

## More on Understanding Grace Upon Grace

Fred R. Coulter—May 21, 2016

We are part of a miraculous—and it can only be—spiritual work of God that the world wouldn't believe. It's even very hard for us to comprehend how that God is able to take us, and when we first come to understand about human nature it's a miracle that we acknowledge it and realize that that is true.

God takes something that for men is absolutely impossible. You all know this Scripture: ***The heart is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things!*** First cousin to the devil! With God's Spirit and His Word and in particularly His Truth, He converts that. He converts the human mind with His Spirit. It's not an instantaneous transformation, because He wants our full participation.

What He's going to give us is so great that He didn't even tell His disciples until years later, as I explain in the book, *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?*

One of the greatest things that was lacking and still is in many places is *understanding about the grace of God and the love of God*. We all understand when we find ourselves to be sinners that we have to keep the Law; that's true.

It's like when we're little kiddies we learn the alphabet, probably when you were about five years old. You strutted around the house and sang they song, little did you realize that same alphabet you use your whole life. God is so great that regardless of the alphabet in any language, He gives His Word to them so they can understand. It starts with keeping the laws and commandments of God. If you grow, repent and receive the Holy Spirit, which is the whole purpose of it... A new plant cannot grow unless you have a seed. That seed has to come from God the Father (1-John 3). In the Greek that's called 'sperma.' I bring it out in the book.

A lot of us have been in the Church for decades. Let's talk about the greatest thing that God is doing. The younger you are and understand this, the greater your relationship can be throughout your life. Everything circles around this.

One day I was thinking: What if you were right at the North Pole, compared to being on the equator? At the North Pole it's one whole turn and it's only about 76 feet. So you're going real slow. At the equator you're going 1,080mph, right at that, more or less. But the core runs all the way through the earth.

In the New Testament everything that we have talking about God runs through the New

Testament, so let's look at it where it's moving very slowly and we can grasp it. Then we will progress to where it moves a little quicker and see what God adds to it.

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life" (vs 1-4).

John 14:6: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life...'" That's the whole Gospel in one sentence; everything else comes from that. That's like standing at the North Pole or at the center. But look at what's all around.

John 1:14 tells us how much God loves us and how great His plan is. God is not up there saying, 'All you human beings down there, you are all sinners and you're all miserable and you're all wretched, and I'm just up here by Myself. I look down there and what a mess you've made of it. You're all guilty; you're all going to die. I'm going to sit here in My throne and enjoy Myself.' ***NO!***

God has a purpose; a purpose so great that is going to last *for eternity* that through this plan He's got to have it so that this carnal mind can become a spiritual mind. There will be love and no rebellion. But because of the things that have happened, beginning with Adam and Eve, human beings have a nature that is evil, called 'the law of sin and death.' That was a result of God's judgment to Adam and Eve; we all came from Adam and Eve. Because they received the sentence of death, it passed into all mankind, men and women, and that's why everybody sins.

In that is a great purpose so that we can truly know, understand, see the difference and how great eternal life is. What God did in order to complete that, He shared in the same existence and nature. If you think you've humbled yourself and given up a lot, you can read about in the book what Christ did to come as a human being. Come from being the Great God (Rev. 1) to a pinpoint of life to become a human being. That's something!

No one can say, 'God, You didn't know what it was like to be a little child. God, You didn't know what it was like to be a teenager.' Teenagers today think they're special. Well, all of us gray heads were teenagers once. So what did He do?

Verse 14: "And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His

glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father)...” Peter, James and John saw Christ in His glorified form in vision on the Mount of Transfiguration. They saw that, plus all the miracles that He did.

Sidebar: Jesus said He came to *reveal* the Father. Think about that! Who is the Father? When you’re in the army and you’re a new recruit, you think about the general in charge. That’s way up there. God is greater than that. **He came to reveal the Father!** The book of John reveals it more than anything else.

He didn’t come to reveal it to the wise and the intelligent. In His prayer to God He said, **‘I thank You, Father, that You have not revealed it to the wise and intelligent, but You have revealed it to babes.’** Isn’t that amazing? You understand with your level of understanding of the plan of God right now *more* than all the greatest brains in the world. Did you know that? That’s not to lift you up and puff you up. That’s to give you encouragement that God knows what He’s doing.

“...full of grace and truth” (v 14). *That’s how He’s going to change the carnal mind!* You need the laws and commandments of God so much that He’s not going to beat you over the head with them; *He’s going to put them in your head.* How’s that for a plan? That’s something.

