



GLOBAL GRACE NEWS

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2012

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.

Grace without Preconditions

While many of us have met preconditions when applying for a job, seeking education, or even participating in a church service, is God's grace available to everyone without discrimination? Through Jesus' finished work on the cross the whole of humankind is qualified to experience and enjoy the life of Christ. We all want to live a meaningful and fulfilling life, and Jesus gave the key to it - He gave Himself.

When we encounter people from various backgrounds and nationalities, it gives us a chance to enlarge our understanding of the significance of the Body of Christ. Sometimes it's important to remind ourselves that our own efforts to produce holiness and sanctification are all doomed, because there is no such power in us by birth. Revelation of God's grace, mercy and loving kindness will empower us to accept and respect all people alike - when we realize that we ourselves have been restored by Christ, and by Him only.

We have just arrived in Ambon, Indonesia, to bring the Gospel of Jesus to our Muslim friends. Unfortunately violent clashes between different religious groups have made this city known, but the beautiful message of the world's redemption belongs to everyone, and it makes us joyous to proclaim the Good News time after time. All nations, every individual, are included in the circle of God's love without preconditions. Our common task is simply to make the message known everywhere we go.

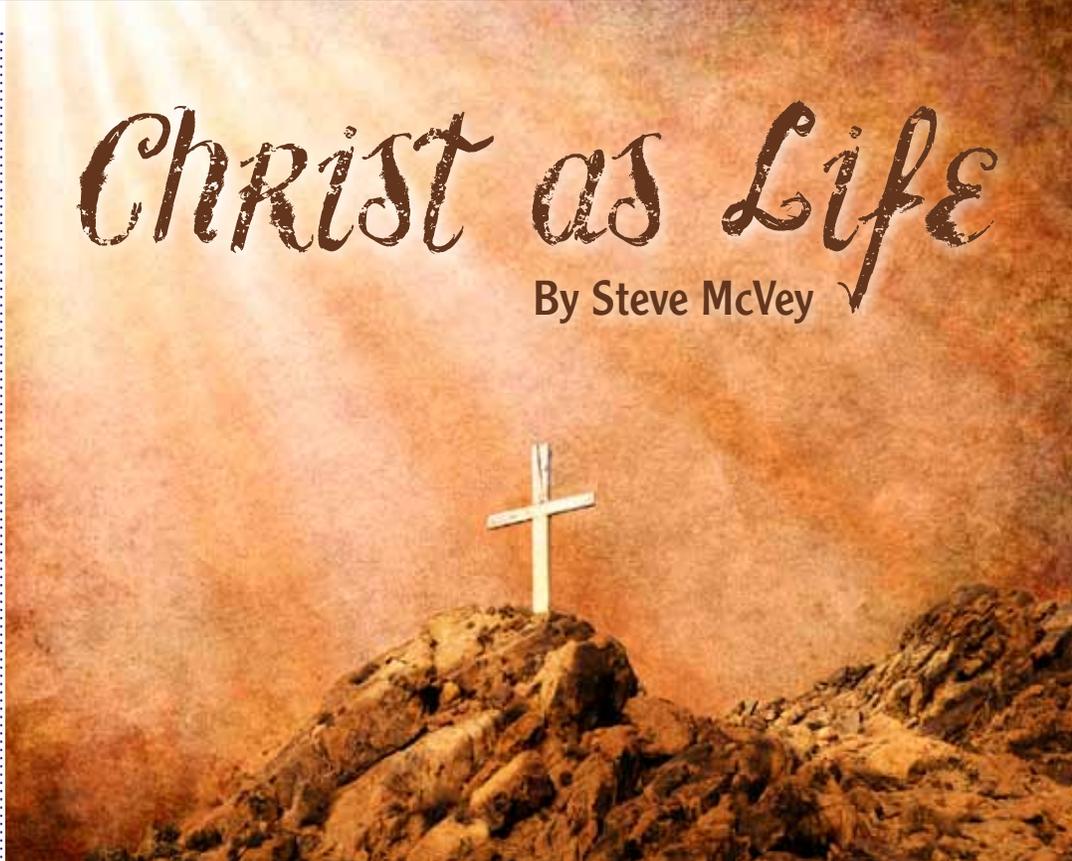
You have the love of God in your heart which manifests itself through your speech and actions. I believe you have subscribed to this newsletter because you want to learn more about God's grace, and how to tell it to the world around you. Be encouraged by the articles of Steve McVey and Mike Walker in this issue. You are highly blessed and favored in Christ Jesus!



