



of Biblical Studies
Ephesians 2:4-9

HOW GREAT IS THE FATHER'S LOVE FOR YOU

COURSE COMMENTARY



1 John 4:17

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By Charles R Gray II, Ph.D
GraceLife University, Inc.

Course Requirements

- 1) Read Course Commentary
- 2) Take Mid Term Exam
- 3) Take Final Exam
- 4) Submit Exams to Dr. Gray at DrGray@gracelifeuniversity.org
- 5) Dr. Gray will email you your Course Grade

How Great Is The Father's Love For You?

He sat at the front porch every day, scanning the horizon for any sign of movement. He did this faithfully, even as the days rolled painfully into weeks and then months. When his friends came by to persuade him to give up and move on, he would simply smile and wave them on and persist unflinchingly. Keeping his gaze on the surrounding hills, he waited unwaveringly and patiently for the return of his son. As he waited, he rehearsed in his mind over and over again what he would do the moment he saw his son. And every day, as he looked earnestly across the fields, he wondered if that day would be the day.

One evening the familiar silhouette of a lone figure appeared in the distance. Recognizing his son, he enacted without hesitation what he had done a thousand times before in his mind: he pulled up his robes, cast aside all dignity, and ran toward his son with all his might. He could feel his heart pumping wildly and his lungs expanding and contracting as his feet tried to outdo each other across the field. Tears streamed down his face as his son grew larger in his sight with each pace. And before any words could be traded, he had leaped forward, embraced the young man, and rained kisses on him.

This unexpected, joyous reception from the father overwhelmed the young man. He had expected to be disowned and even had a rehearsed speech to tell his father to make him one of his hired servants. How could he have known that his father had a rehearsed plan of his own? Without waiting to hear the son's rehearsed speech, his father commanded the servants to bring out the best robe for him, to place a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. The young man thought he had lost the right to be called a son because of the bad choices he had made that resulted in shame and loss to the family. But his father made it clear that wasn't so and even called for a party to celebrate the homecoming of his beloved son.

Unveiling the Heart of the Father

What an incredible and moving story. Jesus shared this parable, and I think it's one of the most beautiful parables in the Bible. It's a parable that Jesus used to skillfully unveil to us the true heart of our gracious and loving heavenly Father.

Bible commentators call this the parable of the prodigal son, but the real hero of this story isn't the son, but the father. This is a story about the father and his love for his two sons. You may already have heard this parable shared a hundred times, but I want you to look at it again to see how this parable exposes the wrong beliefs that many believers today still have toward their Father in heaven.

This is without doubt one of the best known, if not **the** best known of Jesus' parables. It has been called the parable of parables. But, it is most commonly referred to as "The Parable of the Prodigal Son". Like many parables it was mis-named in antiquity.

The subject of this parable in Luke is not the Prodigal Son; For He is only one of the supporting characters in this story. Just like the Elder Brother is only one of the supporting roles in this story. As we go through this story you will see the true subject of this Parable.

I. The Arrogance of the Son

Luke 15:11-12

And He said, "A man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he divided his wealth between them.

Under Jewish law a father was not free to leave his property as he liked. The elder son must receive a double portion, so in the case of two sons, the younger would get one-third of the estate (Deuteronomy 21:17). It was by no means unusual for a father to distribute his estate before he

died, if he wished for example to retire from the actual management of his affairs. But there is a certain heartlessness **and** a certain callousness in the request of the younger son. He said in effect, "you are as good as dead to me. I cannot wait until you die. So give me what you owe me... **now!**"

The father did not argue. He knew that if the son was ever to learn, if the son and the father were ever to have the wonderful relationship that the father long for and that the son was searching for, the son must learn from the consequences of his behavior. He also knew that the Son must follow his own path and find his way home again. So he granted the son's request. Without delay the son took his share of the property and left home.

II. The Devastation of the Son in the Far Country

Luke: 15:13-16

“And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living.

Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be in need.

So he went and attached himself to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

And he was longing to fill his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him.”

He soon ran through the money; and he finished up feeding pigs, a task that was forbidden to a Jew because the law said, "Cursed is he who feeds swine." He had sunk as low as you could sink as a Jew. This is like... feeding pigs to a Jew. I have never come across a true parallel in our culture to just how far one would have to fall to be the equivalent of feeding pigs in Jewish culture.

An interesting bit of trivia about the pods that the prodigal son was feeding the pigs and that he wanted to eat, was that they were from the carob plant. Carob is often used as a substitute for chocolate in trail mix and various other health foods.

It is interesting that just as The Prodigal Son comes to the end of his resources, the bottom falls out of the economy. Was this a coincidence?... Maybe... Personally, I think that God just uses circumstances to His best advantage. We see an inkling of this in Romans 8:28 which says:

“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”

When circumstances become tough, we begin to evaluate our situation.

So let's see what happens as the Prodigal Son thinks through his situation **and** at what conclusions he comes to.

III. Hunger Not Repentance Brings The Son Home

Luke 15:17-19

“But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger!

I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight;

I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants.”

At this point Jesus pays mankind the greatest compliment it has ever been paid. Jesus said “When he came to himself,” Jesus believed that so long as a man was away from God he was not truly himself; he was only truly himself when he was on the way home. Beyond a doubt Jesus did not believe that anyone was beyond redemption, even though He understood that not all would “come to themselves” and go home. He believed that a man or woman was never essentially themselves, unless they came home to God.

So the son decided to return home and plead to be taken back, **not** as a son, **but** in the lowest rank of slaves, the hired servants, the men who were **only** day laborers. The ordinary slave was in some sense a member of the family, but the hired servant could be dismissed at a day's notice. The hired servant was not one of the family **at all**.

Had the Prodigal Son Repented?

Was it a realization of his sin that motivated the Prodigal to decide to return home? NO

If you look closely at the story, it never says that the Prodigal Son repented. He did not change his mind about his lifestyle. He just wanted food on a regular basis. It was hunger that was the catalyst that brought him to this decision, not because he came to the realization that he had done anything wrong. He came to the realization that he had a need and his need could not be met where he was. Hunger brought him to himself. Hunger caused him to examine his situation and decide to go home. Hunger can make us do things we would never consider unless we *were* hungry. This started the process of coming home for the prodigal. Simply saying “I am hungry.”

Coming to God does not require getting your act cleaned up or changing your life style. You do not need to take a shower in order to take a bath! **Remember...**, God cleans the fish *after* He catches them.

The turning point comes when a person “comes to him or her-self,” which simply suggests that he makes a wise choice. His thinking changes and he understands that, “This is stupid. This is **not** who I am! I have a home and I Have a father.

Let’s look further

IV. The Love of the Father

Luke 15:20-24

“So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.

And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet;

and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again;

he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate.”

In the Middle East in that day, even the wealthiest of people lived in towns for protection. They often lived in compounds behind barred gates. It was not unusual for the elders to sit in the gate and greet people, conduct business, or just see what was going on.

The Father in this story was sitting where he could see the road and who was coming and going.

When the Prodigal Son was a long way off, the father saw him and had compassion.

There was a saying in Jewish culture in the time of Jesus “for anyone who is over 30, it is undignified to run”. They wore long robes in those days. Underwear that was almost as long as their robes. The father had to hike up his robes to run so his legs were free to move. Seeing the Father run in long robes would have been quite a sight. He would have been showing the world his underwear! Not unlike these baggy pants boys we have these days!

But, The Father was not concerned about his dignity and position in society. He was concerned about his son. **The son** was more important.

There are two words for run in Greek. One is for a jog. The second word is Tre-CO. It means to sprint or to run fast. It was this second word that is used in this verse. The father ran as fast as he could to the son.

