

CBS for Thursday, February 2, 2012

THEME: PURPOSE OF EXCEEDING GRACE

Text: Zechariah 4:1-10; 1 Timothy 1:2-15; 1 Corinthians 15: 9-10; Ephesians 2:6-8

Words in Marble: 'The year 2012 is a year of exceeding grace for exceeding labor. It is a year of grace from heaven for the posterity that shall serve the Lord and that will operate in exceeding grace' (Pastor Tunde Bakare, 31/12/2011)

Theme Song: *Give me the grace to follow, **exceeding grace** to follow, give me the grace to follow. Your grace is enough for me.*

At the watch night service of 2011, we all gathered with great expectation. It was another time of hearing what the Lord had in store for us in 2012. And as usual the whole atmosphere was charged in excitement. For some people the excitement had the undertone of: 'Thank God we made it to 2012!'. For others it was the fact that another prophetic word was going to be heard. However, we have the tendency of basking in the euphoria of such declared word for a while only to lose steam mid-season or even earlier as the case may be.

Thank God 2012 has been declared the year of Exceeding Grace. But the core of the matter is not just the declared word but appropriating the purpose and intent of the declared word.

In the light of the above, we shall be looking at the purpose of exceeding grace and also discovering how to access such dimension of grace.

Definition:

So how do we define grace? A common definition is '**God's Riches At Christ's Expense**'. Another definition is 'the unmerited favour of God'. Both of these are true definitions, but the one that stands out most is simply 'God's love set free'. "Grace" is the English translation of a Greek word (Karis) meaning "that which brings delight, joy, happiness, or good fortune." It is from the Greek word '*Charis*' we get the modern word charity. One fact stands out from both the Old and the New Testament perspectives-grace is a divine enablement to operate in the love

of God to do what is pleasing to Him and to fulfill purpose here on earth through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is not by works! (Romans 11:5-6, John 1:16-17)

Exceeding grace is limitless grace, wonderful grace, surpassing grace, extraordinary grace or simply put grace that exceeds the ordinary dimension.

PURPOSE: It is said that when purpose is not known abuse is inevitable. In other words, the expected benefits of such purpose cannot be adequately appropriated. The following rank topmost amongst others in trying to capture the purpose of exceeding grace.

1. To live the life of Christ in total Obedience: We were saved by grace through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ so that we can live for Him. **2 Tim 1:9** *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, Rom 5:20-21* *'Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound . But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, 21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'*

NB: Grace is not a license to sin. Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

2. To love others: Grace unlocks the depths of compassion and the generous spirit. *"Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the **grace of God** bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: that in a great trial of affliction the **abundance** of their **joy** and their **deep poverty abounded** in the **riches** of their **liberality**"* (2 Corinthians 8:1-2). The love that took Christ to the cross is the same love that grace enables us to express towards mankind. (John 3:16, 1John 3:16)

3. To labour: Divine accomplishment, ministry, service and building are a direct consequence of enabling grace. When God calls or sends grace is released.- 1 Cor 15:10 *'But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.'* **Gal 4:19** *'My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you,' Heb 6:9-12* *'But, beloved, we are confident of*

better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. 10 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. ‘
Zech 4:8-10 “ *Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: 9 "The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know That the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. 10 For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth."*

4. To Liberate (Limitless increase & freedom) Enlarging the area of your territorial influence. ‘It is the year of exceeding grace no speed limits!’ **Isa 54:1-3** ‘*Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD. 2 Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; 3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.’*

Accessing exceeding grace

We are saved by grace (Ephesians 2:5). Our salvation brings us into a covenant Father-son relationship with God by adoption. (John 1:12, Romans 8:15). Son ship gives us access into all that the Father has including exceeding grace.(Romans 8:14-17) However, accessing exceeding grace requires the following:

A. Humility: James 4:6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

B. Faith: Faith opens us up to the reality of God’s existence and thus connects us to the workings of His grace. **Heb 11:6** ‘But without faith it is impossible to please

Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.’ Grace is brought by revelation (1 Pet. 1:13). **‘In this year, you cannot fake your trust in God. Build a home for God to dwell in. Let your household become a centre of kingdom activities. Let God find a place of rest in your life and home. When you allow that to happen, God will reveal His heart, His plan, His purpose and His will to you’** Pastor Tunde Bakare. **Nahum 1:7** ‘The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him.’

C. Obedience: A yielded life to the Spirit of God & Obedience position us as recipients of exceeding grace. Abraham obeyed God and he had access to abundant grace.(Romans 8:14, Hebrews 11:8) “As you obey God and receive exceeding grace, resistance will break down in the city and the nation as you step out to testify of the goodness of the Lord in your life. Walls will come down; God will put His fear in the heart of those living around you. The walls of religion will collapse as God did in Jericho” Pastor Tunde Bakare (**Joshua 6: 1-5**).

D. Accurate Positioning: While obedience positions us for grace, accurate positioning enables us to appropriate latent benefits of same. Like Pastor Tunde Bakare will say: ‘The grace of God will only follow you where God has sent you’ To position your self is to stay where God has put within the reach of His grace. (Joshua 6:1-5)

SYNOPSIS:

As Pastor was ministering at the watch night service he kept on telling us under the unction of the Holy Spirit that it is time to work! No more postponement!! No more excuses!!! When God releases exceeding grace, it is for exceeding labour, because He has released all the enabling factors and environment to do what He has called us to do. **Acts 4:33-35** *‘And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. 34 Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, 35 and laid them at the apostles’ feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.’*

In 2012, we cannot fold our arms as spectators in the kingdom. Discover your God given assignment for the year and get to work!

Our motto for 2012 is 'Do it Now!'. In the next series of studies we shall be looking at prosecuting the Do-it-Now mandate. Don't miss any of the life-transforming sessions.

Prayer Focus: Dear Lord of exceeding grace, I thank you for generously sharing the riches of Your grace with me. By Your grace, give me a generous heart towards others. Also, please flood my life with such fullness of grace that others will be drawn to learn more of Your exceeding grace, Amen.