

+ Underground Hope +

À For in this Hope we were saved! - Romans 8:24

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MISSION: To spread the truth and *gospel* of Jesus Christ in a world that has rejected and trampled on the hope of *salvation*. To show the *grace* of God which has been given to us on the cross of Calvary by our dear Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. To correct our brothers and sister in error, and to *end the heresies* that torment **Christianity**. All in the sweet name of *Jesus Christ*.

10-10-4-God the *only* thing left that's free—God's Grace

Special Edition—God's Grace

So what's the special occasion for which we're making a Special Edition? **Easter**.

Easter is here, and we decided it was only appropriate that we make a special edition to talk about what Easter is really about: Grace. Everything in the Christian faith revolves around Grace, which is why Easter is important. As you read, just keep in mind what we're talking about here... This is Christianity.

Answer to Question that need to be asked

I bet you've heard the word, right? Probably a couple of time in your life the word has popped up. What is Grace, though? Why is it so special? Why is it so important? Why does Grace matter?

At some point or another you're bound to ask those questions, and they are good questions. Actually, they are very good questions. They need to be answered, and there is only one place to find the answers, that is Jesus Christ.

Maybe the best way of looking at Grace is thinking of it as a promise—a wonderful promise that exceeds everything in existence. Grace exceeds that, though; it goes above and beyond just a promise, because it is a promise that has been fulfilled forever and ever. Grace is a promise that will never be broken and can never be broken. Grace is also the only promise that can give such unimaginable rewards.

Let me tell you a story. God came down from heaven, humbled himself as a man, was born from a virgin, grew up absolutely sinless and taught the world many things. He showed the world how it was sinful, and how it needed to turn from its sin. Then after He was done teaching, He took that sin and died, even though He didn't have to. He conquered death, and rose from the dead. Because of that, we are saved by grace through faith—freely: no charges, no price tags, no bargaining. What's done is done, and that is Grace.

Grace comes to us other places, too. It comes to us in, under, and with the bread and wine during the sacrament of Holy Communion. Grace also comes to us in the Word and water of Baptism.

Grace is essential for salvation. Grace is how we are saved, and it is because of Jesus Christ. For this special Easter edition of *Underground Hope* we're talking about God's Grace, and His love for us that He showed on the cross.

Showing God's Grace to Others

Romans 6:1-2 NASB says, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?" Paul explains this perfectly. We aren't forgiven to go on sinning. We aren't forgiven so that "grace may increase."

We have died to sin; we are to live holy lives. We are new people - "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature;

the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." (2 Corinthians 5:17 NASB).

We are to spread God's Word to others, as Mark explains in 16:15 NASB, "And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.'"

One easy way of spreading His Word is by living a Godly life, as we are commanded to in Ephesians - "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children" (Ephesians 5:1 NASB). Christ is the **ultimate example** of forgiveness and we need to forgive others as He forgave us. (Matthew 6:14-15 NASB - "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.")

We can show Christ's love by forgiving those who have wronged us, we can have a huge impact on others. The people who wrong us usually know what they did and when they see our forgiving attitude, when we live out what we say and believe, it gives our words meaning. It also gives others a glimpse of Christ's forgiveness. As the saying goes, your actions speak louder than your words.

Is there someone you need to forgive? Are you holding a grudge against someone? Ephesians 4:26 says, "Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger." It's all right to be upset with others, but you shouldn't hold that anger inside of you. You need to forgive. If you've got someone against whom you're holding a grudge, go make things right with that person.

Verses About Forgiveness

The following passages deal with the issue of forgiveness.

Mark 11:25 NASB - "Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions."

Luke 6:37 NASB - "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned."

Luke 17:3-4 NASB - "Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him."

Acts 2:38 NASB - "Peter said to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

Ephesians 1:7 NASB - "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace."

1 John 1:9 NASB - "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Have questions about Jesus, need answers and you're not sure where to look? We're willing to help you.

Feel free to contact us at: email@erichmusick.com and InsyderHomieLC@hotmail.com

The History Text Book

We'd like to tell you some history about God's Grace. It has been challenged forever. It has been compromised, beaten apart, attacked, and assaulted from all angles, with no sympathy. It's a true shame people do it too, because they have only one fate, and I know I don't want it.

Probably the first time God's Grace was challenged was when the Pharisees crucified Jesus, or maybe when the Sadducees denied the resurrection. Both of those groups denied Jesus, which was denying Grace.

