

What is Grace?

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MAIN VERSES

[Colossians 2:13](#) · [Colossians 2:14](#) · [Jude 1:4](#) · [Matthew 25:31](#) · [Matthew 7:21](#) · [Matthew 7:23](#) · [Galatians 5:4](#)

Starting with Grace

This is possibly one of my favorite messages I've ever been able to study out. Because we talk about grace a lot, right? I mean, grace is important to our faith in Yeshua. Yes, it is, Matthew. Okay. Grace is very important, but I'm going to suggest that the grace that we're familiar with—this term that we throw around a lot—is not something that we fully understand in a biblical sense. In other words, I was taught that grace was synonymous with mercy. And although mercy can be grace, grace can encapsulate so many other things than simply mercy.

It's very interesting because when we look at grace in the New Testament, do you guys know that in the Greek Roman Empire, grace—"charis"—was actually a secular word, not a religious word? It symbolized a relationship that you had with someone else. And there was a structure to this relationship. And in a grace and a "heres" relationship with someone, the two people in this relationship would communicate with each other, further this relationship, and reciprocate this relationship with one another through something called "pistis" or "pistos"—faith or faithfulness. So you would have faith in the grace relationship you had with someone. I know, confused everybody.

The Speed Limit Story

Before I go any further, I wanted to tell you a story that happened to me about a year, year and a half ago, maybe longer than that. My mother and I were driving in her Kia Sorento down a highway in TK or Fort Miller somewhere—I think we were going out to Waxhaw or something—and it was a 55 mile an hour zone. And so of course I was going above that. As we were driving, we passed a sign that said 45 miles an hour. The speed limit had dropped from 55 miles per hour to 45 miles an hour. I did not see that sign, and I'm very thankful to the state trooper that pulled me over because he sure did, and he reminded me of that.

Blue lights going on behind me, look in the mirror—anybody get that tight feeling in your stomach whenever you have a cop turn on the lights? The blue lights and that anxiety—I don't get that anymore. I just kind of put my blinker on, pulled over; it doesn't affect me anymore. And the state trooper got out of his car—big guy, hat, pristine uniform—comes to the window. And of course the first question: "Do you know why I pulled you over?"

"I do not."

"You were speeding."

"I said I was speeding. I thought I was going the speed limit. 55 zone."

"No sir, it turned into a 45 zone."

"Alright, well, 45—how fast was I going?"

"63 in a 45. You were eligible for a ticket at that point."

And so I promptly, knowing my scriptures, I alerted the officer that I was no longer under the law and I was under grace. Thank you for doing your job, I said, and I will ask forgiveness and I will go on my way. It doesn't work like that, unfortunately. He saw that my mother was in the car, looked at my license and registration, the whole shebang, and proceeded back to his vehicle where he would write up my nice ticket.

Grace. Grace.

Blotting Out the Record

Colossians chapter 2, verses 13 and 14, says: See, Paul is writing to, of course, a bunch of Gentiles in a relatively pagan community. And he's starting to talk about grace. And he starts off—he's basically saying, listen, God has forgiven you for your sins, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross.

If you don't get anything else from the rest of this message, I want you to get this point: All scholars agree that this word for blotting out the handwriting of ordinances is a legal term—one that denotes a handwritten certificate of indebtedness. In other words, you get a ticket, and it's proof that you have a debt to pay because you've done something wrong.

See, not many people realize we know of two things that were nailed to the cross on that day in Golgotha. We know one was our Savior, and the second was a sign that went above his head

that declared him King of the Jews, and so on and so forth. There was a third thing that was nailed to that cross, and this is what Paul is trying to portray here. That third thing was the things in your life that you are condemned by. The things in your life that have been written down against you—legally, you must pay for them. The things in your life that you know you're thinking about right now—the sins that you have paraded around in your life.

The problem with these things, the problem with sins, the problem with breaking God's commandment is that it separates you from God. That's exactly what happened in the garden. On that day, on the cross, that certificate that is against you was nailed to the cross. Blotted out. In other words.

Living in a New State

See, we have this idea—especially in Hebrew roots—we love to harp on the condemnation of God towards man. Because we know that the nations will be judged. And we know that we're going to be judged one day. And we know judgment's coming. But guys. Scripture says that he did not come to condemn. He came to save. That's exactly what Paul is trying to reaffirm with people.

We've all sinned. We've all missed the speed limit sign. We've all done nasty, disgusting things that we wish we could take back. But that is not the state that you are currently living in. If you have accepted Yeshua, you're living in a state where that was blotted out, and now you're living in newness and you've been raised to life with Messiah. This is grace.

Another New Living Translation puts it: "...he canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross."

I hear a lot of Hebrew teachers out there who just like to skip over this verse. I don't know why. I think this is a compelling verse, and I love being reminded of the mercy that my God has for me—that I am not deserving of.

