romans 5:20 and discuss the following real-life story in the light of this passage.

Pete was raised in a Seventh-day Adventist home. He attended church throughout his childhood but during his teen years drifted away. Although he developed a successful business career, something was missing in his life. There was a barrenness of soul, an emptiness within that could not be filled with the things money can buy. Now in his mid-forties he was searching for something more, something better than what he had but he didn’t know what that something more actually was.

Sensing his inner struggles, his mom gave him a copy of the book, *Steps to Christ*. As he read the first chapter titled, “*God’s Love for Man*”, the Holy Spirit touched his heart. He viewed God with new eyes. Here was Someone who loved him more than he could ever

imagine. Here was a God that looked beyond all his faults, all the mistakes of his past life and all his sins and met his deepest heart needs. The plan of salvation became real for him for the first time in his life. His heart broke over his wayward life. He discovered the true meaning of grace. Romans 5 verse 20, “...*But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more*” became much more than words on a page. This passage became a literal reality in Peter’s life.

The heart of the gospel is grace - God’s unmerited, overflowing love reaching into our brokenness to heal, restore, and transform. To be touched by grace is to experience the personal, transformative love of Christ that redeems us from sin, sustains us through trials, and equips us to share His compassion with others. When Christ fills our hearts and changes our lives, we cannot be silent. The greatest witness, the strongest testimony for the gospel is a changed life.

The First Missionaries

3. Read Mark 5:1-19 and discuss the following questions.

a.) How does this story reveal the grace of God?

Despite the demonic forces that held this poor man in bondage, Mark chapter 5 records that when he saw Jesus, he “*ran and worshipped Him.*” (Mark 5:6) The scripture says that this man was

tormented and possessed by a “legion” of demons. According to the Archaeological Study Bible, a legion is “*the largest single unit in the Roman army... at full strength it consisted of about 6000 soldiers.*” (Archaeological Study Bible, Zondervan Publishers, 2005, p. 1633) In the New Testament the term represents a vast or huge number. Jesus never lost a battle with the demons no matter how many there were or how large their number was. Christ is our all-powerful, victorious Lord. The demons are no contest for His mighty power. The forces of hell tremble at the approach of our almighty Lord.

- b.) What significance does verse 15 have for medical missionary work and how does it reveal the practical working of grace?

Jesus’ ministry is always a complete ministry. Once the demoniac was delivered, he was found “*sitting and clothed and in his right mind.*” (Mark 5:15) Where did he get the clothes? It is likely the disciples shared their outer garments with him. He now sat attentively at the feet of Jesus, listening to His Words, eagerly absorbing spiritual truths. He was physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually whole. His one desire now was to follow Jesus. He longed to become one of Jesus disciples.

- c.) What is the response to grace? See verses 18 and 19.

In verse 18, Mark’s gospel records that he “begged” Jesus to allow him to enter the boat and journey with Him. The word begged is a strong word. It indicates a passionate desire. It can be translated *beseeked, implored, or entreated*. It is appealing with emotion. It is asking with intensity. It is a persistent urging. This transformed, totally changed demoniac desired only one thing – to be with the One who delivered him from the clutches of the evil one. He could sing with the modern song writer, “*Amazing grace, my chains are gone. I have been set free.*”

The testimony of a changed life is the most powerful that can ever be given. Christ knew that once the inhabitants of Decapolis heard the testimony of this completely changed demoniac, they would be prepared when He returned later.

Therefore, Jesus said, “*Go home to your friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you and how He has had compassion on you.*” (Mark 5:19) The man’s response was immediate. “*And He departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.*” (Mark 5:19) The word “proclaim” is “kerusso” and can be translated “to herald” or “to publish.” In the brief time that the demoniac spent with Jesus his life was so radically changed that he had a story to tell. He had a testimony to give. He had an incredible experience to share.

“Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven’s chosen agency

for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine.

– Desire of Ages, pg. 347

Grace is not just God’s response to sin; it is His invitation to new life. It is the assurance that no matter how far we have fallen, God’s love reaches further still. To be touched by grace is to be transformed by Jesus, and then to become instruments of His grace in a hurting world.