Peter Youngren

CHRIST as Life

By Steve McVey



Jesus Christ IS the Life of the believer. This is a glorious reality and is what I call the Grace Walk. Here is an attempt to briefly summarize what that means.

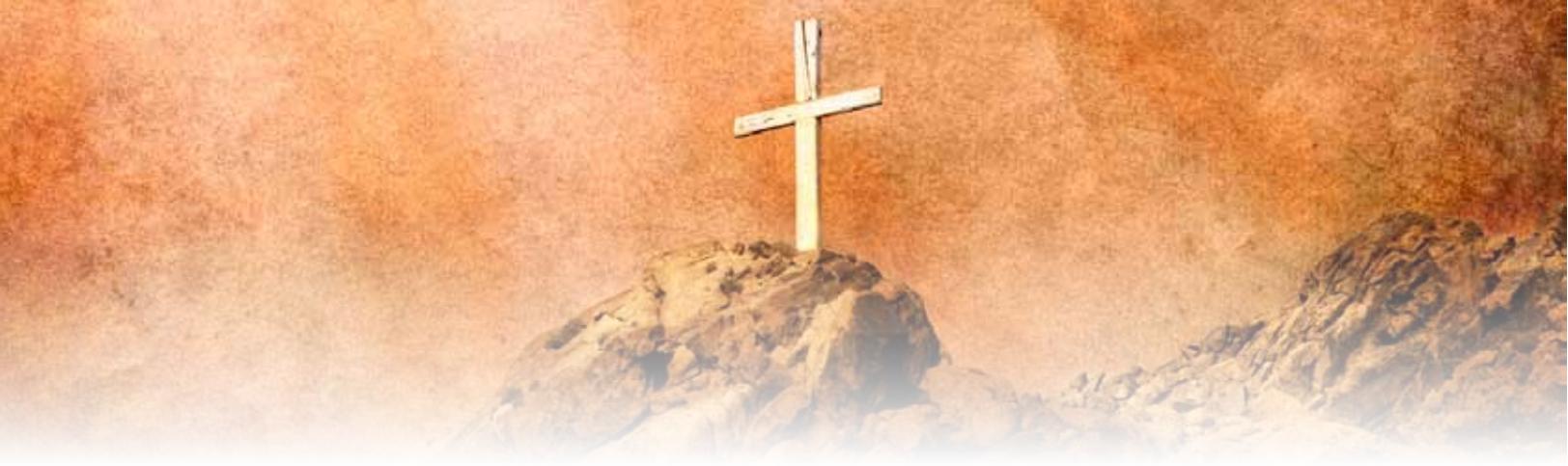
Of course, all Christians know the gospel to be the forgiveness of our sins and the saving of our souls by grace through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. But after coming to Christ for salvation, many of us are told to live our life FOR God in the best way we could.

This is quite familiar language in the modern church, but the concept of "living our life for God" is actually quite foreign to the New Testament.

Dead With Christ

The New Testament gospel was not simply a gift of forgiveness followed by a self-improvement plan. Rather, it was a self-REPLACEMENT plan—the

...the concept of "living our life for God" is actually quite foreign to the New Testament.



death of one life and its substitution with Another.

Much of the body of Christ has a comprehension of the blood of Jesus releasing them from their sins. But too few have an understanding of the cross of Christ releasing them from themselves - their Adamic nature.

We are accustomed to hearing about the cross as the place where Christ died for the forgiveness of sins. And that is wonderful and true! But there is more to it than that! Much, much more!

The cross is also how we died WITH Christ, so that we could walk in the newness of His resurrected life.

Without an understanding of the cross severing us from our first birth, our flesh-life, and bringing us into a union with the resurrected life of Jesus, we can spend years living our lives FOR God, rather than becoming vessels of His Life.

Paul says:

Gal. 2:20: *"I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."*

...we can spend years living our lives FOR God, rather than becoming vessels of His Life.

It is not a STRIVING to transform the old nature; it is a crucifixion of that old nature:

Rom. 6:6: *"knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with"*

and a filling of our earthen vessel with something (Someone) entirely new. Eph 3:19: *"... that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God."*

Gal. 4:19: *"My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you."* This is why we are called "new creations," and are told to put on the "new man."

