

Intro. The opening chapters of Genesis deal with many of the foundational questions of life—is there a God? If so, Who is He? Who am I? Why am I here? How did things come to exist? What’s wrong with the world? How did we get so many skin colors, ethnicities & language groups? But not every question is answered—like why are women so complex & difficult to understand? Why are men so simple-minded? Women love to decorate—their eyes, lips, cheeks, ears, neck, wrists, fingernails, toenails, feet, ankles, waist & more! Men seem content with a T-shirt & gym shorts or camo pants. While Genesis 1-11 doesn’t answer every question, it deals with the pervasive issues of God’s glory, sin, judgment & grace. As we conclude our series on “Building the Foundation of Your Faith,” we consider “The Grace of God” at the end of chapter 11 & first part of chapter 12.

Theme: God’s grace

Background: When you think of the first 11 chapters of Genesis, Walk Thru the Bible ministries gave us 4 hand movements to remember these eras—Creation (big circle), Fall (crashing down), Flood (flowing up) & Dispersion (going out)—those are helpful to see the Big Picture.

- Understanding & receiving & acting on the grace of God is so foundational to the Christian faith (that’s what preaching should aim to do in each message—appeal to the head, affect the heart & urge the hands to think, feel & live out the biblical text)—that’s what I hope to do with this message (get you to think, feel & live/act) on grace

- Someone once said we should think about **GRACE as an acrostic—God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense**

➤ **I want to give you 3 responses to “The Grace of God”:**

- 1. While death is a result of God’s judgment on sin, count life as a gift of God’s grace (11:10-32; cf. 2:17; 5:1-32)**
 - Yahweh promised Adam that he would die if he ate of the tree of knowledge of good & evil (2:17)—once he ate of it, he died spiritually, being separated from God’s presence, & he eventually died physically as a result of God’s judgment on sin
 - All of Adam’s descendants, though they lived some 900 years, died (ch. 5—10 generations)—you, too, as a descendant of Adam, will die, though some may live 100 years or 80 years or 60 years or 16 years
 - The emphasis in chapter 11 (10 generations) is not death, though both Haran & Terah are mentioned as dying (11:28, 32), but the emphasis is on life, for none of Shem’s descendants are mentioned as dying, even though it’s implied in the text (they lived much shorter lives, possibly because the thick canopy of water which once surrounded the earth had been poured out through the open doors of the floodgates during the Flood—the extra thick protection from the sun’s harmful rays, along with increased disease began shortening man’s life drastically)
 - All of life, whether it be nearly 1,000 years or 100 years or just a few years is part of God’s common grace to mankind, for He could have wiped any of us out after 1 sin

Illus: I’ve known people who suffer through life with some of the worst abnormalities or diseases only to get far more out of life than most people, including me—Nick Vujicic (Voy-ich-ich) was born in 1982 in Australia with Phocomelia (a rare condition without arms or legs), but he hasn’t let that stop him from having an incredible life filled with joy—he’s a Christian evangelist, author, actor & more—he has learned to count life as a gift of God’s grace

Illus: You may have been given bad news recently of cancer or loss of a loved one or you may have gone through the pain of divorce or something else—don’t let the junk of life rob you from counting your life as a gift of God’s grace—no matter what you face, you can go “sky-diving, you can go Rocky Mountain climbing, you can go 2.7 seconds on a bull named Fu-Manchu...”

- Whatever life you have, cherish it & treasure it & count it as a gift of God’s grace to you—tell your spouse how much you love them, play with & hug your children often, capitalize on your friendships, because any of those or you could be gone at any moment

- 2. Praise God for His grace to call you out of darkness into the light of Christ (11:31-12:9; cf. 15:7; Joshua 24:2-3; Acts 7:2-4)**

- Everything about Terah’s life isn’t provided in this brief passage, but when we compare Scripture with Scripture (the best way to understand the Bible), we find that Terah & his family, including Abram, worshiped false gods (Joshua 24:2-3)—probably the moon-god, among others. Furthermore, we see in 15:7 & Acts 7:2-4 that the Lord placed a call on Abram when he was still back in Ur, before he ever traveled to Haran (halfway to Canaan). Could it be that the Lord placed a call on Terah’s life to move to Canaan, as chapter 11 notes, but rather than fully commit to following the Lord, Terah found life in Haran to be “good enough?” (show map of Abram’s journey)—

a sign of partial obedience to the Lord (this notion of being “good” when God has called us to be “great” has burdened me to do a 5-part series beginning next week on “Good to Great Church” from select NT passages)