Defining Grace

We're speaking about grace today. And as we go through grace, I'm going to attempt to define grace biblically. I'm going to attempt to give a function to grace—mechanical functions. You guys know I like to mechanically understand things like the crucifixion, like the blood manipulation ceremonies in [Leviticus 4](#) through 6, and so on and so forth. I like to understand the mechanics of how things work.

Grace is more than just a favor. Grace is more than just mercy. It's something—well, we'll get to that in a minute.

One thing grace is not: Grace is not a no-strings-attached relationship. This is—when I was growing up and in some of the churches I attended growing up—grace was basically a free pass, if you will. Does anyone know what I'm talking about? Grace means that if you sin, even if you deliberately sin, then you just ask for forgiveness and God will give you grace, and bloop, you're good to go, right? A little reset button on the remote control. Anyone who played video games—you get a really bad score and you start over, reset, bloop. Grace. This is not grace. This is a figment of someone's imagination.

And I was also taught that there was no real relationship involved with this type of grace. And when I say that, I did not need to have a relationship with God in order to get that grace, and if I continue sinning and use grace as a license of immorality, there is no connection there with God.

You see, the writer of the book of Jude goes into this. He says: "For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men who change the grace of our God into a license of immorality and deny Jesus Christ as our sovereign and Lord."

How many of you guys were taught that that's grace? More or less. Maybe, maybe not. That was my experience.

Grace in the First Century

Scripture tends to differ significantly. In the first century, we're going to look at a few authors here coming up. Seneca the Younger—I think I have his quotes in here. Aristotle. Grace was defined in a relationship. How many of you guys have ever heard the term patronage or patron-client relationships? It's not a term we use often. We really don't have that type. We don't use those terms in our society. So let me put it this way.

In the first century—go back a couple hundred years—in the Roman Empire, it was like what you hear them talk about the 1% a lot in America, right? Well, back then it was like the 3%. I think 3% of the population held about 95% of the wealth. It was a true oligarchy, if you will.

And what would happen is the wealthy—or the people who could do something for the community—accepted that as their responsibility. So if there was ever a disaster in ancient Rome, right, and a whole bunch of buildings got knocked down in the city, it would be the rich

that would come, and they would give income to rebuild and restructure stuff. If your farm got flooded or whatnot, and you came to a rich friend of yours or whatnot, you might say, "Hey, can you help me rebuild my plantation?" He would give out of his heart to you. And you had a choice whether to accept this gift or not.

If you accepted the gift, you now accepted a favor. And what happens if someone does you a favor? What do you do? You owe them one, right? This is how grace, patronage, and clientele worked in the first century. If you needed something done and you did not have the means to do it—there's no possible way that you could get out of this debt—you could petition someone to be your patron. And if they chose to offer you a gift, they would give the gift from their heart.

They would not expect it to be returned. And if you accepted it, you would be their client. Now as a client in a patron-client relationship, something beautiful happens. Even though you cannot pay them back for the favor that they've done for you, you can pay them back with honor. You can reciprocate favors and blessings back to them.

Anyone ever watched any type of Roman TV shows or movies with marketplace scenes where you always see someone rich—like a rich Roman—walking through the marketplace and he always has three or four guys behind him? They almost look like servants, but they're not servants. These are his clients. They're following him through the marketplace to give him honor, to make him look esteemed because they want to reciprocate a favor back to him. This is how the first century worked in the Roman Empire. You couldn't just go to the bank and get a loan, right? But you could go find a patron.

Honor and Shame in the First Century

"Great prestige" is a quote from a book written by Julian Pitt Rivers. "Great prestige attaches to a good reputation as a neighbor. Everyone would like to be in credit with everybody and those who show reluctance to lend a hand when they are asked to do so soon acquire a bad reputation which is commented by innuendo. Those who fail to return the favor done to them come to be excluded from the system altogether. Those of good repute can be sure of compliance on all sides."

Remember when we spoke about honor and shame in the first century? Everybody remember that Saving Face series? Everything was about honor, everything was about shame. When you walked out your door, the game began. And you either were viewed honorably by everyone in the community or you were viewed shamefully. Now you could gain honor by doing something, being a big hero, rescuing a child from a burned building—that's honor. Or maybe your father

was wealthy and you gained honor from him. That's why Pilate asked Yeshua, "Who are you?" He wanted to know, "Where are you from?" He wanted to know what honor he had. He was coming in with the authority to claim the things that he did during his trial.

What better way to gain honor than to appear generous in a community? Right? And if you appear generous in a community, then you would have more clients. And the more clients that you had, the more clients you could regulate, the more respect you gained in that community.

Grace and Faithfulness in the New Testament

Guys, I'm going to make a case, a petition, to suggest that every single place you see grace in the New Testament, and every single time you see the word faith, it has to do with a patron-client relationship. There's a couple sources. I'm part of the Wisdom and Torah Talmudim team, and about two or three years ago we started reading this book together. Ryan White, Daniel McGurr, myself, Tyler Rosenquist. Honor, Patronage, Kingship, and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture by David A. DeSilva. If you have any interest in understanding the culture surrounding the New Testament, highly recommend this book, okay? I know Ryan has done this message a little bit more in-depth than me on his website. Check it out—rootedintheTorah.com. This message has changed my life because if we can understand that every single favor that we receive from someone requires us to respond with gratitude, then it can change the way you walk, not only in your faith, but at your job and in your home.

