



GGN is a teaching resource for ministers and churches all over the world. We advocate the gospel of the grace of Jesus Christ - Jesus alone, grace alone, faith alone. Our purpose is twofold: to help the Church rediscover Jesus and to take this message to the world.

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING LAZY AND BEING RESTFUL

Now and then I hear the comment that people are hesitant to the preaching of the Gospel of Grace because they are afraid it will make people lazy. Some may even go as far as to accuse us for giving people a license to be lazy. However, it is important to hear the fullness of the message being taught here in GGN.

We are not encouraging people to be lazy and not have a living and active relationship with the Lord and with their Church. However, we are focusing on the motive for why people are doing what they are doing. Are they doing what they are doing in order to try to please God and deserve His blessings, or are they doing what they are doing as a result of and in response to the wonderful things God already has done for them?

This newsletter has two articles that both focuses on the rest of the Lord. This doesn't mean that we become lazy, but that we learn to rest even while we are working. Great pressure comes on us when we think it is our own works and effort that will make the difference. Rest is there when we know Jesus has fully completed the work to establish great favor with God and when we are aware that He is the one who is also at work both in and through us.



Mary Felde  
Editor



## Remove the Guilt and Just Rest In Him

By Evan Beecham

When I awoke to this revelation, I discovered this gospel of grace to be the most liberating message I had ever heard!

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord. May His effortless success and powerful rest be experienced in your life, by His grace.

God's word gives us great hope for our future. Circumstance doesn't define who you are: God has defined who you are in Christ. As a result of the finished work of the cross, God has equipped you with the most powerful blessing known to man, which will cause you to reign in life.

Romans 1:17 (Mirror Translation) "Herein lies THE secret of the power of the gospel; there is no good news in it until the righteousness of God is revealed!" (The good news is the fact that the cross of Christ was a success. God rescued the life of our design; He redeemed our innocence. Man would never again be judged righteous or unrighteous by his own ability to obey moral laws! It is not about what man must do but about what Jesus has done!) God now persuades everyone to believe what He knows to be true about them. (It is from faith to faith.) The prophets wrote in advance about the fact that God believes that righteousness defines the life that He always had in mind for us. "Righteousness by His (God's) faith gives meaning to life."



That most powerful blessing known to man is His righteousness. Receive His abundance of grace and gift of righteousness, and reign in life (Romans 5:17). Righteousness is a gift. You cannot become righteous by your works, or self effort, because that would be works-righteousness, or self-righteousness.

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Then the self-effort based questions start: Where did I miss it, what did I do wrong, God why aren't you blessing me, haven't you seen what I have done for you?

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#### **I came to the end of myself**

I was recently asked what I meant when I said I came to the end of myself. Before I caught the revelation of God's grace, I would try to plan my success, and then in my own self effort, I would try to execute my plan to make it work. I tried to earn favor with God by my works - giving, praying, and church attendance (although these things are good, but not if done out of guilt). I was doing things that I thought would get God's attention and get Him to see my efforts and give (earn) me favor.

Whenever I would mess up, I thought I was out of fellowship with God, so I had to work harder to get back to where I was. This I thought would bring blessing to my business and ministry. I would attend sales conferences where the top salespeople would tell those in attendance that we needed to do more. We could never quite do enough; always thinking we were

almost there then falling short again. Many Christians feel this way. They may experience a degree of success, but then somehow they are back to square one, starting over. There is no rest in this constant vacillation.

Then the self-effort based questions start: Where did I miss it, what did I do wrong, God why aren't you blessing me, haven't you seen what I have done for you? I was living a life of constant striving. After decades of this, one day about six years ago, I read Hebrews 4, about entering the rest of God. I became obsessed with this rest, and desperate to get it. I also realized that I could not continue to strive any longer, so I began my quest. You could say that this was where I came to the end of myself. I realized self was the problem - myself - and as I grew in the revelation of grace, I could clearly see I had been full of self effort.

#### **The most liberating message**

When I awoke to this revelation, I discovered this gospel of grace to be the most liberating message I had ever heard! Jesus forgave me and made

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I woke up in a different world - effortless success was mine because Jesus paid the price. His favor was upon me in my business, and ministry.