The Father embraces him and kisses him repeatedly, even though he smells of pigs and body odor from his travels. Have you ever smelled

the odor from a pig farm? Believe me if you ever have, you will never forget that smell!!!! That is just like God with us. No matter how much we mess-up or how bad we stink... **He Loves Us!**

Notice here that the Prodigal did not get all the way through his speech. The Father would not let him. The Father loved his son **so** much, that He was determined to treat him as a Son and... to show him how much He.. Loved.. His..Son!

How Did the Father Show His Love to His Son?

The Father Said “Bring the Best Robe and put it on him.”

In Jewish culture giving a robe to someone said you were an Honored guest in their home. The Best Robe was a robe that would be brought out on important occasions. It was reserved for special and honored guests.

The Father said: “Put a Ring on his hand.”

In Jewish culture putting a ring on a man’s hand was to say “You are an heir of mine” and “I grant you authority.” It was also the ancient equivalent of a visa card. Do you remember in the movie “Ben Hur” when Charlton Heston stamped the ring into the clay tablet? The seal on the ring says who will pay the bill. It also conveys that you have been given the authority of the one whose seal was on the ring.

The Father said: “Put Sandals on his feet.”

In Jewish culture only children wore shoes or sandals. Neither slaves nor hired servants were given shoes. So the Father was saying you are restored to the position of being my Son.

In the Greek there are two words for Sandals:

The first is:

Sandal-lon--- This is made of very cheap material. They were worn by the poor. They cost very little and did not wear well.

The second is:

Huppo-DEE-MA--- is made of leather. It was a luxury item. It was worn by those who were better off. These would wear very well and were more comfortable and much easier on the feet.

The Father called for Huppo-DEE-MA. He gave his son the best. Did you know there is never any sense of cheapness in God's world!!! You never see God being cheap in the scriptures. God gives His best!!!

In fact God is so far from being cheap that He sent his only begotten son, His first born, to be the payment for our sins. Jesus was such a perfect sacrifice for us that he represents an over payment for our sins.

For example, if you owed a debt of a hundred thousand dollars and you had promised to pay it in a certain length of time. When that time came you did not have the money. But unknown to you, your best friend had gone to the person you owed and gave them 10 million dollars. The person who held your debt would say, "They only owe one hundred thousand." Your friend would say I love them so much, I never want them to worry about this debt again or any future debt. You however did not know that your best friend had paid off your debt. He or she had to go out of town and did not get to tell you. So you continued to worry about the debt. You were afraid they would take away your home to satisfy the debt. You were worried about that debt all the time. So you did not get to rejoice and rest in what your friend had done. God loves us so much He does not want us to worry about sin ever again. He wants us to rest in Him and enjoy our relationship with Him. That way we are able to do as one of my teachers said many years ago... "Why not live like we are in heaven, while we are on the way to heaven, since we are going to be there anyway."

There is a scripture that reflects that view:

I John 4:17 Says:

“because as He is, so also are we in this world.”

Enjoy His Presence. Rest in Him! Enjoy the benefits of being His Child!!!!

The Father Said “Bring the Fattened Calf, Kill it, and let us eat and **Celebrate.**”

The Slaughter of the Fattened Calf is yet another Gift of The Father. The Slaughter of The Calf represents the sacrifice of the Blood of Christ Jesus on the Cross. It represents the New Covenant. It was the Gift of Jesus that made ALL the other gifts possible including the redemption of God’s Children.

God always gives the best. He gave us His very best in Christ Jesus. He gave His only begotten Son... **just for us!** He loves us enough to Give the *Very* BEST!!!

How Did the Father Show His Love to His Son?

Extravagantly, The Father showered him with gifts!

The story does not end there. At this point the Elder Brother enters the story. **He** was actually **sorry** that his brother had come home. He stands for the self-righteous Pharisees (**and** some church members) that would rather see a sinner destroyed than saved. Have you known people with this attitude?