The Power of Reciprocity

Anyone ever had a favor pulled and got you a job, right? Something you couldn't do. Let's say you weren't qualified enough. And someone said, "Listen, I'm going to get you a job, but you're not qualified. It says here in the application I need a four-year degree or something or another. It's okay, I'll get you in. Just give me your application."

Every time you pass that person at work in the hall, you give them a little smile, don't you? If you go in the break room and someone's talking bad about them, you don't let that fly, right? You wouldn't even be there if it wasn't for them. You're going to stand up for their reputation. When everyone asks, "Hey, what's your opinion about this guy?" "He's awesome. Most generous guy I know. He's wonderful." Even if he's a jerk, he did you a favor. You got to, right? If he ever asked you for a favor—"Hey, can you come help me move this weekend?"—what would you do? "Yeah, man, I wouldn't even, I wouldn't have a home if it wasn't for you."

Three Steps of the Patron-Client Relationship

There are three major steps when coming into a patron-client relationship. The patron is, of course, always at the top because he has the blessings, he has the favors that he can give. And a patron would offer you a gift, and you had a choice whether to receive this gift or not. You could reject the gift and not have to pay back honor and not have to pay back gratitude. Clean slate. But if you accepted the gift, you are now locked in as the client. Now as the client, you are required to reciprocate gratitude and honor and anything the patron asks of you back up to him. This creates a reciprocal relationship.

Let's see here. What is patron-client relationships? Forgot I had this slide. A patron is one who is initiating favor or gifts, assistance to someone out of pure intentions with no expectation of return. A client would receive this gift, favor, and he would then respond with gratitude and homage. This cycle was a reciprocal cycle of grace, completing and beginning anew.

The Three Graces

I think I have—here we go. This concept was so well known in ancient Greece that they deified the concept. Okay, in the ancient world you just make a god out of anything, right? In Egypt, justice and mercy. You gotta have a god. Ma'at, little feather and everything, right? In ancient Greece, they had these deified figures known as the Three Graces. Has anyone ever heard of these girls? A few people? Don't Google image search Three Graces with your kids in the room. This is not what they really look like. They're not clothed, typically, the statues and everything. Three naked women dancing around. Greeks loved the body. But this was a modest picture I found. And this perfectly depicts a cycle in a grace relationship.

You have one girl that represents the patron and she's giving a gift down. The second girl in the dance going round and round together is the girl that represents accepting this gift, this favor from the patron. And the third girl in the unity circle represents reciprocating honor back to the first and around and around and around they go. As long as you keep reciprocating honor back to the patron, he will be more inclined to give you more blessings and favors in your future. And if you choose to respect those, then you dance around again.

The Circle of Grace

I have here a circle of grace. This is not the circle of trust. This is the circle of grace. Once again, patrons at the top, right? And what's a patron do? What's he give? A favor. Client, are you going

to receive this favor? If you choose to receive this favor, what is your job now? Payback gratitude. Very simple concept. You guys have grabbed onto this.

Children in the room, teens, young adults, your parents are your patrons. And guess what? By living in that house, by eating that food, by accepting that Nintendo, right, and playing it, you accepted and locked yourself in as a client. And guess what you get to do now? Gratitude. Honor. If your parents need help with something, let's say, oh, I need you to go out and mow the lawn. Yes, ma'am. Yes, sir. Because I got a house to live in and you're my patron. Right? It's a patron-client relationship.

Friends and Obligations

At your job, your boss is kind of like a patron. Your friends that go out of their way to make sure that you have what you need. You know that one time when you had a flat tire on the side of the road? And you called your one friend—the only one who had a jack big enough to lift your truck up or whatnot—and he was in Georgia working, and he drove all the way over to help you change that tire? Guess what? You could, not formally, but you could view that as a patron relationship that you're not locked into. Now you love each other, right? It's not like you're his servant. It's not a servant-master relationship, but you owe him one. And next time you go to a bar or restaurant, you're going to buy him a beer, something. You're going to reciprocate honor back to the people who have done you favors, specifically favors that you cannot possibly pay back.

Circle of Grace. We're going to show this slide like four times throughout this message, so just get used to it. Once the client receives a gift from the patron, they are locked into a relationship and the client is now known as a friend of the patron. We have a lot of writings throughout the Greek and Roman era where it talks about so-and-so is my friend, my friend, my friend. Why is he your friend? Well, I mean, of course he's your friend. My best bud, Jason, Brad, so on and so forth. No, if they're your friend, it means that you're in a relationship, a patron relationship.

Friends in the New Testament

You wonder why Yeshua uses this term in [John 15](#), 13, and 14. Greater love has no other than this, that he lay his life down for his friends. You are my friends if you keep my commandments. You are my friends if you keep my commandments.

