

Where Would We Be Without Grace?

We sing about it. We talk about it nonchalantly. We call it great and amazing, but have we really stopped to think about where we would be without the grace of God?

It's God's grace that transferred us from a sure and certain death to life. However, it's not just a mediocre, get-through-it-the-best-we-can life but life overflowing with abundance (see John 10:10).

Sin Versus Grace

Sin entered the world through Adam and brought death to humanity (see Rom. 5:17). Though sin may seem strong, Scripture tells us God's wonderful grace is even more powerful.

"Just as sin ruled over all people and brought them death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," (Rom. 5:21, NLT).

God's grace is the weapon He offers to get us through this life to fight against the pull of sin. Romans 6:2-3 (MSG) gives a great picture of salvation and baptism. "When we went under the water, we left the old country of sin behind; when we came up out of the water, we entered into the new country of grace—a new life in a new land!"

There's Always a Choice

I love the picture of sin being the old country of tyranny, constraint and poverty you left behind, while grace is the new country that promises freedom, life and health. Why would you ever want to return to the old country of sin when you can

live in the new land of grace?

The issue is, though, like Adam and Eve, we have a choice. Even after we trust Jesus as our Savior, we can still choose to go back to our old ways unless we choose to “walk habitually in the newness of life,” (Rom. 6:4b, AMP).

We still have grace, but it’s not automated grace. We have to push the grace button. In other words, we have to choose to employ the power and strength of God’s grace. We have to admit we are weak and need God’s help to live in His freedom rather than returning to the bondage of sin.

Grace Is Strength

In 2 Corinthians 12:9 (MSG), God tells Paul, “My grace is enough. It’s all you need. My strength comes into its own in your weakness.” Then in 2 Corinthians 12:10 (AMP) Paul responds with what he has learned. “When I am weak [in human strength], then I am strong, [truly able, truly powerful, truly drawing from God’s strength.]”

Here’s the truth: Laying down what we think we have to have to get through this life has to happen before we can walk with God. Surrender has to come, so we understand we need God’s strength to defeat the power sin will try to exert over us.

We can easily go right back into the stronghold of sin. But Romans 6:6 (TPT) gives us lots of hope. “Could it be any clearer that our former identity is now and forever deprived of its power? For we were co-crucified with Him to dismantle the stronghold of sin within us, so that we would not continue to live one moment longer submitted to sin’s power.”

Dismantle the Stronghold of Sin

Strongholds begin as half-truths which the evil one throws our way as bait. If we take the bait, it means we agree with the half-truth. We may or may not realize there is a lie in there,

but we don't really think about that. By the time we realize there's a lie, we have completely swallowed the bait, and the devil is already reeling us in.

Before we know it, this stronghold of doing whatever we want and not asking what God thinks has a firm grasp on us. We feel like we have been taken over by things we don't want in our lives, but we made a willful choice. Now it feels like the stronghold is in charge, and we have no say in the matter.

But guess what? God's grace is still there. All we have to do is call on Him. God is still fighting for us. We have the power through the Holy Spirit to make a different choice no matter how far down this rabbit trail we have come.

Dismantle the Power of Sin

All we have to do is realize the truth of Romans 6:6. Our former identity is now and forever deprived of its power. Our human nature was deprived of its power when we were co-crucified with Jesus. That means that if we stay in union with Christ, sin won't creep in because it has no legal power in our life.

When we take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5, NIV) our eyes are opened to the truth. When we have truth on our side, we will not believe the evil one's lies. Truth dismantles lies from which the evil one's strongholds are made.

We just need to remember this truth: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God, [that is, His remarkable, overwhelming gift of grace to believers] is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23, AMP).

Push the Grace Button

Remember, we always have a choice. We can give in to the stronghold of sin. However, if we find ourselves having done

that, we can still push the grace button any time.

We don't do that as a get-out-of-jail-free card, we do that when we want to dismantle the stronghold of sin we have fallen into. We do that because we want to follow Jesus. We want to obey Him.

We want our lives to count for Him and fulfill the destiny He has for us in this world and in the His kingdom.

There's a lot more on this subject in this episode of *Sweet Grace for Your Journey* on Charisma Podcast Network, *What War?* This is also the sixth episode in the Spirit-Led Transformation course. For action steps, challenges, transcript and video, join Overcomers Academy.

This article first appeared on [. {eo}](#)

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