Let’s Look at the Elder Brother

V. The Self-Righteousness & Anger of the Elder Brother

Luke 15:25-32

“Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing.

And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be.

And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.

But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. But he answered and said to his father,

'Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat,

so that I might celebrate with my friends; but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes,

you killed the fattened calf for him. And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours.

But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.”

If you asked the question “Why was there music and dancing?” Then you are of the Older Brother Generation. There is supposed to be **music... celebration... and JOY** in the Father’s house!!!!

The Older Brother would not come in so the Father went out to him.

The father pleaded with The Elder Brother to come into His house.

The Elder Brother Responds by Telling The Father:

First: What he (The Elder Brother) has done for him, that he has obeyed **ALL** the Commandments of The Father and had been the **Perfect** Son.

The religious will always tell God (or anyone else who will listen) how many good deeds they have done, how often they go to church, etc.

Then: The Elder Brother proceeds to tell The Father what He (The Father) had **never** done for him, despite **all** his years of service *and* obedience!

He then: finishes up by complaining about what the Father had done for the younger brother, who was *obviously* unworthy of the Father's Time of Day *or even* the dirt that he walked on.

The religious will complain about the good that is coming to those that they see as evil or ungodly or that simply are not as good as they perceive themselves to be. They will ask why them and not me? You know, we live in a fallen world. Stuff happens. We must continue to believe and have faith. And at the right time for US, we will receive **GOOD THINGS!!!**

There Are Certain Things That Stand Out About the Elder Brother:

(i) The Elder Brother's attitude shows that his years of obedience to his father had been years of grim duty **and not** loving service.

(ii) The Elder Brother's attitude shows he was without sympathy. He refers to the prodigal, not as **MY** brother, but as **YOUR** son. The Elder

Brother was the kind of self-righteous character who would cheerfully, have kicked a man further into the gutter when he was already down.

(iii) The Elder Brother had a suspicious and dirty mind. There is no mention of prostitutes until he mentions them. The Elder Brother, no doubt, suspected his brother of the sins he himself would liked to have committed. But he was too busy being good, righteous, and dutiful or maybe it was just that he was afraid of what people would think of him, if they found out what he was doing, so he just resented his younger brother rather than doing what he wanted to do.

(iv) The Elder Brother shows the *amazing* as well as unfortunate truth that it is often easier to confess to God, than it is to people; that God is more merciful in his judgments than many people, *even* people who claim to be Christian.

(v) The Elder Brother just did not get it. He did not understand that **All** that the Father had was his. The Elder Brother could have taken a goat or a calf at anytime to celebrate with his friends because the Father had **already** given it to him!

(vi) The Elder Brother's Anger and Pain prevented him from entering The Father's House **and** from receiving the Love of The Father.

(vii) The Elder Brother did not understand the Father's Love for him. The Father loved the Elder Brother **just** as he loved his younger son—The "so called" Prodigal!

(viii) The Elder Brother is a picture of the church *or* more specifically a good "Religious Christian". Far too often in the Church there is this attitude that the world should have been here *and acting* righteous **and** working for the Kingdom all along. The church often does not understand The Prodigal and rejects him or her. Likewise, The Prodigal often does not identify with the church and often feels rejected by her. But, both need the Love of the Father.

Conclusion:

The Love of God can defeat the foolishness of man, the seduction of tempting voices, and even the deliberate rebellion of the heart.

So it is *not* without reason that... *this* has been called the greatest short story in the world.

In His ministry, Jesus sought the lost in all sorts of unlikely places. He offended the religious leaders by eating with the lost—those who were not righteous, not clean, not good.

Jesus is the Great Physician... and a physician... **does not** set a broken arm from across the street! He goes where the patient is. Jesus seeks **US** out in our lostness, in our pain, and in our loneliness. Being found is simply coming home, finding our roots once again, **or** for the first time. It is God alone who can heal the hurts and remove our loneliness.