Aristotle, writing about this very relationship between a patron and a client, states this. This was not something that was religious per se. This was a very secular concept in the culture.

James chapter 2, 21 through 23. Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith, faithfulness of a client. How many of you guys know every time you see that word faith, you could also translate as faithfulness, right? Faith the size of a mustard seed or move a mountain.

Faithfulness and Action

Faithfulness. A little bit of faithfulness can move mountains. I think it'll move. No, go grab a shovel. It'll move. A little bit of faithfulness can move mountains. It doesn't take much for you to act on your faith, your faithfulness.

You see that his faith and his actions were working together and his faith was made complete by what he did. What did he do? What did he do? Offered his son up, right? And the scripture was fulfilled that says Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness and he was called God's friend.

God made a covenant with Abraham. Abraham said, "Alright." God said, "I'm gonna give you all this land." "Alright." And at one point Abraham looked up and said, "God, I need a son. I can't have a son. With my wife, we can't have a son together. This is not something I can accomplish." "Don't worry about that. I'm gonna give you a son." God's fixing to act as a patron to Abraham. Gave him a son. Abraham accepted that gift. Will Abraham reciprocate honor, blessing, or favors back to God if God asks? Abraham, you love your son, right? Yeah, he's great. I want you to go sacrifice him to me.

Abraham had a choice. He could break the relationship and not reciprocate the favor or honor or request back up to his patron, or he could act in faith and faithfulness back to his patron and be a friend of God. And that's exactly what he did.

Of course we know that, "Man, Abraham, your faithfulness is awesome. You have proved it this day. Here's the lamb stuck in a bush. Kill that. The covenant's going to pass on to your son."

Grace Is Sufficient

2 Corinthians 12:9, "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.'"

What were we just talking about? Patrons offer favors to people who what? Can't do it themselves. Lacking something, weak, poor—my grace is sufficient for you. My power is seen through brokenness and weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my

weaknesses so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses and insults and hardships and persecutions and difficulties, for when I am weak I am made strong.

What Paul is declaring here is he's saying that God's grace is sufficient enough for every single one of you in here. God's grace is going to be able to pay the debt that you owe. God's grace will be able to redeem you. God's grace—you're struggling with that thing in your life and you don't think you can ever get over it—and what are you ever going to do? And you're thinking, "I am a wretched, weak person, and there's no way I can ever recover from this spiritual state of this thing in my life." You haven't seen God's grace yet. Allow God's grace to work in your life and you will see the power of God come in your life and you will see the strength come in your life to be rebuilt from weakness to strength, obtaining something that you could not do on your own.

But if you accept this grace, now you're locked into a relationship with God.

Gratitude and the Covenant

How many of you guys say thank you to God in your prayers? That should always be done. Always. We talked about, was it one out of ten? We did that last Thanksgiving, talking about being thankful. It's important because if we are not thankful, if we're not grateful to God for what he's given us through his grace, we're going to see what Paul says about people like that here in a few minutes.

[Ephesians 2:6](#), "And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace that you have been saved through faithfulness, and this not from yourselves, it is a gift from God. Not by works, so that no man can boast, for we are God's workmanship created in Messiah Yeshua to do good works which God prepared in advance for us."

We are saved through grace, right? I wonder if I have that verse in this. Do we have it in here? Oh, come on. Yeah, okay. I just want to make sure we touch it.

The Centurion's Patron-Servant Relationship

If you would turn with me to Luke chapter 7. I forgot to put this in the slides and that's okay. I want to show you where this is actually functioning in the society. Is everyone keeping up? All

right. I know, history—boring history.

So Luke chapter 7, and everyone's familiar with the centurion servant, right? Centurion servant, sick, gonna die, and he wants to go ask Yeshua to heal him, right? And so starting, let's see here, in verse 1.

"Now, when he concluded all of his sayings, the time of Yeshua, in hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. So when he heard about Yeshua, he sent elders of the Jews to him, pleading with him to come and heal the servant. And when they came to Yeshua, they begged him earnestly."

So we have this guy, a centurion, he's a man of honor, right? Kind of a big wig, right? And he's sending some Jews to go talk to Yeshua, right? Why is he doing that? Well, obviously, he's a Roman and Romans didn't really have the best relationship with the Judeans. I mean, just generally they didn't.

And so if you were a Roman soldier and you wanted a Jewish guy to do you a favor, wouldn't it be better if you had some Jewish friends to help you? Why don't you go ask him if he'll do you a favor? It'd be a lot better. This centurion's asking the Jews to go to Yeshua and represent him.

Understanding Patrons and Reciprocal Honor

Watch what they say to Yeshua. "The centurion, he loves our nation and has built us a synagogue." That's how they start out. So on and so forth. "No other faith like yours." We know that's part.

What just happened? Why did these Jews go and represent him to Yeshua? Because he loved our nation and he built us a synagogue. He was their patron. Because he built their synagogue. They couldn't build their synagogue apparently. And this one Roman said, "I will fund the building of your synagogue because I love you guys. You're awesome. Don't even got to pay me back. That's awesome."

