The Indescribable Grace of God

By Charles Feinberg

....The Mexican mission that is doing work abroad there in Spain. Yes it went, it went, was brought to all men. Now what do you have in the Epistles from Romans through Jude? How we are to live in this life. We are taught. Epistles are doctrine, they're teaching. it's not just enough to say do this or don't do that as you heard this morning, dos and don’ts, it's the reasons for it. You have the gospel for the unbeliever in Matthew Mark Luke and John. You have the gospel for the believer in the 16 chapters of Romans. Why? To know how firm his salvation is; to know what a basis it is to allow him to live, the resources available at his disposal. So we have how he's to deny, he's to be negative on ungodliness, He's to be negative on worldly desires, but he's to be positive on living sensibly, soberly, righteously, and godly In the age. And then glorification, we're going to be glorified. The revelation tells how caught up we're like him see him as he is. So we have here belief and behavior. We have orthodoxy, right thinking, right doctrine, and orthopraxy. Trouble is a lot of folk are trying to do what no bird would ever try to do and that's fly on one wing. You must fly on both wings, both orthodoxy and orthopraxy.

Now notice how the apostle Paul through the Spirit of God gives us the three great phases of God's wonderful Grace. I’m glad that whoever chose the hymn for us this morning, "My hope is in the Lord", Mike Clayton. I know his son's up there in Kent Washington with his dear wife in a ministry, beautiful ministry there in music. Notice verse two, "no merit of my own is anger to suppress", that’s biblical. "My only hope is found in Jesus' righteousness", verse four, "his grace, “that’s what we're talking about, "His grace has planned it all, tis mine but to believe." My
subject, "The indescribable grace of God", I called that in and called in the passage and a day or so after that I got a call from one of the lovely, capable, efficient, able, endowed secretaries. She said I want to know I have your subject and the passage. Can you give me a little bit of a description on what you're going to say? I said if I could describe it, it wouldn't be indescribable. So we laughed and she let it go at that and I said some things that were strictly irrelevant but she must've written them down. I don't see them anywhere so no harm was done

But this is that Grace that's planned in all, three phases of it: past, present, and future. Notice verse eleven, "the salvation by grace". The grace of God is so marvelous, no wonder Christians have named their children Grace, what a word. It's so marvelous, it is so inexplicable indescribable, unspeakable, many sided variegated, many faceted, multi-faceted, many splendored that it'll take more than any redeemed soul can do here. And the angel Gabriel can't because he's not a redeemed being. Michael can't, he's the archangel. He's never been saved. He's never been lost. Only lost people can be saved. No angel, no angel has ever been redeemed. Holy angels don't need redemption and unholy ones have never had Christ die for them; he died for men. Notice this grace of God as to its source. Where do I get that supply? That's why it's so marvelous, it has an endless supply. God is never enriched in withholding, he's never impoverished in giving. God is the God of all grace. Help yourself.

Dear old Dr. John Hubbard used to teach at the Bible Institute years ago. He would say, "God is called the God of all Grace. Just help yourself." Here it is. He's the God of all grace as he is of all comfort and all hope, God himself. All the three beings, all the three persons in the Godhead, three persons in one wonderful substance of deity the Godhead. The father is the God of all grace, the son is the gracious redeemer and savior, and the spirit of God is called in Hebrews the spirit of grace. God alone is the source and fountainhead of grace. Some people
want to get a corner on a stock market whether it's in oats or wheat or barley or oils or utilities or rails or whatever. God has the, he has the market cornered on grace. There’s no chance that someone is going to horn in there, No he has it. He always has had it. And that's why you and I don't need to worry about whether the supply's ever going to run out. It's just like a little sardine in the Pacific Ocean Afraid there won't be enough water for him.

