

## The Grace of God

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.*(EPH2:8) The word "Grace" translate from the Greek word "charis" means that which causes joy (chara), a free gift (charisma), for a kindness granted or benefit. Its definition is graciousness manner or act of favor, to remit a debt or to pardon an offense, to rejoice. So grace is the unmerited, loving favor and graciousness of our Creator. As a free gift, God bestows His grace upon us. How does He do that? We receive God's gift of grace through faith in Jesus Christ's sacrifice—His shed blood. *"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*(ROM3:24) If we did not receive that grace, we would die in our sins. Grace can be defined as God's favor toward the unworthy. In His grace, God is willing to forgive us and bless us abundantly, in spite of the fact that we don't deserve to be treated so generously. Grace is what saves us.

Bible says that people are saved by grace through faith and obey the Gospel which is power of God for the salvation. A person can achieve salvation only through faith and reliance on God's grace, not through good deeds. The manifestation of God's grace has been in the form of a free gift. Salvation is indeed the most extraordinary expression of God's grace. The grace of God provided what we lacked righteousness. This righteousness is what gives the Holy Spirit the ability to dwell in us and usher in the transformation of salvation. And this righteousness is a gift because of grace. The grace is because of His love; God is love. Salvation is God's righteousness at work in us when we say yes to His plan; that is how we demonstrate faith. Salvation is a miracle we watch reveal in our lives. The view of salvation is a pass to heaven or an escape from going to hell when we die. Salvation comes through faith in God's revealed purpose in His Son who died for all. Salvation that Jesus secured with His death, resurrection is one that restores a believer's oneness with God.

Man had sinned and fallen short of glory and as he was without hope in the world. We were justly condemned to death for sin and disobedience. *"there is none righteous, no, not one"*(ROM 3:10) We all need God's grace and favor. Man could be saved from his lost condition were redemption become necessary. "Save" means to rescue or deliver from harm or danger. God made a promise intimating the eventual recovery of mankind from Satan's influence. God Himself desired to make the first move in the rescue of man. *"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord"*(GEN6:8) The faith of Noah in God's promises saved him and his family from death in the flood. But now, Jesus has laid down his human life in sacrifice as atonement for sin. Jesus was sent to "save his people from their sins"(MAT1:21) The gracious God was fully manifested in Jesus Christ.(JOH1:18;HEB1:3) *And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory,.. grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*(JOH1:14,17) God send his Son into the world to save us from death, which is caused by sin.(JOH3:16,17) God's grace provided a sacrifice to die for us. Christ, the Lamb of God who gave Himself on the cross as atonement (punishment) for sin to bear our penalty so that we might be made righteousness of God in Him. (HEB7:26-28,2CO5:21,ROM3:21-26,GAL3:10-14)Thus, man has access to the grace of God through Jesus Christ, and our former condemnation has been removed, our penalty has been paid. God's righteousness and justice have been satisfied, share the love that the Father has for His Son. *In Christ we have redemption (restoration) through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.*(EPH1:7)It is God's richness in grace which provided the plan for deliverance from sin and death. Thus saved have eternal life.(1JO5:11,12)Those who follow on in faith in the steps of Redeemer, Jesus receive eternal-life, they pass from death to life.(EPH 2:1-13) *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.*(ACT16:31) Salvation is free to all who trust in Him and continue following on in faith. This gift God provides has given graciously. This is solely for our benefit and ratified with the blood of Christ. God paid for everything and we receive everything without money or works.(ISA55:1-3) It is because our salvation is "by grace" that we may rest our hope in God.

*"For the grace of God has appeared for the deliverance from sin and the eternal salvation for all mankind"*(TIT2:11;3:4-6) The grace of God is that in "the goodness and loving kindness of God" our Savior appeared. There was a time, when we did not know the grace of God in truth.(COL1:5,6) But a time came, *"For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.*(JOH1:16) Jesus is full of grace, and from that fullness, we have received grace upon grace. It is meant greater depths to our spiritual relationship and fellowship; greater measures of spiritual understanding; continual received favor and strength. We are now under a new covenant; we call it New Testament. This is covenant of grace, where justification is obtained. Salvation comes from the will of God, worth of Christ and work of the Holy Spirit. Salvation is completely divine action; that nobody can merit it. Therefore does the Lord declare, *'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious'*(EXO33:19) So then God's gift is not of human will and human effort, but of God's mercy.(ROM 9:16) Mercy emphasizes the wretched and miserable circumstances, whereas Grace emphasizes that they are unworthy or undeserving of favor. Mercy has to do with kindness and compassion; it is in the context of God's not punishing us for our sins deserve. Grace carries the idea of bestowing a gift or favor. Grace and mercy involve kindness and favor toward those in unfortunate circumstances. Forgiveness by grace reunites us into God's fellowship. Salvation by grace changes us from being dead in our sins (separated from God), to being made alive (made nigh or reconciled). This makes us His children, members of His household.(EPH2:1-5,11-13) This the age dispensation of Grace, we are living now; which will last up to return of Lord Jesus. *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*(ROM5:1-2)

*"Let us then fearlessly and confidently and boldly draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy (for our failures) and find grace to help in our time of need"* (HEB4:16) Bible encourages us to come boldly to the throne of grace. We need to realize our need for God's grace. We need God's grace for every single thing in this life. We are nothing without God. We will never be able to live the life God wants for us in our own flesh. We need to realize that without Christ, we can't do anything. (JOH15:5) This desperate need for God's help should motivate us to come to Him. The grace of God is for overcoming all struggles of life-for all of fears, hurts, pains. God's grace is available to meet every need of our daily lives. A guilty conscience is a message from God that we are on wrong path. God's grace is designed to relieve sinful man of a guilty conscience. In Matthew 5:21-28 that under grace, anger is equated with murder, and a wrong look is equated with adultery. So long as sinful works control the life, it is not possible to have the fruit of the Spirit. (GAL5:22) God's anointing is there for us for holy living, gracious living, power and strength. So that we can be Jesus like - in our thoughts, attitudes, love, faith and purity. He is also providing measure of His power with us so that we can continue His mission of destroying the works of the devil and setting others free from Satan's destructive grasp. Christian must stand in the grace of God, he must be strong in the grace of God. (2TI2:1;HEB13:9) God wants us to humble ourselves - and that is, in order to give us His grace. *God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.* (1PE 5:5) If we are proud, we don't get grace from God and we cannot live a victorious life. God sets himself against the proud and haughty, but gives grace to lowly, those who are humble enough to receive it. (JAM4:6) Trying to do things in our own strength and change ourselves through our efforts only bring frustration. In order to obtain the grace of God, we must acknowledge ourselves as a weak, helpless and nothing to boast. Grace requires a humble heart. Grace thinking overcomes pride. Words for God extend to others; kind, gentle in what and how you say it. God's grace teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions. Grace defined as God's sufficiency or God's fullness in the life of the believer. Grace is equated with 'power'.