Here comes Yeshua. "Ah, my servant's sick. Hey guys, can you go and talk to Yeshua for me?"

Without it being said, "I'm your patron. I built you this synagogue. Can you reciprocate this honor back to me and go to Yeshua for me?" Right? That way, hopefully I can obtain this favor for my servant. That's exactly what is going on, right?

See here, I got a quote here from Cicero. Let's see here. "According to Cicero, while initiating a gift was a matter of choice, gratitude was not optional for honorable people, but was an

absolute duty." The Jews could not say no to this request from the centurion. They could not. They had to cheerfully do it.

Salvation as God's Gracious Gift

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age. While we wait for the blessed hope, the glorious appearance of our great God and Savior, Yeshua Messiah. For the grace of God that brings salvation has also appeared to men. The grace teaches us to say no to ungodliness."

Let's see, where is it? So let's just go through the salvation story real quick. We know that—who is our patron? What's [John 3:16](#) say? "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. For what purpose? That you don't perish, that you will be saved." Okay?

So, God is our patron, and we need salvation. We need redemption of our sins. We need to be raised back to life because we are found in debt and slaves to our sins according to Romans chapter 6. How are we ever going to get back into an intimate relationship with our God, with our King, when we're stuck in sin?

Well, according to scripture, that's what Yeshua's blood was all about. So what does God do? We can't do it. He gives us a gift that we do not deserve and can never pay back, right?

Now, if we choose to accept this gift—this gift is Yeshua Messiah, according to Romans chapter 10—if we choose to accept the gift of Yeshua, proclaim him as our savior, as our Lord, and believe that God raised him from the dead, we're now saved. We've accepted this.

Losing and Recovering Grace

My church that I grew up in totally forgot about this end of the circle. They said, "You accepted it. You're done."

See, the Catholics actually still maintain a correct view of what grace is. The Protestants lost it after the Reformation. Reformation won. Throw out everything Catholics, right? Everything's wrong. So we threw out grace and we redefined it to be greasy. It's true. It's a true story.

Where is it? "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to men. It teaches us to say no to ungodliness, worldly passions, and to live self-controlled." Guys, how are we ever going to reciprocate honor and gratitude and favor back to God?

Well, He says, "Listen, now that you're in my kingdom, you didn't do anything to get in my kingdom. All you did was accept my son. That was the ticket in. You can never pay me back for an entrance into my kingdom because it's priceless. But all you have to do now is act according to my kingdom. Act according to the laws and the constitutions of my kingdom. Straighten up. You're not going to go on living like you're a slave to sin anymore if you're in the kingdom. You're going to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age. That's what I want you to do to show me your gratitude for sending you my son."

That's how we reciprocate honor back to God. James chapter 2, verse 17 through 21: faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say to you, you have faith, I have deeds. Show me your faith without deeds and I will show you my faithfulness by what I do. You believe that there is one God? Good, even the demons believe that and shudder. You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar?

What James Is Saying

Guys, what James is explaining here is he's yelling at believers who have accepted the gift from the patron, right? And they said yes, and they think that now because they've accepted the gift that they're done with the relationship. And they don't have to reciprocate any type of faithfulness back to God, any type of honor or respect or favors back to God. They don't have to act right, say no to ungodliness. They don't have to say no to the pagan ways. They think they just got it and they're good. No, it's just the beginning. Welcome to the kingdom. Now it's time to be raised to life. Now it's time to start walking in gratitude towards God by keeping his commandments. Yeah, I'm in a faithful relationship with God. I accepted the gift. But you're not walking it out. So your relationship with God, your faith is dead. Faith without works. Faith without reciprocating back to the patron is a dead relationship. It doesn't exist.

Knowing Yeshua vs. Yeshua Knowing You

You wonder how so many believers in Matthew chapter 7, 21 through 23? So many believers. When Messiah is talking and he says, when I come back, all these people are going to come for me. And they're going to be like, Lord, Lord, yeah, he's back. And I'm going to look at him and I'm going to say, depart from me. I never knew you. I don't know who you are. I don't view you in a relationship with me. We did all these things in your name. What are you talking about?

Cast out demons, did all these great things in your name. Don't know who you are. I'm sorry. Go away.

These were people who thought that because they knew Yeshua, that was the most important thing in their life. And I know who Yeshua is, so obviously I'm in a faithful walk with Yeshua. And I'm in a relationship with him and I'm good to go. Guys, I hate to break it to you, the most important thing in the Bible is not if you know Yeshua or not. The most important thing is if Yeshua knows you. Can he call you his friend? That's the charge. Can Yeshua, as your patron, if you will, call you a friend? Because remember, it's a cyclical relationship. If you love me, you will walk as I walk. If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

That's the thing. Before he went off, there was one thing he told his disciples. Listen, that one characteristic everyone will view you as. This is how you know if someone is legitimate in their faithfulness to God or not. This is how you know if they're a friend of mine. This is how you know if they're in a reciprocal relationship with me, that you love one another. Are you a friend of God?