Later on a guy named Saul challenged Grace. He said that it wasn't real. That it was phony. To show you how powerful God's Grace is, God responded to Saul by showing him the light on the road to Damascus. God's Grace turned a murderer into the greatest Missionary that ever lived.

After that, a few hundred years later a man named Mohammad challenged God's Grace by saying Jesus wasn't really God, and that we didn't just get saved by faith.

Sometime around 350 a.d. at the Council of Nicea (basically a big Church convention) a guy named Arians said that Jesus wasn't true man and true God. He was only true man. Later on around 700 a.d. some priests wrote a creed specifically against the heresy of Arians.

After Arian there was the heresy of the Roman Catholic Church. Most of us know about that one because Martin Luther, by the Grace of God, saved the day and showed them their faults, unfortunately though they did not repent.

Since then Christianity has seen many spin offs that have denied God's Grace. There are the Jehovah Witnesses, the Mormons, the Muslims, and the list goes on into all kinds of religions and cults all around the world. Most of these groups deny the Trinity.

God's Grace though has managed to stand tall. Even though people have fallen to the torture of sin and have turned from God's Grace there are still a lot of us who believe and trust in God's Grace and rely on it for our salvation. That's the key.

A good memory verse is Ephesians 2:8 (Look at the Devotional for

From the BIG Book

There are plenty of places to find God's Grace in the Bible. Take some time, sit down, pull out the *BIG Book* and flip to these passages and see what we're told about God's Grace.

- **Psalm 45:2**
- **Jeremiah 31:2**
- **Zechariah 12:10**
- **John 1:14-16**
- **Acts 11:23**
- **Acts 13:43**
- **Acts 15:11**
- **Romans 3:24**
- **Romans 5:15**
- **1st Corinthians 15:10**
- **2nd Corinthians 12:9**
- **Jude 1:4**

On the internet???

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You can find electronic versions of all of our issues, and if you are interested we have an electronic order form if you are interested in ordering *Underground Hope* free of charge for your youth organization.

Check out our home page at:

<http://erichmusick.com/uHope/>

Devotional—What's Grace Again???**Ephesians 2:1-10 (ESV)**

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins [2] in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— [3] among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. [4] But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, [5] even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— by grace you have been saved— [6] and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Long passage to read this time huh? Well yeah, but it's important. Very important. The scripture you just read is what I like to think of as text for Paul's formal Doctrine of Justification. Doctrine of what??? Ok, let's hammer this out quickly. A doctrine is a belief statement, and Justification is how we are saved; we are Justified by Jesus. The Doctrine of Justification is basically what we as Christians believe about how we are saved by Jesus Christ. Many church bodies in America have some formal statement written about salvation, which they often call their "Doctrine of Justification."

I like to call the book of Ephesians my doctrine of Justification. In Ephesians, Paul lays out for us the basic information we need to know about Justification. In 2:8 he says "You are saved by **Grace** through faith," The bottom line is that we are saved by Grace, and we don't have to do any work, Jesus did it for us.

When talking about the book of Ephesians, this is what the great reformer Martin Luther said: "St. Paul teaches, first, what the gospel is, how it was predestined by God alone in eternity, and earned and sent forth through Christ, so that all who believe on it become righteous, godly, living, saved men, and free from the law, sin, and death ..." Martin Luther knew that the book of Ephesians was his doctrine of Justification also. Martin Luther knew that we weren't saved by works, or the law, but by God's Grace. That's why Martin Luther went head to head with the Roman Catholic Church and told them the truth.

God's Grace is important. It's essential for us every day of our lives, and it is especially essential for the end of our lives. At the end of our lives when we pass away it's imperative that we know God's Grace because by knowing it we're saved, and no other way.

God's Grace goes beyond just us knowing it though; part of it is that we are to share God's Grace with everyone we meet. Matthew Chapter 28 tells us about that.

As you go through your week, your month, your year, or even the rest of your life, think about God's Grace, and share it with everyone you meet. Share the love that God had for you with the world. Tell the world all about how all they have to do is believe and they are saved! "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." - Roman 10:9 (ESV)

Looking for more Devotionals?

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<http://www.devotionals.cjb.net>

Have questions about Jesus, need answers and you're not sure where to look? We're willing to help you.

Feel free to contact us at: email@erichmusick.com and InsyderHomieLC@hotmail.com