**“Transcendent Grace”**

Big words. At least in meaning, if not in numbers of letters. “Transcendent” (at least as intended here) means *beyond and not bound by physical laws.* If you think about it, *transcendent* matches well with the concept of “grace” as *unmerited/undeserved favor. Grace* is *transcendent* precisely because God’s *unmerited favor* is extended to mankind in ways that are *beyond* and *not bound* by *physical laws* that would otherwise render him *deserving.* Please allow *the Prodigal Son* in Luke 15 to illustrate:

* He demanded what was (or at least would eventually be) *rightfully* his, v.12a;
* The father complied, v.12a;
* He then *squandered* (his older brother said it was *with harlots,* v.30) his *inheritance* with *profligate* (*wasteful* or *excessive*) *living* in a *far country,* v.13;
* *Rock bottom* was soon reached, vv.14-16;
* Then, realizing that he had *expended* all that was *rightfully his* by *inheritance,* he recognized his *salvation* was totally dependent upon the *grace* of his father, vv.17-19;
* So he *humbled himself,* went home, and *confessed* not only his *sin* but his utter dependence- by *unworthiness,* upon his father, v.21;
* Though he *deserved nothing,* his father’s *grace transcended* what was *right by law* and gave him everything, vv.22-24.

That, my friends, is *transcendent grace.* And we ALL are *prodigals,* Rom.3:9-18,23. But- and please “get” this if nothing else, God’s *grace transcends* what we by *right of law deserve* (cf. Rom.6:23), to provide the *“gift of his grace through redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith,”* Rom.3:24-25a. Like the *prodigals* that we are, God’s *transcendent grace* and *righteousness,* He *“passed over the* (including OUR) *sins previously committed… that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus,”* Rom.3:25b!

Now, notice carefully that requirement (what we have to do) for to receive this *transcendent grace* is to have *“faith in Jesus,”* Rom.3:25b. What does this mean? *Faith* is “technically” defined in Heb.11:1 as including ***assurance***and ***conviction****,*  and “practically” defined in Heb.11:6 being made up of ***belief***(in the mind; *mental acknowledgment*), ***trust***(in the heart; that He is a *rewarder*), and ***obedience***(in the life; *seek Him*).

Question: Does the *requirement* of God’s *transcending grace* (our *faith*) negate its nature? Put another way: Does our *faith* mean God’s *grace* becomes *deserved?* Did the Prodigal *faith* render him *deserving* of his father’s riches and blessings? Of course not! Were the father’s riches and blessings extended to the Prodigal *while* he was in *the far country living with swine?* No. But when his *faith* produced *hope* and *assurance* for *salvation,* and caused him to *believe* and *trust* in his father’s *grace,* he *sought* it by *going home!*

**God’s *transcendent grace* is manifested to us from *beginning* to *end* through*:***

1. Grace in His *eternal plan* to offer salvation to everyone, Eph.1:3-12;
2. Grace in His *specific plan* to save individuals who *believe* (have *faith* as defined above), Eph.1:13-14; Rom.6:1-11
3. Grace in *guidance* through life (*living by faith* in *God’s grace*), Gen.6:8,13-22; Titus 2:11-14; and,
4. Grace in *judgment,* Matt.25:31-40; who would declare that simple acts of *grace* and *kindness* deem one *worthy* of the riches of heaven?

**Take-home Points:**

1. **God’s *grace,* by its very nature, *transcends* what is *right* and *just* to what is *undeserved* yet *graciously given.***
2. **It’s only requirement is *faith* (comprised of *belief, trust,* and *obedience*).**
3. **God’s grace is manifested from *before the beginning* until *after the end* (through His offer of salvation to everyone, His plan to save those *of faith,* His guidance through life, and His eternal judgment).**

**Will you not, like *the Prodigal*, admit your dependence upon Him, place your faith in Him, and come home?**