



# SERMONS



**Pastor Donovan Jacobs**



**Title:** The Grace of God

## The Grace of God

The grace of God, what does it mean

GRACE

Grace vs. Mercy

It is expressed in two very important spheres, CREATION and REDEMPTION.

Creation = Life, human beings, in the creation story God pronounced that the human race was very good, in other words, full of grace.

Redemption: Grace to save indicates special grace to actively save people from a life without Him and ultimately judgment and final separation.

What is Grace: **charis** pre-eminently of that kindness by which God bestows favors even upon the ill-deserving, and grants to sinners the pardon of their offences, and bids them accept of eternal salvation through Christ..." ([Greek-English Lexicon](#), pg. 666).

### A) Different types of Grace

**1) Common grace** is that benevolence which is poured out upon all men, regardless of their spiritual condition:

"But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you; in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" ([Matthew 5:44-45](#)).

"And in the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with good and gladness" ([Acts 14:16-17](#)).

God is gracious in making provision for the salvation of all men<sup>39</sup> and in commanding its universal proclamation. He is also gracious in delaying judgment, thereby giving men ample time to repent ([2 Peter](#)

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[3:9](#)). One might also imply that God is gracious in not revealing more than He does to those who reject Him, since greater knowledge brings greater judgment (cf. [Luke 12:47-48](#)).

**2) Saving grace** is that generous provision of salvation on the cross of Calvary and the securing of it by divine intervention, as we have already outlined above.

“But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are” ([Acts 15:11](#)).

**3) Securing grace** is that manifestation of God’s benevolence by which Christians are kept secure in spite of sin.

Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God ([Romans 5:1-2](#)).

Through Silvanus, our faithful brother (for so I regard him), I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it! ([1 Peter 5:12](#)).

Just as a lost man cannot obtain salvation through any good work of his own, neither can the Christian maintain his salvation by doing good works. Salvation is obtained and maintained by grace alone.

**4) Sanctifying grace** is that grace which works within the true believer in such a way as to bring growth, maturity, and progress in the process of becoming Christ-like:

Now when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were urging them to continue in the grace of God ([Acts 13:43](#)).

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me ([1 Corinthians 15:10](#)).

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. ([2 Peter 3:18](#))

**5) Serving grace** is the enablement to minister in such a way as to manifest the life of our Lord through the saints as members of His body. It refers to acts of generosity and giving (cf. [Acts 4:33ff.](#); [2 Corinthians 8:1ff.](#)). It specifically refers to spiritual gifts (the term “gift” is a derivative of the word “grace”).

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift ([Ephesians 4:7](#)).

As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God ([1 Peter 4:10](#)).

**6) Sustaining grace** is grace given at special times of need, especially during adversity or suffering.

And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me ([2 Corinthians 12:9](#)).

Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need ([Hebrews 4:16](#)).

But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble” ([James 4:6](#)).

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Perhaps some of these distinctions are a bit arbitrary, but the point remains that grace is manifested in a variety of ways. Grace seeks us and saves us; grace keeps us secure; grace enables us to serve and to endure the tests and trials of life. Grace will bring about our sanctification in this life and will ultimately bring us to glory. From beginning to end we are the object of divine grace.

## **B) WHAT GRACE DOES**

### **1. Grace saves us**

"For by grace you have been saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast". (Eph 2:8, 9).

It is important to see here that by God's grace we **have been saved**. It is **not by works**. Salvation is all that God does in taking a fallen man and making him into a son of God - righteous, holy and glorified. Legally it all belongs to us now. God's grace works to make it a reality in our being. First God saves our spirits, making us born again. Then in this life He saves our souls - our minds, emotions and wills, as the process of sanctification in this life unfolds. He also saves our bodies - firstly in part through divine healing and health, and then eternally through the resurrection and redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:23). All this, and anything else which God does in salvation, is strictly on the basis of God's grace. God's gift, not our works, made it all possible.

### **2. Grace justifies us**

"... being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24). See also Titus 3:7.

We may be considered to be right by God only because of the grace of Jesus Christ, which is available to us because Jesus willingly laid down His life for us - paying the price we deserved for our rebellion against God. Our justification is not something we receive because of good works, but because of the payment Jesus paid for us at the cross when he suffered and died.

