

# LIVING IN ANTICIPATION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Class 3: The Sacrificial System and the Grace of God

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## I. SURVEY OF THE GRACE AND MERCY OF GOD

### A. Old Testament

I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The LORD.' And *I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious*, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. (<sup>ESV</sup> Exodus 33:19)

The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, *a God merciful and gracious*, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, <sup>7</sup> keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation." (<sup>ESV</sup> Exodus 34:6-7)

But *the LORD was gracious to them* and had compassion and showed concern for them because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. To this day he has been unwilling to destroy them or banish them from his presence. (<sup>NIV</sup> 2 Kings 13:23)

They refused to obey and were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them, but they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are *a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful*, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them. (<sup>ESV</sup> Nehemiah 9:17)

Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; *be gracious to me* and answer me! <sup>8</sup> You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek." <sup>9</sup> Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. (<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 27:7-9)

*The LORD is gracious and merciful*, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. <sup>9</sup> The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. (<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 145:8-9)

Therefore the LORD waits *to be gracious to you*, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him. <sup>19</sup> For a people shall dwell in Zion, in Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will surely *be gracious to you* at the sound of your cry. As soon as he hears it, he answers you. (<sup>ESV</sup> Isaiah 30:18-19)

Return to the LORD, your God, for *he is gracious and merciful*, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. (<sup>ESV</sup> Joel 2:13)

Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate; it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts, *will be gracious* to the remnant of Joseph. (<sup>ESV</sup> Amos 5:15)

O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that *you are a gracious God and merciful*, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. (<sup>ESV</sup> Jonah 4:2)

This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>7</sup> Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall

become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of '*Grace, grace to it!*' (ESV Zechariah 4:6-7)

And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem *a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy*, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. (ESV Zechariah 12:10)

When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts. <sup>9</sup> And now entreat the favor of God, *that he may be gracious to us*. With such a gift from your hand, will he show favor to any of you? (ESV Malachi 1:8-9)

## B. New Testament

Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? <sup>11</sup> But we believe that we *will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus*, just as they will. (ESV Acts 15:10-11)

For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. <sup>16</sup> That is why it depends on faith, in order that *the promise may rest on grace* and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. (ESV Romans 4:15-16)

Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. <sup>15</sup> But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have *the grace of God and the free gift by the grace* of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many... <sup>20</sup> Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, *grace abounded all the more*, <sup>21</sup> so that, as sin reigned in death, *grace also might reign through righteousness* leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (ESV Romans 5:14-21)

So too at the present time there is a remnant, *chosen by grace*. <sup>6</sup> But if it is *by grace*, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise *grace would no longer be grace*. <sup>7</sup> What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened. (ESV Romans 11:5-7)

You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have *fallen away from grace*. <sup>5</sup> For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. (ESV Galatians 5:4-5)

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—*by grace you have been saved*— <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might show *the immeasurable riches of his grace* in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For *by grace you have been saved* through faith. (ESV Ephesians 2:4-8)

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but *according to his own mercy*, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us richly

through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that *being justified by his grace* we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (<sup>ESV</sup> Titus 3:4-7)

## II. MERCY AND THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

### A. Sin-bearing System

When Aaron has finished making atonement for the Most Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting and the altar, he shall bring forward the live goat. <sup>21</sup> He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins—and *put them on the goat's head*. He shall send the goat away into the desert in the care of a man appointed for the task. <sup>22</sup> *The goat will carry on itself all their sins* to a solitary place; and the man shall release it in the desert. (<sup>NIV</sup> Leviticus 16:20-22)

If any one of the house of Israel or of the strangers who sojourn among them eats any blood, I will set my face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from among his people. <sup>11</sup> For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and *I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls*, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life. (<sup>ESV</sup> Leviticus 17:10-11)

### B. Prerequisite of Intentionality

If the whole congregation of Israel *sins unintentionally* and the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly, and they do any one of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done, and they *realize their guilt*, <sup>14</sup> when the sin which they have committed becomes known, the assembly shall offer a bull from the herd for a sin offering and bring it in front of the tent of meeting. <sup>15</sup> And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the LORD, and the bull shall be killed before the LORD. (<sup>ESV</sup> Leviticus 4:13-15)<sup>1</sup>

