

### **Born By Grace**

As a new Christian you are able to understand that you were born again on the principle of grace--the unearned, free gift of God. *"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" ([Romans 6:23](#); [Ephesians 2:8](#)).*

### **Conformed By Grace**

As a new Christian it is important that you realize, also, that God saved you in order to conform you to the image of His Son. The Lord Jesus is the express image of God, and it is through Him that God realizes His original purpose: *"Let us make man in our image."*

### **Live By Grace**

As a new Christian, moreover, you are to understand that your new life is to be lived on the same principle as your new birth--that of grace. *"As ye have, therefore, received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" ([Colossians 2:6](#)).*

God created, God gave, God works, *"For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" ([Philippians 2:13](#)).* Your Father's good pleasure is that you may become like His beloved Son.

As a babe in Christ, you are aware of new life and strength within, and your heart is filled with love for the Lord Jesus. You will become active in church, Bible study, Scripture memorization, and no doubt seek to win your unsaved relatives and friends to the Savior. All good, and beneficial.

### **Works Vs. Grace**

In time, however--it may be a few months or a number of years--you may begin to falter in all of these areas. Your love for the Lord Jesus cools, and elements of your old life begin to reassert themselves.

Struggle as you may to regain your spiritual balance, you will only seem to fail the more. For you it becomes, *"When I would do good, evil is present with me.... Oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" ([Romans 7:21, 24](#)).*

By means of your struggle and failure to live the Christian life, the Lord Jesus is teaching you the indispensable grace principle of *"not I, but Christ" ([Galatians 2:20](#)).* During this downward path you will finally learn that you cannot live the Christian life in you own strength, nor even with the Lord's help.

### **The Gracious Vine**

The Lord Jesus expressed this principle in [John 15:5](#): *"I am the vine, ye are the branches, he that abides in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing."*

Your part, as a branch in the Vine, is to rest in Him, depend upon Him, and fellowship with Him. You are joined to the Vine by nature, and His life will flow in and through you, *"that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh"* ([2 Corinthians 4:11](#)).

You will find it a great revelation--and relief--in the midst of your failure, to hear these words, *"Now thanks be unto God, who always causes us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place"* ([2 Corinthians 2:14](#)). You do not triumph by means of your own strength and strategy; it is your Father who gives you life and growth in His Son.

Regeneration by grace; growth by grace--that is the principle of the Christian life. Indeed, the Lord Jesus is your Life Principle. *"Now unto him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us"* ([Ephesians 2:10](#)).

### **Walk By Grace**

Slowly and painfully, you will learn to be dependent upon your heavenly Father. He has ordained and laid out His plan for your life, and as you grow spiritually you will be walking in the path He has chosen for you. *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them"* ([Ephesians 2:10](#)).

### **Serve By Grace**

You are going to learn that your service is also according to the principle of grace: regeneration by grace, growth by grace, service by grace.

Your Father has promised to provide you with all that you will need for whatever He calls you to do. There will be enough for you, and for others, also. *"God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work"* ([2 Corinthians 9:8](#)).

### **Grace Works!**

The fact that the Christian life and service are by grace does not mean that you flop down and wait for Him to work apart from you.

The growing Christian is a very active individual; he becomes the willing instrument of God's blessed will. In his measure he can say, with Paul, *"His grace, which was bestowed upon 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"* ([1 Corinthians 15:10](#)).

"God works, not with what He finds, but with what He brings."

— The Works of Miles J. Stanford