### **3. Grace sanctifies us**

Indeed, not only our right standing with God, but also our right living depends on grace. God does not leave us to struggle in our own power to think, speak and act correctly. He gives grace after grace. "And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace." (John 1:16). We need to "continue in God's grace" (Acts 13:43) in order to go on with God. The Word of God's Grace "builds us up and gives us an inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). As we hear about all that God's grace does for us, our faith grows and we can then receive the actual grace to make all this a possibility.

The work of sanctification and perfection belongs firstly to God, not to us. This is why it says, "But may the **God of all grace**, who has called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen and settle you." (1 Peter 5:10). It is as the "God of all grace" that the Lord "perfects, establishes and strengthens us."

Grace gives us the power to conduct ourselves correctly in the world. "For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in all simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but **by the grace of God**, and more abundantly toward you." (2 Corinthians 1:12). It is only by God's grace, and the graciousness He puts in us, that we can conduct ourselves simply and with godly sincerity in the world.

### **4. Strength to Stand Against Opposition**

A Christian must stand in the grace of God (Romans 5:2). He must be strong in the grace of God. "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 2:1). The Scripture says plainly that is "good that the heart be strengthened [or established] with grace" (Hebrews 13:9). "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, **that you**

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**may be able to stand** against the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6:10, 11). All the armour of God is received by the grace of God. We did not pay for the "breastplate of righteousness" or "the shield of faith" or any other parts of that armour. It is therefore by drawing on the grace of God that we are going to be able to resist temptation and stand against all the temptations and trials that Satan wants to discourage us with and make us fall, if possible.

#### **5. Under Grace we are not ruled by the Power of Sin**

Some imagine that the correct understanding of grace frees the believer to do whatever he wants - to sin against his conscience, against others, against the Word and against God. However, this cannot be correct, since the Scripture says, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Romans 6:14). Paul asks, "Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace?" His response is clear. "Certainly not!" (Romans 6:15). Grace is not a license to commit sin. It is a force that both pardons us and empowers us to live right, without falling into temptation.

#### **6. Grace Teaches Us Godliness**

Rather than teaching us to sin freely, grace is "teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age" (Titus 2:11, 12). Here we see how closely related is the concept of grace with the working of the Holy Spirit. For it is the Holy Spirit Himself who convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:7). It is the Holy Spirit who guides us into all truth (John 16:13). It is the anointing of the Holy Spirit that "teaches us concerning all things" as we learn to abide in Jesus (1 John 2:27). All these things: the anointing, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the grace of God, are closely related. We can say that the anointing itself is a very special and important expression of the grace of God.

When we sin, it is the Holy Spirit who makes us feel this personally. He gives us an opportunity to repent. When we sin, He helps us to feel that something is wrong. He does not do it by condemning us (telling us that we are now condemned), but by convicting us (showing us where we are wrong), and by removing the fullness of peace and joy from our lives. We should let the peace of God rule in our hearts (Colossians 3:15). If not, we will sense something is wrong. All this is an expression of God's grace. God wants to lead us to repentance, so that we will neither suffer loss, nor be destroyed.

#### **7. Grace makes us what we are in God**

"But by the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Corinthians 15:10) What we are in Christ is because of God's life and power which has been at work in us. No one can make himself a great man of God. Even the callings to be this or to do that in God's Kingdom are by grace (Galatians 1:6). Paul said that God called Him by His grace from His mother's womb (Galatians 1:15). This means that it was God, not Paul, who initiated Paul being chosen for apostolic ministry. In a similar way, Jeremiah was called from His mother's womb to be a prophet to the nations (Jeremiah 1:5). We cannot become special ministers of God without His calling. We can only be what God gives us grace to be. If through His grace we fulfill a special function in God's Kingdom, then it was not on the basis of our merit and work, but rather, because of God's grace - God's gift, God's favour.

Does this leave us without responsibility before God? No, it is very important for us to take hold of the grace of God, so that we can be what God intends us to be. We will see more on this in a later section.

#### **8. God's Grace Empowers Us for Service**

The anointing for service is a part of God's grace. The ability to exercise a gift or ministry from God comes from God! This can be seen in the following Scriptures:

*"From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed" (Acts 14:26).*

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The early church recognized that these apostles needed God's grace in order that the work they were supposed to do be accomplished.

