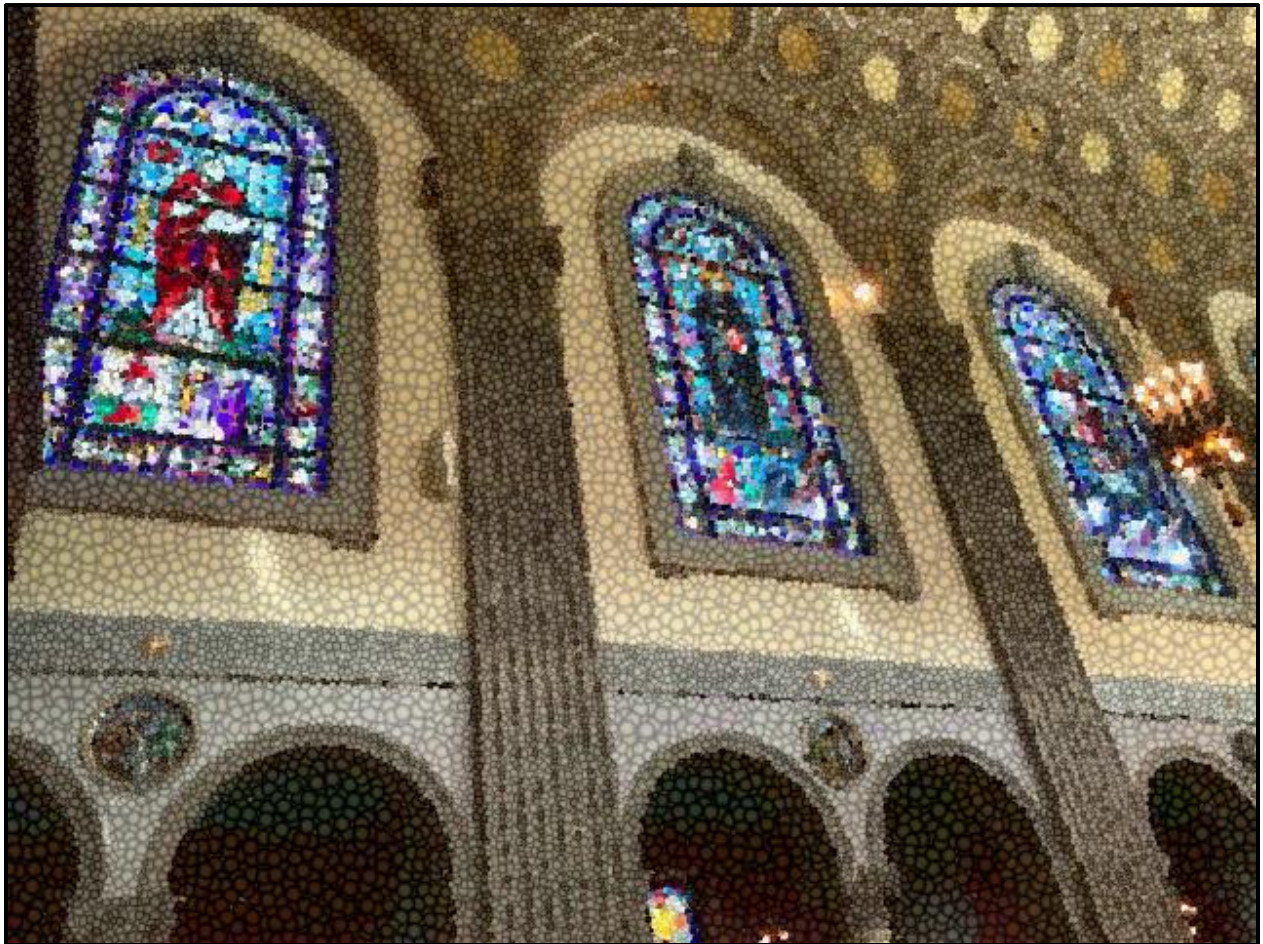

Grace: Believing The Unbelievable

5 Keys to Receiving The Favor of God



BY

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Hello & Welcome!