If a man or woman living among you in one of the towns the LORD gives you is *found doing evil* in the eyes of the LORD your God in violation of his covenant, <sup>3</sup> and contrary to my command has worshiped other gods, bowing down to them or to the sun or the moon or the stars of the sky, <sup>4</sup> and this has been brought to your attention, then you must investigate it thoroughly. If it is true and it has been proved that this detestable thing has been done in Israel, <sup>5</sup> take the man or woman who has done this evil deed to your city gate and *stone that person to death*. <sup>6</sup> On the testimony of two or three witnesses a man shall be put to death, but no one shall be put to death on the testimony of only one witness. <sup>7</sup> The hands of the witnesses must be the first in putting him to death, and then the hands of all the people. *You must purge the evil from among you* [cf. Deut. 13:5; 17:12; 19:19; 21:21; 22:21ff; 24:7]. (<sup>NIV</sup> Deuteronomy 17:2-7)

<sup>1</sup> "It should be emphasized here, as the workings of the sacrificial system are introduced to the reader, that the laws of the Torah did not permit Israelites to expiate intentional or premeditated offenses by means of sacrifice. There was no vicarious, ritual remedy—substitution of one's property or wealth—for such violations, whether they were perpetrated against other individuals or against God Himself. In those cases, the law dealt directly with the offender, imposing real punishments and acting to prevent recurrences. The entire expiatory system ordained in the Torah must be understood in this light. Ritual expiation was restricted to situations where a reasonable doubt existed as to the willfulness of the offense. Even then, restitution was always required where loss or injury to another person had occurred. The mistaken notion that ritual worship could atone for criminality or intentional religious desecration was persistently attacked by the prophets of Israel, who considered it a major threat to the entire covenantal relationship between Israel and God." (Baruch A. Levine, *Leviticus*, JPS Torah Commentary [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989], 2-3)

I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. <sup>12</sup> For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? <sup>13</sup> God judges those outside. *"Purge the evil person from among you."* ... <sup>6:8</sup> But you yourselves wrong and defraud—even your own brothers! <sup>9</sup> Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. (ESV 1 Corinthians 5:11-6:10)

### III. THE DEATH OF THE MESSIAH AS A SACRIFICE

#### A. The Offering of God

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But he was pierced *for our transgressions*, he was crushed *for our iniquities*; the punishment that brought us peace was *upon him*, and by his wounds we are healed. <sup>6</sup> We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has *laid on him the iniquity of us all*. <sup>7</sup> He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led *like a lamb to the slaughter*... <sup>10</sup> Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a *guilt offering*, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. <sup>11</sup> After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and *he will bear their iniquities*. (NIV Isaiah 53:4-11)

And by that will we have been sanctified through *the offering of the body of Jesus Christ* once for all. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time *a single sacrifice for sins*, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by *a single offering* he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. (ESV Hebrews 10:10-14)

#### B. The Sacrificial Blood (Mt. 26:28; Rom. 3:25; 5:9; 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:25ff; Eph. 1:7; 2:13; Col. 1:20; Heb. 9:12ff; 10:19, 29; 13:12, 20; 1 Jn. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:2, 19; Rev. 1:5; 5:9; 7:14; 12:11)

The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are *outwardly clean*. <sup>14</sup> How much more, then, will *the blood of Christ*, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, *cleanse our consciences* from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! <sup>15</sup> For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive *the promised eternal inheritance*—now that he has died *as a ransom* to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. (NIV Hebrews 9:13-15)

Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. <sup>18</sup> For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were *redeemed* from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, <sup>19</sup> but with *the precious blood* of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. (NIV 1 Peter 1:17-19)

