

## Ephesians – Week 3 – Riches of Grace – Bible Study Helps

Title: Riches of Grace: The Abundant Blessings We Have in Christ

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the magnificent grace of God as revealed in Ephesians chapter 1, emphasizing that believers possess unlimited spiritual wealth through Jesus Christ. The message defines grace as "God's Riches At Christ's Expense" and systematically examines how God's eternal plan was to generously bless all who trust in Jesus Christ. The sermon highlights that these blessings were not earned but freely given according to God's good pleasure. Through Christ's sacrifice, believers are brought near to God, adopted into His family, accepted in the Beloved, redeemed by His blood, forgiven of all sins, given an eternal inheritance, and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. The sermon challenges the congregation to live differently in light of these incredible riches, showing grace to others and bringing glory to God who has been so generous to them.

Key Points:

- Grace is defined as the free, unmerited love and favor of God that we did not earn and cannot earn through works
- God's eternal plan before the foundation of the world was to be extremely generous to believers in Christ
- God's plan was made possible only through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross
- Grace brought us near to God, allowing sinners into His holy presence
- Believers are legally adopted into God's family as sons and daughters with full inheritance rights
- We are accepted in the beloved, meaning we are accepted because we are in Christ
- Redemption through Christ's blood has purchased us out of slavery to sin
- All our sins are forgiven according to the riches of His grace
- God has revealed His will to us through His Word, the Bible and His Spirit
- Believers have obtained an eternal inheritance as joint heirs with Christ
- We are included in God's eternal purpose and become testimonies of His glory
- Salvation comes by hearing the gospel and believing and trusting in Jesus Christ
- Believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise as a guarantee of full completion
- This seal means ownership, authenticity, protection, and authority that cannot be broken
- Once saved, believers cannot be unsealed regardless of failures, feelings, or trials

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### Scripture Reference:

- Ephesians 1:1-14 (primary focus)
- Romans 11:6
- Titus 2:11
- 1 Corinthians 15:8-10
- 2 Corinthians 8:9
- Romans 5:1-21
- Ephesians 2:7-9
- Genesis 4:1-7
- Acts 20:28
- Colossians 2:14
- 2 Peter 1:3-4
- Romans 8:15-17
- John 1:12
- 2 Timothy 1:9
- John 10:27-30

### Stories:

- The story of Cain and Abel from Genesis 4, illustrating that from the beginning, God required a lamb sacrifice and would only accept worship done His way, foreshadowing Christ as the Lamb of God
- Personal testimony about the pastor's grandfather Max who would write "hands off Max" on wood he was saving, illustrating how God has sealed believers with His mark of ownership
- Reference to John Wesley's conversion story, particularly his father telling him "the witness is within you" and Wesley's experience with the Moravians during a storm at sea, leading to his understanding of assurance of salvation
- Illustration about concert tickets and backstage passes to demonstrate the privilege believers have of direct access to God's presence
- Brief mention of personal family history regarding visitation rights with his father, contrasting limited visitation with the full adoption rights believers have in God's family

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### Discipleship Questions

How does understanding that God chose to bless believers 'according to the good pleasure of His will' change the way you view your relationship with Him?

In what ways does the reality of being adopted into God's family as sons and daughters impact how you approach prayer and your daily walk with Christ?

The sermon contrasts Cain's rejected offering with Abel's accepted sacrifice. What does this teach us about approaching God on His terms rather than our own?

If God's grace means receiving what we don't deserve, how should this truth shape the way we extend grace and forgiveness to others who have wronged us?

Believers often live as though they are poor despite having incredible spiritual wealth in Christ. What practical steps can you take to live more consistently with your true spiritual riches?

How does the seal of the Holy Spirit provide assurance during times of failure, doubt, or spiritual attack, and why is this security important for Christian living?

What does it mean that we are 'accepted in the beloved,' and how might this truth address feelings of not belonging or being an outsider?

The sermon emphasizes that grace must be received through hearing and believing the gospel. How does this simple yet profound truth challenge modern religious complexity or works-based thinking?

In light of being included in God's eternal purpose as His ambassadors, how should this change your perspective on everyday encounters with unbelievers?

If God plans to display the exceeding riches of His grace toward believers in the ages to come, what responsibility do we have now to live lives that accurately reflect His generosity and kindness?

# Small Group Guide: Riches of Grace

Ephesians 1:1-14

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## Opening Prayer

Begin your group time by thanking God for His amazing grace and asking the Holy Spirit to open hearts and minds to understand the incredible wealth we have in Christ.

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## Ice Breaker

Share a time when someone gave you something you didn't deserve. How did it make you feel?