My name is Laurie and I'm so glad you stopped by. You came to the right place to discover more about GRACE and how to receive God's unmerited favor on your life.

You may have a clear understanding that Jesus died for your sin, but you're not fully walking in His grace daily!

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV)

Why do believers keep trying to earn what's already theirs?!

Maybe you come from a church background that was works based. You had to carry out good deeds to stay in God's good graces. When you failed him, you thought he was mad or disappointed in you. You knew he loved you, but as a harsh, earthly father, ready to punish you. The "fear of the Lord" made you feel distant, not able to call upon Him. You were judged by other Christians and family members. You were ashamed of your mistakes and failures. You did not have the joy of the Lord.

By not understanding true grace, we miss the blessings that are inherently ours.

We get depressed.

We get discouraged.

We lose hope.

We turn to worldly comforts, remedies and pleasures to fill the void.

By the grace of God, we can experience peace, joy, and victory!

We can stop being overwhelmed by our failings and unresolved trauma, and step into our true identity in Christ, and God's unearned, unmerited favor! That is what grace is all about.

Grace and faith are connected in that once you grasp the truth about grace, you gain faith to be an overcomer.

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. (Romans 5:1-2 NIV)

Our ability to receive grace will have a direct impact on how we see ourselves.

When we lose sight of grace, even temporarily, our focus turns back to ourselves and the law that points to our failings and inability to measure up to God's standards.

- We become self-conscious instead of Christ-conscious, leading to insecurity.
- We feel drained and experience a loss of vitality in our physical bodies.
- We feel numb and lose interest in family, church, the Bible and prayer.
- We wallow in shame and self-pity.

I have a FREE download for you to help you unlock the grace and favor that Christ purchased with his blood for you.

I speak from a place of experience, having mis-understood grace for years of my Christian walk. My desire is to help women grasp this glorious truth and live victoriously, full of joy and purpose.

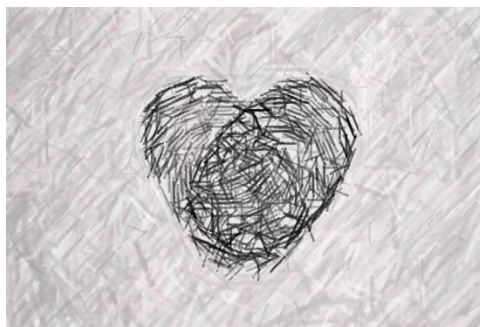
Grace: Believing The Unbelievable

5 Keys to Receiving The Favor of God

Laurie Hilton-Rowland ©2024

I was visiting with one of my besties and we were talking about grace, favor, and faith and how they are intertwined. Seasoned Christians, new believers, and seekers alike struggle at times with the concept of grace and unconditional love. The bible is clear on it, but over time man began mixing law with grace causing confusion and division.

Whether it's our church upbringing, or lack there of, we can be predisposed to feeling insecure, inferior, or unworthy of God's love and kindness. Following are 5 keys to receiving the Lord's unmerited, unearned favor.



1) Accept His Unconditional Love:

Unconditional Love. We may have a sense of what that means as we apply it to our children or to a beloved pet, but often, we have conditions and limits to our love for other people based on their character, behavior, and commitment. We protect ourselves from being taken advantage

of and letting someone walk all over us; and that's self-preservation. The problem is that we perceive and wrongly believe that God has those same kinds of conditions on his love for us. Where we may feel it necessary to protect ourselves or to hold people at bay, God knows we're incapable of unconditional love and is patient with us while we grow in the knowledge of Him. He knows that we don't completely understand this unbelievable unconditional love. God's unconditional love brings with it grace and favor for those who believe. In Deuteronomy 6:5 God gave the command to Moses to teach the Israelites, "love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul and with all your **strength**". In the New Testament when the religious leaders tried testing Jesus about what was the greatest commandment, he quoted that same scripture in Matthew 22:37 saying "love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul and with all your **mind**". Neither of these scriptures referenced the 10 Commandments, instead, the only condition was to follow the Lord and walk in love. The reality is, we can't even to that. In our human frailty we are not capable of carrying out that measure of love for God. Our minds are not stayed on him and we don't have the strength to be consistent and faithful. The truth is, it's not about how much you love God, it's accepting His unconditional love for YOU!