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me FOREVER innocent. He qualified me at the cross. He became me, so I could become Him. WOW! I began to see who I really was in Christ. It was everything Jesus did, and ALL I

had to do was believe it and receive His grace and gift of righteousness. I didn't have to try anymore, and for the first time in my life, I could rest in Christ Jesus and what He had done for me! I woke up in a different world - effortless success was mine because Jesus paid the price. His favor was upon me in my business, and ministry.

Does this sound too good to be true? Well, it is too good, and it is true, praise the Lord! God loves you so much that when your cup is full He just keeps pouring, and your cup of blessing is running over. He is far too good to me, and His goodness produced a radical change of mind in my life (which is what repentance really is). I am hidden in Christ in God; what a wonderful place to be. I am loved, accepted, righteous, and innocent. He qualified me to receive my inheritance. Yes, He is too good, and I love it, and all I had to do was quit striving, believe what Jesus did for me, receive it, and enter His rest for me.

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1 NKJV). Peace is a place of unhindered enjoyment of friendship beyond guilt, suspicion, blame or inferiority. His rest celebrates unhindered enjoyment for man and our unhindered enjoyment of Him! I began to see just how much God really loved me.

Romans 5:8-9 (Mirror Translation): “Herein is the extremity of God's love gift: mankind was rotten to the core when Christ died their (our) death. If

# Remove the Guilt all Just Rest In Him

God could love us that much when we were ungodly and guilty, how much more are we free to realize His love now that we are declared innocent by His blood?"

Cease from you efforts, quit striving and toiling today; rest in what Jesus has done for you at Calvary. He has prepared the good life for you; He has prepared abundant provision for you, so enter His rest! The only thing you have to do is believe.

## Enter into His Rest

Believing what God has said about you, as a result of the finished work of the cross, will forever change your life. As I previously mentioned, God has prepared the good life for you. Ephesians 2:4-10 from the Amplified Bible describes God's wonderful and intense love with which He loved us, and that we are seated with Christ Jesus in heavenly places. He did this so that He might demonstrate through the ages His immeasurable grace and kindness towards us. In verse 10 He sums it up by saying that He wants us to live the good life which He arranged and made ready for us to live. That good life, full of His abundance, is available to us because of the finished

work of the cross, and to enter into this good life, we simply enter His rest.

**This victorious living is intended for every area of your life, your ministry as well as your occupation.**

What are you facing today? Enter into His rest; don't miss out on it because of unbelief. God prepared a rest for us, a rest that as you learn and believe who you are in Christ; having your mind established in redemption realities, will cause you to enjoy the profusely abounding favors of God.

## Victories living in every area of life

This victorious living is intended for every area of your life, your ministry as well as your occupation. Many Christians separate their occupations and careers from their personal lives. They refer to their work (if not in a ministry) as secular, so they exclude it from any blessings because we have been erroneously taught that God will only bless what "you do for Him." The word secular has a root meaning of "temporal" - opposed to the eternity of the church - and means "not connected to a religion." You are not connected to

a religion, you are connected to Jesus who loves you with great intensity and cares for everything you do. He took time to count the hairs on your head. Why did He do that? Because He loves you, that's why!

Jesus came to redeem us and reintroduce us to ourselves. He redeemed our innocence and made us righteous. In Hebrews 4, we see that Israel did not enter into His rest because they believed a lie about themselves. In verse 11, we are warned not to fall according to the same example of unbelief.

When Christians try to live by the law, they are trying to (by their self efforts) become what they already are. They try to become righteous and holy when they have been made righteous and holy in Christ. They try to continually confess forgiveness so they can be forgiven. You already are forgiven and innocent because Jesus took your punishment once and for all on the cross. So don't try to become who God has already made you to be. You'll only frustrate the grace of God in your life.

You cannot do anything special to deserve His rest; Jesus already paid

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# Remove the Guilt all Just Rest In Him

for it. In Numbers 33:11, we see where the report of ten spies produced unbelief, and it stopped them from entering the rest (Promised Land). They believed they were nothing, nobodies, and that the enemy was far too big to overcome. They did not believe what God told them.