Jesus said *"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness"* (2CO12:9) This grace (power) enabled Paul empowered him in his weakness and all in trials, where he testified. *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* (1CO15:10) It was God's grace that working in him, as the servant of God, he labored and cooperated with it for his own spiritual growth. We also need the grace of God. We need God's strength and sufficiency. Grace as the living dynamic of the life of Christ in us by the Holy Spirit. All these: the anointing, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the grace of God, are closely related. God does His work in our minds and hearts through the Spirit of grace. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. (PHI1:25) Paul explained that he was made a minister of the gospel *"according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.* (EPH3:7) We can have as much grace as we need because His grace is unlimited. *"Immeasurable riches of his free grace in kindness to us in Christ Jesus"* (EPH2:7) God provides daily strength through His grace working in us. No more fear or anxiety ever again enters your heart. Receive and take hold of the grace and power of God in our daily lives. Indeed what grace...from "the God of all grace" (1PE5:10)

Romans 5:21 says that *"just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Because of our faith in Christ, we have peace with God, we stand in His grace, we rejoice both in the hope of God's glory and in our temporary suffering. God's grace is the greater ruler. It reigns over sin and death. Grace reigns unto eternal life, which means that the reign of grace results in eternal life. It is in this eternal life that we shall reign. This should be our experience today. We are brought into God's kingdom by grace; we have been made kings and priests to our God. (REV1:5) Grace in life is necessary to rule and exercise authority over the situations that we are in. To reign is to be a king; it is to subdue something and rule over it. To reign also means to have a dominion or a kingdom. Our Christian life today should be not only a victorious and overcoming life; it should also be a kingly life, a reigning life. As kings we must subdue the enemies and rule over them, our major enemies are sin, death, satan. *"much more those who receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ"* (ROM5:17) God which works in man to do His will. We should seek His grace for living, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. (2CO4:15;8:1-4;9:8,1:12)

There are different sins against the grace of God. Setting aside the Grace of God. (GAL2:21) Receiving God's grace in vain. (2CO6:1) Turning the Grace of God into lustful. (JUD4) Falling from Grace. (GAL5:4) Falling Short of the Grace of God (HEB12:15) Insulting the Spirit of Grace. If we "insult the Spirit of Grace" and "no sacrifice for sins remains" (HEB10:26,29)

*But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"* (2PE3:18) God's Grace offers us Spiritual blessings that believers with capacity to grow and fruitful. Every facet of Christian's life requires an applied understanding of the Word and orientation to the Grace. Grace provides us access to God and fellowship with Him. (EPH1:6;HEB4:16) Grace justifies us before holy God. (ROM3:24;TIT3:7) Grace helps us in our every need, daily provision. (ACT4:33,34,ROM8:32) Grace preserves, comforts, strengthens us. (2CO13:14;2TH2:16) Grace grants us immeasurable spiritual riches/spiritual gifts. (ROM12:6,EPH3:7) Sevenfold gifts of grace are: wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, faithfulness, fear of the Lord. *Grace and spiritual blessings and peace be yours from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.* (ROM1:7)

*“looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and thereby many defiled.”*(Hebrews12:15) Make sure that no one falls short of the grace of God. Once one receives God's grace and stands in His grace, future un-repentant actions by that individual could cause him or her to fall short of being under grace. For instance, if bitterness which is a state of anger and hatred is not repented of, one could become defiled by that wrong attitude or spirit and fall short of the grace of God. Un-forgiveness is a murderer to all kinds of forms of the grace of God. It keeps God's grace away from your life. Therefore, we need to continue to pursue peace with all people and maintain holiness. The word peace refers a state of harmony, quietness in one's relationships. True holiness is a life pleasing to God on all levels possible. Likewise, we could be like Esau who sold out his future for the pleasures of the present. Make sure that no one is immoral or disrespectful person like Esau, who sold his birthright in exchange for a single meal. In Genesis 25 states that Esau despised his birthright. Esau's view of his birthright showed negligence. When a person applies that same attitude towards God, it's something unholy. After Esau begs, Jacob gives him inferior blessing. Christians who respond to trials by seeking God in faith can avoid the fate, spiritual errors of careless like Esau. We should never take lightly what the Lord has for us. Below are few things that can cause us to fall short of God's grace.

Depending on Works Rather than Grace: *You have been alienated (separated) from Christ, if you who are seeking to be justified by law[legal justification]; you have fallen from grace.*(Galatians5:4) Bible reveals that one can fall from grace. It's possible to be once saved and yet be in a place where God's grace isn't upon our life. To fall from grace is referring to a loss of status, respect, prestige. Fall from grace refer to: Fall of man, from a state of innocent obedience to a state of guilty disobedience to God. To fall from concept of grace means that someone leaves the concept of salvation by grace alone. If we reject the one through whom grace is bestowed, we lose God's grace, and ultimately salvation He provides. We are justified, reconciled to God by the death of His Son. Accepting Jesus means accepting Faith in His blood, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. Complaining and not being thankful heart hinders the favor and blessings of God. And failure to yield to God's discipline. This is a warning message to those who reject the eternal security of the believer.