Verse 16: “And of His fullness we have all received, and **grace upon grace.**” What is grace upon grace? *I did a series of sermons on it.* We have three special studies on grace:

1. Grace of God
2. God’s Grace and Commandment-Keeping
3. Grace Upon Grace

That shows the progression of the grace of God in understanding, exactly like the song, *How Love I Your Law.* Though it’s complicated, it’s simple.

What is grace upon grace? Protestants think grace is forgiveness of sin. That’s like having a 1928 Packard and you have the crank. You say, ‘Boy, look what I got.’ God says you forgot the car. The crank without the car doesn’t do you any good.

He doesn’t want to just forgive your sins to relieve your conscience, your poor little overworked conscience, ‘oh, pitty-patty, poor little me.’ **NO! He wants to convert us in your heart and in your mind!** He does that with His Spirit. Being under grace is a special relationship with God through His Spirit. Think about it!

- to have the Spirit of God
- to understand the Word of God, to communicate with the Father
- to communicate with Jesus Christ

Like you hear me say on Church on Home {**churchathome.org**}: How close is God to you? *Close as your knees are to the floor!* How long does it take you to get there? *One second!*

We’re going to read some of the most profound verses in the Bible that we understand in degrees, like peeling an onion, pulling it back, pulling it back. There’s only one way to God the Father. You have that contact with God. How great is that contact? Is that just like a permission slip? ‘I give a permission slip and you can talk to Me today. Come back tomorrow, maybe I’ll give you another permission slip.’ **NO!**

John 14:6: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the Way... [no other way] ...and the Truth... [no other Truth] ...and the Life...’”—no other life. What did Jesus say of the words that He spoke? *They were Spirit and Life!* What did He say about the flesh? *The flesh profits nothing!*

All of the rich people in the world—you know George Soros sitting there counting all of his money and spending it out and all the evil. The great bankers, they have all the money. They have all the notes. They have all the nations indebted and 99% of the people indebted. You are richer than they are, every single one of you, because you have the greatest blessing of all, the Spirit of God. Have you ever thought of that?

Let’s jump ahead a little bit because we need to be inspired. The way you overcome is to be inspired. It’s like you have a team of horses. You have a whip. You can beat them and make them run fast. If you love the horse, and the horse knows, he’s got the greatest bunch of food in the barn you would ever want and you tell him, ‘Giddy-up, let’s go’; he takes off. Who gets there quickest, the one that’s beaten? Or the one that has a desire? Who enjoys it the most? This is what He’s telling them.

Now then, He talks to them about the Father, and so forth. Verse 13 is a promise. God gives the promise. There are three conditions:

1. you pray
2. you obey and love
3. according to His will

Sometimes God will say *no* for good reason.

Verse 13: “And whatever you shall ask in My name, this will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

We’re going to see how close the Father and Son are in this relationship that we are going through to understand about *grace upon grace.* These are all the spiritual blessings that come from God. This is a grace—a gift, a favor, a blessing—from God that He only gives to His only-begotten children. The world

in its way cannot even understand it or come close to it, because they haven't taken the first step of repentance, and the second step of loving the Law of God.

Verse 14: "If you ask anything..." according to the will of God. That's like handing you a blank check and say to make it out for any amount you want. How about a million dollars? *Try ten!* This is eternal life, understanding the Word of God. We're going to see what this *grace upon grace* is. ***It's a marvelous and fantastic relationship between each one of us and God the Father and Jesus Christ!***

God tells all of those who bow down to idols—and the one is so poor he only gets a tree and he carves an idol. With the chips he makes a fire and then he cooks himself some food. After he's done eating he bows down to the idol to thank the idol for it.

God says, 'Fool, look up into the heavens. I made the heavens and the earth. Spanned the stars out as a span.' Just like you going to a big window and opening the curtains. 'And all the stars and I know them by name, I know them by number. I know how I made them. I'm giving you permission in the blessing to become like Me. Not in the same power, but the same kind of existence. So, to make sure you understand that, I'm going to give you a down payment. The down payment is called the earnest of the Spirit.'

With *grace upon grace*, it is a marvelous and fantastic thing, v 14: "If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*. If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another **Comforter**, that it may be with you throughout the age" (vs 14-16)—that's the Holy Spirit of Truth.

What did Peter tell Simon Magus? *You can't buy the Spirit with money!* What God gives us with His Spirit is greater than all the riches and wealth in the world. That is individually to everyone who has the Spirit of God. God has that capacity and that ability. Isn't that a marvelous thing? Remember that when Jesus says, 'I love you.' The Spirit of the Truth is how you overcome the carnal nature:

- the Word of God is Truth
- His laws are Truth
- His testimonies are true
- every precept of God is true
- God is true and cannot lie
- you have a relationship with Him

How great is that?

