

## "Why Pardon You?"

God once asked the Israelites in Jeremiah 5:7, "Why should I pardon you?" Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today, we're exploring the wonders of the grace of God. Stay tuned.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. We live by the grace of God. James 1:17 says that, "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow." Your life, air, food, water, clothing, shelter, and every spiritual blessing come from our Father in heaven. In Christ, we have faith, hope, and love. God gives us joy, peace, and salvation through Christ. And in the future, we have an inheritance in heaven because of the sacrifice of Jesus. Because of the grace of God in Christ, we are most blessed. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

John Newton, the author of Amazing Grace, said many years ago, "I am not what I ought to be — ah, how imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be — I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good! I am not what I hope to be — soon, soon shall I put off mortality, and with mortality all sin and imperfection. Yet, though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be, I can truly say, I am not what I once was; a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

God loves us more than we can measure and has provided through the death of Christ and the message of the gospel, our rescue from sin and its consequences. Now, all this comes by grace as the gift of God; but this grace demands that we lovingly receive and trust Him, turn our lives around, and obey Him.

We offer this study on God's pardon free. If you'd like a printed copy or a CD of our study and you live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org).

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Titus 2:11 to 14, and then we'll explore the surpassing value of God's grace.

Our reading today comes from Titus chapter 2 verses 11 to 14. Paul is there talking to Titus about the changes that take place in our lives when the grace of God works. Titus 2:11.

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, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

Yes, we need to be zealous for good deeds and leave the old way of life. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful for the grace of Jesus Christ and for Your love and forgiveness that can change our lives and make us to become the people that You wish us to be. And Father may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen.

All we are and all we possess come from God. We're able to enjoy eternal life, because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who suffered for our sins. Some people have the mistaken notion that God owes them eternal life and must answer every prayer, whether they are devoted to Him or not. They think God should let them into heaven, whether they have paid any attention to Him or not. We go to

a funeral, and sometimes the minister will make a saint out of a rascal, who had no intention of serving God. Does God think like that?

God has no desire for anyone to be lost; He went to great lengths so that we might be saved. Sometimes we forget the most basic teaching of God. John 3:16 to 18 says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only (or only) begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Now, God doesn't want to condemn anyone, but some people refuse to believe and obey the Lord. Sadly, some Christians never quite deny themselves or take up their crosses to follow Jesus.

I fear we think too lightly of God's grace and tend to excuse ourselves from the consequences of sin. Have you considered how terrible sin really is? Ephesians 2:1 to 3 says, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." To be a "child of wrath" means that God will one day punish you for the way that you have lived. Why, this is a sad thing, but Ephesians doesn't stop here.

Ephesians 2:4 to 7 says, "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." God knew that we needed to be saved, and He was willing to pardon and save us, so that we could live with Him eternally. But God wants more than merely to save us; He wants to transform our lives to be what He created us to be.

Ephesians 2:8 to 10 says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, (you can't earn it) so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." Our salvation is a gift. And we can't boast about saving ourselves, because no one can save himself. God must save us by grace through faith. We're saved in order to be different than we were before.

Paul explains with a before and after picture of this change that grace works in our lives; and so we change morally, and spiritually, and practically. Let's think about Titus 2:11 to 14 again, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all (people) men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself (now let's watch this) for us (why?) to redeem us from every lawless deed, (get us away from those things) and (then) to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, (and what does that mean? That we are) zealous for good deeds." We deny the worldly and the ungodly so that we can live sensibly, righteously, and godly in the present age.

Now, an ungodly person never gives God a second thought; he's selfish and lawless. A godly person, on the other hand, realizes who God is and seeks to serve Him. He recognizes what Jesus did for him on the cross and knows that he belongs to Jesus Christ. He wants to live pure from sin and is zealous to do what is right, to serve the Lord, and to do good to others. He is truly born again, living a

new life that's different from the one he used to live. Now, that's why God wants to pardon us, so that He can transform our lives.

Someone objects here that well, he doesn't want God telling him what to do or how to live his life. Well, God has given you freewill to make up your mind whether you'll live by your own ways outside of His laws or whether you will serve Him. Well, what you choose, friend, will determine your destiny in the hereafter.

Paul wrote to some Jewish Christians who then judged the Gentile Christians for not keeping the Law in Romans 2:3 to 11 and he said, "But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?"