The book of Galatians is dealing with a heresy(deviation) that has taken the church of Galatia. In chapter 1:6-9, states that they have left true gospel for another gospel, which is not another. *If anyone is preaching to you a gospel different from or contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.* There's a false Jesus and a false gospel mentioned in the bible.(MAT24:3-8) If we believe in any other Jesus than the one taught in scripture, we have the wrong Jesus and loss His grace and favor. We must acknowledge the divinity of Jesus Christ. In chapter 3:1-3, likens a dependency on works with that of witchcraft. *“You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you not obey the truth? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh”* Galatians were trying to complete their salvation by works. They were again observing various festivals, Sabbath observance, commanded in the law of Moses and were considering circumcision.(GAL2:21) Their teaching was in contradiction to the Apostle Paul's teaching that salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone. Jesus Christ is both God and man, He is the one and only divine mediator who can restore the relationship between God and human.(1TI2:5) Because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.(ROM8:2) Christians have been freed from bondage to the sinful nature, we now have the path of holiness open to us. There were false teachers known as Judaizers in the early church were teaching that such works(laws) were necessary for salvation to be complete. (ACT15:1,5)To be sure there are modern-day Judaizers, who put emphasis on things that they do. Examples: many churches today change object of worship and glory.(from God to Mary) *Angel said, Greetings, highly favored woman[means one who has been “favored” or “graced” by God]!*(LUK1:28) Mary refers to God as her Savior.(v47) Mary obediently submitted to God's will.(v38) Mary was a willing servant, trusting in God, obeying his call. They have legalistic tradition, religious rituals, human law; hence rely upon works to justify themselves. *for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified*(2:16

In Gal.3:13 concerning Christ's sacrifice and warns against setting aside grace that comes from Christ. When we place our faith in the things that we do or works, rather than what Christ has done for us, we fall from grace. While Christian disciplines, consecrations are required, we must not conclude that these things justify us. If we could be justified through our works or the law, then Christ's death on the Cross was meaningless. Are you living under grace? The way to live for the Lord, remain free from the fall from grace, is to live each day by faith in Christ. *“I have been crucified with Christ; and I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.*(GAL2:20) Thank you Lord Jesus for your sacrifice; help me to keep my faith in you, walk with you. Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with yoke of bondage.(GAL5:1) Every believer needs constant cleansing and forgiveness, whether willfully sinning or not. Most of suffering we endure; God intends those experiences for our good—to train us into a more mature in faith. We are justified by Christ's blood. We do not become disqualified by our undiscipline or disobedient actions. Therefore, we must remain steadfast in holiness. *let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*(HEB12:28)

## Check your Attitude

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God chose us that we should be holy. He called us to be His children according his purpose of grace.(2TI1:9;ROM8:28-30; EPH1:4) The absolute righteousness and justice of God the Father demand perfection in us. God is perfect, and His plan is perfect. We must go on towards perfection(spiritual maturity), in acquaintance with Christ and his gospel to holiness. *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.*(2PE1:2-4)

*I dwell in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and humble in spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite.[repentant-changed mind and attitude]* (ISA57:15) According to God's word, when you become a Christian(born again), a part of your new creation is the development of new attitude—your attitude should become like that of Jesus. *Let this same attitude and purpose and humble mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus* (PHI2:5) Let Him be your example in humility. The word "attitude" literally means to think, or to be minded in a certain way. It is not just thinking thoughts, but it is more the attitude behind those thoughts. Other words often uses are: opinion, disposition, feeling, mood, sentiment, temper, tone perspective, frame of mind, outlook, morale, viewpoint. In essence your attitude is your inward disposition toward other things such as people/circumstances. Most of us can easily identify bad attitudes when they are displayed outwardly in our words or actions, such negatives, criticalness, rebellion, defiance, impatience, uncooperative, apathy, discouragement, independence, presumption, arrogance, self-centeredness, rudeness and such like. These are examples of bad attitudes, which Christians should reject. However, keep in mind, attitudes are inner dispositions of the heart and thoughts, they are the hidden intentions, which will eventually serve as the basis for our actions. *For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.*(PRO23:7) In reality, no one else really knows the thoughts of your heart, except you and God. Consequently, attitude is something that only you and God can work out a change, which must take place inwardly. An example of bad attitude is seen when hard times come to life of a person. He became resentful toward God, critical of other Christians. All of us go through difficult times or hardship may trouble our hearts. The right attitude to have when difficulty comes is to persevere in faith and draw nearer to God, to fall at the feet of Jesus. God is the God of comfort (encouragement) in all areas in this life; He can bring comfort if your dealing with sickness his word tells us that by his stripes we are healed. It can change our outlook, attitude, and focus. Bible makes it clear that God works all things together for our good when we love Him, and the testing of our faith is for our benefit. Trouble will never defeat person with a right attitude. Finally, brethren, Aim for perfection, be encouraged, be of one mind, live in peace.(2CO13:11)

**Flesh:** *Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*(MAR14:38) Every part of man was pure, including his body. But when Adam and Eve ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, something terrible happened. They took in the sinful nature of the devil. This deadened their spirit, damaged their soul, and corrupted their pure body, changing it into the sinful flesh. "Now the doings(practices) of the flesh (godless human nature) are clear: they are immorality (adultery, wickedness, contrary to conscience or divine law), impurity (the condition or quality being impure in any sense or thought: defilement, foulness, adulteration), indecency (the state or quality of being indecent: want of modesty or good manners, offensiveness in behavior, expression or appearance), idolatry (worship of false gods, blind or excessive devotion to something; respect or love which on adoration), sorcery (witchcraft, magic, divination by the assistance of evil spirits), enmity (hatred, one who is hostile to or opposes the purposes/interests of another), strife (variance, conflict, disagreement among persons, groups, or things), jealousy (suspiciously watchful, fearful of losing affection or position), anger (wrath, ill temper, outbursts of anger), selfishness (selfish ambition), divisions (dissensions, the act of being divided /separation of a mass or body, a grade or rank in classification), party spirit(heresies, factions, sects with peculiar opinions), envy (to covet, try to equal or excel), murders (unlawful killing of a person, to destroy/spoil) drunkenness (habitual indulgence in alcoholic liquor, uncontrolled excitement or emotion, violent anger), carousing (take great pleasure, wild party or celebration) and the like.(GAL5:19-21) "Flesh" causes the tendency to sin. Carnally minded as, relating to the desires of the flesh; sensual, not spiritual. Desire for the physical life is the point of weakness, vulnerability to sin, cause of denial of the spiritual life. Tendency to sin still exists as long as you live in a earthly world, that only way to have victory is to die daily to physical desire.(1JO2:17)

