

Message Three

The Believers' Experience of the Grace of God in the Economy of God Consummating in the Church as the Organic Body of Christ

MC, KL Hymns: 312

Scripture Reading: John 1:16; Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 1:2-4; 2 Cor. 13:14;

Gal. 6:18; Eph. 4:7, 29; Phil. 4:23; Rev. 22:21

John 1:16	For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.
Rom 12:6	And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;
1 Cor 1:2	To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:
1 Cor 1:3	Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Cor 1:4	I thank my God always concerning you based upon the grace of God which was given to you in Christ Jesus,
2 Cor 13:14	The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
Gal 6:18	The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.
Eph 4:7	But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.
Eph 4:29	Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear.
Phil 4:23	The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.
Rev 22:21	The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.

I. The New Testament believers' living under the grace in God's economy is a total living of experiencing the processed and consummated Triune God as grace—Gal. 6:18; Heb. 4:16; Rev. 22:21:

- Gal 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.
- Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.
- Rev 22:21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.
- A. The Christian living must be the living of grace, the experience of grace; our Christian life is essentially a life of having God as our grace—2 Cor. 1:12.
- 2 Cor 1:12 For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in singleness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and more abundantly toward you.
- B. A total living means that our entire living is a living of the Triune God processed to be grace to us—13:14.
- 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C. The compound Spirit is moving within us daily as the anointing so that we may enjoy the processed Triune God as grace—1 John 2:20, 27.
- 1 John 2:20 And you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know.
- 1 John 2:27 And as for you, the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone teach you; but as His anointing teaches you concerning all things and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, abide in Him.
- D. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Spirit of grace, is with our spirit, which has been regenerated to be the dwelling place and vessel of the Triune God—Heb. 10:29b; Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23; Philem. 25; 2 Tim. 4:22.
- Heb 10:29b ... who has trampled underfoot the Son of God and has considered the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing and has insulted the Spirit of grace?
- Gal 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.
- Phil 4:23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.
- Philem 25 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

- 2 Tim 4:22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.
- E. We are those who have received grace, which is the Triune God—the Father given to us in the Son, and the Son realized as the Spirit dwelling in our spirit— 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17.
 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
 1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
- F. Because we are saints, the grace of the Lord must be with each one of us in every aspect of our daily life—Phil. 4:23; Eph. 4:7.
 Phil 4:23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.
 Eph 4:7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

II. A genuine church is based upon the grace given to it in Christ Jesus—1 Cor. 1:2-4:

- 1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:
- 1 Cor 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1 Cor 1:4 I thank my God always concerning you based upon the grace of God which was given to you in Christ Jesus,
- A. The grace of God is not given to the church based upon the spirituality or condition of the church.
- B. The grace of God alone is the base of the church—16:23.
 1 Cor 16:23 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.
- C. Paul's thanks to God in 1 Corinthians 1:4 was based upon the gift of grace which was given to the church in Christ Jesus.
 1 Cor 1:4 I thank my God always concerning you based upon the grace of God which was given to you in Christ Jesus,
- D. The church is standing on the base of grace in order that it may receive further grace—Rev. 22:21.
 Rev 22:21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.
- E. We have received grace as our base, and we are standing upon grace, not upon our attributes, virtues, or excellencies; therefore, we are qualified to receive more grace, even grace upon grace—John 1:16.
 John 1:16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

III. The consummation of the believers' experience of the grace of God in His economy is the church as the organic Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:12-13, 27; Eph. 1:6-8, 22-23:

- 1 Cor 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.
- 1 Cor 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.
- 1 Cor 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
- Eph 1:6 To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved;
- Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace,
- Eph 1:8 Which He caused to abound to us in all wisdom and prudence,
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- A. Grace is the circulating Triune God dispensing all that He is into us for our enjoyment; the entire church life depends on grace as the circulation of the Divine Trinity within us—1 Pet. 5:10; Acts 4:33; 2 Cor. 8:1; 13:14.
 1 Pet 5:10 But the God of all grace, He who has called you into His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself perfect, establish, strengthen, and ground you.