And what's the nature of grace? Well if you were to ask a hundred people in any church, “What is your definition of grace?” You'd probably get answers enough to make the angels weep and those who might come the nearest to it would say grace is getting something that you didn't deserve. It’s without merit, without works, without labor and that is only the beginning of it. That's not all of it at all. No that's not Grace. Grace is getting the very opposite of what we deserve. It's not only without our works but it's contrary to the miserable works we have done. It’s not only without merit but it's without its giving us something in spite of all our demerits, not just getting down to zero. My we're so far down we'd have to climb a ladder to touch a snake's tail when it comes to merit. Yes the nature of Grace, That's what it is.

During the Revolutionary War in 1776 there lived in our home state of Pennsylvania a faithful preacher of the gospel whose name was Peter Miller. Which is just about as common as John Smith would be anywhere else. Well he was a faithful minister of the word of God and of course he suffered because of it. He had, not very far from him, had lived near him a man who was so violent who was as evil as young people would say. He was everlastingly bad mouthing Miller, opposed him at every turn, abused him and anyone who would be stupid enough to listen to him. Well in the course of the war, this is a true account, that man was found guilty of treason. He was sentenced to death. Well Peter Miller heard it, of course everybody in the area heard it, it was the town of Ephrata Pennsylvania named after Ephrata in the Holy Land. So when that word
got around that he was found guilty of treason and sentenced to death, Peter Miller Set out on foot to the headquarters of General George Washington sixty miles away. He went there to intercede for this man's life. He got an audience with Washington, General Washington heard him out, and shook his head again and again emphatically. No sir. No. This man was found guilty. He was caught red handed and all the rest of it. I cannot grant your prayer, your request, for your friend. He said my friend I have not once said in all my pleading, I haven't said he's my friend. I don't have a worse enemy alive than that man. Well he says, you mean you walked sixty miles? You've come by foot sixty miles to save the life of your worst enemy? Well that puts it in quite a different light. I believe I will grant that pardon. It was made out very hurriedly that reprieve and Miller set out to the place of execution. He knew he didn't have too much time and that was fifteen miles farther up, seventy five miles in all. And he got there just about the time they were taking that miserable man, that treasonable fellow to the scaffold. And when he got up high enough he saw miller coming to the edge of the crowd. He said, "Oh look at there". He says, "Oh Peter Miller wouldn't you know, come seventy five miles from Ephrata to gratify his revenge by seeing me brought to the gallows and hanged." Yes. Words are scarcely out of his mouth before Miller came forward and produced that pardon. And of course they saw the signature of General George Washington and the life of that worst enemy was spared. That doesn't even begin to touch the hem. Of the picture but it's about as good as we can do with our limitations of speech and mind and perception. What's the nature of grace? It is the direct opposite of merit and worth contrary to our works the source of it God.

What is the sphere of it? It's to all men and when God says here through the apostle that it comes, hear it, to all men verse eleven, all means all. You'd be amazed even sometimes with graduate students you say all are required. Somebody comes up and says, "May I be out of it?"
They don't understand that all means all and when we read that God is a God of all grace we think that maybe some of it spilled off and it's lost. No you don't have to lie awake figuring how much is left out, all means all, all men. And we love to get things in a little cozy circle. That little song, "Matthew Mark Luke and John bless the bed I lie upon." Or we say, "Lord bless me and my wife my son John us four and no more please no more." No. If we didn't believe that we'd be more on fire for missions. It's to all men. There must be something American about the gospel. That Hebrew must be something and Greek must have been a perversion of early English. No it wasn't. No it's to all men. No respective persons, the grace of God knows no bounds or limit of race or place or condition or position or disposition or indisposition.

Men don't need to search warily for the grace of God because it's appeared. It's not something they've got to attain. Did Adam and Eve have to attain something? Look, read that passage again. They didn't have a thing to attain they were only to maintain the plane on which they were. They weren't told to reach out and attain something. And so in grace also. Man doesn't need to search warily for it, it's appeared. We'd be have a time wouldn't we if we had to wait for the UN well named, unable, and unaware, and a few more UNs if we had to wait until they thought up what would be good for salvation. No. The Grace of God has appeared. Man can't buy it because it's a gift. Man can't run after Grace because it's everlastingly running after him. And bringing salvation to all men doesn't mean that all men are saved but they're savable, that's what we mean. There is the potentiality if they'll reach out the hand of faith they can have it. "Nothing in my hand I bring simply to thy cross I cling. Other refuge have I none hangs my helpless soul on thee."