**Selfishness:** *A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He defies against all wise judgment.*(PRO18:1) Selfishness is the quality or state of being concerned only for the things that are inclined toward, or belong to individual, who always thinks only about it self, their own pleasure/interest regardless of its impact on others. Pride focuses on "I," on "me!" Selfishness is a problem each of us individually must deal with and conquer if we are going to please God! Selfishness is at the heart of most people. *you want only what will give you pleasure.*(JAM4:3) Selfishness can be very subtle, almost unnoticeable. Our attitudes and interests are often firm, it is a hindrance to a Christian's spiritual growth. *For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.*(JAM3:16) No one is immune to selfishness. It is sin and must be overcome. The best way to overcome selfishness: "whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." We must put the things of God first. When you do things, do not let selfishness or pride be your guide. Be humble and give more honor to others than to yourselves. *When Job prayed for his friends, the Lord restored his fortunes.*(JOB42:10)

*For by faith you stand firm.* (2CO1:24) The opposite of faith is doubt, or unbelief. We stand strong in Christ by faith; yet, we fall away from Christ through unbelief. Another name for unbelief is lack of faith. *“everything that does not come from faith is sin”* (ROM14:23) Faith means active belief, loyalty and trust in God’s word. (HEB3:7) But if we then refuse to trust and to obey, that is unbelief. Definition: unfaithfulness (ROM3:3) withholding belief in the divine power, or in the promises of God. *So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!* (1CO10:12) James 1:6 likened a doubting person to a wave of the sea, unstable, driven to and fro. Jesus' disciple Thomas refused to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead until He saw the risen Lord. (JOH20:27-30) The Bible mentions two kinds of unbelief. One kind of unbelief is doubt accompanied by a desire to believe: Lord, I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief! (MAR9:24) In Luke 17:6, although the father had his doubts, he was willing to exercise faith so Jesus healed his son. Another kind of unbelief is an obstinate, hard-hearted refusal to believe: *See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.* (HEB3:12) Sin includes wrong and evil attitudes in our hearts. Jesus taught that wrong attitudes in people’s hearts cause all kinds of wicked behavior. (MAR7:21-23) This kind of unbelief not only hinders the work of God but also brings about God's righteous anger and judgment. Some, no longer have faith at all (ITIH3:2), ship-wrecked their faith (ITII:19), left the faith for the doctrines of devils (ITII:1), denied the faith by not providing for their family (ITIS:8), cast off their first faith (ITIS:12), erred from the faith for the love of money (ITI 6:10, 21), overthrow the faith of others by wandered away from the truth (IIT2:17-18;3:8) Unfortunately, for many will fall away in unbelief. But my righteous one will live by faith. (HEB10:38) *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”* (HEB11: 1) Faith is the connecting power into the spiritual realm, which links us with God and makes Him become a tangible reality to the sense perceptions of a person. When faith in God it means, we have put all our confidence and hope in Him. Results of faith are seen in the radical changes that people experience when they place their trust in Jesus. *Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you unless, of course, you fail the test?* (ICO13:5) When Moses led God’s people through the desert, their worst sin was wrong attitude of their hearts (HEB3:8) They did not want to trust God, so they would not obey him. The results of unbelief are very serious, people whom Moses led could not enter Promised Land. Those were the same ones who experienced the oppression of slavery, witnessed God's plagues upon Egypt, watched Red Sea part for them, trembled at God's power revealed at Mount Sinai, they tasted bread from heaven, and they drank water from a rock. But what happened to that generation? They wandered in the wilderness for forty years and did not enter into the Promised Land (except for Joshua and Caleb) because of their unbelief/disobedience. (HEB3:17-19) Don't be deceived: those who cast off their faith, depart from God even if they knew Him at one time will not inherit the Kingdom of God, unless they repent and get back on the path to salvation. Salvation is a lifetime journey that requires “deny himself and take up his cross and follow Jesus” and learning from being disciple by the Savior. (MAT16:24). You must guard your heart diligently and cling to Jesus so that you do not lose faith. (HEB4:1,11) We skillfully wield “shield of faith” against all the sharp arrows of the enemy that we may stand firm. *But you beloved, building up yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.* (JUD1:20) **Bitterness:** *lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.* (HEB12:15) Bitterness is a spiritual poison that will not only destroy our life, but also affect the lives of those around us. It could be something someone did or the adversities of life that torments us until it becomes a root of bitterness in our life. No matter what the cause, it keeps us from experiencing the grace and favor of God. Forgiveness is giving up your right to hurt someone for hurting you. Un-forgiveness is like drinking a cup of poison and hoping it kills the other person. When we become bitter we say and do things we normally wouldn't. The fruits of bitterness are anger, wrath, slander, hate, malice (desire to see another suffer). Bitterness produces the Sin of un-forgiveness. The word bitterness refers something cutting and sharp, it also implies bitter taste. Stages of bitterness - Oversensitive to a verbal remark, action, or lack of action. Hurt feelings. Repulsive feeling toward a person at the thought or sight of him. Remembering wounds. Isolation of a person. Verbal slander against the person. Lack of obedience. Becoming like the one you despise. As a response to wrongdoing, bitterness is never acceptable before God, hinders prayer since it is sin. It will cause to stray from the Lord and alienates from the body of Christ. It causes division in the body of Christ. It brings about jealousy, envy and strife. It is a result of pride. It gives Satan an advantage in our lives. Nothing good ever comes from bitterness, it will eat away at us until we are destroyed. Bitterness can be tricky to recognize because it's not a symptom or visible. It keeps getting worse; it hurts not only the holder, but everyone in the way. It motivates complaining and gossip. Holds grudges and finds it difficult to forgive, displays stubbornness. The devastation of bitterness is vividly depicted in the life of King Saul. He began his reign as respected ruler, but he ended his life in defeat, sorrow and suicide. Bitterness eventually develops into scheming, plotting. *“Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy”* (PRO14:10) There is a root of bitterness, it needs to be cut off at the root and removed from one's soul. We need to make a choice to release all hurt, up feelings, repent for holding that poison in our hearts. For your sake and the sake of those around you, resist and reject bitterness. Make a list of the ways in which that person has offended/hurt you. Turn from those feelings and forsake them, allow Lord's love to minister to your soul. Ask God to forgive you for your bitterness toward that person. (EPH4:6,31; MAT6:14,15)