2 Cor. 5:17: *"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."* Eph. 4:22: *"... lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit...and put on the new self..."*

The Gospel is not about an IMITATION of Christ's works; rather, it is the IMPARTATION of Christ's life,

2 Pet. 1:4: *"you have become partakers of the divine nature,"* so that His life could have full expression through His body (the church).

2 Cor. 4:11: *"For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh."*

It is not flesh becoming spiritual (that's impossible!).

John 6:63: *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing;"*

Rom. 7:18: *"For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh..."*

Christ Through Us

But comprehending the finished work of the cross, we can know (Rom 6:6) and reckon (Rom 6:11) our Adamic nature dead, and abide in the Life of Jesus.

John 15:5: *"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."*

And abiding in Christ is essentially synonymous with "walking in the spirit;" i.e. living out of the place of union with Jesus Christ; living in, and drawing from, the life of Another.

1 Cor. 6:17: *"But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with*

The Gospel is not about an IMITATION of Christ's works; rather, it is the IMPARTATION of Christ's life...

Him." Gal. 5:25: *"If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."*

And so, the New Testament gospel is not really concerned with us (our flesh) bearing the fruit of our works for God.

Is. 64:6: *"And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment"*

Rather, we are brought into participation/union with the life of Christ, so that **God bears fruit through us** ~ just as a branch is merely a living conduit for the sap of the vine. It is the sap that both gives life to the branch and produces fruit on the branch.

John 15:4: *"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me."*

Of course, we are not becoming Jesus. A branch does not become the vine! But it is grafted into a joyful participation with the life of the vine, so that ONE LIFE can have expression in and through the many branches.

Christianity is not about many people imitating one Life. Quite the contrary! It is about the expression or manifestation of that one Life through the many.

And so, Paul's main concern was not the disciplining of our flesh so that we would act more like Christ.

Col. 2:23: *"self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, are of no value against fleshly indulgence"*

Rather, he was laboring in prayer until Christ's very life was formed in the body. Gal. 4:19: *"My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you."*

The purpose of any body is to give expression to the life dwelling within it. God calls us "the body of Christ," and thus our eternal purpose is to become an expression of His life.

Understanding Christ as the LIFE of the believer is the good news that the cross has brought about an exchange of life, wherein we can both partake of, and make manifest, the glorious life of Jesus Christ.

AND THAT'S A SUMMARY OF THE GRACE WALK!



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THE GOSPEL IN WHICH WE STAND

- Part 1

By Pastor Mike Walker

The power of God is in the announcement of the Gospel. Let's take another look at what we have been preaching.

1 Cor 15:1 *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in*

memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. KJV

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the good news of what He has already accomplished. Salvation, healing - all we will ever need has already been provided for! The devil is defeated and we have the victory! Jesus will never leave us or forsake us. Jesus is the guide of our life and we have peace and safety in our lives.

It Cannot Be Earned

The Apostle Paul reminds them: This is the gospel which we have preached to you; this is the good news that you have received. It cannot be earned because it was already paid for at the cross. The foundation of our abundant life is standing on the finished work of Christ and by this message we are saved - the good news of salvation.

News is something that has already happened. Grace is what God has already provided for us through Jesus Christ and faith is the hand that receives what has already been provided!

Rom 1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

This is good news of something that has already happened. The good news of what has already happened is the power of God!

All of us desire to see the power of God working with us. We desire to see God's power wherever we go. The power of God is in the announcement of the gospel and not found in someone declaring judgment and the wrath of God. It is not found in pointing out all the failures of someone's life. It is not found in what we can do in good works and it is not found in religion. The power of God is found when we tell the good news of what Jesus has done.

Mark 16:20 *And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.* Amen. What was their message? What were they preaching when Jesus went with them confirming the word with signs following? What was the message that brought the power of God into the picture?

Be A Good News Expert

Mark 16:15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.* Miracles follow the gospel because the gospel is the power of God! So it

is very important that we Christians become good news experts! We like to preach what God is going to do: God is bringing judgment and condemnation to the homosexuals, God is going to judge that city because of their sin, or God is going to move in a certain place because we have fasted and prayed.