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## Key Scripture

*"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." - Ephesians 1:7*

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## Sermon Summary

This message explored the incredible riches of God's grace given to all believers in Christ. Before the foundation of the world, God planned to lavish His blessings on those who would trust Jesus Christ. These blessings include being brought near to God, adopted into His family, accepted in the Beloved, redeemed by Christ's blood, forgiven of all sins, given His Word, promised an inheritance, included in His purpose, and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

**Grace Defined:** God's Riches At Christ's Expense (G-R-A-C-E)

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## Discussion Questions

Understanding God's Grace

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1. **What does it mean that grace is "unmerited favor"?** How does this differ from the way the world typically operates?
2. **Read Ephesians 1:4-6.** Why did God choose to bless believers so generously? What does "according to the good pleasure of His will" tell us about God's character?
3. **The sermon stated that if we had to earn grace, it wouldn't be grace anymore (Romans 11:6).** Why is this distinction so important? How does this challenge our natural tendency to try to earn God's favor?

### The Cost of Grace

4. **Read 2 Corinthians 8:9.** Grace is free to us but costly to Christ. How should understanding Christ's sacrifice change the way we view our salvation?
5. **Discuss the story of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4).** What does this teach us about approaching God on our terms versus God's terms? How does this apply to salvation today?

### Our Blessings in Christ

6. **Review the list of blessings from the sermon:**
  - Allowed to be with God
  - Adopted into His family
  - Accepted in the Beloved
  - Redeemed by His blood
  - Forgiven of all trespasses
  - Given His revealed will (the Bible)
  - Given an eternal inheritance
  - Included in His eternal plan
  - Made a testimony to His glory
  - Sealed with the Holy Spirit

**Which of these blessings is most meaningful to you personally right now? Why?**

7. **The sermon mentioned that we often live like we're poor when we're actually incredibly wealthy in Christ.** What causes us to forget our spiritual riches? How can we remind ourselves daily of what we have in Jesus?

### Eternal Security

8. **Read Ephesians 1:13-14 and John 10:27-29.** What do these passages teach about the security of our salvation? How does being "sealed with the Holy Spirit" give us confidence?
9. **The sermon said, "When you fail, you cannot be unsealed. When your feelings change, you cannot be unsealed."** How does this truth provide comfort during difficult times or when we struggle with sin?

### Living in Light of Grace

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10. **Read Ephesians 2:7.** God's plan is to display His grace to us throughout all eternity. How should this reality affect the way we live today?
  11. **If we've received such overwhelming grace, how should we treat others?** Share specific examples of how you can show grace to someone this week.
  12. **The sermon challenged us: "Are you living like a person who has received unlimited riches in Jesus Christ?"** What would it look like practically to live in light of this truth?
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### Key Takeaways

- ✓ **Grace is completely unearned** - We did nothing to deserve it; God gave it according to His good pleasure
  - ✓ **Grace came at great cost** - Jesus Christ gave everything so we could receive everything freely
  - ✓ **Grace brings us near to God** - We have access to the Father through Christ
  - ✓ **Grace secures our future** - We are sealed by the Holy Spirit and cannot lose our salvation
  - ✓ **Grace should transform our lives** - Understanding what we've received should change how we live and treat others
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### Practical Applications

#### This Week's Challenge

Choose one or more of the following to put into practice:

1. **Daily Gratitude:** Each morning this week, thank God for one specific blessing from the list in Ephesians 1. Journal about how that blessing impacts your life.
2. **Grace Extension:** Identify someone who has wronged you or irritated you. Intentionally show them grace this week in a tangible way, remembering the grace God has shown you.
3. **Scripture Memorization:** Memorize Ephesians 1:7-8 to remind yourself of God's riches of grace.
4. **Witness Opportunity:** Share with one person this week about what God has done for you. Use the blessings from Ephesians 1 to explain the gospel.
5. **Spiritual Inventory:** Spend time in prayer asking God to reveal areas where you're living like you're spiritually poor rather than rich in Christ. Ask Him to help you live in light of your true identity.

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6. **Worship Response:** Listen to or sing "Amazing Grace" this week, reflecting on each verse in light of what you've learned from this sermon.
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### Prayer Prompts

Spend time in prayer together, focusing on:

- **Thanksgiving:** Praise God for His amazing grace and the specific blessings listed in Ephesians 1
  - **Confession:** Ask forgiveness for times we've lived as though we don't have these riches in Christ
  - **Intercession:** Pray for those in your life who haven't trusted Christ, that they would receive God's grace
  - **Commitment:** Surrender your life afresh to Christ, asking Him to help you live in a way that brings Him glory
  - **Personal Needs:** Share specific needs and pray for one another, remembering that we have access to God through Christ
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### Closing Thought

*"God's plan was to be extremely generous to believers in Christ. The moment you trust Jesus Christ, you are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and God says, 'Hands off. That's my son. That's my daughter.' Amen."*

**How will you live differently this week knowing you are a child of the King?**

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### For Next Week

Read Ephesians 1:15-23 in preparation for the next message. Consider: What does Paul pray for the believers? What does this teach us about prayer?