4. Read 1 John 1:1-4. What was John communicating about God’s grace in this passage.

New Testament believers witnessed for Christ through the uniqueness of their own personalities. They each had different encounters with Christ but each of those encounters led them to enthusiastically share the Christ they loved. The circumstances of the conversion may have been different, but the results were the same – hearts transformed by God’s grace.

5. What does the apostle Paul mean when he declares “...for you

are not under law but under grace”? Compare Romans 6:14,15 with Romans 3:27-31. Is Paul speaking here of being under the jurisdiction of the law? Is he speaking of the law as a means of salvation? How does an understanding of God’s grace and God’s law harmonize?

6. If God’s very nature is love, and His actions toward us are grace-filled, how are we to relate to the difficult times we experience suffering? Read 1 Peter 5:10 and 2 Corinthians 12:9.

The teaching of scripture is clear. God’s grace does not absent us from suffering, it strengthens us in suffering. The world we live in is full of heartache, sorrow, and sickness. It is in the context of suffering that God’s grace at times is more powerfully revealed.

Discuss how we as medical providers can share God’s grace when people suffer without trivializing their suffering.

7. Read Ephesians 1 verse 6 and discuss God’s grace in the context

of the following statement by early Adventist writer W.W. Prescott. Share any new thoughts you get with your group?

“To the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved,” and when the Father said to his Son, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” he said the same words to every son in this divine-human family. “Thou art my beloved son in whom I am well pleased” in him, in him. Was he accepted? So are we in him. Are we accepted because of anything that we are, or have been, or can be? No, but we were accepted in him, in the beloved. It is so, in him, accepted.”

One renowned preacher is reported to have said that the gospel *“Tells rebellious men that God is reconciled, that justice is satisfied, that sin has been atoned for, that the judgment of the guilty may be revoked, the condemnation of the sinner cancelled, the curse of the Law blotted out, the gates of hell closed, the portals of heaven opened wide, the power of sin subdued, the guilty conscience healed, the broken heart comforted, the sorrow and misery of the Fall undone.”*

Grace includes the recognition that Jesus has redeemed us. He has forgiven our sins. He has taken our guilt away. He has silenced the accusing voices in our heads. We see Jesus who said to the woman caught in adultery, “Go and sin no more”. We see Jesus who said to the dying thief, “You will be with me in paradise.” We see Jesus,

who dying on the cross, cried, “Father forgive them for they know not what they do”. We see the Jesus who transformed Peter from a loud-mouthed fisherman to a powerful preacher. We see Jesus who delivered the demoniacs from the bondage of the evil one. We see the all-sufficient Christ who delivers us from both the penalty and power of sin. In Him we have peace, freedom from guilt, a changed heart and new hope.

8. Read Revelation 22:20,21. Why do you think John, the Revelator, links the second coming of Jesus and God’s grace to conclude the entire Bible?

The Bible begins with a perfect world in Genesis 1 and 2 and ends with a perfect world in Revelation 21 and 22. From Genesis 3 to Revelation 20 we see God’s grace. The story of the Bible is the story of grace. The story of a merciful, forgiving, all-empowering God who longs to save us. He is a God worth worshipping forever.

Touched By Grace – Daily Living

Applying the Principles of Grace

Medical Professionals Sharing Together

The Goal:

1. When you look at Jesus's life, what could 'Touched By Grace' look like for you on a day-to-day basis?

The Obstacles:

2. What personal obstacles come to mind when you think about living out God's grace on a daily basis?

The Strategies:

3. What are some habits or methods that will help you overcome these obstacles?

The Motivators:

4. What will motivate you to persevere in overcoming these obstacles and continually feel the fullness of God's grace and mercy?

The Implementation:

5. How have you integrated your personal relationship with Christ into your medical practice?

6. What have you found to be some of the most effective ways to share Christ with your patients, colleagues, and staff?

7. What specific one or two thing(s) do you feel God calling you to change/implement this year so you can live 'Touched By Grace' on a daily basis and more boldly and effectively share His love and witness to those in your sphere of influence?

The Support:

8. Who or what will support and encourage you to implement these changes?

9. Could AMEN help provide ongoing support throughout the year to encourage you in the implementation process? If so, how?

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