**When Christians try to live by the law, they are trying to (by their self efforts) become what they already are.**

### **Life guilt free**

We have been redeemed through Jesus; He is the propitiation (satisfying sacrifice) who redeemed our innocence. God's plan of redemption is perfect and complete. Do you believe that? If you do, then you won't have any problem believing that through Christ, you have been made righteous, innocent, fully acquitted, forever forgiven, holy, and you are intensely loved by your Father, and He will never be angry with you again (Is 54:9). You would also believe, as He IS so are you in this world. All of

this is because of His grace and not your "trying to become." So simply rest in what Christ has done for you, and cease from your efforts of trying to become what he has already done. Whenever you try to become, and you don't quite measure up (nobody can), then guilt will flood in every time you fall short. You cannot have a quality relationship with anybody in an atmosphere of guilt! Once guilt sets in, then you have believed a lie about yourself, and it will affect your rest. Live guilt free - Jesus made you innocent! Don't try to earn what He has given to you.

This is the superabundant life Jesus came to give you (John 10:10)! When you catch this revelation, it will turn your life, career, business, and everything else upside down! Why do I say upside down? Because this is completely backwards to the world's

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way of thinking. In Acts 17:6, the disciples were accused of turning the world upside down with this gospel of grace. What an awesome, loving, wonderful Father we have! Now can you see how you can reign in life today as a king through what He has done for you? His abundant supply and effortless success will flow in your life when you are at rest.



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# IT IS EASY!

By Åge Åleskjær



## Jesus Himself said that His yoke was easy and His burden light.

All religions have an underlying foundation of demands of works and achievements. This is why temples and places of worship are filled with rituals, sacrifices, penitential exercises, and works of religion.

The gospel is the total opposite! In this case, *God* is the one who did something. He has in Christ reconciled the world to Himself, and is now offering a free salvation of pure grace – without works. This is such good news that people have problems taking it in, and so the religion of

works has slipped into the Christian ranks as well.

Many people believe that God will judge them according to their deeds, and that their eternal blessedness is dependent upon if they did “as best they could.” This delusion is a product of preaching “the law and the gospel.”

Luckily, Christians know that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him.

Still many Christians start striving and struggling in self effort after they are born-again. They try to do works “worthy of the conversion,” and they end in struggles to satisfy God. So in a creeping way, Christianity has become a religion of works as well.

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### Rest

This is why the invitation of Jesus brings such freedom! He is inviting

everybody who labors and are heavy laden and is saying, “Come to Me, and I will give you rest.”

The entire chapter of Hebrews 4 is all about this rest of faith: “We who have believed do enter that rest.”

The chapter explains that those who died in the desert did not enter because of disobedience and unbelief. Neither did Joshua lead them into this rest, because in a later generation David prophesies and says, “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.” So by this, he is speaking about a day when one can enter the rest. That day is now; it is the “day of salvation.”

It is not heaven or eternity he is speaking about, because there one cannot harden the heart. He is speaking about something that is for now, and this becomes a great testimony about what the rest of faith really is. You get to rest from your works, just like God rested from all His works. The works are already finished. They are prepared beforehand that we should walk in them and in Him we have all the power, all the equipment, and all the energy that is needed. This is a fantastic gospel to all the Christians

suffering from stress.

This is a rest from fleshly works - a rest in God where He works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Many worn-out Christians have never experienced what it means to lift their wings like eagles and run and not get weary. But those who wait on the Lord have learned to live the kind of life that takes all the energy from Him who lives in them.

### **It Is Easy to Be A Christian**

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. *For My yoke is easy and My burden is light*” (Matt. 11:28-30).

This is the message! Jesus wants to set you free from all heavy burdens, and lead you into an easy life.

Many Norwegian Christians have sung, “It became so easy when the burden fell off, it fell into the ocean of oblivion...” In other countries there are other songs that are similar. We sing about the freedom that came when the burden of sin fell off.

But unfortunately the time is often short before Christians experience that someone is “putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples,” just like Acts 15:10-11 is talking about. But Jesus is offering a life where one continues in liberty. It is possible to lay the burdens on Him all the time.

### My Yoke Is Easy

Jesus says that He has a yoke that we

should take upon us. At the same time He says that His yoke is easy, and His burden light. How can a “yoke” be easy and a burden light?

