

## Link FM - The Grace of God

### Chapter 1

We start our series today on the Grace of God. We know that Jesus died for our sins, was buried and raised from the dead, and He is seated at the right hand of the Father. But what he accomplished on the cross is more wonderful than we can ever comprehend. We will be looking at some aspects of this wonderful grace salvation.

The book of John tells us clearly where this grace comes from. Chapter 1:14 says that Jesus who came from the Father, became flesh and made his dwelling among us, *“full of grace and truth”* and vs 16, *“from the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another, for the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”* And this grace gives us blessing after blessing after blessing.

What does “grace” mean? The concordance says it is *“the free mercy of God, or the enjoyment of his favour”*. The dictionary says it is the *“unmerited favour of God”*. That means that God has given us love, mercy and favour, which none of us deserve. We deserve the consequence of sin, which is death, but instead we have been given the gift of life as a free gift through Jesus. Jesus signed his name over our names and he took our death sentence That is grace.

Now what qualifies us to receive this grace, this unmerited favour and love? Rom 5:1 says that through Jesus we have gained access into this grace by FAITH .... Rom 4:5 says, *“to the man who does not work but TRUSTS God who justifies the wicked, his FAITH is credited as righteousness.”* “Justified” means that the wicked are declared “not guilty”, and to be “righteous”, means to be in right standing with God – how God sees Jesus.

So every man who is a sinner by birth, is given this free gift of righteousness when he trusts God; he cannot work for it. Nothing will qualify him for this grace, this undeserved favour, only faith. Faith is receiving what is promised.

Now Adam, the first sinner, brought death to all men after him, but Jesus brought life to all men. Rom 5:17 says *“for if by the trespass of the one man (Adam), death reigned through the one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.”*

Rob Rufus explains it in his book, “Invading the Impossible”. Jesus was not made sin by doing sin, because he never sinned. But he was given the free gift of our sin – it was imputed to him. And once he received that free gift of our sin from the Father, he did not have to beg for judgement and curse to come upon him. It came automatically and with fullness, because all the sin of the whole world was brought together in him. Sickness, disease, poverty and death, came onto Him. God now judged all sin in Jesus ONCE, for all time, so that all of mankind could be made right with Him.

Hebrews 10:10 says, “we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, ONCE FOR ALL”.

2 Corinthians 5:21 says that *“God made him who who had no sin to become sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God”*. Just as Jesus did not have to do sin to be made sin, we do not need to do righteous acts in order to be made the righteousness of God. And since we are the righteousness of God, we do not have to beg God to bring resurrection power on us, or to bless us or heal us or to provide for us or to protect us. Just as Jesus did not DO anything to receive the curse, we don't have to DO anything

to receive the blessing either. This gift of righteousness is imputed (given) to us, not by doing righteous deeds, but by believing in what Jesus already did.

So in other words, it is there for the taking - this wonderful free gift of grace, undeserved favour. Dwight Nelson, put it so well. It is a cheque of eternal life, signed by Jesus, written out for every person, but only those who cash that cheque will receive that life. Sadly, many just don't bother to cash that cheque and receive what is theirs for the taking.

Though believers have accepted this message that faith opens the door of salvation, many believe that after that, we have to go back to working and striving to remain accepted by God. Many believe that blessings are conditional. If we do this, then we will receive that. Joseph Prince says, *"You can't earn your salvation, your healing, or your financial breakthrough by your own efforts. If the greatest miracle – which is being saved from hell – comes by grace through faith, and not by your works, how much more the lesser miracles, such as healing, prosperity and restored marriages?"*

Our part is to trust in His perfect work, and receive with open arms the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness. Let it be our prayer that we stop trying to earn God's grace and righteousness. Let the Holy Spirit teach us to start depending on Jesus' finished work and to start receiving this grace. This is God's effortless way to success, wholeness, and victorious living!

In my own experience, I received salvation through faith, but then I was taught that I had to strive and work to please God in the journey ahead. For many years, I lived feeling guilty that I was not doing enough and was living a life that was not holy enough. Always, there was the thought, "Not enough, not enough", not enough prayer, not enough reading of the Bible, not enough work for God, not enough intercession for the lost, not enough victory over sin, not enough praise and worship. But the question is then, how much is enough? My enough and your enough and God's enough will never be the same. The point is, we can never do enough, or ever be good enough to get God's favour. It is a gift.

But in my life, condemnation was always nagging at my conscience and letting me feel the failure that I was. And when things went well, maybe I fasted a few days, or read a Christian book, or did some good deeds, I felt good about myself and felt that now God was pleased with me. The whole emphasis in my heart was always determined by good things done or bad things not done. And I saw God as some school teacher, always showing me up for the standard never reached. Many people have eventually given up and realised, *“I will never get there, I may as well indulge and make the most of my failures”*. Do you see an angry God today, or do you see a God who is smiling and ready to embrace you? This understanding of God's grace, righteousness and favour, changed my Christian life.

The righteousness that the Gospel offers can never be earned by good works. It can only come as a gift. A gift is no longer a gift if I have to work for it. When God gave me the gift of righteousness, it was a real gift. We have to stop trying to earn it with our own works. God's gifts to us are unconditional. This applies to the moment we receive his salvation, and every day after that as well.

Would you like to cash this cheque of eternal life and God's righteousness for you? Accept that Jesus became your sin, so you can become his righteousness – it is an exchange. Both are undeserved – Jesus' death was undeserved, but he chose to take it from you. So also your righteousness is undeserved, but you can receive it from Him. It has nothing to do with what you have done, or have not done – it is a wonderful gift for the taking – take it by faith for yourself now.

Pray this prayer of faith with me, *“Lord Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for my sin and becoming sin for me, so that I can become your righteousness. Thank you for taking my judgment so that I can receive your blessings. I receive by faith this day, your wonderful salvation. Come and live in my heart by your Holy Spirit. I now receive your abundant grace and your gift of righteousness. I am now set free from my sin and from death. Halleluya. Thank you Lord Jesus. And every day I will walk in this grace by faith. Amen.”*

God bless you till next week as we continue looking at the wonderful provision of grace and God's gift of righteousness.

## Link FM - The Grace of God

### Chapter 2

Last week we looked at the free gift of grace, which is undeserved favour, through Jesus. We said, death came to us through Adam, but Jesus exchanged his own righteousness and life for our sin and death. We can now become the righteousness of God, because He became sin for us on the cross.

Today we are going to look a bit more closely at the Old and the New Covenant. We read John 1:17, "*For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*" The law was given, but grace came in a person of Jesus. The law is a list of rules, but grace is a relationship with Almighty God.

But first there was the unconditional Abrahamic covenant of grace, given to Abraham and his descendents, but the Israelites complained and rebelled, so the Mosaic law was added to this covenant. God gave the law to show Israel their true nature of sin, to show them how they actually looked in His sight. But they failed to keep the Law. And then the New Covenant came through the gospel of Jesus.

Chad Mansbridge in his book, "He qualifies you", put it so well. *The Abrahamic covenant of God's promises become your right and inheritance, because of your Pedigree. Under the Mosaic Law God's promises are your right and inheritance, because of your Performance. But under the New covenant Agreement, God's promised blessings are your right and inheritance, purely because of your Position (in Christ).* He also says, where the blessings came because of their Abrahamic-pedigree, and God's vengeance and wrath were reserved for those outside this lineage, (those who would curse Abraham), now the blessing and favour

was promised to those who behaved right, and his curse would come, not only on Abraham's enemies, but on all who failed to keep all the requirements of this new agreement, the Covenant of the Law. But we know that Israel could not keep it, because if they failed on one aspect of the Law, the whole Law was broken. This is the same for us, too.

The Bible says that the law is holy, just and good, but it does not have power to make us holy, just and good. It only condemns the sinner. It was merely a mirror to show our flaws. It can't clean off the blemishes. Only the blood of Jesus can do that. And that happened when Jesus died. So if then the law cannot do a single thing to change the heart of man, why did God give a law which no man could keep? In Gal 3:19 Paul answered this question, *“It was added because of transgressions UNTIL the Seed to whom the promise referred had come.”* It says, the law would end when the Seed, that is Jesus Christ, came. In vs 24 it also says *“we were held prisoners by the law, locked up, UNTIL faith should be revealed”*. So the law came to an end, and the New Covenant came through Jesus.

Jesus said that he did not come to abolish the law, but to fulfill it. Because we cannot keep the law, Jesus came to fulfill every requirement of the law perfectly on our behalf. All that we were unable to do, He did on our behalf.

Now, no man can be saved by trying to keep the law. The only remedy is to plead guilty before the law and flee to Jesus for salvation by the grace of God. Jesus came to bring together sinful man with a holy God, and we are made holy and righteous by his blood once and for all. Now we can boldly enter into God's presence without any guilt, condemnation or expectation of punishment. The price has been paid for our sin of not keeping the law.