*"Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name" (Romans 1:5).*

It was by the grace of God that Paul was able to get so many Gentiles in different lands to believe and obey the gospel of Jesus Christ.

*"According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation." (1 Corinthians 3:10).*

Paul was able to do his work of laying the foundation in the Corinthian church only by the grace of God. This grace was for Paul the ability to do his work as an apostle.

*"For I say, through the grace of God given to me, to everyone who is among you..." (Romans 12:3).*

It was God's grace that gave Paul the power and authority to say to the church at Rome and to us as well what he had from God to say.

A similar idea can be expressed in Romans 15:15, 16.

*"Nevertheless, brethren, I have written to you more boldly on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God, that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles."*

Here we can also see that it was the grace of God which gave Paul the power to be a minister of the gospel.

*"... I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." (Ephesians 3:7, 8).*

We can see here that the ability to be a minister, to preach the gospel among the peoples of the world comes through the grace of God.

*"Having then gifts that differ according to the grace that is given to us: let us use them." (Romans 12:6).*

The receiving and operation of the gifts we have from God depends upon the grace that is given to us. Therefore it is through grace that we have certain gifts and ministries of the Spirit among us.

*"Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia" (2 Corinthians 8:1).*

In the context we see that this grace mentioned was grace that made them to operate powerfully in the ministry of giving, even beyond their natural ability (2 Corinthians 8:3).

*"But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift" (Ephesians 4:7).*

This verse makes it clear that grace has been given to each one of us believers that we might be able to serve with the gifts that God gives us.

**In conclusion we see that God's grace empowers us for the service of God in three ways.**

- Firstly, by making us a minister or servant of Christ.
- Secondly, by giving us gifts and ministry abilities necessary.
- And thirdly, by giving us power and authority to operate those gifts and ministries.

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It is God's grace that gives us the right words and the right way to communicate those words. It is God's grace that actually spreads through us to work in those that are hearing and receiving the gospel (2 Corinthians 4:15).

God would like us to be so full of His grace in our lives that we can say with Paul the apostle: "His grace towards me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (1 Corinthians 15:10). The grace of God is not **received** by works, but it **produces** work done in God. Grace, which is God's life, comes into us and begins to live in us. And God is working even now (John 5:17). In the same way, His grace is to work in us and through us so that we can be all and do all that He wants.

## 9. God's Grace Enables Us to Reign

God's Word says, "Much more those who receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness **will reign in life** through the One, Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:17). We have been made kings and priests to our God (Revelation 1:5). Grace is necessary to rule and reign in life. Grace is necessary to exercise authority in the way that God desires. God rules, but not harshly. He rules in grace, justice, mercy and truth. In order to exercise authority over the situations that we are in, we need to receive more and more of God's grace. This grace gives us power not only to use authority over the demons behind many of the negative situations in life, but also to lead and direct people in a way that will build them up and not destroy them.

### C) WHAT WE MUST DO IN RELATION TO GRACE

**1. Believe.** The Scripture tells us that Apollos helped those who had "believed through grace" (Acts 18:27). Even the faith which saves us comes through God's grace. We don't produce faith - we receive it as a gift from God. "For by grace you are saved, through faith, and that [faith] not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8).

Nevertheless, we must choose to exercise the faith which God has given us (Romans 12:3). God has given us the grace to believe. We need to use that grace in whatever measure we have received it until now.

By the grace we have, we must believe God - His Word, His promises, His commandments, His judgments.

**2. Receive.** God's Word says, "Much more those who **receive abundance of grace** and the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:17). Paul says in Romans 1:5, "We have **received** grace and apostleship." God may give grace, but we must also be willing to receive it.

Grace must be received as grace. It cannot be received as payment for good behaviour or good works. If we are thinking to receive grace from God on the basis of our good behaviour or good works, we will not be able to receive it as grace. We will therefore not be able to receive it at all. This is why God many times seems to greatly bless a sinner recently turned to him and gives them a great ministry, while seemingly ignoring many "good church people" who have been struggling faithfully for years - but with a wrong mentality concerning grace.