Since I grew up in the countryside, I know what it means for oxen to work in harness. One puts a yoke upon their shoulders so that they can pull together. Jesus is offering us to work in harness with Him. The secret is that He takes the heavy part, and the light part rests on you. In fact, He is pulling the entire load, but you are allowed to walk next to Him and feel that you have a part. When you see the result after plowing, you say, “Wow, take a look at what we did!” But in reality it was not you, but the grace of God who was with you. Paul says it like this:

“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” (1 Cor. 15:10)

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### No Sweat In the Presence of God

The Old Covenant is full of pictures. There is a great picture of this in connection with the priests who were to serve in His presence. In the context where it says they are to dress in linen, it says, “They shall not clothe themselves with anything that causes sweat” (Ezek. 44:18). This symbolizes that the Lord does

not want anything that represents human effort or works of the flesh. No sweat in the presence of God!

On the other hand, we are “laboring more abundantly than they all!” But it happens through His grace, “for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). Another way of saying it is that “we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). This is not something by which one gets “terribly exhausted!”

### Through the Cross We No Longer Are Conscious of Sin

The cross of Jesus Christ is at the centre of the gospel. All the symbolism, the sacrifices and the services in the Old Covenant are examples of the perfect sacrifice that was to come. This is why Hebrews says that they were examples and shadows of the things that were to come, but now the real thing is here.

The problem was that the sacrifices could never make perfect or free from the consciousness of sin. So one always had a constant reminder of sin, and the sacrifices had to be offered continually year by year. Hebrews 10:1-2, Revised Standard Version (RSV) expresses this perfectly:

“For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of *the true form of these realities*, it can never, by the same sacrifices which are continually offered year after year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have

ceased to be offered? If the worshipers had once been cleansed, they would no longer have any consciousness of sin."

The problem was that the *reality* had not come; the law had but a shadow of the good things to come. But now the *reality* has come. Now "the good things to come" are here.

The perfect sacrifice of Christ has come:

"For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14).

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### Many Christian really need to attend a course in how to glory in the Lord!

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#### Once for All

A key expression is "once for all."

"For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins." (Heb. 10:2)

"By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10).

This is the foundation of our complete salvation.

"Therefore He is able to save to the uttermost (completely, perfectly, finally, and for all time and eternity) those who come to God through Him..." (Heb. 7:25, AMP).

Notice some wonderful details:

Hebrews 10:2 is saying that if we had been cleansed once for all, we would no longer have any consciousness of sin. We have been cleansed once for all. Consequently, we do not have any consciousness of sin. Instead we have received a "consciousness of righteousness."

The key to live by the perfect law of liberty is for man to see this so that a change takes place in his mind. One gets conscious of not being a sinner anymore, but being righteous! Then one can live and walk in the privileges belonging to the righteous.

#### **To Glory In the Lord**

Because Jesus became one with us, and we became one with Him, it is simple to catch the truth in 1 Cor. 1:30-31:

"But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."

Many Christian really need to attend a course in how to glory in the Lord!

Because we have been indoctrinated to think that we have nothing to boast about, we have missed what it means to boast in the Lord. But it is where the secret lies: We have nothing to boast about in what we did ourselves; all our boasting is excluded by the law of faith.

It is because Christ is our life that we

indeed have something to boast about. We can glory in the Lord. It means that we boldly can confess who we are in Him and who He is in us.

He is our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. So with that our righteousness is the best in the universe - it is perfect. *He* is our righteousness. That is what we can glory in. He is also our sanctification.

Moreover He is in us. He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world. That makes us conquerors. We can reign in life through Jesus Christ.

In this we glory!

It means that we boldly confess what the Word of God is saying about us. That is not pride - that is humility. Can you see it? Humility is to bow to the Word. You should not be prideful and insist that you are miserable and weak, while the Word tells you that you are seated with Him in heavenly places, and you are reigning as a king in life.

#### We Glory in Christ Jesus

"For we are the true circumcision, who worship God in spirit, and *glory in Christ Jesus*, and put no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3, RSV).