- Acts 4:33 And with great power the apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.
- 2 Cor 8:1 Furthermore we make known to you, brothers, the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia,
- 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- B. The practical life and building up of the Body of Christ come forth out of the inward enjoyment of the grace of God—1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Cor. 13:14.
- 1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C. Every part of the organic Body of Christ is an issue of the grace of God in the economy of God—Rom. 12:4-6a.
- Rom 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,
- Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
- Rom 12:6a And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, ...
- D. In the Body we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us and that are a result of our experience of the grace of Christ—v. 6:
- Rom 12:6 And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;
1. This grace is God in Christ as the divine element coming into our being to be our life for our enjoyment—John 1:16; 2 Cor. 13:14.

John 1:16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
 2. When this grace comes into us, it brings with it the element of certain spiritual skills and abilities, which, accompanying our growth in life, develop into the gifts in life so that we may function in the Body of Christ to serve God— Rom. 12:6-8.

Rom 12:6 And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

Rom 12:7 Or service, let us be faithful in that service; or he who teaches, in that teaching;

Rom 12:8 Or he who exhorts, in that exhortation; he who gives, in simplicity; he who leads, in diligence; he who shows mercy, in cheerfulness.
 3. In Romans 12:6 the gifts differ according to grace; in Ephesians 4:7 grace was given according to the gift:

Rom 12:6 And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

Eph 4:7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

 - a. Grace is the divine life that produces and supplies the gifts.
 - b. In Romans 12 it is the grace that produces the gift; thus, the gift is according to grace.

Rom 12 be omitted.
 - c. In Ephesians 4 the grace is according to the gift, according to the measure of the gift.

Eph 4 be omitted.
- E. In the church as the organic Body of Christ, we should let no corrupt word proceed out of our mouth, “but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear”—v. 29:
1. Our word spoken to others should convey grace, Christ as our enjoyment and supply—2 Cor. 13:14; Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 16:23; Gal. 6:18.

2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

- Rom 16:20 Now the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.
- 1 Cor 16:23 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.
- Gal 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.
2. The word that builds up others always ministers Christ as grace to the hearer—Eph. 4:29.
- Eph 4:29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear.

IV. In Ephesians 3:2 the apostle Paul says that the stewardship of grace was given to him for the members of the Body—5:30:

- Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,
- Eph 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.
- A. In Ephesians 3:2 and 9 Paul uses the Greek word *oikonomia*; in verse 9 this word refers to God's economy, and in verse 2 it refers to the stewardship of the apostle.
- Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,
- Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- B. The stewardship of the grace of God has been given to us so that we may live and serve for the building up of the Body of Christ—vv. 2-7:
- Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,
- Eph 3:3 That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,
- Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
- Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
- Eph 3:6 That in Christ Jesus the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the Body and fellow partakers of the promise through the gospel,
- Eph 3:7 Of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God which was given to me according to the operation of His power.
- The stewardship of the grace is for the dispensing of the grace of God into His chosen people for the producing and building up of the church as the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 4:1-2.

1 Cor 4:1 A man should account us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

1 Cor 4:2 Here, furthermore, it is sought in stewards that one be found faithful.
 - Out of this stewardship comes the ministry of the apostle, who is a steward in God's house, ministering Christ as God's grace to God's household—9:17.

1 Cor 9:17 If I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a stewardship.
 - Paul's ministry was to dispense the riches of Christ as grace to the believers for their enjoyment—Eph. 3:8.

Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
 - The economy of God is with God Himself, but the stewardship of grace was given not merely to Paul as one person; this stewardship has been given to all the believers.
 - The stewardship of grace is universal; for the Body of Christ all the saints have the stewardship of grace according to God's economy—vv. 2, 9.

Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,