But the proud heart of man struggles to accept God's grace, he would rather try to save HIMSELF by his OWN goodness and works. Satan also wants man to be religious and morally good, striving to improve HIMSELF, to try and obey the law, to keep on working, to be earnest and sincere and religious in all his efforts, to keep the commandments and the sabbath days in an effort to make himself worthy of God's favour, instead of accepting His grace. Rom 10:4 says some people who were zealous for God *“did not know the righteousness that comes from God, and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.”* But the Apostle Paul says this is another gospel and a trick of the enemy to keep us from coming as poor, hopeless, helpless sinners to the Christ of grace.

2 Corinthians 3 tells about the difference between these two covenants. The Law in the Old Covenant is spoken about as the *Ministry of death* and Grace in the New Covenant, as the *Ministry of Life*. The Law was written on *tablets of stone*, but the New Covenant *“on tablets of human hearts.”* Vs 3 says the *letter of the Law kills*, but the Spirit in the New Covenant *gives life*. Vs 7 says the ministry that brought death, was a *fading glory*, but the ministry of the Spirit is *more glorious*, and this surpassing glory is *one that lasts!* Vs 11 says when the Law is read, *a veil covers people's hearts*, but whenever anyone turns to the Lord in the New Covenant, *the veil is taken away*. It also says in vs 9 that the Law is a *“ministry that condemns”* and the New Covenant is a *“ministry that brings righteousness.”*

Joseph Prince uses the example of a house bond been paid in full, so then we do not need to continue sending our monthly payments anymore. If the bank still sends a letter demanding more payments, all we need to do is to produce the title deeds. Jesus paid our debt in full, and when the devil comes to accuse us with the law and shows us how we have fallen short and failed, all we have to do is point to the payment that Jesus made on the cross. Christ is our title deed. We have been bought with the precious blood of Jesus. The law has no hold over us anymore!

The Bible tells us in Colossians 2:14-15 that the *“written code with its regulations that was against us and was opposed to us; he took away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”* This shows us that the devil was armed with the written code of the law, that was against us. So the devil used the law as a weapon to accuse and condemn us, because he knew the law was opposed to us. So once the law was nailed to the cross of Jesus, God knew that the law no longer had the power to condemn us as long as we believed on Jesus. Jesus fulfilled all the requirements and the devil cannot use the law to condemn us every time we fail. We point to the cross and reject the condemnation. However, if we insist on still being under the law, and keeping it, we are actually putting that weapon back into the devil's hands to accuse and condemn us. Rom 10:4 says, *“Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.”*

Through Jesus we are made righteous apart from the works of the law. I am not clothed today in my own righteousness, which is self-righteousness, but with Jesus' righteousness. God sees me as righteous as Jesus himself. So let us leave the law and its regulations nailed to the cross, because now we are saved by the grace of God. And let us live in the grace of God. It means nothing I can ever do will make me holy, but only accepting God's righteousness by faith. I am no longer condemned, or guilty, no matter what I have or have not done. It is this understanding and faith in our POSITION of righteousness, which actually begins to change our CONDITION, because then His Spirit of life reigns in us and no longer our own efforts of law and death.

Pray with me, *“Thank you, Father, that I am no longer guilty of not fulfilling the law, because Jesus fulfilled it for me and he nailed the law to the cross. Thank you that Jesus disarmed the devil, and made a public spectacle of him, and he can no longer accuse and condemn me. Thank you that I am now the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus and that you see me as you see Jesus. Thank you for this abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness. I will never put myself back under the Law and give the devil a weapon to condemn me again. Halleluyah. Amen.”*

God bless you till next week as we continue looking at the wonderful provision of grace and God's gift of righteousness.

## Link FM - The Grace of God

### Chapter 3

Last week we spoke about the Old Covenant of the Law and the New Covenant of Grace. The law is a ministry that condemns and grace is a ministry that brings righteousness. We said that Jesus came to fulfill all the requirements of the law on our behalf. We also said the devil uses the law as a weapon to accuse us, but the law was nailed to the cross and the powers and authorities were disarmed. Therefore we need to reject the accusation of the devil, when he condemns us about not keeping the law.

Today we will look at some questions that arise around this whole issue of the grace of God and his gift of righteousness. We will summarise Law and Grace again:

- \* Under the Law, favour is deserved – if we obey the commandments perfectly, we will be blessed; but no-one can.
- \* Under Grace, favour is undeserved – Jesus obeyed God perfectly, and we will be blessed by believing in Him.

So God does not bless us because we are good, but because He is good. Grace is based on His faithfulness and goodness toward us. It is not dependent on our performance.

So then, you may ask, “***Will grace not then cause people to go out and live a life of sin and immoral living, or give them a license to sin?***” People are afraid when you tell a believer that he is completely forgiven by grace and no longer has to earn his right standing before God. 1 Cor 15:56 says, “*the power of sin is the law.*” It is not grace that gives people the power to sin. It is the law! The more you are under the law, the more, sin has power over you! And the more you are under grace, the more sin will lose its power over you. Rom 6:14 says, “*For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.*”

This means that the more grace you receive, the more power you have to overcome sin. In other words, sin shall not be your master when you receive the abundance of grace!

We have made the mistake many times, that when we see sin in a person's life, we give them more of the law! "*You must not do this or that ....*" But that is like adding fuel to the fire, because the power of sin is the law. Sin is strengthened when more law is preached! But victory over sin is found when more grace is preached!

Sin loses its appeal when you come to know the Person of grace, Jesus Christ, and realise all that He has blessed you with, and all He has done for you on the cross. You begin to realise that you have been given this great gift of righteousness and that you did nothing to deserve it. It will not cause you to want to go out and sin, but it will cause you to fall in love with Jesus all over again. It will make you someone who desires with all your heart to live a life that is victorious over sin by His grace and strength! The focussing on Christ instead of on ourselves, will cause us to start reigning in life through Jesus. 1 Cor 15:34 says in the AV "*Awake to righteousness and sin not*". The more you realise that you are righteous, the more victory you will experience over sin! We will become what we believe. As we believe that we are righteous, we will become more righteous.

You may also ask the question, "***What then about the anger and wrath of God? Does he not get angry with us if we sin or disobey?***" We must keep looking at what happened at the cross of Jesus. We do see God angry in the Old Covenant when Israel was under the law, and also in the book of Revelation, where His anger is toward those who have rejected Jesus. It shows the reality of our sin which angered the most powerful God. God had anger, but

He still is love. For the believers in the new Covenant, God is not angry any more, because all His anger for our sins fell on Jesus, the Lamb of God, our sin offering. His sacrifice absorbed and consumed all the wrath that was due for all the sin of all mankind. The Father turned away from his Son, and then turned back to execute Him, literally judging all our sins in Him.

1 John 4:10 says, *“This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”* John Stott said, *“God does not love us because Jesus died, but Jesus died because God loves us.”* 1 John 2:1 also says, *“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense – Jesus Christ, the righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world.”* The words *“atoning sacrifice”*, means that God's wrath is satisfied and sin was taken away, and favour released in its place. Now we live free from condemnation – it fell on Jesus. We live free from punishment – it fell on Jesus. We live free from fear – perfect love casts out all fear. We are free from separation from God – Jesus was separated from God for us. Now we can live in freedom and abundance, and we can come to his throne with confidence and grace. God's anger is burned out, and now his favour burns. We now can access his love and presence at any moment. That is why Jesus died.

You may still ask, ***But if bad things happen to us, is God not still punishing us?*** Some Christians who face sickness or death, think that it is God's judgement. Though we may not have all the answers, we can have full assurance that the negative circumstances that we may sometimes experience, are not the works of God, neither are they the punishment for our sins. Start trusting in his grace and goodness, and blessings will always come. Because of the cross of Jesus, you will never be punished for your sins again. As we read in John, *“If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous”*. He did not say, *if anyone sins, he will be punished for his sins!* No, under the new covenant of grace, Jesus is your Advocate today. He

represents you before God and as Jesus is, so are you!

The good news is that even when you fail, God does not judge you for your failure. All your sins have been judged at the cross. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

And if we say that God is disciplining us with a sickness, we deny the finished work on the cross. Isaiah 53 says that *“by His wounds we were healed”*, so whatever condition you have today, it is not from the Lord! He paid the price for your total healing. In Hebrews 12 it speaks about God's discipline, as a father deals with his sons. Now, would you give your son a terminal disease to teach him a lesson? Then why do you think that your Father in heaven would do that? Joseph Prince says, *“Sickness, diseases, and accidents are NOT lessons from God! When you train a child, you give lessons that teach the child things that will benefit him in the future. God would never use sicknesses and accidents to teach you and me – His children – lessons! ... If your earthly fathers know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more does your heavenly Father who loves you. Sicknesses, diseases and accidents aren't good gifts! They are from the devil and because of Jesus' finished work, we have been redeemed from every evil work and curse. And if believers insist that God uses sickness to punish them, why are they going from doctor to doctor trying to get healed?”* God is full of grace and mercy and wants us to be healthy, prosperous and protected from all evil things. Let's start to expect good gifts from the Lord, because Jesus paid for that.