## Impurity

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*But fornication or of any kind of impurity [of lust, sexual immorality] or greediness must not even be mentioned among you, because these are improper for God's holy people.*(EPH5:3,4) Bible is talking about impurity the context is typically regarding sexual sins, they are sexual immorality, indecency. The "works of the flesh" involve "Sins of moral impurity" It refers to dirt or dirtiness in a physical sense. It then came to be used in a moral sense, of that moral depravity which disgusts the person who sees it. Impurity enters into our hearts mainly through our eyes and our ears. This impurity then comes out from our hearts and expresses itself through the various members of our bodies-primarily thru our tongues and eyes. Impurity has a way of building upon itself, leading the person never to be satisfied. *He who sins sexually sins against his own body. put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, greed, which is idolatry.*(COL3:5) Filthy lusts must be rooted out. These sins must be dreaded and detested. Anyone who seeks to be pure must therefore be especially careful about what he sees and what he hears. Jesus told His disciples that they should be willing to pluck out their right eye and cut off their right hand rather than sin with those members.(MAT5:8,27) *Flee from sexual immorality.*(1CO6:18) *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt.*(COL4:6) Purity is one of the ways that people represent themselves as God's children.(1JO3:2-3) Purity has the ability to lead ungodly men to God.(IPE3:1-2) Purity enables people to interact with fellow believers in a non-threatening way: *"Treat ..younger women as sisters, with absolute purity"*(1TI5:1-2) *"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity"*(1TI4:12;2CO6:6) When we think of impurity, we often think of sexual sin. Impurity includes all kinds of sin and encompasses any activity, thought, word, or action that does not conform to God's will for our lives. *"God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life"*(1TH4:7) We should find deal with this problem. Whenever a thought comes (impure and temptation) to your mind recognize that it is not of God, pray and ask God to change your thought toward Jesus and his ways. You must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the vanity of their mind[thinking](EPH4:17,29) By led in the Spirit it is possible to overcome the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. By setting our minds on the things of the Spirit and obtaining the aid of Spirit (via prayer) we can produce the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, instead of the works of the flesh. *Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.*(ROM6:19) **Covetousness:** *Covetousness, wickedness, deceit, indecent, envy(an evil eye), slander, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.*(MAR7:22) To covet is to go after something that is not in the will of God. This unlawful desire equated with idolatry because it puts self-interest, visible things in the place of God. So he serves to get it. To covet something is not merely wishing for it, but going after it, lusting for it, and working to it at any cost. In fact, it was the first sin. Eve saw what she couldn't have. She wanted it and took it. Covetousness is a discontent with what we have, an intense desire for something else, something we believe will make us happy or satisfied. It is to allow oneself to indulge in grasping thoughts that lead to actions. Desire is so normal; yet, some desires are destructive. Lust means to set one's heart upon. Jealousy means fear of losing something important to another. Envy means feelings of inferiority, desire to possess rival's qualities. Greed is expressing excessive desire, especially for food, drink, sex, wealth. Coveting normally begins with a perception of beauty; we desire to possess a thing because it looks good to us. Second, it comes from an inclination for something abstract, like a desire for power. Some have a passion to be number one, to compete, to dominate, to assert their will, and to have control. Such an attitude frequently produces envy and dispute. It often involves fraud, deceit, lying. Some passionately pursue possessions and the glory associated with owning them. Bible gives several examples of evil desire leading to more sin: Achan desired silver, gold and a beautiful Babylonian garment; he stole them despite knowing that they had been devoted to the Lord. He was killed as a result of his coveting. (JOS7:18-26) Abimelech desired the prestige of the throne, and he murdered seventy times to get it.(JUD9:1-5) David desired Bathsheba, leading him to commit adultery and then murder.(IISA11:1-27)Ahab desired the vineyard of Naboth, and it led him and Jezebel to compound that sin by lying, then taking God's name in vain and murder.(IKI21:1-19) Because of his greed, Gehazi became unfaithful to the Lord, and to Elisha.(2KI5:20-27) And the way it destroys the godly service. It is picture of religious hypocrisy, failure to progress spiritually, false values that destroy a man's pursuit of righteousness. *For the love of money is the root of all of evil:*(1TI6:10) Covetousness lies at the heart of which is the root of most of sins. (ECC1:8)We give ourselves justification, unwilling to discipline ourselves to do what is right. When we have evil desires, turns from them when they arise, pursues after what is good. Learn to hate greed.(ITI 6:3-9;17-19)Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.(LUK12:15,31;COL3:1-2) God is sovereign and man is subject to God.(PSA24:1,1CO6:20) God owns it all, even you! We are only managers(stewards) of what God has given us. The tithe should be offered as a result of perspective of God as the Owner and Giver of all things. We will learn how to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in the wise use of all of our resources-money, time, talents etc. Contentment is one of the most distinguishing traits of the godly person, because a godly person has his heart focused on good rather on possessions or position or power. Let us genuinely ask God to show us the truth about our hearts, our thinking, values and priorities. Covetousness is interested in getting more; but love is interested in giving. *Remove far from me vanity, deception and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; but give me only my daily bread.*(PRO30:8)

## Spiritual Pride

- 7 -

*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*(MAT5:3) The word 'poor' literally means having nothing, like a beggar, totally broke. The opposite of 'Poor in Spirit' is 'proud in spirit'(PRO8:13) What Jesus really meant was spiritual poverty. 'Spiritual poor', it is a state when you realize that you have nothing and need constant help. It is picture of a man with humble, broken heart who constantly needs help from God for his very existence. In the Kingdom of God, this is the most important qualification, you can have. You can be really poor, yet be arrogant and prideful or you can be rich and still be poor in the spirit. King David is great example, in spite of being King, he had a humble, contrite heart *But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word*"(ISA66:1) A man's pride will bring him low, but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.(PRO29:23) Selfish pride be defined as excessive confidence or glorification in one's self, possessions or denomination. It is dangerous to have a spirit of pride. Selfish pride is sin. If we are not careful we can develop a spirit of pride that will manifest itself in an attitude of superiority. The attitude that "we have more than you have" "All others are below par". Along with pride itself, in words such as arrogance, haughtiness, boasting, high self-esteem all of which are opposite of Godly humility. To boast in one's flesh is not only vain, it is also worldly.(1COR1:18-31) The only worthwhile boasting is in the cross of Christ.(GAL6:14) Only boasting in our weakness, apart from God's grace and the price His Son paid on Calvary to redeem us, is acceptable.