Grace, Law, and the Patron-Client Relationship

[Galatians 5:4](#). This is one of those verses that we run from in Hebrew roots. We don't like this verse. No one thought that was funny. I thought it was funny. "For if you were trying to make yourselves right with God by keeping the law, you have been cut off from Christ. You have fallen from God's grace."

So how many of you guys have had this verse quoted to you when you started keeping Shabbat? Right? You started saying no bacon on your salads and the first one, hey, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, you're falling from grace over here. You're trying to get saved by not eating the pig. I have this verse quoted to me a lot by friends who of course are not Hebrew roots. And we battle this verse in Hebrews. I've read so many commentaries. Well, that law wasn't that law. It was something else. Old traditions of man. And if you try to keep God's grace, it wasn't talking about God's law.

Guys, my opinion is this. This verse is talking about the commandments of God. But we have to understand what grace is. So what's Paul saying? If you're trying to make yourselves right with God by keeping the law, you have been cut off from Christ. You have fallen from God's grace. So let's just review this. Keeping the law, keeping God's commandments should be on this side of the circle, right? This is how we pay gratitude back to God, right?

Christ is on this side of the circle because Christ is the gift that we received as his clients and we pay back by following his commandments. If we're trying to make ourselves right with God by keeping his commandments, it means that we are trying to be the patron in the relationship and by keeping his commandments, we're expecting God to reciprocate Christ back up to us. Catch that: keeping the commandments is not going to force God to give us salvation. That's not how this works. It has never worked that way and it never will work that way. A patron is known by giving a gift to someone who cannot obtain it by themselves. We cannot obtain salvation by ourselves. God gives us Messiah and we accept Messiah and then our walk begins in the commandments. If we do it the other way around, you've been cut off from Christ. You've fallen away from God's grace. You've fallen away from this whole thing. You got it all jacked up. Stop it. Verse isn't so intimidating anymore. I understand what grace is. Of course, Torah is not going to save you. Not eating a pig.

The Sheep and the Goats

[Matthew 25](#). Oh man, it talks about the sheep and the goats. Turn there. Oh, we got time. I got a microphone. There's no sound guy up there to hit mute. Everyone's so quiet. Do what?

[Matthew 25](#). Who has it? Get your Sharpie out. We're going to mark some stuff because this is not taught in Hebrew roots enough. I know a few teachers who teach it. I'm in Mark—what am I doing in Mark? We're going to [Matthew 25](#). So you guys have heard the parable, here it is: the parable about the sheep and the goats, [Matthew 25](#). We're going to read this, right? We know Torah, we love Torah, right? Love is very important, right? Very important. Keeping the Shabbat, very important. We discussed this, right? Not eating the swine, we're going to talk about that next week. It's pretty important. Don't touch the pig.

Verse 31 in [Matthew 25](#): When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit in his throne in his glory. All nations... How many nations? That's everybody, right? So everybody's going to come together. We'll be gathered before him and he will separate them one from another. So everybody in all the nations are going to be separated one from another as a shepherd divides his sheep from his goats. Okay. So sheep's on the right, goats on the left, and he will set the sheep in his right hand and the goats in his left hand.

Separating the Sheep from the Goats

Then the king will say to those on his right hand, come you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world. So this is awesome, right? This is cool. It gets me excited to read about this because Messiah is going to come down. He's going to

sit in the throne and we're all going to be divided up. And I'm pretty sure, I really hope that all of you are going to be on the right side with the sheep, right? And he's going to say, come on in, inherit the kingdom. And then he's fixing to tell us why we are inheriting the kingdom and everyone else is not, right? So you ready for this? This is exciting.

For I was hungry and you gave me food and I was thirsty and you gave me drink. And I was a stranger and you took me in. I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to me. Then the righteous, right? These are the righteous because they're doing righteous acts after the model that God told them. This is the foundation of the Torah: to love your neighbor.

Then the righteous will answer him saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry or feed you and thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and take you in or naked and clothe you? Or when did we see you sick or in prison and come to you? And the king will answer and say to them, assuredly, I say to you, in as so much as you did it to one of the least of my brethren, you did it to me.

Then he will also say to those on the left, depart from me, you cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. So we got everyone else on the left. Then they will also answer him saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not minister to you? These sound like believers, saying, Lord, when didn't we minister to you?

Then he will say to them, assuredly, I say to you, in as so much as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me. And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into everlasting life.

The sheep did not get in because they were keeping Shabbat. Sheep did not get in because they didn't eat the pig. The very foundation of the Torah are the acts of justice and righteousness. Loving your neighbor as yourself. That's the foundation.