If you have not received Jesus, you can come into this favour and peace with God, by receiving Jesus, and what he did for you. You can know that your sins are atoned for, paid for in Jesus, and that God no longer is angry with you.

Pray with me, *“Father, thank you for your grace, and mercy. Thank you, Jesus, that you died to take all the punishment for my sins. I receive you as my Saviour. Holy Spirit, come and live in me. Thank you, God, that you are no longer angry with me, and that you want to bless me. I believe you for health, blessings and protection that is part of my inheritance. Amen.”*

God bless you till next week as we continue looking at the wonderful provision of grace and God's gift of righteousness.

## Link FM - The Grace of God

### Chapter 4

Last week we spoke about questions that arise around the preaching of the grace of God and His gift of righteousness. Doesn't it give you a license to sin? We said that the preaching of law actually gives one power to sin. Is God never angry over sin? We showed how Jesus became the atoning sacrifice once for all, and carried all the punishment for the sin of all mankind. And we said that God does not discipline us with sickness, diseases or accidents, and that these come from the enemy, the devil.

Today we look at the power of God that is released by believing this Gospel of grace and righteousness, and a few more questions around it.

**Do we throw away the Old Testament?** What then of the Old Covenant Law? I want to say that God's grace is threaded throughout the Bible. The Old Testament is full of pictures of the New, pointing to the cross, like shadows of the cross of Jesus in the New Testament. Joseph Prince's daughter said so aptly, the Bible is a book with a red cord through it.

**And is the forgiveness of sins not a basic teaching?** No, the forgiveness of sins is the very power of the Gospel. This gospel of grace was preached by the apostle Paul himself, who received more revelation on the new covenant than all the other apostles, and his writings consist of two thirds of the New Testament. When Paul preached about this grace, it released faith in the finished work of Jesus. Wherever he went, people were healed and saved. It says in Acts 14:3 that Paul and Barnabas spent a lot of time in Iconium, *“speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and*

wonders.”

There were people who hated what Paul was preaching, were the Pharisees, who it says, *“were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was teaching.”* We read how even the city was divided on this message and many tried to stone Paul. Today we still find people who depend on their own efforts to achieve their own righteousness, and who hate this teaching of grace, because believers under grace receive blessings and breakthrough without works or self-effort. But Paul believed that the gospel is the power of God to salvation. Twice in Galatians 1:8,9 he said, *“if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!”*

This message of grace is the good news – undeserved forgiveness and undeserved favour, all received simply by believing that Jesus did it all for us already on the cross.

Rom 1:16, says, *“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.”* The word “salvation” in the Greek, “*solterio*” means wholeness, health, blessing, provision and protection. So it means much more than going to heaven, but this gospel gives us the power for “*solterio*”, for earthly wellness or healing, deliverance, strength, victory and provision, for all who believe. The more revelation you get of Jesus' finished work, the more you will receive an impartation of faith for any situation, even the seemingly impossible ones!

Rom 1:17 says, *“For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous shall live by faith.'”*

We have a gift of righteousness and we are the righteousness of God. Rob Rufus in his book, "Invading the Impossible", explains to us clearly that as we live by this understanding and faith, it releases the power for salvation, for healing, protection, provision and wholeness. We don't need steps of faith-for-healing, or steps of faith-for provision, but faith that we are the righteousness of God. There is no distinction between the righteousness to get you to heaven and the righteousness to get heaven to you. It is the same gift that is by faith from first to last. You see, when we live with guilt and condemnation over our failures and for not doing enough, this guilt keeps us bound and unable to believe in God's goodness and power. Condemnation, guilt and fear, are the exact opposites of faith.

**But is there not another practical righteousness in the believer's life?** No, there are only two kinds of righteousness, the Bible tells us, the free gift righteousness from God, and self-righteousness. If we do things to earn the blessing of God, then we have stepped into the danger zone of self-righteousness. The religious world says, if you want to have success in life, then you have got to do a whole lot of things, perform, keep laws and regulations. You have got to live holy and act righteous all the time. They say, "*Blessings are conditional.*"

But the new covenant says, if you want to be successful in life, it is not through what you do, but through what you believe and receive. The gift of His righteousness we receive, will lead to practical outworking and holy living. And a gift is something you don't pay for. God meant it as a gift, so when you receive this gift you are not obligated to do anything for God. By receiving this free gift and hearing about this gift, it will raise your faith to higher levels. If your faith in His gift of righteousness is at a very low level, you will walk around going, "*Oh I am so unworthy, I am so guilty, I am so condemned.*" Meanwhile all heaven is saying, "*No, you are not! You are worthy! You are the righteousness of God!*" We are positioned in Christ Jesus, in heavenly places, in His righteousness. But how we live it out in experience and how we enjoy the benefits

of that, is according to the level of faith that we are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. The reason why some people struggle to believe that they are the righteousness of God is simply because they hardly ever hear that they are the righteousness of God in Christ.

Rom 10:17 tells us that *“faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”* There is no impartation of faith when the Ten Commandments are preached, but faith is born from the preaching of Jesus' finished work of grace in the new covenant.

The more you believe that you are righteous, the more grateful you are as you look to Jesus, who gave you this gift, and His beauty, His perfection, His grace; and there is more joy in your life, there is more victory over sin, there is more authority over the enemy and there are more blessings. The basis of this righteousness is removed from your performance and obedience and put on the performance and obedience of Jesus who is always perfect. There is no distinction between a righteousness for salvation and a righteousness for daily Christian living, because there is only one true kind of righteousness for both, namely, the gift of righteousness that you receive by faith. That is the true Gospel!

If you are trusting for a miracle in your life, maybe a healing breakthrough, a financial miracle or in your ministry or career, fill your ears and heart with the message of Christ, the word of his grace and not the word of law. Faith will grow in your heart, as you stop being preoccupied with your failures and shortcomings, but by focussing on Jesus, His free gift of grace and power. No obligation! Just believe it and you will see the outworking of it!

Pray with me, *“Thank you, Father, for this wonderful gift that I am righteous because of Jesus. Thank you that as I believe and receive this gift, your power is released into my personal situation and needs. Today I trust you for the full “solterio” of healing, of blessing, of provision, of protection and of favour. Thank you, Lord. Amen”*.

God bless you till next week as we continue looking at the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness.

## Link FM - The Grace of God

### Chapter 5

Last week we said that the Apostle Paul preached the Gospel of grace and condemned anyone who preached a different Gospel. He also said that it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. This salvation or “solterio” (in Greek) means wholeness, blessing, healing, provision, deliverance, etc. We also said that faith comes by “*hearing the message of Christ*”, so hearing about this grace will make our faith grow.

Today we will look at what Jesus said about this righteousness, and look at the wonderful love of God. In Matthew 6:24-25 we read that Jesus said we are not to worry about clothes and food. We are much more valuable than the flowers which God clothes, and the birds of the air that he feeds. He said the pagans run after these things, and that people who worry are of little faith. He concludes in v 33, “*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well.*”

So our priority in life is not to develop enough faith to have money for clothes and housing and provision, but to seek first God's gift of righteousness. When our faith grows in His righteousness, these things the world runs after, will be added to us – provision, food, blessings, homes, cars. And as our faith continues to grow, more things start coming! Rob Rufus says, “*we become a magnet to blessings as our faith grows in seeking the Kingdom and His righteousness.*”

**What is the Kingdom?** Rom 14:17 tells us “*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*” This is the gift of righteousness. That is what the Kingdom is - the revelation that in Jesus we are righteous! And joy and

peace will fill our lives. So we must seek first this righteousness, listen to messages about this righteousness, build our faith on His righteousness, then worry and anxiety will disappear and all these things will be added to us.

Joseph Prince says, "*Good things happen to people who believe that God loves them.*" Good things happening to you does not depend on who you are, what you have done, but when you believe that God loves you! He loves you all the time. Even when you fail, He loves you! His love is not dependent on your behaviour. It is contingent on His grace and the work of Jesus.

God loves you so much that He did not withhold from you His only son, the Son whom He loved. The reason that people are full of bitterness, anger and resentment, is not that God does not love them. It is that they think they must earn God's love by their conduct and by doing good works. You see, religion is a heavy burden, it says, "*do good to get good things happen, and when you do bad, you'll get beaten.*" Jesus said in Matt 11:28, "*Come to Me, all you who are weary and are burdened, and I will give you rest.*" Jesus is talking here about those who are burdened with religion, to cease from their self-efforts. Where the law demands more effort, grace imparts rest. This is the Sabbath rest he is talking about – no works.

