

## GRACE

3 of 3 | Established by Grace

### SLIDE 1 Introduction

In our series on the grace of God we have looked at a couple of aspects so far. In my first message I shared about how the Lord provides us with an unlimited abundance of grace. You are never in short supply. So you just don't come up short in your service to God. 2nd Corinthians 8:8 says you are "abundantly supplied for every good work."

I based this on the message Joshua and Zerubbabel received from the prophet Zechariah. They were called to a "tall order" before the Lord. This small group of returning refugees, struggling just to survive in a destroyed nation, were called to rebuild the glory of Jerusalem and God's temple.

In Zechariah 4:7 the prophet declares that Zerubbabel would bring forth the "capstone." This is a symbol that he would complete the work God had called him to do. The shout of the people would be, "Grace, Grace!"

It's never by our works, effort, or ability. It is by God's grace. It's not about what we want to accomplish. It's always about what he has called us to do. And what he begins in us, he will complete in us.

As Paul said to the believers at Philippi:

**SLIDE 2 Philippians 1:3-6 (NIV)** *"<sup>3</sup> I thank my God every time I remember you. <sup>4</sup> In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy <sup>5</sup> because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup> being confident of this, that **he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion** until the day of Christ Jesus."*

You may not see how you are going to finish your life's work, but God does. I see this for myself, I see it for my wife, I see it for my sons, and I see it for each of you in this church.

### SLIDE 3 Empowered by the Spirit

This brings me to last week's message, when I shared about how God's abundant

grace empowers you for serve him. Contrary to what some preachers say, it's not about having a wonderful life of blessings and wealth. It's about growing in the qualities we need to serve in difficult times and places.

You are here and now for a reason. You are equipped by the Spirit with everything you need for completing your service to the Lord.

**SLIDE 4 Ephesians 1:3 (NIV)** *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."*

We need to get a hold of these truths and become proficient in them. They are necessary for our times, as they were for every generation of the believers before us.

Sometimes we get it, sometimes we don't. Sometimes we act as if it was real and available to us and sometimes we don't. We need to become established in the grace available to us and operate from it as the foundation of all we do and speak.

**SLIDE 5 Established by Grace**

To build a solid foundation we need to dig down until the earth beneath us is firm and constant. There can be no shifting, no freezing and thawing, no unstable elements to disrupt us from laying a stable, lasting foundation and building upon it.

Paul then tell us in Ephesians:

**SLIDE 6 Ephesians 4:14-16 (NIV)** *"<sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming."*

Then you will be solid and consistent in your walk with the Lord. Then your testimony and witness will line up with each other. You will not only be believable, but you will be confident in your words and actions.

Paul goes on to say the same thing:

**SLIDE 7** *"<sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup> From him the whole body,*

*joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and **builds itself up in love**, as each part does its work."*

To do a work that will last you need to build on a solid, enduring foundation. This is called "being established" in the Lord.

### **SLIDE 8** The Establishment of God

To become established in the Lord you must continue to build upon the grace he has given you.

- Grace reveals truth. God reveals truth to you because he loves you and wants the best for you.
- Truth acted upon reveals power, transforming power. You never go back to the same old sins again, because you are not the person you once were. You have been changed. Your mind has been renewed. You have been "sanctified."

Again, the Bible warns us about following just every kind of teaching and all the ideas that are swirling around. This is because you will never lay a foundation on which you can build. You'll always be confused by the next "new thing." You'll never become "fully persuaded" about anything. A constantly changing mind eventually just becomes mush.

**SLIDE 9** Hebrews 13:9 (KJV) *"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. **For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.**"*

You can eat all the right things and do all the right things and still not know anything about God and his salvation. God's grace is revealed to us through Jesus our Lord.

Like I said last week from Titus 2:12, his grace is...

**SLIDE 10** Titus 2:12 (KJV) *"**Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.**"*

Learning about his grace is the first part. Applying his grace is the part that establishes us in his grace. I can do a lot of things. I can draw, I can play the piano, I

can exercise (once in a while), and I can ride a bike.

However, I am only as established in them as I actively spend time in them. I'm established in sleeping and eating because I can do them everyday without even thinking about it.

### **SLIDE 11 Built Up**

If you have to build yourself up to it, then you are not yet established in it. God uses the word "established" when he refers to the covenants he makes. In other words, he does not change the terms of his covenant after it has been "established."

It ought to be the same with us. There ought to be things in our lives that never change. Since everything in the physical world is subject to change, the things we need to work on are internal things, spiritual things.

Like Psalms and Proverbs say so many times:

**SLIDE 12a Psalm 40:2 (KJV)** *"He set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."*

**SLIDE 12b Psalm 90:17 (KJV)** *"Establish thou the work of our hands upon us; Yea, the work of our hands establish thou it."*

- The rock on which we stand is the solid foundation of the knowledge of God's Word.
- Being established in it is acting upon the knowledge we have.
- Knowing when and how to act is the guidance of the Holy Spirit within us.

But the Prophet Isaiah warns:

**SLIDE 13 Isaiah 7:9 (KJV)** *"If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established."*

Faith is what is built on the solid foundation of God's Word. This works itself out in practice as we begin operating in the things God is revealing to us by his grace.

Referring to Apostolic teaching the Bible says this:

**SLIDE 14 Acts 16:5 (KJV)** *"And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily."*

Faith became a part of who they were. It was their nature to respond in faith to the Word that was preached. They had become established in it.

Like I said in the last message, you don't have to start over every time you make a mistake or sin. Why? Because you haven't forgotten the Word that you have learned. You haven't forgotten the forgiveness you received through grace. You simply pick up from there and become more established in it each and every time.

**SLIDE 15 2nd Peter 1:12 (KJV)** *"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and **be established in the present truth.**"*

### **SLIDE 16 Altar Time**

Many people simply lack the self-discipline to consistently set aside a portion of each day to the Lord. This is mostly because they have never established a schedule for their lives, nor a budget for their spending, nor a program for their health. You get the picture.

If you lack this necessary self-discipline, or other things crowd out time in God's Word, we want to pray for you today.

As Jesus is the Capstone of Grace, his Word is the Cornerstone from which you build a solid life of service to him.