What unconditional love is, and is not:

- ❖ It is unlimited. You can't use it up. It will never expire. It's literally inexhaustible.
- ❖ It's complete. There is nothing you need to or can add to it.
- ❖ It doesn't diminish based on your behavior, or lack of devotion to him.
- ❖ It's not based on expectations...yours of Him or Him of you. Expect His unfailing love.
- ❖ It's sacrificial. Once you fully understand what he sacrificed in his love for you, your heart's desire will be to please him like a small child seeks to please their earthly father.

Knowing with all certainty how much you are loved by God can transform your relationship with Him, leading to lasting change and confidence of who you are in Christ. He delights in his children that run to him, even if they've failed him. His favor will rest on you!

But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God's unfailing love for ever and ever. (Psalm 52:8 NIV)

2) Accept His Free Gift:

Occasionally, I receive a gift that I realize has some strings attached. I accept the gift knowing that something is expected in return. Other times I receive an overwhelmingly generous or lovely gift that I have trouble receiving even if the giver's intention was pure and there were no strings attached. Been there? Let's relate that concept to God's gift to us.

He gave, unconditionally, his son to take on the sins of mankind as in *John 3 :16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish*

but have eternal life". You've heard that verse, seen the banners in the football stadiums, and read it in the bible, but have you accepted, taken ownership and cherished this free gift? If you have been brought up hearing about the Law of Moses, good works and serving God, you may have a viewpoint that there must be a catch. You may have been taught that we're all basically good people and we'll all go to heaven. The law was given to show us that we are all sinners and need a savior. God made a way when he sent his son to die on the cross to cover our sins. Jesus did call for people to repent; meaning to change the way they thought about the Messiah and believe he was the Christ, but the only requirement was to believe!

What exactly is this gift and how do we accept it? The gift is righteousness; right standing with God. Even though we're sinful, flawed, imperfect. This means that God sees his believing children through the blood of Jesus who took the punishment for all our sins so that when God sees you, he sees a blameless child he loves dearly.

Unwrap this free gift and remember:

- ❖ There are no strings attached. It's free and it's yours to keep.
- ❖ You don't have to work for it, and you can't earn it. Jesus paid for it with his life.
- ❖ It's irrevocable. If you mess up, you don't lose it or have to pay it back.
- ❖ It's eternal. It covers your past, your present, and your future sins and failings.
- ❖ You are worthy to receive it, just as you are. The Lord's power will help you overcome your faults and weaknesses.

There is power in receiving the gift of righteousness. It's nothing we could have conjured up or accomplished on our own. The scripture below promises us abundant grace and the power to reign in this life! Possess this gift. Remind yourself that you have been made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:21)*

"how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!". (Romans 5:17b NIV)

3) Change Your Mindset:

Do you hear yourself? Are you playing the same mental tapes over and over that speak of defeat, limitation, loss, and doubt? How we process, store, and react to everyday interactions, challenges and opportunities are directly linked to our upbringing, learned behavior, and culture. We might be predisposed to feelings of insecurity, inferiority, and unworthiness, but to change those mindsets you must challenge what you have come to know and believe about yourself, how God sees you, and what the bible says is truth.

Let's start with what you think or believe about yourself. Do you believe God made you for a special purpose that only you could fulfill? How about God. Do you see him as an angry task master that expects perfection and punishes you for mistakes, or do you see him as your loving heavenly father? What about other people? Do you look in envy or pass judgement on them, resenting their achievements and position in life, so you avoid them?

The good news is that you can change your mind! Changes that will help you accept new beliefs about who you are and what you can achieve; about God, and how much he loves you, and reprogram your negative thoughts.