The wrongness of self-centered pride inevitably leads to disregard, disrespect, disobedience to God i.e. pride is primarily what transformed the once-righteous Lucifer into the wicked Satan after he became too impressed with himself: *I will make myself like the Most High*(ISA14:14) Pride was the downfall of Lucifer. Beware! The spiritual wickedness, which Satan provokes unto you, especially the saint, is spiritual pride. It's the very sin that caused Lucifer to be cast down from heaven. Selfish pride often results in self-destructive behavior because, while a form of self-delusion, it isn't necessarily as much an overestimation of one's self as well it is a dangerous underestimation of others, hence "*Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall*"(PRO16:18) *God will humble those who don't humble themselves.*(LEV26:18-21) "*The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the pride of men shall be humbled; and The Lord alone will be exalted in that day*"(ISA2:11) We must at all costs avoid letting pride of any sort come into our hearts and minds. Danger is that you could easily make the mistake that prophet Ezekiel warned: They transformed the beauty of His ornaments into pride.(EZE7:20) If you don't develop a habit of praising each of God's attributes, it will be easy to stop of praising the Lord and wind up with the praise coming back towards you. Only a true servant of humility will continue to be blessed by God. We must continue to press forward in our service for God. A wrong attitude can stop our progress and fall short of the grace of God. We must repent of our pride the sin in spirit of humility and humble ourselves. We can cry out to the Lord; "*Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.*"(PSA51:10

Does your life live up to God's standard of meekness and humility? Are you submitting to God and correcting the sins in your life? *Jesus said "I am meek and lowly in heart"*(MAT11:29) *the man Moses was very meek, above all men on face of the earth.*(NUM12:3) If we seek to be blessed, to be led by the Spirit, to avoid destruction, and to be like Jesus, we need to possess meekness and humility. Meekness means a calm temper, someone who is not easily provoked. It does not mean weakness but of strength. Meekness is an attitude and quality of heart.(1PE3:4) whereby a person willingly accepts and submits without resistance, desires of someone else. Meekness is an attribute of human nature and behavior. It has been defined: righteous, humble, teachable, patient under suffering, long suffering willing to follow gospel teachings; an attribute of a true disciple. Meekness is primarily emphasized as submissiveness toward God rather than toward men. Meekness is the opposite of self-will, self-interest, and self-assertiveness. To be meek is to deny self. True meekness says, What does God want? Is this really best according to God's way/will/counsel which are much better than ours that we should submit. Humility is an attitude and quality of mind.(ACT20:19) whereby a person holds low esteem, opinion of his own goodness, importance. Proper humility toward God is admit of our own weakness, sinfulness, unprofitableness, and inability to obtain or accomplish and therefore he is willing to depend on God to meet His needs. It is the opposite of pride, haughtiness, and self-exaltation. *when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.*(LUK17:5-10) God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.(1CO1:26-31) The things of the world come from pride of life, pride of self, pride of one's own abilities. God uses the weak things like meekness, humbleness of spirit. Jesus humbled himself submitting unto death on the cross. A meek-humble person will accept persecution, mistreatment, suffering, or hardship without rebelling against God and without doubting His wisdom. Sometimes like Job, we have not sinned but God allows Satan to cause hardships. Paul's thorn in the flesh kept him from being overly exalted.(2CO12:7-10) Hardships are for our good if we endure faithfully. So, problems may be allowed that they keep us from becoming proud and self-reliant. Meekness requires that we too oppose sin and false doctrine in the lives of others. *Brothers, if a man is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, watching yourselves, lest you also be tempted.*(GAL6:1) Spiritual pride is a subtle enemy that we all continually guard against and fight. *God hates pride and resist it.*(JAM4:6-10)

*“For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace”*(ROM8:6) Developing right attitude can only occur as a result of having the right convictions in your heart. The choices you make in life, wise or foolish will be a reflection of the strength of your convictions. Our testimony is displayed in our attitude. The development of a right attitude is dependent upon a growing knowledge of God and His power. Jesus said that we must choose between what two things? Anything earthly thing that takes priority over God will put us in bondage to that thing and decrease in our interest in spiritual things. Simultaneously there is a decrease in church attendance and association with those active in the church. Backsliding, known as falling away or committing apostasy, to describe a process by which an individual who has converted to Christianity reverts to pre-conversion habits and falls into sin, when a person turns from God to pursue their own desire. *but a wise man listens to advice.*(PRO12:5,11:14) A surrendered heart will always yield a fruitful life! In the Parable of Sower, Jesus presents of how differently people respond to the Word of God. We must be willing to put God's principles into action by making wise choices. As a result of our obedience, we can enjoy God's blessings.

Believer is commanded to have a different mind, to develop a biblical viewpoint, and possess a Christ like attitude in all things. Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly.(ROM12:16;15:5) To have the mind of Christ means to think and to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. So that we bring our thoughts and actions into harmony with God's viewpoint by applying God's views to everything we do and to everything that happens to us. Jesus used Scripture to counter Satan's attacks, to show how vital God's whole council is to our ability to handle temptation and sin. *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind,* (EPH4:23) Having the same mind means an attitude of humility. Attitude of humility expresses itself in servant living. Humility prepares the way for agape love which puts the needs of others above self. *“First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.”*(MAT23:26) The problem is “stinking thinking,” that is lacking divine viewpoint and faith in the power and purposes of God.(PHI4:8) If you are continually thinking about the goodness of God, you won't have any time to dwell on negative thoughts that may get you down and discouraged.(PSA77:12) A positive/right attitude is a key to success in life.