What's the aim of Grace? What's it all about? Bring us, bring salvation. That's it. Bring Salvation. That's better than your Christmas bonus. That's better than your degree I know a lot of
people are dying by degrees. Yes. The Oklahoma student paper The Oklahoma haymaker had a rough one on scholars in the student newspaper it said, "Thermometers aren't the only thing that are graduated and have degrees without having any brains." Anyhow, Forget that. The aim of grace it's to save not science, not art, not poetry. It's not works that saves, it’s not philosophy, it’s not man that can save. Never saved himself how could he save anybody else? Grace, Grace alone.

Oh my dear friends I remember one of my professors in seminary He taught about the science of interpretation. And all he told about being a pastor in one of the Carolinas. And one of the board members came out with a cane had a gold headed cane and he'd been preaching on the grace of God. And that man just stamped his foot and pounded that cane and said, "I hate the grace of God." I don't know how you got on the board but it's not a board that will take him to heaven as the young people were singing. No Washing behind your ears will get you faster than that fellow.

And then look at the manifestation of grace, the word appeared; grace appeared. He didn't say it came into existence. It had always been in existence. God was always a God of grace. It came into light, into full blaze through the life, the incarnation, the light, the ministry, above all the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. The Law came by Moses John 1:17 but Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, The great truth set forth here. Makes it possible for any man, All men to be saved. If God's grace hadn't appeared that way the world would have had no hope. But with him we go from a hopeless end to an endless hope, that's it. If God's grace hadn't appeared, the world, if you think it's bad off now you ought to see what would have been without the death of Christ. Ever since Adam had fallen the world had gotten worse, worse. You never fall up you fall down. The great try to day is salvation by attainment rather than by Atonement. By improvement
of environment. You can't, my dear friends you cannot cure a blood disease or smallpox by trying to save the world by improvement of environment.

McLaren was a preacher in Edinburgh. He had a fine assistant Gustier. McLaren was dying and he knew it and Gustier was there, He was near a man of God. We're not bemoaning this that or the other but rejoicing in the Lord. Dear McLaren whose sermons are preached by so many and Alexander McLaren I don't know that everyone could preach that type of a message now, it's a different age. I know Pastor Swindall doesn't preach those sermons. He has his own out of a book. But they were very mightily used of God. Then McLaren fell into a deep quiet and reverie and meditation and Gustier didn't say anything for a while. Then he said, "My good brother what are you doing?" He said, "I'll tell you what I'm doing. I'm gathering together all my prayers, all my sermons, all my so-called good deeds, and all my many more bad deeds. I'm throwing them all overboard. And I'm swimming to glory on the plank of God's free grace." That's the only way anybody gets there.

But that's not all. God doesn't leave born ones, as they say in Scotland the barons, He doesn't leave those as foundlings on some doorstep. There's instruction in Grace. Verse twelve grace not only brings salvation to all men, It instructs, and it disciplines, it child trains, it chastises. Those saved by grace are immediately, I mean immediately, enrolled in the school of grace. Negatively you have to get rid of certain things if you're going to build a foundation even in a physical building, So much more when it's a spiritual building. And so negatively there's got to be an unlearning before there's a learning. Ungodliness, what's ungodliness? It means not taking God into account at all, what the psalmists say, God is not in all their thoughts. While I was teaching in seminary years ago in Dallas, Texas I also had a pastor for four years. normally as Pastor Wood went around in pastoral visitation and I remember so well one lady, no matter
when you visited her, she knew everything from A to Izzard about everything in town and about all her family and all her relatives and all this and all that. And yet in talking her whether you talked with her a half hour or an hour or an hour and a half, she was amazing that way. She never mentioned God once, just wasn't in her vocabulary. That's ungodliness, never taking God into account. There're some people like that. Do you mean to tell me that if you're a parent in a home you're going to have children in the home and they take no account of you at all? How impossible is that? It's ridiculous. You wouldn't stand for it and God doesn't either. You can't rule God out of the universe. I remember during World War 2 some folks thought that God had abdicated his throne for a little mustached paper hanger. Well he hadn't. No. Hear it. Ungodliness have done with it, never bringing God into it.