**3. Continue in It.** "Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to **continue in the grace of God.**" (Acts 13:43). It is vitally important that all of us, especially those who have recently turned to God and trusted in His grace, **continue** in the grace of God. We need to allow God to keep guiding our hearts to the place where He can continue to work in us by His grace. In the moment when we cease to allow God's grace to work in us, in the moment when we no longer abide in Christ through disobedience; in that moment we start to dry up as Christians and that life of God in us begins to lose its effectiveness. God will not force us to remain in His grace. It is something He gives us the power to do, but we must choose to go on. Don't give up!

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**4. Use and Manage it.** "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:10). Every born-again Christian has received a spiritual gift, and should use it. We have all been given grace to serve somewhere. God's grace takes many forms. There are many different anointing. A steward or manager must use what has been entrusted to him and multiply it. Otherwise, he is not being a good and faithful steward.

This means that whatever gifts and abilities God has given us by His grace; we should use them for His glory. God's grace and blessings were not given simply for us to sit in church and feel good. Rather, they were given that we might not only be blessed, but also be a blessing.

**5. Spread It.** "For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God." (2 Corinthians 4:15). Grace and peace will multiply as more and more people spread it. We can spread God's grace through giving, through preaching the gospel, and by "speaking such a word as is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to those who hear" (Ephesians 4:29). It is the privilege and responsibility of every true Christian, and not just of a special few, to spread God's grace to as many as possible. When we do this, more and more people will give thanks to God, and so pleasure will come to the heart of God.

#### **D) SINNING AGAINST THE GRACE OF GOD**

There are a number of different sins against the grace of God mentioned in the Scriptures.

##### 1. Setting Aside the Grace of God (Galatians 2:21)

This is teaching that efforts to adhere to moral laws are all that is required for us to please God. It is a denial of our need for God's partnership in our transformation.

##### 2. Receiving God's grace in vain (2 Corinthians 6:1)

This implies it is possible to actually receive God's grace, and yet fail to take hold of it and flow with it in such a way as to allow any good fruit to result.

##### 3. Turning the Grace of God into Lasciviousness (Jude 4)

This is teaching that we can sin sexually, live to please our flesh or commit other sins and somehow the grace of God makes it so that we are still right with God while we go on like this.

##### 4. Falling from Grace (Galatians 5:4)

This is to reject Christ after you have known Him, and turn back either to a system of rule-keeping and self effort, or to slide into sinful and rebellious ways, hardening the heart to God.

##### 5. Falling Short of the Grace of God (Hebrews 12:15)

This is to fail to come up to the mark God has enabled you to attain by His grace.

##### 6. Insulting the Spirit of Grace (Hebrews 10:29)

This is to speak against God, His ways, His system of salvation through the cross and the Holy Spirit.

##### 7. Turning Aside from Grace (not continuing in it)

This is to get our eyes off God and go after other things.

**The big question then, can we lose our salvation**

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You get

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. Unbelieving unbeliever , | <b>Goats</b> , No reformation ,No Regeneration , Math 25         |
| 2. Believing Unbeliever     | <b>Pig</b> , Reformation without Regeneration (Phil 3 vs. 2)     |
| 3. Unbelieving Believer     | <b>Dogs</b> , Return to their vomit , old lifestyle (Prov 26vs ) |
| 4. Believing believer :     | <b>Sheep</b> , Reformation and Regeneration, John 10 vs. 4,5     |

Saved

Reprobate

Saved people are new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17)	The reprobate on the other hand wants no real knowledge of God (Romans 1:28).
They desire to do good works (Ephesians 2:10)	Covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful" (Romans 1:29-31)
love the brethren (1 John 3:14)	Further, they not only blatantly sin against God, but "they have pleasure in them that do them" (Romans 1:32).
keep themselves unspotted from the world (James 1:27)	These people were never saved. The same can be said for those described in 1 John 2:19  <i>They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.</i>
confess their sins (1 John 1:9) to maintain fellowship	
John 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed	Romans 1:28 says, "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;"

## Reprobates and Romans 1:28

Reprobate (or reprobates) is used **seven times** in the Bible: Jeremiah 6:30; Romans 1:28; 2 Corinthians 13:5, 6, 7; 2 Timothy 3:8; Titus 1:16. It is related to the word reprove. However, reprove is based on the word prove, which means to test. Reprobates then would be those who have been put to the test and are found wanting and so are reprovved. In Jeremiah 6:30, men are said to be like reprobate silver because they are rejected. We can see the picture of

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(2 Corinthians 13:5). Notice the key word, prove. They were to prove or test themselves. If they were not truly in Christ, then they would be reprov'd--because they were reprobates.