Those are the weightier matters that Yeshua refers to. Remember when he was fighting with the Pharisees? Weightier matters. If you're not doing the weightier matters of Torah and loving everyone, if you're not following the example that Yeshua showed you to follow—walk as I walk. "Oy, he didn't eat pig. I'm not gonna eat pig." You've missed it. Of course you don't eat stupid pig. Of course you keep the Shabbat. It's important. But the weightier matters of Torah, without those, nothing matters anymore.

You could make the case that there were some goats that kept Shabbat. I'm going to make that case. I'm going to say that there were some goats that thought they were good, okay. They had a relationship with God. They had faith, if you will. Kept the Shabbat really well. Made sure they didn't have any enzymes in the cheeseburger. But that doesn't matter. That wasn't in the list, was it? Did I miss it? It's not in the list.

The foundational things have to be met first. If you don't have the foundational things to begin your walk in Messiah, nothing else matters. Nothing else matters. That's what Torah observance is. That's the foundation of all Torah observance. Mother Teresa's kicking our butt on keeping Torah at this point. We better learn to catch up in our faithfulness and reciprocating honor back to God.

Saved by Grace, Not by Works

Went in a rabbit trail. Grace. You're not saved by the works of the law, guys. You're saved by accepting Yeshua and then walking after him. That's you continually reciprocating the honor and glory back up to God. It's important.

Did that scare anybody, [Matthew 25](#) and [Matthew 7](#)? It scared me. No one in here is scared but me. I keep Passover. I'm going to heaven. It's not what it says. It's important. Of course it's important. Duh. But there's more. We need to understand the foundation. If we don't have the pillars, foundation on the house, you can have great walls. Sheetrock can be smooth. Electrical all done right. House is going to fall down.

For example, in Seneca's Axis of Evil, he argues that ingrates are the worst of very bad lots. So this is Seneca that's speaking, and this isn't Hunger Games Seneca—this is Seneca the Younger. He was an author in the first century. He was the one that claimed the Jews were the ones that started the big fire in Rome, that Nero persecuted Christians over.

So what he states about clients who are not grateful to their patrons, but yet accepted the gift: Homicides, murderers, tyrants, thieves, adulterers, robbers, sacrilegious men, and traitors there will always be. But of the worst of these are the crimes of ingratitude. So you could be a murderer and an adulterer and a thief, and you're still not as bad as someone who accepted a gift from a patron and refuses to be grateful for it. Let that soak in.

Grace Is Reciprocal Honor

What does scripture say? Everything that's good comes from God, comes from above. I want everybody to think of the top three things. When I say the best thing in your life, think of the top three things. Have you thanked God for the good things in your life that he has given you as your patron? Or are you worse than an adulterer, a murderer, and a thief? Me too. Thank you, God, for everything that you have given me in my life.

Paul says the same thing to the Romans. You want to see this? This is great. He's talking about people who knew God. They glorified him not as God, neither were they thankful. So he just throws that in there. That's his whole point. He's talking about this group of people that knew God. They did not give him any glory or honor, and they were not thankful. But they became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. So this isn't someone who just acts evil. This is someone who fabricates evil in their self-being and acts on it.

Disobedient to their parents, right next to the inventors of evil things. Young adults in here, which is a big deal—don't be. Yes, Mom, I'll go mow the lawn without understanding. Covenant breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful. For if we sin, unmerciful... Sorry, I'm going on, skipping out of Hebrews. It keeps hammering it. Who were the people that were all these things? The people that were not thankful and did not give glory back to God.

This wasn't just Paul. This wasn't just Seneca. This was everybody—everybody understood this concept. If someone has given you a favor and you accept it, you better make sure you're giving glory, honor, and respect back to them, even if you don't like them. As long as that relationship is functioning, you're locked in.

Now the patron can leave the relationship, right? Patron can leave it. He stops giving the favor. Nothing for you to give gratitude back on. No big deal. But it's a shameful thing for the client to leave it.

[Hebrews 10:26](#), "For if we sin willfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins. But a certain fearful looking for all the judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. How much sore punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who has trodden underfoot the Son of God and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing and has done despite unto the spirit of grace."

Now that we understand what the spirit of grace is, now that we understand what grace is, the writer of the book of Hebrews is speaking about someone who entered into that spirit of grace

and refused to reciprocate honor and glory and faithful deeds back to God and has literally trodden Messiah under his feet. Scary verse number three. [Acts 15](#): We believe through the spirit of grace, through grace, our Lord Jesus, that we are saved just as they are. Belief through grace.

[2 Corinthians 6:1](#), "As God's fellow workers, we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing."

Now that we understand grace, we understand hard verses like in Galatians when it's talking about grace and law. Law was never meant to give you salvation. It was something for you to walk out as an example of your salvation. Making God the patron, attempting to force God to be your patron in your life—it's not a smart thing to do.

We see a lot of other patron-client relationship language. Talking to Jason about it in [Matthew 7:7](#). What is it? Ask and you shall receive. Ask in my name and you shall receive, right? We're like, yay! It's not quite the context. The context is if you go to your patron and you are loyal to them and you give him honor and glory, then anything you ask of your patron, he's going to reciprocate it back to you because you're in a relationship. Ask and you shall receive. Amen.