Bible commentators call this the parable of the prodigal son, but the real hero of this story isn't the son, but the father. This is a story about the father and his love for his two sons. You may already have heard this parable shared a hundred times, but I want you to look at it again to see how this parable exposes the wrong beliefs that many believers today still have toward their Father in heaven.

Consider this for a moment: What is your opinion of God, especially when you've made a mistake? Do you see Him as an all-powerful, distant, and unfeeling judge who is angry whenever you fail and who constantly has to be appeased? Or do you know Him as your Daddy, your Abba Father whom you can run to anytime, even when you have fallen short? As I was studying the Word, the Lord revealed to me that many believers have come to a place where they have forgotten their heavenly Father. They have forgotten about His love, His grace, and His loving-kindness. They relate to God in a judicial and transactional fashion.

Today many believers come before Him with apprehension and trepidation, presenting their failings to Him and quickly leaving before they get the punishment

and condemnation they think they rightly deserve from Him. They perceive Him exclusively as a God of holiness, judgment, and justice— His face steely and stern, His mighty arms folded in dissatisfaction and disapproval. They see a God who is easily displeased, quick to anger, perpetually disappointed with them, and waiting impatiently to be placated.

This wrong belief of who God really is has driven many into fear, guilt, depression, and insecurity. And that is why it's so vital we see the heart of the Father as unveiled by Jesus in this timeless parable. Not too long ago, Lydia, a sister from South Africa, wrote to me. I believe that many of you would be able to identify with what she shared about her struggles in relating to God as her Father:

“I grew up with very low self-esteem, having been labeled the difficult child in my family. I was an unplanned baby, and my parents already had one child— a girl, so they really wanted a boy. They were disappointed when I turned out to be a girl and even considered giving me to a paternal family member who did not have children.

“My dad comes from a very cold, strict family, and he has a very bad temper, so I grew up naturally fearful of him and always felt like I was walking on eggshells around him. My mom also grew up in a household where she had not received love. Both my parents are extreme perfectionists and very organized. On top of that, they raised us with military discipline and no compassion. It was your own fault if you got hurt— you brought it on yourself. Thus, I could never relate to God as a Father. God was unapproachable and sitting with a lightning bolt ready to strike me whenever I wasn't good enough, didn't pray enough, or wasn't obedient enough. I was under the impression that God was only pleased with me when I obeyed the law. Being a perfectionist myself, I felt that I never met His expectations and I was always under condemnation.

“Since encountering your teaching resources, the veil in my life has been torn. For the first time, I am free. I no longer walk under the heavy burden of condemnation. I learned that God loved us first and I can now have a love relationship with my heavenly Father and Jesus.

I have experienced victory over fear and sin that kept me captive for years— not by trying to be obedient, but by just learning that my sins have already been forgiven on the cross. And no, I am not sinning more now. I am actually overcoming more and sinning less, and I have a grateful heart for what Christ has done on the cross.”

Do you feel the same way Lydia did about God?

Do you feel as though you are never good enough, can never do enough and be obedient enough for God to love and accept you?

Do you feel like you are always living under perpetual condemnation? Perhaps you can't relate to God as a loving Father because you've never experienced the love of your earthly father or because your own father has hurt you terribly.

My brother or sister, I pray that as we study the Word of God together, you will supernaturally experience the intimate love of your heavenly Father in a deep and personal way like never before. I pray that this experience will heal, renew, restore, and transform you in a spectacular way because His love for you is nothing less than spectacular.

See the Father's Perfect Love

There is a vacuum in our hearts that can only be filled by the Father's love. So stop trying to find love and approval in all the wrong places and getting entangled with all kinds of fears, insecurities, and addictions. I believe that if you would allow the Father to come into your heart today and fill you up with His perfect love, you will find the joy, confidence, fulfillment, and freedom that you have been looking for in life.