**Identify and Repent of Bad Attitudes.**(ACT8:22) Submit your attitudes to God: Bring your attitudes into obedience to God's Word. Apply discipline to your thought life; submit your thoughts to those of Christ's. A good attitude is matter of faith, disregarding your feelings, with a determination to embrace God's outlook and character.(2CO10:5) Equip and Feed Your Attitudes: Dwell on the things that God's word tells us to those good and virtuous things. The proper attitude toward the world is separation. *“Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord.*(2COR6:17;1CO15:33;1JO2:15;JAM4:4)The attitude toward authority which will make one can overcome is submission to God.(JAM4:7) A believer is in submission to God when he is in submission to those whom God has placed in position of authority. *Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.*(1PE5:6)The mighty hand of God speaks of five relationships in which there is submission to authority. (1) To one another: Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.(EPH5:21:1PE5:5) (2) Wives to their husbands: Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.(COL3:18;1PE 3:1;EPH 5:22) (3) Members to the elders in the Church: *Obey your leaders and submit to their authority.*(HEB13:17;1TH5:12) (4) To the civil government: *Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority.*(1PE2:13-14;ROM13:1) (5) Employee to employers: *Servants, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect,*(1PE2:18;EPH 6:5-8;COL3:22) Note: For children are to obey their parents in the Lord.(EPH6:1) Those having authority submit to those under authority by submitting to and fulfilling their responsibilities as servants to those under their authority. *“just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many”*(MAT20:25-28) Husbands: *love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.*(EPH5:25;COL3:19;1PE 3:7) Elders: *Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-- but being examples to the flock.*(1PE5:1-3;ACT20-28) Employers: *masters, treat your servants in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.*(EPH6:9;ROM13:3) The Proper attitude in relationship to God's dealing is *“I am sanctified/consecrated”*(set apart for God and His use/purpose) Therefore, I need to purge attitudes and myself of bad/evil desires, which are hindering me from being used by God.(2TI2:21,PHI1:6,2TI2:15) The proper attitude in relationship to God's plan is Jesus could return at any moment, I must, therefore, be about my Father's business. The overall attitude adjustment for the believer in relationship to God himself has to do with priorities. According to scripture, your attitude toward life, circumstances, toward other people should always be like the Christ Jesus. If we trust in God, we will have ingredients of Godly character and Eternal life.

**Be Honest:** *Surely you desire honesty (truth) from the heart;*(PSA51:6) Honesty is not just about telling the truth. It's about being real with yourself and others about who you are, what you want and what you need to live your most authentic life. Honesty promotes openness, empowers us and enables us to develop consistency in how we present the facts. The Lord doesn't approve of dishonesty in business dealings.(PRO20:23;25:18) Riches gained dishonestly don't last (PRO21:6) Do it God's way: The Lord hates cheating and delights in Honesty.(PRO11:1) Lying lips are abomination to the Lord.(PRO12:22) Lying is not having an honest enough heart to admit the truth. We may tell a little "white lie"; to say something in form of a promise and then not keep your word is to lie. Being honest is about following in God's footsteps, for He cannot lie.

"Be faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life"(REV2:10) Faithful means: True, trustworthy and constant in the performance of duties or services, fulfillment of promises or commitments. *But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.*(2TH3:3) God remains faithful to God's people, both fulfilling and promising to all His promises. *If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, since he cannot deny himself.*(2TI2:13) God's faithfulness to His promises discharging every aspect of the covenant He had made, they are "Yes" in Christ. Trustworthy servants must prove themselves to be faithful ministers of Christ.(1CO4:2;CO1:7,4:7) Paul remains faithful to God in spite of pressures. *He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.*(1TI1:12) Timothy is to select teachers who correctly handles the word of truth and exhibit faithfulness. The faithful person is one who can be counted on to carry out his responsibilities, to the best of his ability, in all circumstances. It is the person of faith who has the capacity to be faithful in their responsibilities before God and man.(NUM12:7;NEH9:7;DAN6:4) The Spirit of God enables us to remain faithful. They will experience the discipline and courage needed for faithfulness. Apostle Paul says: *I can do all things through Him[in Christ] Who gives me strength.*(PHI4:13) A servant is to be faithful to the gifts, abilities, opportunities and God given duties and leave the results to the Master for the Glory of God. For Christian, faithfulness occurs when we allow the Lord Jesus to reproduce Himself or transformed by His life in us.(COL1:28) *He who calls you is faithful and he will do it.*(1TH5:24) There is a basic Christian responsibilities for which we are all to be faithful - in prayer, bible study, loving one another, fellowship and edification, giving[money matters], showing mercy. However, there are also specific responsibilities or duties in the will of God that He calls us to do. *"even more diligent to make your calling and election sure"*(2PE1:10) Our ability to be a blessing to others is dependent on our faithfulness to use our God-given spiritual gifts and talents. See unfaithfulness of Eli, especially his sons, to discharge their duties in accordance with conditions prescribed by God's Word.(ISA2:29-33) For instance, Christ rebuked the religious Pharisees for their lack of faithfulness, because their faith was not truly in God but in their own legalistic system of works. We are called on to look to the Lord Jesus as our supreme example or model of faithfulness and for faith life. One of the purposes of the Christian life is ministry where we function not only as good stewards, but as servants of others, serving one another in love. Stephen remained strong and true to the very end, his faith never waver.(ACT7:59-60) Paul was martyred for preaching the truth. Daniel remain faithful in all circumstances. Be faithful witness to Jesus! Our witness for truth must be bold. May God enable us to be faithful to the trusts He has given us that we may hear from the Savior at the Judgment Seat of Christ, Well done, good and faithful servant!(MAT2:23)