Father, just give me the intent to be thankful and give you gratitude for every single thing in my life. That's my prayer, man. Not miss one cycle of this relationship for every good thing that you have given to us.

[Hebrews 12:28](#), "Since we are receiving a kingdom that is unshakable, let us be thankful and please God by worshiping him in holy fear and awe." That's what grace is, guys. Grace is not some type of slick, fluxed idea that's synonymous with mercy. At the beginning of this message, I said it can be mercy. Because if you're on death row, right, and I'm the judge, I could kill you or I could give you mercy as a favor in a grace relationship. I let you go, but you got to scrub my floors for the rest of your life. It's reciprocal, right?

Grace is more than simply mercy. Grace was an act. It was a relationship term and it was an act that God looked down and said, I see you in your sin. I see you in the places in your life where you are struggling. I see where your focus is not on life, but on death. I see a life of curses ahead of you because of the choices that you're making, but I'm going to give you something. I'm going to offer you something that can change all of that. And that is my son. And if you accept this, then you will be in my kingdom and I will love you. And you will not be a slave to sin as [Romans 6](#) says anymore. No, you will be a son of the living God. You will be a daughter of the king from this point forward. You will be able to live in a status where your honor no longer

matters because your weakness is filled and covered with my strength and your shame has been covered with my honor.

Will you accept this gift from me? And if you do, will you remember to say thank you? That's what grace is.

Your Clients and Patrons

We see grace relationships every single day in our lives, and we probably never even blinked an eye. Hey, I owe you one. Wow. Now you know. How many clients do you have in your life? See, in the first century, it was actually a status thing to have multiple clients because it wasn't just about being able to make clients—it was about managing your clients, managing the needs of your clients in the areas that you were facilitating or giving them need in their life.

Who are those people in your life that lean on you for things? Who are those people in your life that lean on you for prayer? Who are those people in your life that lean on you for counsel? Who are those people in your life that say, "Hey, I just need someone to talk to tonight." Do you keep them in your prayers? As a patron, you're locked into the same relationship too. It's now your job to give them something that they need.

Honor Your Patrons

How many patrons do you have in your life? You may have many. You may have people that are always there for you, that do you favors all the time. Don't take advantage of them. Paul speaks very, very, very severely about someone who does. Remember to give them honor. If you're accepting benefits from someone, give them honor. Give them gratitude. Someone's talking about them behind their back. He's a great guy. He's awesome. He's honorable. Quit talking about him. Stand up for your patrons. And remember the one true patron, our King, in everything you do.

That's How Grace Works

When that state trooper came back to my vehicle, 63 in a 45, he decided to give me a warning. Okay? And he said, "Watch your speed around here." Now, he did not have to give me a warning. He could have given me a ticket. And I certainly could not have achieved the warning by myself. There's no way I was getting out of this ticket. This instance, this officer basically gave me a choice. I could accept that warning or I could say, no, you just write me a ticket. By accepting the warning, I was going to make this state trooper my patron. I graciously did so in

taking the warning and said, thank you, officer. After I took this warning, as a client of this wonderful state trooper, do you think I left my seatbelt off, did not use my blinker, swerved out in front of traffic and went up to 70 miles an hour? No, I sat there for a minute and I very gracefully buckled my seatbelt, I checked my mirrors, I put my blinker on, and I drove 44 miles an hour all the way home. Why? Because I owed the state trooper one. He was my patron at that point. He said, go speed limit. Speed limit. That's how grace works, guys.

Bestow Your Favors on the Good

Hey, we got one more slide. Don't hit that button. Socrates says, bestow your favors on the good for a goodly treasure is in store of gratitude laid up in the heart of an honest man. If you benefit bad men, then you will have the same reward as those who feed stray dogs for these snarl alike at those who give them food and at the passing stranger, and just so base men wrong alike. So Socrates isn't explaining the patron-client relationship—he's giving advice and counsel to patrons. And basically, he's saying, listen, don't just give favors out to everyone. You don't want to be in a relationship with everybody. You want to be in a relationship with clients who are going to be faithful and going to be gracious and honor you back, right? Who are going to represent you because your clients represent their patron. That's what's supposed to happen, right? And so anyone ever have like that dog in the neighborhood? You know what I'm talking about. That dog in your neighborhood is not the dog that yaps every once in a while. It's not the dog that does good in the leash. It's the dog that will run after everybody. Run after the mailman. UPS guy has to wear shin guards so he doesn't have bite marks on his legs because of the stupid dog. And then when you get home, the dog bites you even though you're its owner. A person who is not going to be a faithful client and is just going to eat up favors is likened unto that dog, according to Socrates.

Represent Your King

Clients represent their patron. So if you don't leave with anything else, it's your job to represent and honor your king in everything that you do, everything that you speak. When people see you, you should be reflecting him and his kingdom. That's how you reciprocate honor and gratitude back to your patron, back to our king.

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