When Jesus was baptized, in Matt 3:17, the Father's voice from heaven came, "*This is my son whom I love, with him I am well pleased.*" Today, God has accepted you in the Beloved. He is pleased with you today, because you are in Christ. In John 17:23, Jesus prayed to the Father, "*... let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.*" God loves us just as much as he loves His son, Jesus! How amazing! After Jesus heard those words from His Father, he went into the desert and was

tempted of the devil, but the devil's plans failed. When the devil said, "*Tell these stones to become bread,*" in fact he was telling Jesus to get his food from the law written on stone, but Jesus answered in Matt 4:4, "*Man does not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God*". Jesus was referring to the Rhema word, the "now" word that God had just spoken to him, "*My beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.*" You see, once we know that we are God's beloved, that He loves us with an unconditional love, whatever temptation the devil wants to bring us, will fail. People give their lives to sin when they feel rejected and unwanted. But when we hear God speak those words to us, that He loves us with an everlasting love, and that He is well-pleased with us, we will be overcomers in the face of any temptation. Believe that God really loves you and that you are precious and valuable to God. When you know the *Abba* Father's love, why would you want to waste your life in sins that bring only destruction? Satan will always try to bring condemnation to you, and try to make you doubt your true identity of being His beloved son or daughter, and will try to make you feel far from God. But even when you fail, remind yourself that you are still the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, and that nothing will separate you from the love of God.

God's love is unconditional and unchanging. You are loved because of what Jesus has done on the cross. There is nothing you can do today to make God love you more, and there is nothing you can do to make him love you any less. When you fail, that is the time you need to feed on His love for you. Begin to see that he not only loves everyone, but he loves YOU. It has nothing to do with your deserving – none of us ever deserve one ounce of his love.

When you are full of His love for you, all anger disappears, forgiveness comes easily, and we can love others like Jesus

loves us. Our lives begin to change.

Joseph Prince explains that in the battle of David and Goliath, their names tell us a whole lot about who they were. "Goliath" means "*exiled*" or "*stripped of everything*", and David, means "*beloved*". It takes someone who is beloved of God to bring down a giant, who has already been stripped of everything! What is the giant in your life, a marital problem, a financial difficulty? Begin to see yourself as God's blessed and beloved son or daughter, that the devil is already defeated, and see the giants in your life fall!

In Ephesians 3:17-19 Paul says, "*And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*" When we understand and receive this love, we will be filled with all the fullness of God! Isn't that wonderful!

God loves you because you have been washed in the blood of Jesus, so live by these words every day of your life, "*I am loved by my Father, He is pleased with me. I am the righteousness of God. His favour is over all my life, I am a blessing wherever I go.*" He says of you in the Song of Songs 7:6, "*How beautiful you are and how pleasing...*" and His banner over you is love.

So do not worry about your needs, but seek His righteousness. Believe that in Jesus you are righteous and not condemned, because Jesus took your judgement! Feed on His love for you and He will provide all your needs and give you even more than you can ask or think! And the giants in your life will fall down defeated!

Pray with me as we close, "*Thank you, Jesus, that in You I am righteous. Thank you for your amazing love for ME. Help me grasp how wide and long and high and deep is this love, and never to doubt that You love me, no matter what! I will not listen to the condemnation of the enemy any longer, but I will feed on your great and everlasting love. Amen.*"

God bless you till next week (actually it will be 2 week's time) as we continue looking at the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness.

## Link FM - The Grace of God

### Chapter 6

In the last session we looked at what Jesus said of righteousness. He said, as we seek God's Kingdom and his gift of righteousness, and believe that we have this gift, all our needs will be met. And when we believe that God truly loves us, and we receive His love, not because of anything we have done or have not done, our lives begin to change.

Today we are going to look at the difference between a servant and a son in the New Covenant. John Sheasby in his book, *"Son!"* gives a wonderful study on this subject. We know that the value of a servant lies in what he does; he receives and does his daily duties as best he can. He is rewarded if his deeds please his master, but he leaves the intimacy of the family and goes to his servant's quarters with his wage and perhaps knowing his master is satisfied. He eats by himself, not at his master's table. All he has to look forward to is another day of duty and trying to please his master, and hopefully earn a reward. But if he fails to do his master's will, his wages could be withheld, or other forms of punishment could be given, or his work could come to an end, and he can lose his position.

Luke 17:10 says, *"So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'" So if you focus on duty, and see yourself as a servant, you will always feel unworthy. You see, we remain who we believe we are. And the master only tells the servant the information he needs, to do his job, and no more. The servant does not know his master's purpose for what he is doing. Jesus, however tells us in John 15:15, "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business, instead, I have called you friends, for everything*

*that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.”* He further says in John 8:34-36, *“I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”*

But many Christians still see themselves as servants, and their communication with God is limited to finding out what God wants them to do. When we live as servants, we live in fear and that motivates us to do what we believe God has commanded us to do, but we always have the damning sense that we should have done more. And if we still see ourselves as servants, we do not expect God to reveal His deep secrets to us, or to be intimate with us. But in the New Covenant the veil was taken away, so we can come into the God's intimate presence.

Through the new birth, we were united with Jesus in his death and resurrection. We now can enter into the enjoyment of uninterrupted communion with God the Father as His SONS, and share in Jesus' inheritance as a Son, of all that belongs to the Father.

Romans 8:15-17 says, *“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.”* “Abba” is the intimate term for “my Daddy”. Fear and slavery are the opposites of sonship. By the Spirit I can know with certainty that I am a child of God, a son of the Father, and I can know that I have inherited all the blessings of a son. It says, *“heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.”* Galatians 4:6 also says the same, *“Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father.’ So you are no longer*

*a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.”*

The spirit of bondage that makes you a slave, works against the “*Spirit of sonship*”. It is the demonic enemy to keep us from enjoying the position as sons that Jesus brought about on the cross. This relationship is not based on performance (what a servant does), but on birth, our new birth! The son will do his Father's will, but it flows out of relationship, and is not a condition to the relationship. At times the Father might be disappointed with his son's behaviour, but he remains the son, no matter what his performance. Once a son, always a son! We read, “*The son belongs to the family forever!*” As a son we are part of the family and can have intimacy with the Father. I become a son and therefore also an heir.

Ephesians 1: 3-5 tells us that, “*In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will – to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.*”

So we see that we are no longer regarded as slaves or servants, but as sons of the Father. It is the opposite to the life of a servant. The son lives in the presence of his father, not in the servants' quarters; the son is always accepted by the father, not only when he deserves his favour. The son lives in the blessing and inheritance of the father, and does not earn a wage for what he has done. And the Father shares the deep secrets of his heart to his son. The son eats at the same table as the Father. Rev 3:20 tells us, “*Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.*” What wonderful intimacy with the Father.

And whereas the servant lives in fear of his master, the son lives in joy and security, knowing his father loves him! The Heavenly Father's love is a strong, pure, committed love. The servant feels

fear when he is not reaching the expected standard of performance and might be rejected by God. But a son is so safe in his Father's love, he is able to rest in the promises that His Father has made; promises of protection, provision and His abiding presence. 1 John 4:18 says, *"There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."* Because Jesus took the punishment for our sin, we don't need to fear punishment by our heavenly Father. If I have any fear, it is the surest thing that I do not understand my position as a son, and am still in bondage to trying to please God and be acceptable through obedience to commandments.

You may ask, ***"What then about the fear of the Lord?"*** Proverbs 9:10 says, *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."* But that is not the fear that dreads punishment for not measuring up, or fear of rejection, but it is a reverence that honours and esteems. Rather, we fear that we will do anything that might grieve His Holy Spirit. The dictionary says reverence is *"a great respect and admiration mixed with love."*

The security of our position as a son, rests in the perfect, unconditional love of the Father. That drives out every anxious thought that He does not find me acceptable. And I gladly obey Him, not because my acceptance is dependent upon my obedience, but because his great love for me motivates me to do what pleases Him. Listen to His Spirit in your heart, without fear and doubt, and then you cry out, *"my Daddy, Abba, Father! I am your son."* Let us believe that we are no longer servants, who are expected to perform, but sons of the heavenly Father, and he has lavished his grace and love upon us, and even more, made us heirs of God!

Pray with me as we close, *"Thank you, my Daddy, Father, that because of the cross of Jesus, and the new birth, you have accepted me as your son. Thank you that I no longer have to prove myself as a servant, but can rest in the security of being your son. Thank you for the blessings of my inheritance. Thank you, Abba, Daddy, Father. Amen."*

God bless you till next week as we continue looking at being a son of the Father and the blessings he promised us.

## Link FM - The Grace of God

### Chapter 7

Last week we looked at the difference between a servant and a son of the New Covenant. We said the servant obediently works for a wage and has no intimacy with the Master, but a son, by his new birth, is accepted, not because of his obedience, but because of the love of his Father. By the Holy Spirit we can call out, "Abba, Father," and confess that we are no longer slaves, but sons and also heirs of God.