God's Word declares:

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us” (1 John 4: 18–19).

Today, under the new covenant of His amazing, incredible grace, our Father in heaven isn't looking to judge you for your failings because He has already judged your every failing, mistake, and sin in the body of His own Son, Jesus Christ. The name that Jesus came to reveal in the new covenant of grace is “Father.” Today God wants to reach out to you as a caring and loving Father.

Do you know His heart of love toward you?

Do you know that it was His idea to send Jesus to be punished at the cross for you?

Read the most famous passage in the Bible and personalize it so that you can see God's heart for you: "For God so loved _____ that He gave His only begotten Son, that you who believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn you, but that _____ through Him might be saved" (John 3: 16– 17).

Know beyond the shadow of a doubt today that your Father loves you and sent His own Son to save you.

Understand that we are not belittling the work of Jesus at the cross when we talk about the Father and His love for you. The truth is Jesus came to reveal the love of the Father to you. God so loved you that He sent His one and only beloved Son to pay the heavy price at the cross to cleanse you of all your sins.

Do you know that God loves Jesus dearly? Jesus is God's darling Son, the apple of His eye. Now, if your Father in heaven didn't withhold His precious Son, Jesus Christ, and sacrificed Him for you, how much do you think He loves you? You cannot begin to comprehend the intensity and sheer magnitude of your Father's love for you until you realize how much the Father loves Jesus— because He gave up Jesus to ransom you.

I hope you are beginning to experience and see for yourself just how loved you are by the Father and how precious you are to Him! Don't fear Him— see the heart of your Father's love unveiled through Calvary's cross.

No Matter What You Have Done

But Dr. Charles, you don't understand my past and all the mistakes I've made.

You are absolutely right. I don't. But your Father in heaven sure does, and He who knows you perfectly, loves you perfectly.

At the very beginning of the parable of the prodigal son, the younger son came to his father and demanded his share of his inheritance. In the Jewish culture, this was tantamount to the young man telling his father to "drop dead." He was effectively saying, "Give me my share of the inheritance right now. I can't wait for you to die." It was a stinging slap on the face of his father. The young man completely humiliated and dishonored his father by making such an insolent request.

We need to understand this because if we are unable to grasp the extent to which this young man utterly rejected his father and chose his own way, we cannot appreciate the extent of his father's love and grace in receiving him back home as his son. In the same way today, if we don't realize how much we have rejected the Father through our sins, we cannot fully grasp, appreciate, and respond to the immense grace that He extends toward us in forgiving us totally. Those who think they have sinned little and are thus forgiven little, love little. But those who know they are forgiven much, love much (see Luke 7: 47). Remember who told this parable—our redeemer Jesus, and He has firsthand knowledge of the Father's heart of love.

This may be a difficult concept for some of you. Some of you may not agree with this picture of a father. You may not have experienced what it is to be loved by a father. You may not have even experienced the love of a mother. You may have grown up with an absentee father. You may have had a father that was never there for you. Or you may have had an abusive father who treated you harshly. A father you could never measure up to; A father for whom you could never do anything right. So your image of a father is tainted. You may have assumed that God is like your earthly father. You may find it difficult to see God as a gracious, loving, giving father. Let the Father show His Love for you. Let Him show you what a Father's love truly is. Let him heal those hurts so you can receive His LOVE.

Let Him pour over you HIS Extravagant, Un-Ending Love.

Corrie Ten Boom in her book, *The Hiding Place* said ...“There is no pit so deep that the Father's LOVE is not... deeper still.

How Great Is The Father's Love For You?

If you need to experience this love I have talked about today, Please Pray this prayer....

Father Prayer:

Jesus, I do not know what it is like to have a father to love me. I ask you as the Great Physician to heal the hurts and pains in my life, so that I may know what it is to experience a Father's love. Show me your LOVE and your Grace. Show me what Extravagant, Un-Conditional Love is. So that I might be able to receive THE Father's LOVE for me AND That I might understand what it is to be loved.