Therefore we see that a reprobate is one who have been tested (proved) and found lacking; so he is reprov'd or rejected as a true believer. It must follow that a reprobate claims to be a true follower of God and yet is found false when put to the test. This fits perfectly with Titus 1:16, which states, "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." These men profess to know God but in their works they deny Him. They fail to pass the test of genuine faith. I do not see how this can apply to those who have "sinned away their day of grace." Again, this is not a true biblical doctrine.

### **Alexander, Hymenaeus, Jannes, Jambres and Philetus**

If we look at Jannes and Jambres we see that they are not mentioned by name until well into the New Testament, although their works are mentioned near to the start of the Bible in the book of Exodus.

In 2 Timothy 3 we read of what I believe to be the corrupt church. Notice, the passage refers to the last days and talks of those "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." Of these we go on to read, "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." It is in this context that Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, refers to the works of Jannes and Jambres. Some things to notice here about Jannes and Jambres, together with those like them:

1. They resist the truth.
2. They are of corrupt minds.
3. They are reprobate concerning the faith.
4. They will not continue any further.
5. Their folly will be manifest to all.

If we turn to Exodus 7, we see what the apostle was referring to, although Jannes and Jambres are unnamed here (as always, the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself).

Exodus 7:10-13 And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerer's: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

1. They resist the truth - they withstood Moses who was doing as the Lord commanded.
2. They were of corrupt minds - they were sorcerers and enchanters.
3. They were reprobate concerning faith - they stood in Pharaoh's court against the people of God.
4. They could not continue any further - Aaron's rod totally defeated them.

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5. Their folly was manifest to all - their "defeat" occurred in the presence of Pharaoh, his servants and the wise sorcerers.

It seems to me that Jannes and Jambres are examples of those "reprobate concerning the faith" because they have a form of godliness yet deny the power thereof. They refuse to believe the truth, although they have been faced with it, and God allows them to continue in their own "religious ways" until that day when "their folly shall be manifest".

## E) The dispensation of Grace

The Greek word for "DISPENSATION" is the word *oikonomia* (compare the English word "ECONOMY"). This Greek word is actually made up of two words: 1. *oikos*=house 2. *nomos*=law.

Thus the word means, "the law of the house, house-law." Think about the family in which you live. Are there any "laws of the house"? Are there any "house rules" for you to follow? Has the "head of the house" given you any responsibilities or obligations to fulfill? Do you get into trouble if you "break the rules"?

This same Greek word is translated by the word STEWARDSHIP in Luke 16:2, 3, and 4. Therefore, if we are to learn what a dispensation is then we must learn something about STEWARDSHIP!

### Stewardship

What is a STEWARD? A steward is a "household manager." He is one who looks after the goods and property of another. He is one who takes care of that which belongs to another. Most of us do not need stewards because we are not rich enough! We can take care of the few things we have by ourselves! But if a man has 10 houses, 8 boats, 2000 acres of land, 500 head of cattle, 3 swimming pools, 25 cars, 8 trucks and one oil field, then certainly he would not be able to take care of all of these things by himself. He would need men to help him to manage all of these things. A steward is a MANAGER – one who is responsible to take care of those things that belong to someone else.

There is one essential requirement for a STEWARD. He must be faithful (takes care of the responsibilities that have been given to him)

Consider the steward described in Luke 16:1-4.

"DISPENSATION" means the same as the word "STEWARDSHIP." A DISPENSATION is a stewardship and this stewardship involves three things:

### 1. THE LORD OF THE HOUSE

If there is a **stewardship** then there must be a LORD or OWNER of the house! There must be One who lays down the "laws of the house." There must be One who sets forth the obligations and responsibilities and privileges. As we read the Bible we discover that the LORD OF THE HOUSE is the LIVING GOD (compare Hebrews 3:4). He is the MOST HIGH GOD, the LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH (Genesis 14:19, 22). God is the OWNER and He is the BOSS!