Today we continue this study of sonship, and also look at the story of the prodigal son. Rom 8:16 says, "*The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children*". The same Spirit, who caused Jesus to perfectly please the Father, will also motivate that life in us to please the Father. Though we have been taught that "*we are saved to serve*", it is true in one sense, but that statement has damned us to a life of performance, condemnation and guilt.

The intent of the Father's heart is bring "*many sons to glory*" (Hebrews 2:10). Galatians 4:4 says, "*God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights as sons.*"

A servant serves his master hoping for a reward, but a son does not earn his inheritance. It is a gift, not because of his worthiness or deserving nature, but because of his birth. He is born a son, and therefore an heir. He needs to do NOTHING to have the full favour of the Father. So many promises are made to heirs! This is the good news of the Gospel. Hebrews 1:14 says, "*Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?*" We who are sons, inherit salvation, and the very angels are ministering spirits to serve us!

John Sheasby explains, that Satan wants us to continue thinking of ourselves just as servants. If we ever rise up in faith in the revelation of our position as heirs, we will start to take back what is rightfully ours. We will exercise authority that God has given us and plunder from the enemy what he has stolen from us.

Luke 15 tells us the story of the son who had wasted all of his inheritance, and found himself looking after pigs and even more hungry than them. He thought back to his father's house, but realised that he could never return as a son, since he had taken his share of the inheritance already. That is why he decided to go back as one of his father's servants, and to beg his father for employment. *"Make me one of your servants,"* he said. But we know that, *"while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him."*

Only those who have experienced the unconditional love and forgiveness of God our Father, can grasp the tender compassion and all-covering mercy of this father, as he ran toward the far-off, broken boy coming home. It was not a cool reception with a strong look of disapproval to show him his disgraceful behaviour. Though we may have experienced this from our earthly fathers after a severe punishment, we think that God acts like that, too. Then we try to do something to compensate or balance out, to impress God with the sincerity of our repentance.

But the father, ran, threw his arms around him and kissed him and overlooked the sinful behaviour of this son, who deserved to be despised. The eyes of our heavenly Father also looks at us with eyes that do not see our unworthiness, our sinfulness and the shame of our actions. But He sees our need for acceptance, forgiveness and love. Even Jesus

received sinners and did not condemn them. Don't hold to a wrong picture of an angry Heavenly Father. Jesus carried all the wrath of God for your sins on the cross. Now the Father receives you, and wants to have fellowship with you, and wants to enjoy the intimacy of a father / son relationship.

Luke 15 goes on in vs 22, *“Quick bring out the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate.”*

The father did not expect his son to do anything to make HIMSELF ready to re-enter his house. He commanded his servants to bring the robe, the ring, the sandals and the fatted calf to where they were. In the making of covenants, there was the exchange of gifts (often a valuable piece of clothing), often a ring, and the slaughtering of an animal or shedding of blood, and then sitting down to a feast to celebrate it. Just as with Abraham, the covenant was one-sided (he was asleep), so here the son was regarded as “dead” and the action of the father was one-sided.

It is the father's rich robe that was given to replace the old, dirty, pig-smelling clothes of the son. And the robe symbolises the willingness of the father to lay down his life for the son, and it also means that *“all I have now belongs to you whenever you need it”*.

And the ring with the family seal, is a picture of restored authority as a son in the family. And the sandals show the son's restored position, not as a servant, but as a son of honour. The custom was that slaves went about their duties barefoot, showing their servanthood.

The slaughtered fatted calf, is the shedding of blood, for the covenant to be sealed, and the celebratory meal is prepared. His

lost son, is now found, his dead son, is now alive. This is cause for joyous celebration and feasting and dancing!

So, we also, are received unconditionally, just as we are. With merciful arms Father God still embraces us and with merciful lips, he still kisses us with a kiss of forgiveness and grace. Let us not listen to Satan's lies when he lays on us condemnation, guilt and feelings of unworthiness. Otherwise we go back to behaviour to improve ourselves so that God will accept us and like us.

And we have His robe of righteousness, His life and His inheritance. He has stripped from us our self-righteousness, that are like filthy rags, and has given us His perfect righteousness, through our faith in Jesus. And in this new covenant, all that the Father has, is now ours! We are now heirs of the Father!

Also, we have the ring of authority and dominion restored to us through Jesus - authority over sin, and sickness, authority over Satan and his demons. But as long as we feel condemned and unworthy, we will never be a match for Satan's powerful deception and intimidation. He knows how to keep us ineffective, as long as we do not know the authority we've been given through Jesus.

Then, we have the sandals of honour. Ephesians 6:15 says, our *"feet are fitted with a readiness that comes from the gospel of peace."* This means *"a firm footing"* (New King James) as a child of God. We have the right to walk confidently into His presence without fear of rejection. Let us step into those sandals of grace and stand unthreatened by fear, unthreatened by the accuser of our souls, and begin to rejoice. We are accepted! We are forgiven!

Pray with me as we close, *"Thank you, Father, for your love and acceptance when I came home from the pig sty of sin. Thank you that you restored me unconditionally as a son, that you gave me your robe of righteousness, the ring of authority, the sandals of honour, and the covenant sealed in Jesus' blood. I am accepted and forgiven by your grace! I am a son and an heir! Halleluyah! Amen."*

God bless you till next week, as we continue looking at our inheritance as sons in the new covenant.

## **Link FM - The Grace of God**

### **Chapter 8**

Last week we looked at sonship in the story of the prodigal son. When we return to the Father, like the son who returned to his father's house, our Father will accept us with his unconditional love. He will re-instate us as sons in his house, and will give us a robe of righteousness, a ring of authority, and the sandals of honour. And the slaughtered calf is as the shed blood of Jesus, that seals this New Covenant that God has made with us.

Today we look more specifically at the older brother of the returned Prodigal. Coming in from the fields, he heard music and dancing and asked one of the servants what was going on. When he was told about his returned brother, he became angry and refused to go in to the feast. His father pleaded with him, but he complained that he had been slaving for all those years and was never even given a young goat to celebrate with his friends, but “this son of yours”, he said, who lived with prostitutes, and squandered all his money, was given the fatted calf. He was highly offended.

John Sheasby expounds this parable so well. The tragedy in this story is the blindness of the older brother. Though he had lived with his father for all those years, he did not really know him. He related better to the other servants. He saw his father as a hard task master, who demanded perfect obedience and hard work. He did not know and enjoy him as a merciful, loving, father. His mistaken view of this father as a master and himself as a servant, had prevented him from experiencing the blessings of a son.

The same attitude is seen in the story of the talents and the one who buried his share. Luke 19:21,22 tells of his

response to the King, who asked what he did with his talent. He answered, *“I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow. His master replied, “I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant!”*

What he believed in his heart corresponded to his confession, and determined his actions. Jesus is showing us that the master was bound by what the servant believed and confessed him to be. How we see God, how we relate to God, will determine the basis on how God will relate to us. God can be no more to us than what we believe and confess Him to be.

Matthew 8:13 says, *“It will be done just as you believed it would.”*

In Luke 15:29 the older brother said, *“Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.”* The word, “young” literally means “tiny goat,” or “skinny goat”.

So the older brother saw his father as a stern master, who was difficult to please. And He even accused his father of being stingy and not rewarding his diligent service. His anger over the “unfair treatment” of his brother, blinded his eyes to the amazing revelation of the father's true heart.

And our perception of God will determine how we see ourselves. If we see God as a master, we will see ourselves as servants, who have to obey commandments and duties, to please the Master. The older brother thought he had a life of perfect obedience. Like the rich young ruler who said he had kept the law from his youth, his confidence was also in his performance, his own righteousness and not in the

character and righteousness of God.

So the legalist still lives his life regulated by laws and rules. And his goal is to be faultless in obeying every rule he believes in. He believes that acceptance by God is dependent upon perfect following of all the commands laid out in the Bible. He is hard on himself, but at the same time he covers up his failure to live up to the standard he set, by a hypocritical outward show of holiness. He compares his performance to that of others around him. He is either proud, or he is driven to despair because he sees others as better than himself. He is extremely judgmental of others, for in finding fault with them, it makes himself feel better about himself and his own acts. In his life of unbending discipline, self-denial and trying to be perfect, his goal is to earn a reward from God. When God fails to reward a legalist according to his expectations, or when he sees God blessing someone he feels is undeserving, he becomes angry and offended.

The older brother was blind to all the benefits of living in his father's home. Only one thing consumed him - the prize, the reward! He expected a reward for his diligent service, but when the father blessed the young son of bad character instead, he became highly offended.

So why then did the father not reward the older brother for his long years of service? The reason is that it was impossible to reward the son with that which already belonged to him by inheritance!