AMEN.

Or perhaps you have never experienced the love of a mother. If not, pray this prayer to heal & receive:

Mother Prayer:

Jesus, I do not know what it is like to have a mother to love me. I ask you as the Great Physician to heal the hurts and pains in my life, so that I may know what it is to experience a Mother's love. Show me your LOVE and your Grace. Show me what Extravagant, Un-Conditional Love is. So that I might be able to receive THE Mother's LOVE for me AND That I might understand what it is to be loved.

AMEN.

Closing Words

My Dear Student, thank you for taking this journey with me in the Dear reader, thank you for taking this journey with me into God's Love For Us. You've been a wonderful and attentive travel companion, and I pray that you've been blessed by the truths shared in this course. While there is so a great deal of emphasis on God's Love in some circles, I am concerned that it is a very poorly understood subject among believers today. I trust you are beginning to see that there is transformative power found in believing right about how much we are loved by God. If you can change what you believe, you can change your life.

There were some surprises when doing the research for this commentary. Like many, I assumed that the topic of God's Love For Us was a fairly well understood subject. It was quite surprising to find how little most Christians (including myself) actually know about the subject.

The topic of God's Love For Us and its effects on people has been and remains a poorly understood subject. It is my prayer and hope that we may find that rediscovering the Biblical teachings about Condemnation can enrich our lives and our ministries.

Throughout this course, I have endeavored to show you the gospel of Jesus Christ through the Scriptures as well as through the testimony of others. Because of Jesus' finished work at the cross, He will never be angry with you nor rebuke you even when you fail. So don't ever forget the main clause of the new covenant, which says that your sins and your lawless deeds, He remembers no more!

Many believers are defeated today because they do not know the God of the new covenant of grace. I believe with all of my heart that because you took this wonderful journey with me you saw for yourself, all the things concerning Jesus

Christ and His finished work, your heart would now burn with His extravagant love for you. Jesus truly puts the “amazing”, the “wonderful” and the “marvelous” back into grace!

Today, God is all about blessing you with His grace — His undeserved, unearned and unmerited favor — in every area of your life. Stop trying to deserve and earn your own acceptance before God with your own works and efforts. It will only frustrate the grace of God and nullify the effects of the cross in your life. My Dear brother or sister, Jesus already finished the work! Believe with all your heart that it is not about what you need to do today, but about what has already been done and accomplished on your behalf.

My Beloved brothers and sisters, I have proclaimed to you the gospel of Jesus Christ and am fulfilling the commission He gave me to bring Jesus back to central place in the church by rolling away the stone and opening people’s eyes to reveal more of Jesus and His finished work. I know that if you have believed this good news of His grace, your life has begun to be radically transformed, together with the countless believers around the world who have already been impacted by the Gospel Revolution. I pray that this course has torn down the fences of controversy that the enemy has erected around the teaching of God’s grace and the gift of righteousness, so that you may indeed receive not just grace, but the “abundance of grace”, and receive not just righteousness, but the “gift of righteousness”, and start reigning in life. Start reigning over sin, over sickness, over condemnation, over financial lack and over the curse of the law through the ONE, Jesus Christ.

All that I have shared works most powerfully and effectively within the environment of the local church. These truths are for the greater good of the body of Christ and should never result in you becoming a law unto yourself. Beloved, I want to see you enjoying the safety of the covering of a local church where there is accountability and submission. This is where our blessings are tremendously multiplied.

I thank you for taking this journey with me and for giving me the opportunity to unveil more of Jesus to you. You have been a wonderful traveling companion. We

should do this again soon! In the meantime, until the next course begins, BE BLESSED!!!

In His Grace, *Dr. Charles.*

I look forward to hearing from you about how our Lord Jesus has touched and impacted your life with His amazing grace.

It is all about Jesus and His finished work!

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