



Many men try to hide and pretend they are not broken. But this only leads to more hiding, pretending, and despair—and nothing ever changes. We fear that God is almost never pleased. This study will lead us into the light between two very different underlying motives: our determination to please God or to trust him. One results in a striving that never feels it has done enough to please him. The other results in a trust that experiences his full pleasure. Our motives as Jesus followers will either keep us enslaved in our hiding or free us into God's Adventure for our lives. Let's discover the Open Road of Grace together!
Ride ON!

THE SWEETEST GIFT OF GRACE: REPENTANCE
Galatians 5:1 Romans 5:20, 21 Ephesians 2:8-10

Highland Colony Men's Roundtable
www.MensTable.com

FREE TO BE A MAN
TAKE THE MASK OFF AND WALK THE OPEN ROAD OF GRACE!

July 28, 2022

Bible Verses: Romans 5:20, 21; Ephesians 2:8-10; Luke 18:9-14; I John 1:6,7; Colossians 2:6,7; Titus 3:3-8; II Corinthians 7:8-13; James 5:16; Proverbs 16:18; Romans 2:3, 4

Music: Alan Jackson - Amazing Grace
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogxLNlgKM8c>

Resources: *TrueFaced – Trust God and Others with Who You Really Are* by Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, and John Lynch.
The Cure: What If God Isn't Who You Think He Is and Neither Are You? By Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, and John Lynch.
Video: Ioan Gruffudd singing Amazing Grace!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9_RQsl-yyc

TAKE THE MASK OFF – SWEET GIFT OF GRACE: REPENTANCE

1. _____ → Repentance is a gift of God's grace because your repentance resolves nothing without grace. Grace alone resolves sin. Only the power of the cross can break a pattern of sinful behavior.
2. _____ → Repentance isn't doing something about our sin; rather, it means admitting that we **can't** do anything about our sin. Sin cannot be managed. Willpower is no power. The **intention** not to sin is not the same as the **power** not to sin. God did not design us to conquer sin on our own. To think we can is an incalculable **undervaluing** of sin's power combined with a huge **overvaluing** of our own willpower! Jesus condemns the legalistic Judaizers and Pharisees for trusting in themselves and having contempt for others (Luke 18:9-14).
3. _____ → A sin management system shuts off the **only** resource that can deal with sin: our **trust** in who God says we are, attracting the **power** of his **grace**. Agreeing that we have done something wrong is NOT the same as trusting God with what we have done. Sin is resolved when we are cleansed of it, and only dependence upon the cross of Jesus cleanses us from sin (I John 1:6, 7). There is power in the cross of Jesus!
4. _____ → We can do absolutely nothing to make provision for our sin. Every act of repentance depends on an act of redemption. Repentance is about trusting, not willing. If our motive is determined straining to please God, all our striving will be a pile of filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). Willpower, no matter how sincere, cannot buy you freedom. **To redeem** means "to liberate by payment or to release from debt or blame"(Col. 2:6, 7). When we repent through trust, it is exclusively and entirely a gift of God's grace (Titus 3:3-8).
5. **INHIBITORS OF REPENTANCE** → Three common inhibitors of repentance are:
 1. _____ = When we repent in isolation it proves we still favor presenting a nicely packaged life to others (II Cor. 7:8-13 and James 5:16).
 2. _____ = Trust in others, not God. Pride will do what sin does. It destroys (Proverbs 16:18).
 3. _____ = To make God happy with us (Romans 2:4).
6. _____ → In a grave-filled community, a different view of life in God biases the whole culture toward repentance. This community **expects** and **anticipates** imperfection. We honor others in the community of saints, but we also face the reality of each other's sin. We applaud vulnerability and view godliness as something much more than the presence of good behavior and the absence of bad behavior. The individuals in this community trust God to mature them from the inside out, by the power of His Spirit ... in His timing. No one feels a need to hide, for no one's parading his own righteousness. Everyone feels safe to be real and alive. In this community, repentance is as accessible to its members as fried chicken to a southerner. Into the community of grace comes a hurting, tired broken-down man who has may have spent all his Christian life in a community of folks with good intentions. When failing strivers stumble into a community of grace, safety, and vulnerable repentance, freedom awaits. When repentance becomes a constant, recognizable part in an environment, a man in that culture experiences freedom they never knew. A man is set **FREE TO BECOME THE MAN GOD DESIGNED HIM TO BE! WELCOME!**

ACTION: Journal This!