And then worldly desires, they can be of the body or of the mind. Of the body, first three chapters in Romans. Of the mind or the spirit, the first three chapters of First Corinthians and God hates both. Well what are you to do? You just can't be a negation, you just can't be a zero. No. Everybody knows that godliness, holiness, is not negative excellence. To do no harm, that may be a quality of a stone, not a person. You've got to do something. Got to get off the dime. You got to be living and everybody does one way or the other. How? Soberly or sensibly. Oh people that get so egomaniac, they are self-made and worshipping their makers. The trouble with a very famous disease called "I-itis", perpendicular itis perpendicular pronoun. And when some of them scratch their head they do it way out here. They’ve got such a big head. They don't know that's a sign of hydrocephalic condition, that means water on the brain. If they were full of grey matter wouldn't be so bad.

But my dear friends, some folk can think as sober as a judge about everything else. David did when Nathan came to him and told him that story about an injustice done on your land. He
said you've said enough, that man is going to repay fourfold, he's worthy of death and shall repay fourfold. He says you know what happens to me? You’re the man, you're the man, you're the victim and you're the judge. Yes. Oh to think soberly, that means self-control, mastering our appetites righteously. That’s toward others, recognizing the rights of others. I've seen even churches people have, "no well I want to get to that seat", and I tell you, you might just as well not take any shine that morning because it’s going to be stomped all over without so much as, "if you're please", or "excuse me." You know it doesn't hurt to be courteous even if we are Christians. Like a great professor at Southern Baptist Dr. A.T. Robertson, the great Greek scholar and grammarian used to say to the students when they couldn't answer, "you think it'd hurt you to know a little something even if you are going to be a preacher?" It doesn't hurt to live right Even if we are Christians, yes.

The rights of others. You can't swing your hands around just any way you want unless you're on an island. Even then you got to stop and get near trees or you're going to have a lot of broken knuckles. Your hands got to quit where my nose begins. You say yes I guess somebody's been at it already. And righteously, providing things honest in the sight of all men. And then godly living as toward God realizing his presence, his claims, his love on the life; living in the will of God through the power of the spirit. The grace, hear it, that saves always teaches. It's our duty, it is our privilege to manifest to this world the results and fruits of that blessed training and discipline. Too many believers, hear me, reflect poorly the training at their disposal. They disgrace the grace that saved them instead of gracing the grace that saved them. And you'll let your media get something like that about a member of a board of a church or somebody on the choir or one of the pastoral staff or one of the missionaries and I tell you it is such a juicy morsel.
They just have to tell it out to the whole world. Yes. Too many of us disgrace the grace that saved us instead of gracing the grace that saved us. We believe one thing and behave another.

Now look at the expectation of grace. Verse 13 grace not only saves and teaches us to live properly but it gives us a hope, an expectation there's something ahead. Two appearings, verse eleven the appearing in grace. It is concluded and culminated and consummated thank God. It is the hallelujah chorus in the appearing of glory verse 13. This same Jesus, acts 1:11, this same Jesus that you see going into Heaven shall come in like manner as you've seen him go. And this blessed one who has appeared who does now appear in the presence of God will appear without sin question unto salvation to all those who look for him, Hebrews 9:28. Yes. And he calls it the blessed hope. If you want a good characterization of an unbeliever Ephesians 2:11-13 you'll find there it's stated that that unbeliever is without Christ, without hope, and without God. And as if that isn't enough he says in the world where the devil's bailiwick is, he's the god small g of this world, this is where his throne is permissibly now. So he's without hope. Hopeless. But what is the hope of the believer? Oh it's a blessed hope. Bring the presence of Christ, loved ones, the cessation of pain and sorrow and trial and heartache. Have you have been around the world to see it? I've been around the whole world more than once and I'll tell you the universal language is Tears. Tears. The soil of this world is wet with two things, tears and blood and Christ is going to take care both of them. He did at Calvary, It's going to be seen. And that's the blessed hope. With that blessed hope as a leading star of the light. The life saved by grace and taught by Grace is going to be transformed and transfigured by Grace.