**Be Righteous:** *For the Lord is righteous, he loves justice.*(PSA11:7) Righteousness is an attribute that belongs to God, the Lawgiver, manifested in His laws. No man can be justified by his own works apart from God's ordinance. Therefore, righteousness is a wonderful gift from God to humanity through His love: it is the God-given quality imputed to man upon believing in the Son of God. The word righteous in the Hebrew is "tsaddiy" which means just, lawful and correct. The word righteous in the Greek word "dikaios" which means observing divine laws or upright, faultless, innocent, and guiltless. The ways of the Lord are right.(HOS14:9) Bible teaches us that no man is righteous before God, or has any righteousness that can stand before God.(PSA14:3;143:2) *"All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags"*(ISA64:6;ROM3:10-18) God set forth Jesus to be a propitiation by His blood, that man receives the righteousness of God, which is received in faith.(ROM3:22,24:10:3) *"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God"*(2CO5:21) Jesus can become our righteousness as it is imputed to us on behalf of Jesus' work at Calvary on the cross.(ROM6:18) We were bound to sin, but now that we have been delivered, we are to bound to righteousness, able to live a life for God.(ROM6:13-19) Men are divided into two classes, the righteous and the wicked.(ECC3:17;ISA3:10;EZE3:18) *The righteous cry, and the Lord hears; he delivers them from all their troubles.*(PS34:17;1PE3:12) Lord Jesus demands this righteousness and seek; *Seek First His Kingdom and His Righteousness.* Righteousness is quality of being right in the eyes of God, including character (nature), conscience (attitude), conduct (action), and command (word). Righteousness pertains to all the areas of life. Righteousness is based upon God's standard because He is the ultimate Lawgiver.(ISA33:22) Righteousness of God is available through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe in Him. And those who will seek Him, will find Him and will be satisfied. *Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.*(GEN15:6) Only God can quench our thirst and satisfy our hunger for righteousness. Righteousness along with love as marks of the children of God.(1JO2:4,11,29;3:10) The righteous shall live by faith' a righteous life.(ROM1:17)The righteous man learns to live as a righteous and walk humbly with God. He knows that the way of righteousness is the way of blessing, life and joy. *And put on the new self, created in God's image in true righteousness and holiness.*(EPH4:24) Putting on the armor of God, involves guarding our hearts with the breastplate of righteousness.(EPH 6:4) The fruit of the salvation of God is seen chiefly in three things. In our relation to God and His will by righteousness and doing right; in our relation to our neighbor by love and doing good; in relation to our-self by humility and lowliness. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness; trust in the Lord.(PSA4:5) We are expected to bear fruit: *Being filled with the fruits of righteousness.*(PHI1:10-11;JAM2:23) Pursuing God's righteousness means putting God at the center of our lives. The Crown of Righteousness is promised to those who love and anticipate the Second Coming of Christ.(2TI4:8) *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they will be satisfied.*(MAT5:6)

*But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; [in all your conduct and manner of living] for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." (1PE1:15,16)* The word "holy" means separate. [set apart, dedicated, consecrated or sanctified] Holiness: The state of being holy; purity and complete in moral character; freedom from sin; sanctity. *"And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory. At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty." (ISA6:3)* When we use the word Holy to describe God, in relation to every aspect of His nature and character. That is, the word Holy calls attention to all that God is. We are called to be holy because we are called to be Christlike. *For God has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. (1TH4:7)* We are to separate ourselves from the world to righteousness, faith, love, and peace and unto the holiness of God. (1PE1:14-16) To be holy is to be morally pure. It is important to realize that God has established a high standard for our conduct. God is so separate from evil that it is like the contrast between light and darkness. (HAB1:13) *Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God. (2CO7:1)* Lord's plan for us that we shall stand blameless in holiness before God. That plan includes the process of strengthening our hearts which we increase and overflow in love towards one another. This comes through our submission to His hand of refinement and purification. *Make every effort to live in peace with all men and pursue that consecration and be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. (HEB12:14)* Make every effort to pursue holiness and willing to give up a certain practice or habit that is keeping us from holiness. An evil force is behind every sin. We must remember that we are in war against Satan and his forces. *In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. (HEB12:4)* We have the discernment of right choice, and we have the power by God to overcome any temptation that may come. Holiness is a gift from God. We should walk in the spirit and not fulfill the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and pride of the life. We must work to attain this characteristic of God. Our lives must consist of the practice of Holiness. Submit to Him and allow the Holy Spirit to keep pure before Him. Bridle the tongue and bring our mind and its function (thoughts) under control. Keep oneself pure, undefiled, unspotted and unstained from the world. Let us proceed towards attaining perfection (spiritual maturity) As we concentrate on living an obedient, holy life, we will certainly experience the joy of victory over sin. God calls us to holiness so we can be set free from the bondage and consequences of our own sin. God also knows that a holy life paves the way for deep intimacy with Him. (PSA15:1-2) Holiness sets us free and draws us close to God! Holiness builds peace with God. Holiness pleases God and produces "fruit". Holiness in God's people brings Him glory. When we live holy lives we reflect God's character to the world. We become lights in a dark world that lead the way to the Savior.

In Rom 12.2, verse describes transformation toward holiness as "metamorphosis" caterpillar to butterfly. Sanctification is evidence of fruit in the believer's life. Sanctification – where I put off sins by the Power of the Spirit. Sanctification accurately gives Christians a practical understanding of how to put off sin and put on righteousness. (EPH4:31-32) The root of the Greek word translated "sanctification" (hagiasmos) is the word translated "Holy" In 1Th 4:3-7, sanctification refers to the completion of the process overcoming a particular sin. In Heb10:10 and 14, "sanctified" communicates the passing into the Christian life through faith in Christ. It means entering the process of changing toward holiness. All the forms of "sanctification" is part of the ongoing transformation toward Christlikeness while on earth. Sanctification is a Process, is a journey. It is an ongoing labor, a work in progress. As Christians it is our, purpose, calling. To be pursuing sanctification is to submit our will to the Lord's. Our union with Christ has three phases: justification, sanctification, glorification. We were set apart to be God's through Christ. We stand by grace in our union with Christ. We put Word into practice to become more like Christ. *"Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth" (JOH17:17)* This, "progressive sanctification" is our occupation until the return of Christ. Our union with Christ is complete at the resurrection/rapture.

**The Glory of His Grace:** *"For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. (JOH1:16)* And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2CO3:18) *They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion. (PSA84:7)* Enoch found grace with God - he walked with God, and God took him as He desired. Moses found grace with God - he talked to God face to face and lived; he led a miraculous life from Egypt to Canaan; died and was taken away by angels. Elijah, the prophet, found grace with God - he lived a life of power and spiritual authority; was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire. Eternal life is the grace gift of God, through Christ. (ROM6:23) *"to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved." (EPH1:6)* This is the hope of eternal life, a hope of eternal blessing. For all the Lord's people into the enjoyment of it, will be attended with shouts and acclamations, crying "grace, grace, unto it!" (ZEC4:7) We are awaiting that blessed hope, which is the appearing of Christ in His glory. Overcomers, the redeemed of the Lord entered into mount Zion, the promised land of rest with thanksgiving and singing, everlasting joy will crown their heads. (ISA51:11) They shall obtain joy, gladness and celebrate the feast of tabernacles. By the grace of God we'll meet, in the Holy city's golden street, shouting, Glory! Hallelujah!" Grace be with you all! Our Lord Jesus is coming soon!