Let's observe what the Bible says about a positive mindset:

- ❖ You can have the mind of Christ if Jesus lives in you! (See 1 Corinthians 2:16)
- ❖ You will be an overcomer; not overcome by evil, but overcoming evil with good. (See Romans 12:21)
- ❖ You will have His power at work in you, accomplishing more than you could ask or think. (See Ephesians 3:20)
- ❖ Know that you are God's chosen and dearly loved child. Face your fears with trust in His protection. He wants to prosper you and bless your future. (See Psalm 91)
- ❖ Seek the Lord and he will hear you and deliver you from your fears. (See Ps 34:4) His deliverance and protection give you peace of mind and courage to face trials.

Practice makes perfect and this applies to changing your mindset. Renew your mind daily with scripture and prayer. Limit exposure to media or people that drag you down.

Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man. (See Proverbs 3:4)

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Ephesians 4:31-32 NIV)

4) Believe The Word of God:

One common denominator between unbelievers is that they simply can't believe the bible. They find some of the accounts and stories handed down inconceivable. Others acknowledge God and that Jesus was his son, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died a sinner's death on the cross, rose from the grave on the third day and ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father, yet they can't believe what the bible says about His promises, miracles, the work of the Holy Spirit, prayer and the second coming.

If you truly want to experience God's amazing grace and favor on your life, you'll want to fall in love with his word, starting with the New Testament in the book of John, then read the Old

Testament Bible Stories. Scholars have poured over the ancient scrolls and writings for centuries and have compiled the most reliable accounts to include in the Bible. Pray first. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you understanding and insight. I have a very simple study guide for those that are just starting out or are looking for a daily devotional guideline. Email me and I will share it.

Trusting in what the bible says is a sure way to pleasing the heart of God and be in his favor. He watches over his Word to perform the promises in it! (See Jeremiah 1:12). The Bible says *“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart”* (Hebrews 4:12). It has power!

“Your word, LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens” (Psalm 119:89). It will never disappear!

Look at the following truths about the Bible:

- ❖ The word of God is living and active; when you speak it there is power behind it!
- ❖ Jesus promised to send us the Holy Spirit to come and remind us of everything he said.
- ❖ The devil is real. Jesus said he’s a liar and has been from the beginning. He’s not a character with a pitchfork, he’s Satan, and he hates Christians.
- ❖ The Bible is the inspired word of God by the Holy Spirit through the prophets and apostles!
- ❖ Jesus did many miracles on earth and is still the Lord of miracles today. The faith of people to be healed and helped pleased God and brought favor.

When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. “Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing?” (Mark 6:2 NIV)

5) Reject Satan’s Lies:

We’ve established that there is a Devil but what I want to drive home is that he is the father of lies and deception. He’s insidious and crafty as he seeks to get believers off track and to go astray. He will plant seeds of doubt about the Bible, church, pastors, and religion as a whole. His goal is to lure you away enough that eventually you no longer participate in any biblical practices. He’s capable of deceiving even the elect, devout Christian into believing what’s wrong is right, and that God is not real. He duped Eve in the garden and Adam followed suit.

When Jesus was being challenged by arrogant religious leaders, he spoke about the Devil and his character. *“You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44 NIV).*

Peter described Satan as a roaring lion. *“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8 NIV)*

Being alert to the devil’s schemes keeps you ready to hear the truth from the Lord and walk in his favor.

The bible is clear on the weapons and defenses we have to reject the lies of the devil:

- ❖ “We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Cor 10:5 NIV).
- ❖ We put on the full armor of God...”Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph 10-12 NIV).
- ❖ We become un-devourable! Be so full of the Holy Spirit in Christ that Satan will spit you out if he tries to even take a bite.
- ❖ We resist the devil and turn to the Lord for truth and deliverance.
- ❖ We remind ourselves that we are the children of God and we have favor in his sight.

Grace and favor are one in the same and are often used interchangeably in scripture. By using these keys of the Kingdom truths you will intrinsically receive the Lord’s grace and favor to live a life that glorifies God, shares faith and blesses others.

Many are the plans in a person’s heart, but it is the LORD’s purpose that prevails. (Proverbs 19:21 NIV)

I help women and their families struggling with personal issues, past trauma, and difficult relationships achieve transformation and victory like I did.

All scriptural references are taken from the Thompson Chain-Reference Bible, NIV version 1984,

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