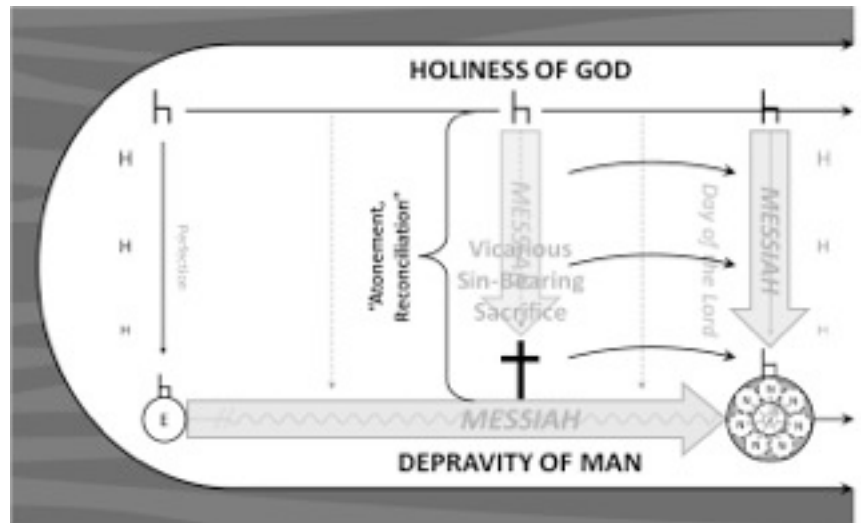
## IV. THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. <sup>16</sup> For I tell you, I will not eat it again *until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God*... <sup>18</sup> I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes... <sup>20</sup> This cup is *the new covenant in my blood*, which is poured out for you [“for the forgiveness of sins,” Mt. 26:28]. (NIV Luke 22:15-20)

### A. Common Sacrificial Assumptions

Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that *through Jesus the forgiveness of sins* is proclaimed to you. <sup>39</sup> Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses. (NIV Acts 13:38-39)

Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and *without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins*... <sup>26</sup> But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. <sup>27</sup> And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, <sup>28</sup> so Christ, *having been offered once to bear the sins of many*, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. (ESV Hebrews 9:22-28)



### B. The Reconciliatory End of Forgiveness

God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, <sup>20</sup> and through him to *reconcile to himself* all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by *making peace* through his blood, shed on the cross. <sup>21</sup> Once you were *alienated* from God and were *enemies* in your minds because of your evil behavior. <sup>22</sup> But now he has *reconciled* you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation. (NIV Colossians 1:19-22)

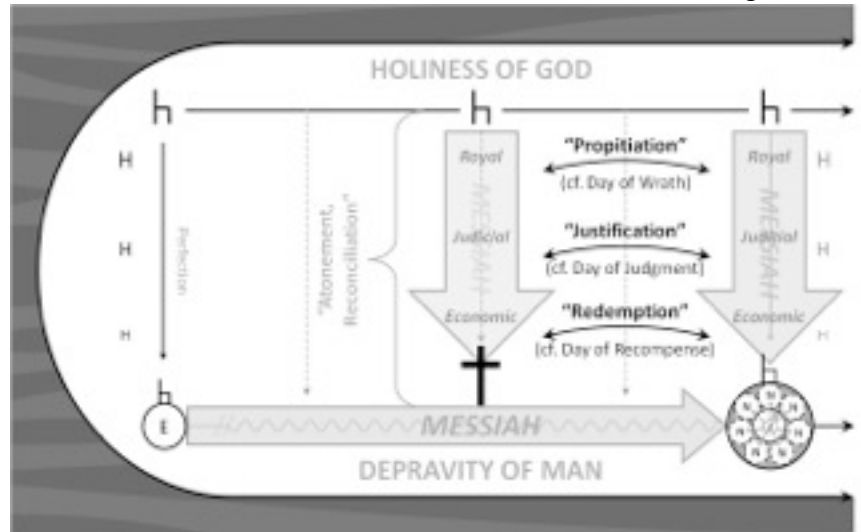
### C. The Propitiative Nature of Forgiveness

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it- <sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward *as a propitiation by his blood*, to be received by faith. (ESV Rom. 3:21-25)

### D. The Justificative Nature of Forgiveness



Therefore, since we have been *justified through faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom we have gained access by faith *into this grace* in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God... <sup>6</sup> You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, *Christ died for the ungodly*. <sup>7</sup> Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, *Christ died for us*. <sup>9</sup> Since we have now been *justified by his blood*, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! (NIV Romans 5:1-9)



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### E. The Redemptive Nature of Forgiveness