All the skinny goats and fatted calves already belonged to him, for he was a son and therefore an heir! He could have had a party every day of his life. In Luke 15:31 the father said, *“My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.”*

What a tragedy! Because he saw himself as a servant and awaited a reward, he lost the enjoyment of his inheritance. His mentality

limited him to the expectation of a wage or reward, and kept him from seeing himself as a son and heir to receive what was already his.

Why do so many believers not receive their healing, or they live in poverty, or in fear, and lack of joy and blessing? The answer is clear. They are waiting for a reward, but because they are heirs, the Father can never give them, as a reward, what already belongs to them.

Jesus came into the world to show the Father to us. He could say in John 14:9, *“He who has seen me has seen the Father.”* Some of us still see the holy God as so holy that He cannot look at us. But we must remember that he sees and receives us through Jesus, and wants to have intimate communion with us. He wants to break through our confused view of who God is, and wants to show us His love and goodness. Allow the Father to embrace you as a son.

God wants us to enjoy the benefits and blessings of what is ours by birthright as His sons. All the gifts of God to us are promised gifts of the New Covenant, secured in the death of Jesus on the cross. They are available to us through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. They are already ours! When we desire the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and recognise their importance to our walk and ministry, we will receive them, not as a reward, but as a free gift. When we believe the truth of who we are as sons and therefore heirs, we will receive in simple faith, what already belongs to us!

It is time we come out of the servant-thinking that waits for a reward, but enter into our full inheritance as sons!

Pray with me, *Thank you, Father, that I am a son, with a wonderful inheritance. I now leave the servant mentality of working for approval and reward, and want to receive all that you promised me as a son. I want to know you intimately as a Father and want to enjoy all that Jesus secured for me on the cross – full acceptance, deliverance from every bondage in my life, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and every promise in your Word. Thank you, Father. Amen.*

God bless you till next week as we continue looking at our inheritance as sons in the New Covenant of grace.

## Link FM - The Grace of God

### Chapter 9

Last week we looked at the attitude of the older brother of the Prodigal son. He saw himself as a servant and his father as a master. He was offended and angry at his brother, and at his father. He was waiting for a reward for his diligent service, and did not understand that he was a son with the full inheritance from a loving father. In our Christian journey, we often see ourselves as servants, with a grovelling sense of not feeling worthy enough to be rewarded with blessings like prosperity or healing.

Like servants, we are frustrated that God does not seem to reward our loyal service and prayers and fasting, with the blessing or provision that we want. And then we have an inner drive to do more to impress God with our sincerity and faith.

But as we come to the revelation that we are no longer servants, but sons and daughters, we will appropriate the full blessings God intended for us. We will be able to step over into simple faith and receive what is ours by covenant inheritance.

So today we look at 2 aspects of this birthright we have as true sons of the Father, based on his promises, not our service.

The first of these rights as sons, is to have intimacy with the Father. Think of the joy the older brother could have had in knowing his daddy and the depths of his love, favour and generosity, that would have blessed him. But instead we see an angry, bitter man, who never came to know his father, but lived imprisoned in a system of justice and fairness, so he never could enjoy his benefits. We see a legalist blinded by

his sense of law and cheated out of his birthright as the eldest son, because of his servant mentality. He called his brother, "*this son of yours*" - but he didn't see himself as a fully accepted son.

Yet we read that the father called him, "*Son!*" So we are not sons because of our faithful service, but because we are born of God's seed, in the new birth. We believe what God says about us and we declare that truth over our lives.

Now, the one thing we have believed that affects our intimacy with God, is sin. We have heard that sin breaks our fellowship with God. But we have the right to unbroken, intimate fellowship, because of the robe of His righteousness that He has given us. It is not based on our good works, or absence of sin, but because He has declared us to be righteous through our believing in Jesus. In other words, God does not look at our failures, disobedience, or sin. He sees his robe, his righteousness. So we need not walk in condemnation any longer, but be at peace with God. Don't run away like the Prodigal, but run to the Father. As He received the Prodigal, he accepts you, and wants you to be in constant fellowship with himself. And while we live in that place of believing we are righteous, sin will not have that locked grip on our lives any longer.

So, looking at that older brother, we see he wasted those available hours that he could have had of intimate conversation, coming to know his father's heart, and understanding his own position as a son. Though he was geographically and physically near the father, he was not near him emotionally or in intimate fellowship. If we try to know Him at a distance (from the fields), we will be offended by His actions. They are not always fair, because he is merciful and "*mercy triumphs over judgement*" (James 2:13) We must get to know his heart, his ways. Psalm 25:10 says,

*“All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth.”*

When we know the Father's heart, then we will know the extravagance of His love and acceptance, and the generosity of His covenant blessings lavished on us. That is our birthright as sons!

So the second aspect of this inheritance we look at, is prosperity. *“All that I have is yours”*, the father said, in Luke 15:31.

2 Corinthians 8:9 says, *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.”*

Some of us have believed that to be like Jesus, we must be poor. But Jesus' poverty was temporary and had a purpose to take the place of our poverty. Our focus should not be on His poverty, but on our wealth! Jesus has been restored, with higher honour than ever before, to the glory and wealth that he had with the Father. There is no poverty or lack in heaven. 1 John 4:17 says, *“Because in this world we are like Him”* - that means, as he “is” not as he “was”.

The first effects of the curse of Adam and Eve, was poverty, lack, surviving by the sweat of their brow, being cast out of the paradise of plenty. Satan stole what God gave them, through his lying deception. But we know that Jesus came to break that curse and promised us abundant life. But Satan still steals from God's people. He will use fear, stress, discouragement and disappointment, to stop our believing and declaring what God has said. He does not want us to prosper, but to stay in lack and poverty. A person under the yoke of poverty, has difficulty receiving, because of a sense of unworthiness or pride. The servant-mentality is closely

related to a spirit of poverty. That blocks us from receiving all that is ours.

The only way you can resist the devil is by knowing your rights as a son and standing firmly on them. As long as we come to God based on who we are in ourselves, and what we have done, we will slink out of His presence as poor people, crawling out in shame and unworthiness. But when we grasp that our rights and privileges are in the name of the One, Jesus Christ, who made covenant with God the Father on our behalf; then we will come boldly and expectantly confessing, *“All that the Father has, is mine!”* Don't listen to the accusations of the enemy that you are not worthy, but keep on declaring, *“All that the Father has, is mine,”* until you begin to walk in the fulfilment of it and even become a blessing to others.

If you have not yet given your life to Him, receive Him as your Father today. Then, remember, that He does not see you as you once were, or as others might still see you, or even as you see still yourself. He sees you, clothed with Christ, who is your righteousness. You have to change the way you see yourself! You are a son, not a servant. That is how God sees you!

Receive as your inheritance, firstly, that intimate, unbroken relationship of love with Father, and secondly, the wonderful blessing of having all your needs met, and even greater abundance!

Pray with me, *“Thank you, Father, that as a son, I am righteous in your eyes, because of Jesus. Thank you that I can live in close fellowship with you, because of Jesus. Thank you that I can live in abundant wealth, because of Jesus. Thank you that it has nothing to do with me, and that “All you have is mine!” I thank and praise you for this wonderful inheritance, Father. Amen.”*

God bless you till next week, as we look at some more aspects of this wonderful inheritance as sons of the new covenant of grace.

## Link FM - The Grace of God

### Chapter 10

Last week we looked at some aspects of our inheritance as sons of the New Covenant. We spoke about the right to unbroken fellowship and intimacy with the Father, who does not condemn us, because of the robe of righteousness. We also have as our birthright, God's full provision and blessing, and we stand on the word that "all that the Father has is mine".

Today we look at 2 more aspects of this inheritance, which is based on the death of Jesus, and not on the basis of our service. The first we look at is our birthright to healing. 2 Corinthians 1:20–22 says, *"For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."*

So all these promises are sure (yes), because of Jesus. We can stand firm, and not just hope, but know that God will hear us – we have confidence to expect fulfilment of every promise. And it says God receives glory when His promises are fulfilled in us. And the Holy Spirit in us is the seal of every covenant promise and the guarantee, that when we come in faith to receive the promise, we will never be denied.

Our birthright as sons of the Father is to be well and not sick. God made the covenant with Abraham, and we, as his descendants, can also believe God, *"who calls things that are not as though they were."* (Rom 4:17) And Jesus promised healing, paid for it, and told us to pray for healing.

## **So what are the things that hinder our healing?**

We know that our faith for healing must be declared to activate it. But the first hindrance to this healing, is the fear of ridicule. There is always strong attack against the idea of confessing something to be true, when it seems not to be so. Many people have been so mocked, that it has produced a fear in many Christians.

Our problem is that we have not been able to understand the difference between truth and fact. The truth is that we are loosed from our sickness. The fact might be that we are still physically showing symptoms of a disease. By confessing the fact, "I am sick" will never bring us into healing. But believing and confessing the promise, is a key.