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## 2. THE HOUSE

Not only must there be a Lord or an Owner, but there also must be a domain over which the Lord executes His rule and shows His authority. God's house is the WORLD: "The earth is the \_\_\_\_\_ and the fullness thereof; the \_\_\_\_\_, and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1 and see also Exodus 9:29 and Genesis 18:25). The world belongs to Him and He rules over it and He governs it according to His will and according to His wisdom.

## 3. THE STEWARD

There must be a Lord (Owner) and there must be a House and there must also be a steward. The steward is the one who has been made responsible. He is to be faithful and obedient to the known will of the Lord of the house. The steward is assigned certain duties or directed to be in charge over certain things or responsible to do certain things (compare Acts 17:30 and 1 John 3:23 where we see that all men today have a responsibility before God). The steward must follow the "house rules" that the Lord has given him. If the steward fails to follow these "house rules" then he will be in trouble. MANKIND is God's steward (see Titus 1:7; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 and 1 Peter 4:10).

Let us summarize these three points:

**The Lord of the house is THE LIVING GOD.**

**The house is THE WORLD.**

**The steward of the house is MANKIND.**

### Not Just One Dispensation

God has ruled His house in different ways at different times. This means that God's HOUSE RULES have not always been the same. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and the Apostle Paul all lived in the same world under the same God but they all lived under DIFFERENT HOUSE RULES. The house rules that Abraham lived under were not the same house rules that Peter lived under. If there have been different HOUSE RULES then this means that there have been different DISPENSATIONS.

In the Bible, the divine history of man is ordered within the framework of seven dispensations. It commences with the creation of Adam and Eve in paradise and culminates in the new heaven and new earth where an eternal perfect existence will prevail. The seven dispensations are:

1. The dispensation of innocence in paradise.
2. The dispensation of the conscience after the Fall.
3. The dispensation of the law in the Old Testament.
4. The dispensation of grace in the church age.
5. The dispensation of the Antichrist.
6. The dispensation of the millennial kingdom.
7. The dispensation of perfection in eternity.

The beginning and end of a dispensation are always marked by dramatic events associated with the unfolding of a new aspect of God's plan for the ages. They are also accompanied by intensified demonic activities as Satan then try everything in his power to upset God's plan.

### 1. Man innocent.

"This dispensation extends from the creation of Adam in Genesis 2:7 to the expulsion from Eden. Adam created innocent and ignorant of good and evil, was placed in the garden of Eden with his wife, Eve, and put under responsibility to abstain from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The dispensation of innocence resulted in the first failure of man, and in its far-reaching effects, the most

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disastrous. It closed in judgment: "So he drove out the man." See Gen. 1:26; Gen. 2:16, 17; Gen. 3:6; Gen. 3:22-24.)"

### **Salvation Gospel in this dispensation:**

Do not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

### **2. Man under conscience.**

"By the fall, Adam and Eve acquired and transmitted to the race the knowledge of good and evil. This gave conscience a basis for right moral judgment, and hence the race came under this measure of responsibility -- to do good and eschew evil. The result of the dispensation of conscience, from Eden to the flood (while there was no institution of government and of law), was that "all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth," that "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," and God closed the second testing of the natural man with judgment: the flood. See Gen. 3:7, 22; Gen. 6:5, 11-12; Gen. 7:11-12, 23.)"

### **Salvation Gospel in this dispensation:**

Do good and do not do evil, or love what is good and hate what is evil.

Genesis 3:22 Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"-- 23 therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.

### **3. Man in authority over the earth.**

"Out of the fearful judgment of the flood God saved eight persons, to whom, after the waters were assuaged, He gave the purified earth with ample power to govern it. This, Noah and his descendants were responsible to do. The dispensation of human government resulted, upon the plain of Shinar, in the impious attempt to become independent of God and closed in judgment: the confusion of tongues. (See Gen. 9: 1, 2; Gen. 11: 1-4; Gen. 11:5-8.)"

### **Salvation Gospel in this dispensation:**

Believe God and build an ark.