Verse 16: "'And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter..." He'll comfort you in time of trouble; read the Psalms.

He's with you in trouble. He will help you out of trouble.

"...that it may be with you throughout the age. ***Even the Spirit of the Truth***, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and ***shall be within you***. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you" (vs 16-18). That's quite a thing. *In* you, not around you or above you or alongside you, not in front of you, not in back of you, but *in* you, the Holy Spirit of God.

Verse 18: "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Yet, a little while and the world shall see Me no longer; but you shall see Me. Because I live, you shall live also. In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I am in you" (vs 18-20). What a fantastic statement that is.

I want you to think about these next verses we're going to read, because these are the most important in *grace upon grace*.

Verse 21: "**The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father...**" Think about that when it talks about the love of God.

Think about that when you read Rev. 4. The only one to see a vision of the Father was John the apostle, who was also of the priestly line. He heard a trumpet blow and said, 'Come up here.' He came up and he looked and he saw a throne. He saw God sitting on the throne and a rainbow around the throne and twenty-four elders. I imagine he was in awe, 'What is this?' Amazing thing. That is the Father and Jesus is at His right hand.

Do you have special input to someone important? *Yes, indeed!* Do you have someone so interested in you and loves you so much that He does a special thing, which is the greatest grace of God and leads to the *grace upon grace*?

"...and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.' Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, 'Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?'" (vs 21-22). How are you going to do that? *God's Spirit and God's grace!*

Verse 23 is one of the most important verses in the entire New Testament concerning our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. This is how ***They're doing the work within*** to convert, to change, to help us grow and overcome. We have our part. Our part is very simple:

- love God
- keep His commandments

- pray and study
- rely on God

How much does that cost you? *Nothing! That's a grace!* Notice what Jesus promised. He doesn't give it to certain special people. It's not like the super-elite of the world. They just control everything themselves.

I made this statement recently and it is true. All the debt that we have, all the debt that the world owes, you know the only way you get rid of it? *You never pay it back!* You can never print enough money. The super-elite are so gnarly evil they will never do what they have to do. That is: forgive, wipe it out. Make all the books everywhere read *zero!* That's what God is going to do when Christ returns.

There's always forgiveness with God, but never with Satan. Think about what a wonderful grace that is. Remember: *grace upon grace.*

Here's how He's going to do it. How is Christ going to come to each one of us and the world not know it? You may tell your friends and relatives about it, but they'll think you're rather nuts. 'What have you done?' *I've become a Christian.* 'What do you do?' *I keep the commandments.* 'That isn't what I heard in the First Baptist Church.'

Verse 23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word...'" He's going to write it in your mind and heart. It's going to become part of your cells, part of your DNA, because that is being built for the spiritual DNA at the resurrection. I guess the older we get the more we look forward to the resurrection. Whatever aches and pains you have they're going to be all gone.

"...If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word..." (v 23). When it's singular like that, that is His entire message. Was He Lord God of the Old Testament? *Yes, it includes all of that!* To make sure that you will keep His word, He will put it in your mind. Isn't that wonderful? God is so loving and kind and great, and He's produced the Bible.

Someone wants to know: What would God say to me if I could talk to him? Tell him to pick up the Bible and read it; it's all there. It's so important and He thinks of you so much and loves you so much, He's given you His Word. He has His words written down so you can go to Him and find out what He says. It's not like the bank where it has a secret repossession clause that is written such a way you can't read it.

"...he will keep My Word..." The greatest event in every one of our lives, which will be *forever*. New Testament calls that *the ages of eternity*.

"...and My Father will love him..." (v 23). Think about that. The Two Who control the vastness of the universe and created everything that there is loves each one of us. Even the world and all the sinful people so much that He has put into His plan a second resurrection for an opportunity for salvation. How is that? *That's fantastic!*

If you think we're going to have glory and joy when we're resurrected—which we will—think of what those people who died horrible deaths, how are they going to feel when they come to the realization that they have been restored as a whole human being again. Surrounding them are millions of the sons and daughters of God to help them and teach them so they can enter into the fullness of God.

"...and **We** will come to him and make **Our** abode with him" (v 23). The earnest of the Spirit, God the Father and Jesus Christ, have given that right here in our minds and in our hearts: *grace upon grace!*

Notice there's the other side of the coin, v 24: "The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me. I have spoken these things to you while I am yet present with you. But *when the Comforter comes, even the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, that One shall teach you all things...*" (vs 24-26).