# 5-Day Devotional:

## Living in the Riches of God's Grace

### Day 1: Chosen Before Time Began

**Reading:** Ephesians 1:3-6

**Devotional:** Before the universe existed, before stars filled the sky, God chose to bless those who would trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This isn't about your performance or worthiness—it's about His sovereign love and good pleasure. The Creator of all things looked through the corridors of time and said, "All who trust My Son will be in My family." This truth should revolutionize how you see yourself today. If you are saved, when doubts whisper that you don't belong, remember God's eternal plan included you. Your destiny was adoption as His child. Let this settle deep in your soul—you are wanted, chosen, and deeply loved by the King of kings.

**Reflection:** How does knowing God's eternal plan and the possession of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ change your perspective on your worth and identity today?

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### Day 2: Accepted in the Beloved

**Reading:** Genesis 4:1-7; Ephesians 1:6-7

**Devotional:** From the beginning, God established that acceptance comes only through the acceptable sacrifice—the Lamb. Cain learned this painful truth when his self-effort was rejected while Abel's lamb was accepted. Today, you stand accepted not because of what you've brought to God, but because of what Christ has done. You are "accepted in the Beloved." His blood has purchased your redemption and forgiveness. This means when God looks at you, He sees you through Jesus Christ—holy, blameless, and beloved. Stop trying to earn what's already been freely given. Your striving cannot improve upon Christ's finished work. Rest in this glorious truth: you are completely, fully, eternally accepted because you are in Him.

**Reflection:** Are you living like someone who is fully accepted, or are you still trying to earn God's approval?

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### Day 3: Sealed and Secure Forever

**Reading:** John 10:27-30; Ephesians 1:13-14

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**Devotional:** The moment you believed the gospel, God sealed you with His Holy Spirit. This seal represents ownership, authenticity, and divine protection. It's as if the King of heaven stamped you with "Hands off—this one belongs to Me!" No force in the universe can break God's seal. Not your failures, not your doubts, not Satan's accusations, not even death itself. Jesus declared that no one can snatch you from His hand or the Father's hand. The Holy Spirit within you is God's guarantee—His down payment promising full redemption is coming. You are eternally secure not because you're strong enough to hold onto God, but because He is powerful enough to hold onto you. Live today with the confidence of the sealed.

**Reflection:** How does eternal security in Christ change the way you face trials, temptations, and uncertainties?

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### Day 4: Riches Beyond Measure

**Reading:** Romans 8:14-17; Ephesians 1:11-12

**Devotional:** You've been given an inheritance as a joint heir with Jesus Christ. Everything that belongs to the Son belongs to you. This isn't about earthly wealth that rusts and fades, but spiritual riches in heavenly places. You have access to the Father's presence, wisdom for every decision, power to overcome sin, purpose in God's eternal plan, and a guaranteed future in glory. Yet many believers live like spiritual paupers, unaware of their wealth. You don't have to beg for what's already yours. You don't have to live defeated when victory is your inheritance. Today, take inventory of your riches in Christ. You possess all things in Him. Walk in the reality of who you are and what you have.

**Reflection:** What spiritual riches do you possess in Christ that you've been living without or taking for granted?

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### Day 5: Living Worthy of Grace

**Reading:** 2 Corinthians 8:9; Ephesians 1:1-14

**Devotional:** Christ became poor so that through His poverty you might become rich. This is grace—God's riches at Christ's expense. You've received what you didn't earn, don't deserve, and could never purchase. Now the question becomes: How should you live in light of such overwhelming grace? God's generosity should produce generosity in you. His forgiveness should make you forgiving. His acceptance should lead you to accept others. His sacrifice should inspire your surrender. You are His testimony to a watching world—proof that God transforms lives and lavishes love on the undeserving. Don't live down in defeat when you've been raised up in Christ. Let your life bring glory to the One who has blessed you with every spiritual blessing.

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**Reflection:** In what specific ways can you reflect God's grace to others this week, demonstrating the transformation He's worked in you?

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**Closing Prayer:** Father, thank You for the riches of Your grace. Help me to live each day aware of the incredible blessings I have in Christ—allowed to be with you, adopted, accepted, redeemed, forgiven, sealed, and secure. May my life bring You the glory You deserve. In Jesus' name, Amen.