Genesis 6:16 "You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it [with] lower, second, and third [decks]. 17 "And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which [is] the breath of life; everything that [is] on the earth shall die. 18 "But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark--you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you.

### **4. Man under promise.**

"Out of the dispersed descendants of the builders of Babel, God called one man, Abram, with whom He enters into covenant. Some of the promises to Abram and his descendants were purely gracious and unconditional. These either have been or will yet be literally fulfilled. Other promises were conditional upon the faithfulness and obedience of the Israelites. Every one of these conditions was violated, and the dispensation of promise resulted in the failure of Israel and closed in the judgment of bondage in Egypt."

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"The book of Genesis, which opens with the sublime words, "In the beginning God created," closes with, "In a coffin in Egypt." (See Gen. 12:1-3; Gen. 13:14-17; Gen. 15:5; Gen. 26:3; Gen. 28:12-13; Exod. 1:13-14.)"

### **Salvation Gospel in this dispensation:**

**Believe God's promise.**

Genesis 12:1 Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you.

### **5. Man under law.**

"Again the grace of God came to the help of helpless man and redeemed the chosen people out of the hand of the oppressor. In the wilderness of Sinai He proposed to them the covenant of law. Instead of humbly pleading for a continued relation of grace, they presumptuously answered: "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." The history of Israel in the wilderness and in the land is one long record of flagrant, persistent violation of the law, and at last, after multiplied warnings, God closed the testing of man by law in judgment: first Israel, and then Judah, were driven out of the land into a dispersion which still continues. A feeble remnant returned under Ezra and Nehemiah, of which, in due time, Christ came: "Born of a woman-made under the law." Both Jews and Gentiles conspired to crucify Him. (See Exod. 19:1-8; 2 Kings 17:1-18; 2 Kings 25: 1 -11; Acts 2:22-23; Acts 7:51-52; Rom. 3:19-20; Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3: 10.)"

### **Salvation Gospel in this dispensation:**

**Obey God and keep His commandments.**

Exodus 19:5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth [is] Mine.

### **6. Man under grace.**

"The sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ introduced the dispensation of pure grace, which means undeserved favor, or God giving righteousness, instead of God requiring righteousness, as under law. Salvation, perfect and eternal, is now freely offered to Jew and Gentile upon the acknowledgment of sin, or repentance, with faith in Christ."

"Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:29). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24). "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish" (John 10:27-28). "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).

The predicted result of this testing of man under grace is judgment upon an unbelieving world and an apostate church. (See Luke 17:26-30; Luke 18:8; 2 Thess. 2:7-12; Rev. 3:15-16.)

The first event in the closing of this dispensation will be the descent of the Lord from heaven, when sleeping saints will be raised and, together with believers then living, caught up "to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16-17). Then follows the brief period called "the great tribulation." (See Jer. 30:5-7; Dan. 12:1; Zeph. 1:15-18; Matt. 24:21-22.)

After this the personal return of the Lord to the earth in power and great glory occurs, and the judgments which introduce the seventh, and last dispensation. (See Matt. 25:31-46 and Matt. 24:29- 30.)"

### **Comment:**

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Some teachers number the Tribulation as one of the dispensations, while combining the dispensations of Promise & Law. However, we see the Tribulation as a special period during which human civilization crumbles under the weight of the combined features of its ages long rejection of God.

**Salvation Gospel in this dispensation:**

**Confess Jesus as Lord and believe in His resurrection.**

Romans 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

**7. Man under the personal reign of Christ.**

"After the purifying judgments which attend the personal return of Christ to the earth, He will reign over restored Israel and over the earth for one thousand years. This is the period commonly called the millennium. The seat of His power will be Jerusalem, and the saints, including the saved of the dispensation of grace, namely the church, will be associated with Him in His glory. (See Isa. 2:1-4; Isa. 11; Acts 15:14-17; Rev. 19:11-21; Rev. 20:1-6.

But when Satan is "loosed a little season," he finds the natural heart as prone to evil as ever, and easily gathers the nations to battle against the Lord and His saints, and this last dispensation closes, like all the others, in judgment. The great white throne is set, the wicked dead are raised and finally judged, and then come the "new heaven and a new earth." Eternity is begun. (See Rev. 20:3, 7-15; Rev. 21 and 22.)"

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