We see in Luke that Jesus declared the woman loosed when she was still bent over with her crippling infirmity. "*Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.*" He said in verse 16, "*Should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham (with the covenant blessing), whom Satan has kept bound for 18 long years, be set free on the Sabbath from what bound her?*" The blessing of Abraham was hers and yet she never lived in that blessing of healing.

Peter, in chapter 2:24, believed that the healing took place when Jesus was beaten over his back, when he said, "*By whose stripes you were healed!*" So when we confess the truth of what has already happened, then the facts begin to change, conforming to the truth that we are confessing. Do not be afraid of some religious people, bound by unbelief, who make fun of those who have learnt to confess the truth of the Word. God's promise is, "*We will reap a harvest if we do not give up,*" in Gal 6:9.

The second hindrance is one we looked at last week,

namely a servant mentality. We have a grovelling unworthiness that does not allow us to feel deserving enough to be rewarded with healing. Or it could be a frustration that God does not seem to reward all our prayers and fasting with the desired healing. Or we accept the sickness as our lot in life, the cross we have to bear, and that God is using the sickness to teach us something, or even to punish us. But since Jesus has taken our punishment on himself, God could never place on my body again what was carried by Jesus in His body on the cross. Let us no longer confess what we see with our eyes, or feel in our bodies, one more time, but say, *“I declare that I am healed! Halleluyah! By his stripes I am healed.”*

The second aspect we look at as our birthright is joy. Joy came because of Jesus. The message was given by the angels, *“I bring you good news of great joy.”* Joy is a fruit of the Spirit, but joy is also a hallmark of God's presence. Where there is joy, there He gives his presence. And that can be at any time, not only in a moving moment in a service. In fact, we can choose joy, because it is our birthright that Jesus paid for on the cross.

*“He gave me beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, a garment of praise for a spirit of heaviness.”* (Isaiah 61:3 KJV)

Joy results from praise, and praise is like a faith confession. We don't praise God only because we feel like it, but as we bring praise as a sacrifice, it pleases God, and releases joy in our lives. The point is, that our emotions are not to lead us, but our spirit should lead us and our emotions will begin to change as our spirit leads us into praise, faith confessions and declaring his promises. Joy is not happiness, dependent on happenings, but can be experienced in difficult times. We so easily accept our condition of depression and feel that it is something we have to learn to live with, but depression is

not the will of God. Anything that controls us in a negative way, is not from God and is a spirit of the enemy to paralyse us and make us submit to its power. That spirit is sent to prevent us from entering into our position as sons and daughters of the Father and the possessions He has given us. We do not need to accept depression as a normal part of our lives. Ask Him to show you the root of it – it may be condemnation, or unforgiveness, or due to some exposure to spirits of darkness. Anything that steals our joy, is of the enemy. Jesus died to free us from depression or anxiety, and promised us joy and fulfilment in life.

And spirits do not just go away by themselves. They must be evicted and sent away from the dwelling places that do not belong to them. We have the authority to bind the strongman, and rebuke and cast out the spirit of slavery and depression. Then we must be renewed in our minds by the truth that joy is our right as one of the blessings of our inheritance as sons or daughters of the Father. You can lay claim to it and need not be satisfied with anything less. Use the weapons at your disposal and begin to praise God for all the wonderful blessings and promises that are yours, paid for by Jesus on the cross – and JOY is one of them.

To summarise then, two of the promises of the new covenant include healing by the power of Jesus, and also joy in our every day lives, even in times of trials or testing.

Pray with me, *“Thank you, Father for the blessing of healing that is my birthright as a son. I rebuke the spirit of infirmity in my body. Today I receive my healing for ..... Thank you, Jesus for paying for the full blessing of joy in my life. I rebuke any spirit of heaviness and depression that is weighing my spirit down. I no longer give those spirits any right in my body or soul. Holy Spirit, fill me with life and healing and joy that comes from God. I choose to praise you and thank you and declare this as mine, until it becomes a fact in my life. Thank you, Father. Amen.”*

God bless you till next week as we look at the undeserved blessings in the New Covenant of grace.

## Link FM - The Grace of God

### Chapter 11

Last week we said that healing is our birthright as sons of the Father, in the New Covenant. We said that fear of ridicule often hinders us from making faith confessions that activate our healing, or we may have a servant mentality of unworthiness. Then we also looked at our birthright to joy, and said that depression is not the will of God. We have authority to bind the enemy and receive the joy that Jesus paid for on the cross.

Today we look at the favour we have received from God, through what Jesus did for us through the New Covenant. If we study the Old Covenant, we see that God often encouraged his people to believe in His goodness and his promises to them. God always wanted to bless and show favour to his people. Here are some Scriptures that show us that.

**Gen 39:21** - *“But while Joseph was there in the prison, the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favour in the eyes of the prison warden.”*

**1 Samuel 2:26** - *“And the boy Samuel continued to grow in stature and in favour with the Lord and with men.”*

**Psalms 5:12** - *“For surely, O Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favour as with a shield.”*

**Psalms 30:5** - *“For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favour lasts a lifetime.”*

Moses was given favour. David had God's favour. Esther obtained favour. It says she had favour with the king, with

everyone who saw her, and favour above any of the other virgins. Daniel also was shown favour when working for the king. Proverbs 8:35 says, *“For whoever finds me (wisdom, a picture of Jesus) finds life, and receives favour from the Lord.”*

**What brought favour on the lives of these people?** In the Old Testament favour was given to those who believed God, and in doing so, they glorified Him.

But we see clearly the promise was that blessing and favour would come through the new covenant, through Jesus.

In Luke 1:25 we read about Elizabeth, who was barren and became the mother of John the Baptist. She said, *“The Lord has done this for me, ... in these days he has shown his favour and taken away my disgrace among the people.”*

And in Luke 1:28 the angel said to Mary, *“Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you!” ... Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High ... his kingdom will never end.”*

When Elizabeth met Mary, she exclaimed, *“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favoured, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ... Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished.”* **Luke 2: 45**

Elizabeth received favour because her son was to be the prophet who was to prepare the way for Jesus. And when she was in the presence of Jesus, who was still in the womb of Mary, she again recognised the favour of God. And Mary was highly favoured, because she was to bring forth the son

of the Most High.

So favour comes by knowing and carrying the life of this Jesus inside you. We can know Jesus and have his Spirit live inside us, and so we can also have his favour.

In Luke 4:18 Jesus preached his first sermon in the temple and said that Isaiah 61:1-11 was fulfilled that day. He said, *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners, and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.”*

### **So what is this favour we receive through Jesus?**

We have favour with God – by having our sins forgiven and not counted against us anymore; favour that as we exchange our sins for Jesus' life, he gives us his righteousness; favour that there is no longer any condemnation, even when we messed up or failed; favour that we have authority over the devil and his demons; favour that we can receive healing and full provision, no matter what the circumstances; favour that we need never be afraid of anything; favour, that we have eternal life, that never ends; favour that the God of the universe loves us and sings over us; favour that we are fully approved and fully accepted as one of his own; favour that we can sit in the presence of a holy God.

And it works through into our daily lives. We receive favour with man – favour in the work place, and in our studies, favour in being selected above others, favour in being recognised and honoured, favour in our marriages, favour in our families, favour for our children, favour for their futures and destinies.

## **There are 2 requirements to receive this favour:**

1) We must believe that Jesus is the only one who brings us this favour. If we think that in any way it is due to our abilities or gifting, or the people we know, then we miss the mark, and remain in darkness. Jesus is the fulfilment of that prophecy in Isaiah, and he brings in the year of the Lord's favour.

2) And secondly, we must believe Him when he says that God's favour rests on us. It is according to our faith in Jesus and his finished work. Mary was told by the angel in vs 37, *“For NOTHING is impossible with God.”* And in vs 45 it was also said to her, *“Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished.”*

What is the thing that you carry inside you? Is it the way of your culture and your people? Is it faith in a political party, or some form of charity to solve the problems of our society? Do you merely have an association with Jesus, or is his life the thing you carry inside your womb, your heart, like Mary? If you do, then you, too, are highly favoured. And the Lord is with you. You also, need not be afraid, because you have found favour with God. And his kingdom rule in your life will never end! The Holy Spirit will also come upon you and the power of the Most High will also overshadow you. And you can also know that, *“Nothing is impossible with God”*. And like Mary, others will also recognise Jesus in you and so also receive favour and blessing.

Thus Jesus brings favour in your life – great favour, continuous favour, undeserved favour, everlasting favour. That is the message of the New Covenant.

Pray with me as we close, *“Jesus, I receive you, as Saviour today. I invite your Holy Spirit to live in me. Thank you, for opening the way for favour with God and favour and blessing in my everyday life. Thank you that like Mary, I now am highly favoured and that nothing is impossible with God. Teach me to believe that what you have said, will be accomplished in my life. Amen.”*

God bless you till next week as we continue looking at the wonderful blessings of the New Covenant of grace.