"But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God." Now attitude matters, and where we place our priorities matter. Whether we listen to God and obey His teaching makes a difference in our salvation. And if you choose to disbelieve and disobey, you can hardly blame God for rejecting you at the end of time.

Give yourself to the Lord Jesus, and Jesus will care for you from that day forward. We're fallible creatures, yes, who sin and need the help of the Lord Jesus. And when we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1 and verse 7) Now walking in the light is not sinless perfection. No one can live a perfectly sinless life except Jesus. And even when we walk in the light we need the blood of Jesus and His help. As our high priest, Hebrews 9:24 says that He has entered heaven in the presence of God for us. Well what is He doing there? The Lord Jesus has three roles in heaven, His work is with the Father on behalf of Christians.

First, He is our mediator. 1 Timothy 2:3 to 6 says, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time." Jesus is doing what no one else can do; He alone is mediating for us with the Father. Now, a mediator stands between God and us and reconciles us with the Father, so that we can be right with God.

Second, He is interceding for us. Hebrews 7 verses 24 to 25 says, "Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." Jesus earnestly pleads our case, formally making requests to the Father on our behalf. Perhaps you remember how Peter boasted about never falling away or denying the Lord, but Peter was weak. He denied the Lord three times. And I mention this to point to how Jesus deals with weak Christians when they sin. Jesus said to Peter in Luke 22 verse 31, "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked permission to sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you." I tell ya, I find great comfort in knowing that Jesus not only prayed for Peter; He is also praying for me in my weaknesses. That humbles me and makes me want to love the Lord even more.

Third, the Lord Jesus is our advocate. He stands by our side pleading our case with the Father. 1 John 2:1 to 2 says, "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation (the atoning sacrifice) for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world." The word "propitiation" refers to an atoning sacrifice. Jesus gave His body and His blood on the cross to atone for our sins, so that we could be reconciled to God. We couldn't be friends with God or even approach God were it not for the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ. Consider this: the very person who was the atoning sacrifice is the very person who is pleading your case and advocating for you with the Father.

Romans 8 verse 32 speaks of the Father's great love and kindness toward us, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" If God would not withhold His Son from us, we can be sure that He will not withhold anything that will bless us but will freely give us all things that will lead to our salvation and living the Christian life. That's what the Lord is doing for us in heaven. What a marvelous God and a great salvation we have in Christ.

God's grace cost the body and blood of His Son Jesus. And for this reason, we must never presume upon the grace of God. God doesn't owe us grace; it's His gift. Now, gifts are free, but they aren't cheap. Hebrews 10:26 to 31 says, "For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. And anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people." It's a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Perhaps we should all examine ourselves and consider God's question, "Why should I pardon you?"

Let's pray together. Oh, Father we thank you, we thank you for Your marvelous grace and for it's wonderful benefits and blessings in our lives. Father help us as we think about what You have done for us. To put ourselves aside and live for You and love You and serve You and glorify Your name. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen.

When we look at our past, we see things that we wished we hadn't done. Have we repented or have we continued with our foolish ways? Titus 3:3 to 4 says, "For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another." Before we knew Christ, we lived in a sad state; but we don't have to continue living foolishly, causing all kinds of problems for ourselves and the people we love.

Verses 5 to 7 say, "But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we've done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

We are dependent upon the grace of God for our salvation. We cannot earn it; but God does expect us to meet His conditions in order to receive His grace. Hebrews 11:6 says, "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." The Lord Jesus said in Luke 13:3, "unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." Jesus said in Matthew 10:32 to 33 that if we confess Him before men, He will confess us. Now

none of these things earn salvation, but you can't be saved without them. Titus said that God saves us through the washing of regeneration. That's baptism! That's the time that God causes us to be born again and God washes away our sins (Acts 22:16). Now, God wants to pardon you. Will you let Him? Will you meet His conditions? Do it today!

We hope today's study about Christ's sacrifice has stirred you to consider the price paid for your soul. And if you live in the United States and want a free printed copy or a CD of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now, you can download these lessons or a newsletter online at our website: [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). There's also a schedule of our programs a map of churches that are in your area. Churches of Christ. And you can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Just subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry." We offer free Bible Correspondence courses. And don't worry, we're not here to get your money.

As always we say, get involved with a church of Christ. And if you're looking for a church home, we'll be glad to help you find one. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.