Isn't that amazing? It says in John 6:45 that we'll "...all be taught of God..." and the Holy Spirit is going to teach us everything we need to know. Especially in this age, because we have the whole Word of God.

John 14:26: "...that One shall teach you all things... [you need to know] ...and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you"

We're going to see that the greatest blessing of all is with the Spirit of God, God the Father and Christ dwelling in us through the earnest of the Spirit, and this gives us an ongoing, always open. They don't need to sleep or rest, you don't have to come and knock at the door at midnight and say, 'God, are You awake, I need to talk to You.' How much is that love of God to you?

John is writing this in the time when there's a lot of trouble in the Church. We've had a lot of trouble in the Church. Let's read it.

1-John 1:1: "That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled, concerning the Word of Life; (And the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life,

which was with the Father, and was manifested to us); that which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that..." (vs 1-3).

Sometimes our human nature drags us down, but if we can keep this in mind, this will help us

- to want to pray
- to want to study
- to want to yield to God
- to want to grow, change and overcome

"...we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship... [that's what it is in the Greek] ...—indeed, our fellowship—..." (v 3)—is when we all get together in church. *No!*

Look at how important this is. Think on this. Here's every one of us. When you read these kind of things you think, 'little old me.' But that's how great God is.

"...*is* with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ" (v 3). That is fantastic—isn't it? That's why we are to love God with all our heart, all our mind, all our soul, all our being. When you do that you won't have to be beating yourself because of sin, because you'll be actively loving and serving God. God's Spirit will help you and uplift you. You can pray to God and He will answer. Maybe not right away.

Imagine what a revelation this was to the Apostle Paul. So, when you read the book, *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* you'll see that God had to delay this until they were spiritually ready to handle it.

You tell someone in the world, 'I'm going to be just like Jesus Christ.' Call the crazy wagon and get this person out of here.

Ephesians 3:13: "So then, I beseech *you* not to faint at my tribulations for you, which are *working for your glory*." Don't worry about the trials and difficulties you go through:

- God is there with you
- He knows it
- He will help you
- He will comfort you
- He will see you safely to the first step of your graduation: 'Blessed in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints'.
- second step of graduation is: 'Come up here,' you are resurrected

Verse 14: "For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (vs 14-15).

You're going to receive a new name. Here we are all on the Sea of Glass, all the resurrected saints. What's that going to be like? I want to find Tyndale and talk to him. Someone's going to want to know: Abel, what happened to you? Then I want to find Paul because Jesus will be there. Here's a great ceremony on the Sea of Glass, all the saints there and the throne of God (Rev. 15).

If the temple is right there, guess who is in the temple? *The Father!* Jesus is going to do the presentation. The graduation ceremony begins. 'Behold, I and the children You have given Me.' Then you get your new name. You and you and you, everyone.

I don't know how the angels are going to pass out all the garments that are white and glistening, but we'll get those, the whole Family of God.

Notice how profound these next verses are, v 16: "That He... [God the Father, Jesus Christ] ... may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man." That's for us today. Think of the strength there will be when we're resurrected.

Verse 17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; *And* that being rooted and grounded in love..." (v17-18)—the greatest grace of God:

- the love of God
- the peace of God
- the kindness of God
- all of the characteristics of God

That's grace *upon grace upon grace upon grace*, with God the Father and Jesus Christ in us.

"...you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints... [we grow into this; it doesn't come all at once] ...what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height... [how great God's plan is] ... and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge; so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (vs 18-19).

These are some of the greatest things that God inspired Paul to write. Think of that! Don't worry about the things in the world. God will help us take care of those. God will help us overcome. We're all the weak of the world, *but strong in Christ!*

Notice what else it says, v 20: "Now to Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all... [each and everything] ...that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us"—with *grace upon grace upon grace*. With fellowship and love and understanding. That's what God is doing.

Verse 21: “To Him *be* glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations...”—going clear back to when the Church first began.

Then going back beyond that “...*even into the ages of eternity*. Amen” (v 21).

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 1:1-4
- 2) John 14:6
- 3) John 1:14, 16
- 4) John 14:6, 13-26
- 5) John 6:45
- 6) John 14:26
- 7) 1-John 1:1-3
- 8) Ephesians 3:13-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1-John 3
- Revelation 1; 4; 15

Also referenced:

Book: *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon Series:

- *God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping*
- *Grace of God*
- *Grace Upon Grace*

FRC:lp  
Transcribed: 6-8-16  
Formatted: bo—6/9/16

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