## Link FM - The Grace of God

### Chapter 12

The last time we spoke about the wonderful undeserved favour that God gives us when we receive Him. Mary carried the life of this Jesus inside her and found favour. We must first believe that favour comes through knowing Jesus and having His Spirit live in us, and then we must receive it by faith. The day after I shared this message here on Link FM, I received a phone call that my son was given admission for next year to a school that had a waiting list of 600 pupils, and we had applied 3 months after the closing date. That, I believe is God's favour – undeserved grace!

Today we end this study on the grace of God, by looking at holiness and the mixture of law and grace. Are we more sin-conscious or more God-conscious? We have all been taught that we should regularly search our hearts for sin before we worship God or take communion. But the more we search our hearts, the more guilt and uncleanness we will find, and in the end we feel totally dejected and have no sense of worthiness to worship him.

We read the story of the sinful woman in Luke 7. She fell at Jesus' feet and worshipped Him, washing his feet with her tears and wiping them with her hair, then anointing them with fragrant oil. She worshipped Him just as she was, and after that Jesus said, "*Your sins are forgiven*". Whatever our need is, we can go to Jesus just as we are and He will meet us at our point of need. If you are struggling with a particular sin, He is your solution, He is your Forgiver. We tend to want to straighten out our lives first, but having a relationship with Jesus is the answer. That is the Gospel of grace, forgiveness and "*no more condemnation!*"

Titus 2:11-12 says, "*For the grace of God that brings*

*salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.*" It is clear that the grace of God, the message of "no condemnation", will produce righteous living in us; not by our trying to obey commandments. Receiving His grace, gives us authority to say, "No" when temptation comes. Grace is not a doctrine, it is a person and his name is Jesus. Grace "*appeared to all men*", teaching us that godliness is only found in Him, and when we have Him, we are made righteous, we are made holy, and his life begins to work out in our daily lives!

**What is "holiness"?** The word means "*separation to God*", which means that we are set apart, different from the rest of the world of unbelievers. The Israelites were set apart, made holy, by the blood of bulls and goats, and God protected and provided for them. How much more, we, in the New Covenant, who are made holy forever, by the blood of the perfect sacrifice of Jesus.

This means that when the world faces a financial crisis, or faces a pestilence, we as God's people are set apart. We are provided for with more than enough, we are set apart to enjoy God's protection and divine health! We don't have to search our hearts. When God searches our hearts, all He sees is that we are righteous, holy and forgiven.

How do you see yourself today? Are you more conscious of your sins, or are you more conscious of your righteousness and what Jesus' blood has done? We have been taught to be occupied with self, but grace teaches us to be occupied with Jesus. The more self-occupied we are, the more dejected, defeated and depressed we become, because from whichever angle we look at ourselves, we will see

unworthiness, ugliness, and disqualification. Joseph Prince says, *“to be occupied with Christ is to turn away from self and to see Jesus. He is like a precious diamond. When you hold Him up in the light of God's Word, whichever way you turn Him, He sparkles with rays of beauty, perfection, righteousness, holiness and wholeness. Look away from your own frailty and see Jesus, because the Word of God says, “As he is, so are we in this world.” Is Jesus holy? Then so are you!”*

But many people think that grace must be balanced with the law. *“It is good that you are saved by grace, but it is not enough for you to just have Jesus. You must also know and abide by the law of Moses to be pleasing to God.”* But the Apostle Paul was firm with the Galatians who taught circumcision and the commandments. Paul pronounced a double curse on them for mixing grace with law.

Rob Rufus calls this mixing of a little law with grace, *“a poisonous cocktail”*. The result is death. And Joseph Prince says what man calls balance, God calls mixture. You cannot balance law and grace. God's grace is nullified when we add even a little mixture of man's own efforts to be justified. Many believe that we are blessed when we obey the law and cursed when we fail. In the New Covenant, God says, we are blessed on account of His Son and what He did on the cross. It has nothing to do with our performance or ability to keep the law.

Jesus said in Mark 2:22, *“No one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins.”* Jesus was referring to the mixture of the two covenants. When you pour the new wine of grace into the old inflexible wineskin of law, you will lose both. Each covenant is robbed of its full effect in your life. Gal

3:24-25 says, *“The law was put in charge (was our schoolmaster) to lead us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.”* The law shows us our sinfulness and inability to keep the full measure of it, and leads us to despair, into the saving arms of Jesus. With a mixture, even the law will then be nullified.

Jesus exposed the true state of the hearts of the Pharisees, who tried to be justified by the law. He showed the true standard of God's law and holiness, and said, even if you fantasise about a woman, you are guilty of adultery, and if you get angry with a brother without cause, you are guilty of murder. It is impossible for man to keep his law! If you are not under grace, then make sure that you are completely under law, because when you put yourself completely under law, you will find that it will be your tutor to bring you to the end of yourself. When you finally acknowledge that you cannot save yourself, you will turn to Jesus. But a mixture is like lukewarmness that makes God nauseous.

Paul told the Galatians in chapter 5:4, *“You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.”* The more entangled you get with the law, the more the law will stir up sin in you. Trying to balance grace with the law, robs you of the power to reign in life. Grace is the power to get out of sin. Do we want to be holy? Yes, by believing that we are made holy through the blood of Jesus, set apart for Him, to love and serve Him; not by commandments we try to keep, or anything we do or don't do. So choose either the covenant of grace or the covenant of law. Either you enjoy the blessings of the Lord through His undeserved, unearned, and unmerited favour; or you trust in your own efforts and your own behaviour to deserve, earn and merit favour from the Lord. One produces life and the other produces death. I pray you will choose grace. Therein is life eternally!

Pray with me, *“Thank you, Father, for your wonderful, undeserved grace and forgiveness. Thank you that I am made holy forever, by the blood of Jesus. Thank you, that as I become more God-conscious and less sin-conscious, my life will begin to reflect your life that I focus on. Halleluyah! Amen.”* God bless you till January when we will begin another study on Monday mornings.

# The Prodigal Son

This family factory owner guy has two sons. The kid brother gets it into his skull that he's had enough. He goes to his dad, and as much as wishes the old man dead: "I want my half of the inheritance." The dad almost has a heart attack from the shock, but he sits down, does the sum, sells some shares and hands over half the family assets.

The son doesn't even hang around to hear his dad's top ten tips for survival. He legs it. Within weeks he's off to foreign climes, spending the nights filling the glasses of the designer set with his liquid assets. He has such a great time he can't remember any of it the next day. 'Course, the money goes down the toilet. So do the "friends" when they realise he's broke. So he surfs around and finds a site called, [www.worstjobsposs.com](http://www.worstjobsposs.com). He scrolls through the search results and ends up cleaning out the pigsties – not such a great career move, since he still counts himself Jewish.

He's there with his shovel, scratching away, and suddenly a light bulb goes on just above his head: *What am I doing? The worst job in the old man's empire is like jetter-setter status compared to this. If I had any food in my stomach, I'd be throwing up. I'll hitch-hike home. Work on a speech – something like "you don't have to think of me as family, but please, give me a job."*

After a long hot trip, he turns the corner into his old street. His dad sees him and runs out into the street in his slippers, throws his arms around him, lifts him up and spins him around. And the noise! The whole street hears it to. Sooo embarrassing!

The son starts his speech, but the dad cuts in, telling his assistant to arrange the biggest street party ever: "My son was virtually dead, and he's come back. He was lost and now he's turned up. Let's party!

Don't you just love a happy ending? Me too. Sorry, not this time! See, there's still the big-brother issue. He's coming home from work, he turns the same corner and thinks he's in a scene from an old musical: dancing, music, tables right up the middle of the street and everyone having a fantastic time. He calls over one of the waiters and asks, "We just won the lottery, or what?" The employee answer, "Better than that, sir: your brother's back, and your dad's blown the whole entertainment budget on the party!

That's the trigger. He loses it. Furious, he walks off, kicking lampposts, ranting and swearing. His dad catches up with him but he has to fend off words he'd never heard before from his eldest: "I've slogged my guts out. Slaving over your accounts. Doing exactly what you told me to do - I've not

even taken sick time when I fancied a day down at the beach – and did you ever, ever throw a party for me and my mates? No! But when this waster comes crawling back, oh yes, he get the full treatment. Well, thanks for nothing!

“Son,” his dad says, grabbing him by the shoulder and eye-balling him, “You’re around all the time, and I love it. What’s mine is yours. But how could I not throw a party – as far as I knew, your brother was dead! Now he’s alive. He could’ve been anywhere, and now he’s here, with us. Come, join the party.” (Luke 15:11-32, Word on the Street, by Rob Lacey: Zondervan 2003)