1. What do you wish you could stop in your life?
2. What do you fear will be "found out" about you?
3. Have you ever told your story to others?

"Amazing Grace" by John Newton

Amazing grace
How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found
Was blind, but now I see
'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.
The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my Shield and Portion be,
As long as life endures.
Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,

I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.
The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.
When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

Bible Verses – The Message

Romans 5:20, 21- 20 All that passing laws against sin did was produce more lawbreakers. But sin didn't, and doesn't, have a chance in competition with the aggressive forgiveness we call *grace*. When it's sin versus grace, grace wins hands down. **21** All sin can do is threaten us with death, and that's the end of it. Grace, because God is putting everything together again through the Messiah, invites us into life—a life that goes on and on and on, world without end.

Ephesians 2:8-10- 8 Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! **9** We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! **10** No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing.

Luke 18:9-14 - 9 He told his next story to some who were complacently pleased with themselves over their moral performance and looked down their noses at the common people: **10** "Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a tax man. **11** The Pharisee posed and prayed like this: 'Oh, God, I thank you that I am not like other people - robbers, crooks, adulterers, or, heaven forbid, like this tax man. **12** I fast twice a week and tithe on all my income.' **13** "Meanwhile the tax man, slumped in the shadows, his face in his hands, not daring to look up, said, 'God, give mercy. Forgive me, a sinner.'" **14** Jesus commented, "This tax man, not the other, went home made right with God. If you walk around with your nose in the air, you're going to end up flat on your face, but if you're content to be simply yourself, you will become more than yourself."

John 1:6,7 - 6 If we claim that we experience a shared life with him and continue to stumble around in the dark, we're obviously lying through our teeth - we're not living what we claim. **7** But if we walk in the light, God himself being the light, we also experience a shared life with one another, as the sacrificed blood of Jesus, God's Son, purges all our sin.

Colossians 2:6,7 - 6 My counsel for you is simple and straightforward: Just go ahead with what you've been given. You received Christ Jesus, the Master; now live him. **7** You're deeply rooted in him. You're well constructed upon him. You know your way around the faith. Now do what you've been taught. School's out; quit studying the subject and start living it! And let your living spill over into thanksgiving.

Titus 3:3-8 - 3 It wasn't so long ago that we ourselves were stupid and stubborn, dupes of sin, ordered every which way by our glands, going around with a chip on our shoulder, hated and hating back. **4** But when God, our kind and loving Savior God, stepped in, **5** he saved us from all that. It was all his doing; we had nothing to do with it. He gave us a good bath, and we came out of it new people, washed inside and out by the Holy Spirit. **6** Our Savior Jesus poured out new life so generously. **7** God's gift has restored our relationship with him and given us back our lives. And there's more life to come - an eternity of life! **8** You can count on this.

II Corinthians 7:8-13 - 8 I know I distressed you greatly with my letter. Although I felt awful at the time, I don't feel at all bad now that I see how it turned out. The letter upset you, but only for a while. **9** Now I'm glad - not that you were upset, but that you were jarred into turning things around. You let the distress bring you to God, not drive you from him. The result was all gain, no loss. **10** Distress that drives us to God does that. It turns us around. It gets us back in the way of salvation. We never regret that kind of pain. But those who let distress drive them away from God are full of regrets, end up on a deathbed of regrets. **11** And now, isn't it wonderful all the ways in which this distress has goaded you closer to God? You're more alive, more concerned, more sensitive, more reverent, more human, more passionate, more responsible. Looked at from any angle, you've come out of this with purity of heart. **12** And that is what I was hoping for in the first place when I wrote the letter. My primary concern was not for the one who did the wrong or even the one wronged, but for you - that you would realize and act upon the deep, deep ties between us before God. **13** That's what happened - and we felt just great.

James 5:16 - 16 Make this your common practice: Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed. The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with.

Proverbs 16:18 - 18 First pride, then the crash - the bigger the ego, the harder the fall.

Romans 2:3, 4 - 3 You didn't think, did you, that just by pointing your finger at others you would distract God from seeing all your misdoings and from coming down on you hard? **4** Or did you think that because he's such a nice God, he'd let you off the hook? Better think this one through from the beginning. God is kind, but he's not soft. In kindness he takes us firmly by the hand and leads us into a radical life-change.

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