My dear friends I'm not just talking about some pie in the sky by and by. You know these people they're always trying to tell us that we are pie in the sky by and by I tell them you what you want is more and more Chow here and now. We're not talking about pie in the sky by and
by. We're talking about reality. We're talking about what is and the door of grace where you can have all this is open. It'll take care of the past, the present, the future. And God wants us to enter now now. "Behold now is accepted time", "behold now is the day of salvation." Twice over our young people say they are the now generation, they’re right. But they better realize as they look around here if you see any gray hairs. They are also in the now generation, you Get close enough to them and you'll see they're breathing yet. That puts them in the now generation. We're all now. Why? This is the only time you'll ever have. Whatever the color of your hair or if you have it like some of us this long departed situation.

My dear friend, whatever age bracket you're living right now I can't find and I've looked for it many times in the 66 books of the Bible, Believe me, I've looked for one place in the Bible where it tells us that we can make that decision for heaven in some other time or place than right here on Earth. There is not a bit. You cannot trust Christ in Moses' age. That's gone. You can't trust Christ in Solomon's age, that’s gone. You can't trust Christ in Peter or John's age, it’s gone. You, even in Paul's age, I mean a year in which you live we’re in the same church age of course with Paul. You’ve got to do it now. Sir Walter Scott was right, the writer of Ivanhoe. He said the greatest word in the English language, I know what he meant, the greatest word in the English language is now. Would you say with us that?

I want us to sing, we haven't done it in the other services but we will in this service. I'm impressed that we should sing. I love this invitation hymn. "I am coming Lord" 217. Listen to it, "I hear thy welcome voice that calls me Lord to thee for cleansing in thy precious blood that flowed on Calvary. I am coming now coming now to thee wash me cleanse me in the blood that flowed on Calvary." We won't keep you long, You've only been at one service I've been to three and I'm preaching tonight in Canoga Park so don't worry you're going to get all your rewards for
Feinberg: The Indescribable Grace of God

listening to these long winded preachers. Don’t you know that? That's right between Malachi and Matthew, tells you all the rewards you're going to get. Shall we stand as we sing 217?

[Audience singing hymn]

Feinberg:

...the Spirit of God moved in your heart. There is a prayer Chapel. There are knowledgeable ones who will lovingly and knowingly give you more light on the truth, break it down. Even more simply take time. Will you come with singing? Second stanza of hymn number 217, mean it. Let's be real with God.

[Audience continues to sing hymn]

Feinberg:

Oh our father how we praise thee for that precious blood. Often we think how dare these sin polluted lips to mention that precious price. And yet as with Isaiah of old we know there's been the cleansing not just from some altar with coals but from heaven's sacrificial altar for our Lord Jesus was lifted up between heaven and earth. Calvary thine altar as though he were fit for neither place But he died for us. The just for us the unjust that he might bring us to thee. Lord may no heart be willing to leave this sanctuary without coming to grips with the question of all questions, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called the Christ?" May there be many hearts resting in him this hour. Bless the absent Pastor. Refresh him physically, mentally, spiritually we pray with his family, with all the families here, with all the household faith with all thy
missionary servants the world over. And now by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God our father, the sweet communion and direction, Guidance of the Holy Spirit Be with you all who are in Christ Jesus Now until our Lord Jesus shall come and forever and ever amen. Amen.