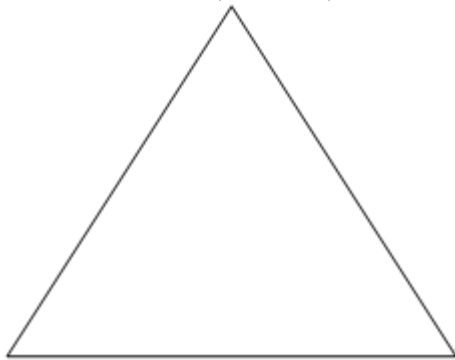
Illus: Have you ever known someone who knew what they were supposed to do, but they either didn’t do it or only did it halfway? Maybe that’s been true for you. I’ve known people who have trusted the Lord but never gotten baptized. I’ve known couples who dated & knew they shouldn’t “mess around,” but they did it anyway. I’ve known people who knew they needed to repent from their sins & trust in Jesus, but they just won’t do it—too often we rely on our own judgment or our own strength, when we need to receive God’s grace to call us out of darkness & into the light of Christ & then praise Him for it!

3. Receive God’s grace in Christ through repentance & faith & get innumerable blessings in the life to come (12:1-9)

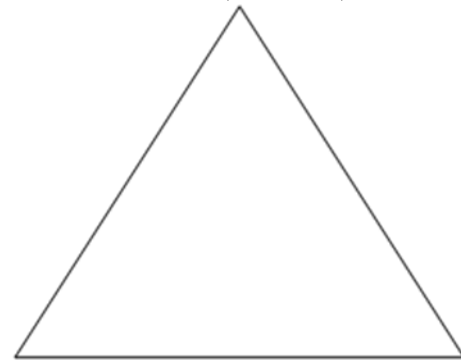
- When the Lord called Abram to leave his homeland, that was God’s call for Abram to repent from his past life
- When the Lord called Abram to go to a land he had never seen, He was calling him to trust Him
- If Abram would turn from his past & trust the Lord, God would make him a great nation, would give him a land, would give him innumerable offspring & bring multitudes of blessings through him (& his ultimate Offspring in Christ, cf. Galatians 3:16)
- Yahweh promised Abram & his offspring a piece of land, which is why we should stand with Israel to occupy the land of Canaan, because God promised it to them
- The Lord hasn’t promised us land on this earth, but He has promised us a home in heaven (cf. John 14:2)

Illus: The 3 elements of the Abrahamic Covenant & how it translates to NT Christians

God (Yahweh)



God (in Christ)



Abraham & his offspring

Land of Canaan (Israel)

Followers of Jesus

Home in Heaven

- Receive God’s grace in Christ & you will also receive forgiveness of sins, peace with God, your prayers being heard, eternal life, heaven & more!

Conc. Some of you think your sin is too great for the grace of God, but Paul tells us “where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more” (Romans 5:20). I asked my Dad’s permission to share this story: For 39 years, I never knew I had a sister. One day, I began receiving a series of emails from a young lady who was trying to find out information about my Dad—full name, date of birth, where he was from, etc. She thought she knew some of the information, but wanted confirmation. She found me & my last name through Google and Facebook. Long story short, she said she was my niece and she needed to contact my Dad for some questions related to her mother’s medical history. A couple of days later, I handed my phone to Dad & let him read the email & he confessed to having a daughter he never met while he was stationed in the military in San Antonio in the late 1960s. He was ashamed of his sin & guilt & never said anything about it, but he said he prayed often for her salvation & even asked God to send a Southern Baptist to her, because he knew Southern Baptists would share the gospel. After confessing to my Mom, whom he had met after being in San Antonio, Dad called Carey his daughter & began to apologize for how wrong he had been. She stopped him & said, before we go any farther, you need to know that the most important part of my life is my relationship with Jesus—me & my 3 daughters are faithful members of a Southern Baptist church here in San Antonio (now, to be sure, none of us believe you have to be a Southern Baptist to be saved, but people know Southern Baptists to be “people of the book” & serious about the gospel). My point is this, in the midst of a sin & another sin to try to cover something up, God was gracious in hearing my Dad’s prayers & saving his daughter. God is also allowing Dad to patch that relationship as he talks to her every week or two. They came for Dad’s 70th back in February & my family & I saw them in June. I say that to say this: I don’t know what you’re hiding, but whatever it is, confess it to the Lord & allow His grace to flood your life and cleanse you through the blood of Calvary! Count your life as a gift of God’s grace, praise God for His grace in Christ & most importantly, receive God’s grace in Christ.