There is no power in speaking those kinds of things. The power of God is the gospel – the good news of what Jesus has done. He was our wrath-bearer. All the anger of God

towards sin was poured out on Jesus at the cross!

I understand there are prophetic words that foretell but that is not the gospel, because the gospel is good news and news is what has already happened. The other is prophecy of what is to come. The power of God is in the announcement of the gospel. To preach what God has done is the power of God!

Peter Youngren once taught me gospel math: One plus one equals two, plus one equals three. Math is an absolute science and when you preach the gospel, faith will come. Preaching plus faith equals miracles. This will then add something more to your life called influence. One is telling the story; then faith is added bringing a miracle; then influence is increased - absolute science. This is the gospel in which we stand!

Tell the story of what God has done at the cross. At the cross His blood redeemed us from sin, paid for our healing, brought us peace in every

situation. At the cross He released divine direction so that we can know what we need to do. Tell the good news; tell the gospel news that Jesus has provided for every area of our life. We have more than enough and this all happened at the cross.

This is the gospel – this is the news that is too good to be true. We no longer have to ever be lonely because He will never leave us or forsake us. This is good news that has already been accomplished at the cross. Not only did Jesus conquer all the power

of the devil, He conquered all the power of the enemy so that we are more than conquerors. Where He ended, we begin. He is seated and His work is finished. We are also seated with Him in glory. Go tell the news! Tell the good news of how He has touched your life. Tell the good news – it is the power of God!

Miracles follow the gospel because the gospel is the power of God! So it is very important that we Christians become good news experts!



Mike Walker

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BY STEVE MCVEY

In light of grace exactly how does one live the Christian Life?

The key to victory in the Christian life lies in acknowledging that you cannot live the Christian life out of your own resources or abilities. Only one person has ever lived the Christian life as God intended and that was Jesus Himself! However, there is good news: Jesus wants to live His victorious, overcoming life through you. Perhaps no verse says it more clearly than Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me." We live the Christian life by yielding (surrendering) moment-by-moment to Christ, trusting Him to animate us with His very life.

Does the teaching of grace lead to passivity in the Christian life?

One of the most common misunderstandings about the grace walk is that it teaches passivity in the life of the Christian. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The grace walk is an active lifestyle energized not by the energy of the flesh but by the energy of the indwelling life of Christ. Consider the example of the apostle Paul. Paul trusted Christ to live His life through him (Romans 15:18) while leading an extremely active lifestyle. Notice Paul's description of his lifestyle in Colossians 1:29, "And for this

purpose also I labour, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me." Paul was not passive; he was active. The words "labour" and "striving" in the original language refer to weariness to the point of physical exhaustion. Yet it was not done in the energy of the flesh, it was "according to His (Jesus) power," which was at work within Paul.

If we are forgiven of our sins past, present, and future at the time of salvation won't that lead to a sinful lifestyle?

This is not a new question. In fact, this was the essence of the concern of those in Paul's own day who asked, "Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase?" (Romans 6:1). Coming to understand the totality of forgiveness should never lead the believer into a sinful lifestyle. Grace doesn't work that way. Grace enables us to walk in obedience. Grace moves us toward righteousness. Grace overpowers sin. Rules, regulations, and rigorous self-discipline will not keep us from sin but an authentic love relationship with Jesus will.

Does grace lead to a lawless attitude in the Christian life?

The simple answer to this question is "No way!" The Christian who is truly walking in grace is not an antinomian ("one who opposes the Law"). Rather, the person who is walking in grace has great respect

for the God-ordained purpose of the Law. In Romans 7:12, Paul said, "So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good." Grace-oriented Christians are not "Law-bashers," but, they do understand that the Law has no place in the life of the Christian. Consider the following Scriptures: "Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God" (Romans 7:4). "In order that the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit" (Romans 8:4). "Realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious" (I Timothy 1:9).

What exactly is legalism?

We define legalism as a system of living in which a person tries to make spiritual progress or gain God's acceptance based on what they do. Legalism is focused on behaviour and is therefore an achieving system. Legalism is the opposite of grace. Grace is a system of living in which God blesses us because we are in Jesus Christ and for no other reason at all. Grace is focused on our spiritual birth and is therefore a receiving system. Consider a couple of Scriptures: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13). "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age" (Titus 2:11-12).