

**Sunday, Session 1 - 4/28/2012**  
**"Grace Distorted" - James 4:6**

Principles of Grace Reviewed:

1. Grace is the free and unmerited favor of God towards us.
2. Grace is the divine assistance and Power given us at spiritual birth and positional sanctification.
3. Grace is the condition of being sanctified and favored by our Heavenly Father.
4. Grace and sanctification are totally unmerited.

Categories of Grace:

1. COMMON – Grace to both the saved and unsaved
  - a. God has given us divine institutions of freedom and morality
  - b. Volition in spiritual matters, family and marriage.
  - c. Presentation of the Gospel to the unsaved, and withholding of His righteous judgment and wrath while He gives them time to accept His Son Jesus Christ as Savior.
2. SAVING – Grace applied to the unsaved
  - a. Ephesians 7:19, Romans 3:24
  - b. Grace *can be extended* freely to every unbeliever, because of the Saving Work of Jesus Christ on the cross.
3. LIVING – Grace given to believers after salvation
  - a. Every born-again believer receives Grace beyond common Grace; we must have an attitude of acceptance and gratitude for this Grace – for our health as we awake each day, for example, for our food, each time we arrive safely in our driveway after traveling, for our homes and our families.
  - b. We can live free of the fear of death – we can therefore die well, happy and grateful (Psalm 23:34).
4. SURPASSING – Grace from God in Eternity: God is free to do what He wants to do for us (to give us great rewards and blessings in heaven) in eternity.

Grace Distorted: Our Passage in James 4:6 tells us that God “resists the arrogant” – those who distort His Grace.

- Satan’s purpose is to cause us to distort Grace: for example, some believers try to do this with the contention that salvation by Grace, the Truth of faith alone in Christ alone providing eternal security, invites us to ignore Doctrine after salvation, or just “live like the devil”, or other distortions of this nature. Romans 6:1 and following clearly refute such distortions:
  - “**1** What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? **2** May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? **3** Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? **4**

Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. **5** For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, **6** knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; **7** for he who has died is freed from sin ...”

- Legalism is the enemy of Grace – *God* does the work and *God* receives the glory. Legalism specifies that *man* does the work and wants to credit man in his *doings*. Grace and legalism, therefore are *opposite*. Legalism hinders and neutralizes the believer.
- God is perfect, his plan is perfect, and as such can *never* depend on our contribution. Our contribution would make any plan *imperfect*!
- Grace is the antithesis of human arrogance. The one rejecting the eternal security of Grace is *not oriented to Grace*.
- Falling apart under pressure is actually a distortion of Grace. This is nothing short of concluding that our pressure or adversity actually *exceeds God's Grace* and His infinite ability to completely cover and handle the problem.
- False spirituality is a great distortion of God's Grace. The very idea that a person taking on a “heavenly air” in the energies of his or her own flesh – and then self-generating a “goodness” and “closeness to God” – somehow impresses Him – is absolutely a distortion of Grace.
- Emotionalism is a distortion of Grace; many depend on their feelings and emotions to define their spiritual life; a person who thinks their feelings and their emotions are greater and more real than God and His Word is actually a distorter of the Grace of God.