

Monday, October 4 “God’s Grace Shapes His Stewards”

“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me” (1 Corinthians 15:10).

To know God is a great gift of the grace of God. We’re not talking about knowing some things *about* God; but rather knowing Him in faith. You know God as your Heavenly Father, your Creator, Preserver, Provider. You know Jesus as your Lord and Savior. You know the Holy Spirit as your Comforter. By grace you know that you are redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus. By grace you know that God has adopted you as His child and given you His Spirit.

Because you know God’s grace, you are energized to be about His work. He has entrusted you and me with our lives, the lives of our families, all of the things which we typically think of as our own, our fellow human beings, the creation we live in. He trusts us to be managers or stewards of all of this. You become God’s instrument through which He works to further His kingdom and help those in need. Shaped by His grace, may we all remain faithful to our calling as His stewards.

Prayer: Dear heavenly Father, shape and make me into a person who is anxious to do Your will and boldly share the Good News of Jesus’ love and grace with others. In Jesus’ precious name. Amen.

Tuesday, October 5 “Strengthened by Grace”

“But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Corinthians 12:9).

We’ve all heard of wonderful stories of rescue, where, for example, a person is trapped under a car as a result of an accident. Some passers-by come to the rescue and with super-human strength lift the car off of the victim. Without divine intervention, they would not have had the necessary strength.

As helpless as that accident victim is or as helpless as the rescuers are on their own, we are even more helpless without God. God enables us to understand that all we are, have, and do are the result of God’s grace in Christ. God’s grace not only brings us salvation; it also trains us *“to live self-controlled, upright, and Godly*

lives in the present age" (Titus 2:11-12). We are changed from being self-centered, selfish people into people who serve God by loving and serving others. On our own, we are helpless to make this change. But as we call upon the *"strength of His might"* (Ephesians 6:10), we are empowered by His grace to be Godly stewards.

God takes ordinary people like you and me and does some extraordinary things through us. We become His hands, feet, and mouth. We just need to be willing to be instruments in God's hands.

Prayer: Dear Father fill me with faith and grace so I can do Your will and be Your faithful steward.

Wednesday, October 6 "Hope in God"

"For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

It is wise to plan for our current and financial needs, but listen to the words of Paul as recorded in 1 Timothy 6:17: *"As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, Who richly provides us with everything to enjoy"*. Paul reminds us that worldly wealth is still uncertain. He boldly states that, if we're trusting in worldly wealth, we are acting arrogantly. The only thing that is certain is God's love for us. His grace and love enable us to make our livings. He loves us so much that He *"richly provides us with everything"* – and here's the surprising part – for our enjoyment!

How do you plan to "enjoy" God's rich blessings to you? You could take cruises and buy a new luxury car every year. But God has blessed us not so that we can enjoy His gifts by hoarding them, but so that His purposes in the world can be fulfilled. In verse 18, Paul tells us how to enjoy the gifts God gives us: *"(We) are to do good, to be rich in good works, and to be generous and ready to share."*

When our hope is in God, we have no need to amass worldly wealth. We place our hope in God and trust Him to provide for us all we need and even more so that we'll always have something to share. God in His grace has called us to be such stewards.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for Your grace that enables me to place my trust and hope in you. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

Thursday, October 7 “God’s Grip Doesn’t Slip”

“I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5).

Isn't it amazing that birds go to sleep on their perches and never fall off? This is because God created them so that, when their legs are bent, the claws contract and grip like a steel trap. The claws will not let go until the knees are unbent. The bended knee enables the bird to hold tightly to its perch.

As strong as this grip is, it is not as strong as the hold God has on us. Think about Daniel, a young man in a pagan environment. With all the temptations and threats around him, he was safe because God's grace which kept an everlasting grip on him. On his bended knees before his open window, he prayed every day – three times a day – giving thanks for God's grace and protection. And God didn't let go of him, even in the lion's den (Daniel 6:10-22).

We might also consider Joseph, who, through all the twists and turns of his lifetime, found one constant: *“The Lord was with Him”* (Genesis 39:3, 21, 23). Taken away from his family at a young age, immersed in an idolatrous culture, tempted by Potiphar's wife, he was, by God's grace, safe in God's everlasting grip.

Like both Daniel and Joseph, we live in a sinful world. We may not be facing accusations and a den of lions, but we, too, face temptations and threats. We, too, earnestly pray for God's protection and safekeeping of our souls, and His Word assures us that we can rest secure and have hope in His everlasting grip. May God bless us with faith to put our hope in Him who promises to keep His grip on us always.

Prayer: Lord, You are so gracious to me. Thank You for Your protecting grace. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Friday, October 8 *"Giving Is an Act of Grace"*

"And God is able to make all grace about to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8).

As Christians, we understand that all we are and have are by God's grace. *"And from His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace" (John 1:16).* Life is a gift of His grace... the life we now have and the life to come. God lavishes us with His *"...abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness through the one Man Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17).*

And so we strive to express our gratitude to Him by how we live and what we do with our lives. An important way we show our thanksgiving is through giving. Giving is evidence that God's grace and faith are at work in our lives as we give to others and to extend the Christian faith. Giving is a fruit of grace and faith. When God's grace is at work in our hearts we give of our resources generously.

Maybe you recall how Paul spoke of the Macedonian Christians who gave so generously (*"beyond their means" v.3*) to the needy Christians in Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:1-9). Because of God's grace and generosity to them, they were so eager to give that they actually pleaded for the privilege of sharing with the needy, even though they themselves were living in poverty. Paul referred to their giving as an *"act of grace" (v.6)*. God's grace makes it possible for people to want to give generously.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, by Your grace, please bless me with a giving and loving heart. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.