Paul testifies and says that He could have boasted in the flesh, but he does not. The reason is that what he gained in Christ is of so *much greater value*. The righteousness he has in Christ, and the union with Him, completely outweigh everything else.

"But God forbid that I should boast



except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation" (Gal. 6:14-15).

The only thing Paul would boast about was the work of Christ in his life. He would boast about the result of the cross. By the cross, he is crucified to the world and is now a new creation in Christ. *That* is what he would boast about! Paul knew that the message of the cross was foolishness. As a Jew he was persecuted because of the cross and Jesus. But Paul prided himself in Jesus and the cross. He said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ!"

Some people did not like to be persecuted for the sake of the cross:

"As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ" (Gal. 6:12).

Jesus Christ and His cross are our glory. We take glory in our righteousness through His blood, in our death with Him to sin, the law, and the world, in our healing through His stripes, in the resurrection with Him to a new life, in being seated with Him in the heavenly places, in having authority in His name over sickness and evil spirits, and in being like He is in the midst of this world!

### **Grace Rules!**

"In order that as sin has ruled as king in death, so also grace *might* rule as

king in righteousness which issues in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, – ours!" (Rom. 5:21, MNT)

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**However, there are many Christians who are sweating and struggling simply because they do not understand that everything is by grace!**

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Jesus came to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:19):

"To proclaim the accepted and the acceptable year of the Lord [the day when salvation and the free favors of God profusely abound]" (AMP).

In the Norwegian translations, the acceptable year is called the year of grace. Grace means "undeserved favor," "joyful surprise," "God abounding toward you." The acceptable year was a year of grace where the free favors of God abounded.

In the Old Covenant, the fiftieth year was a year of Jubilee. In the year of Jubilee all the debts were released, all the slaves were released and the land was returned to him from whom it was bought, to the one who owned the land as a possession.

This is why Jesus calls it an acceptable year of the Lord - a year of grace. He added good news to the poor and liberty to the oppressed and captives.

### Grace upon Grace

All Christians carry some sort of understanding about grace.

Everybody knows that we are saved by grace:

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).

"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24).

Fortunately most believers have understood! However, there are many Christians who are sweating and struggling simply because they do not understand that *everything* is by grace! The great discovery is to see that sanctification is by grace, ministry is by grace, fullness is by grace, gifts of the Spirit are by grace, and everything concerning the Christian's life is by grace.

The Christian life is grace plus nothing!

### Personal Observation

As I have touched on earlier in this book, my experiences with different Christian environments have showed me how easy it is to end in a Christian life where one has fallen away from grace.

When it comes to salvation people understand it is by grace, but in other areas they end up in works. When I was searching to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, the preaching I was given told me that it was going to be a struggle. But the Word says:

"For of his fullness we all have



received, and grace upon grace” (John 1:16, DBY).

We are talking about many levels of grace: grace upon grace! It is not only salvation that is by grace. Fullness is also by grace.

### The Sanctification

Some believe that a focus on grace will make people free to sin more (this is discussed in the article “Certainly not!”). But the Word is showing us that sanctification is a work of grace - it is free, it is undeserved, and it is a joyful surprise. Titus 2:11-12 explains that the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. *This grace* teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts...

T.B. Barratt called this “the sanctifying work of grace.” Peter calls it “the sanctification of the Spirit.” No room is given for self effort and works of the flesh.

**This is the rest that will be the medicine against all burnout in the ministry.**

### The Ministry

Paul is giving us a glimpse of the secret of the ministry:

“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I,

but the grace of God which was with me.” (1 Cor. 15:10)

His great working capacity was a work of grace! Just like it was for Jesus, it was “food” for him to do the will of God. Just like Jesus, he did nothing on his own initiative - he only did what he saw the Father do.

This is the rest that will be the medicine against all burnout in the ministry.

In the same manner signs and wonders are by grace (Gal. 3:5). Therefore, it is wrong when someone is emphasizing the price you have to pay for the miracle power of God. That is a price that Jesus already paid! Paul says:

“For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient—in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, ...” (Rom. 15:18-19).

And at this we neither have something to boast about in ourselves! If God uses you, it is by grace. If God performs miracles in your ministry, it is by grace.

“And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace” (Rom. 11:6).



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