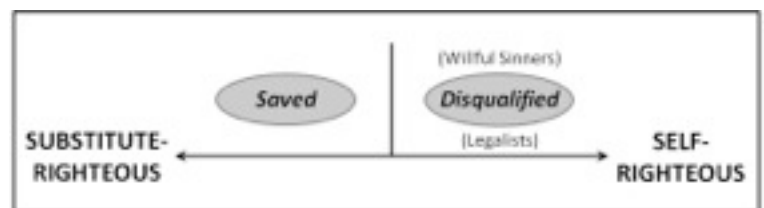
For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless *in his sight*. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us *to be adopted as his sons* through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has *freely given us* in the One he loves. <sup>7</sup> In him we have *redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins*, in accordance with the riches of God's grace <sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. (NIV Ephesians 1:4-8)

## V. SACRIFICIAL ERRORS

### A. Presumption of the Sacrifice

For if we *go on sinning deliberately* after receiving the knowledge of the truth, *there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins*, <sup>27</sup> but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.

<sup>28</sup> Anyone who has *set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy* on the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>29</sup> *How much worse punishment*, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has spurned the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? (ESV Hebrews 10:26-29)



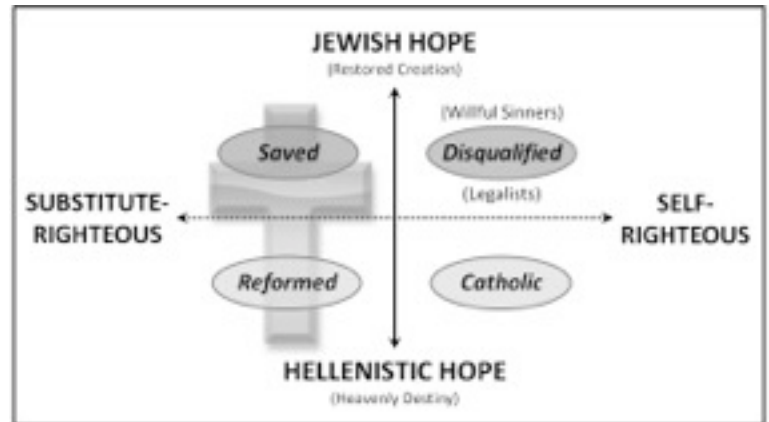
It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. <sup>2</sup> *And you are arrogant!* Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. <sup>3</sup> For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, *I have already pronounced judgment* on the one who did such a thing. <sup>4</sup> When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, <sup>5</sup> you are to *deliver*

*this man to Satan* for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. (ESV 1 Corinthians 5:1-5)

Someone might argue, "If my falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?" <sup>8</sup> Why not say—as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say—"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is deserved. (NIV Romans 3:7-8)

## B. Rejection of the Sacrifice

For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing *the circumcision party* [cf. Acts 11:2; Gal. 2:12; Eph. 2:11; Col. 4:11; Tit. 1:10]. <sup>13</sup> And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. <sup>14</sup> But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas



before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?" <sup>15</sup> We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; <sup>16</sup> yet we know that *a person is not justified by works of the law* but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be *justified by faith in Christ* and not by works of the law, because by works of the law *no one will be justified*. <sup>17</sup> But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! <sup>18</sup> For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. <sup>19</sup> For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. <sup>20</sup> *I have been crucified with Christ*. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh *I live by faith in the Son of God*, who loved me and gave himself for me. <sup>21</sup> I do not *nullify the grace of God*, for if justification were through the law, then *Christ died for no purpose*. (ESV Galatians 2:12-21)

Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. <sup>3</sup> For we are *the real circumcision*, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put *no confidence in the flesh*- <sup>4</sup> though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness, under the law blameless. <sup>7</sup> But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of *knowing Christ Jesus* my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be *found in him, not having a righteousness of my own* that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, *the righteousness from God that depends on faith*- <sup>10</sup> that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup>

that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. <sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, *but I press on to make it my own*, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. <sup>13</sup> Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: *forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead*, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. <sup>16</sup> Only let us hold true to what we have attained. <sup>17</sup> Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. <sup>18</sup> For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as *enemies of the cross of Christ*. <sup>19</sup> Their end is destruction, their god is their belly [“appetite,” NASB/NLT; cf. Rom. 16:18], and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. (ESV Philippians 3:2-19)

### C. Summary of the Mercy and Grace of God

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. <sup>4</sup> But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. <sup>8</sup> The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. (ESV Titus 3:3-8)