



**Module** : Understanding, Accessing & Growing in GRACE

**Session 10** : Humility Accesses 'A Greater Grace' - Part 2

**Focus** : Grace Attends Humility Expressed and Evidenced as Obedience

Manifesting Glory - The Example of Jesus

*He HUMBLed Himself by becoming Obedient*

*Phil. 2:8*

If God resists the proud but give grace to the humble, what then is the ultimate expression and evidence of humility? OBEDIENCE

"..., He HUMBLed Himself BY BECOMING ... OBEDIENT ... to the point of death ... on a cross."  
(Phil. 2:8)

Humility is prerequisite to obedience and the proof of humility is obedience. WE can think that we are humble all we want to but the litmus test of a humble heart is the degree to which you accept, agree with and actually practice God's principles or view of things in all aspects, particularly when God's will requires of you A DARING and COURAGEOUS act of OBEDIENCE to the point of 'death' to self.

In Session 9, we demonstrated that great grace is given to the humble person where this humility, a lowly disposition of spirit and soul, is expressed as obedience to God and His Word.

God blesses obedience to His Word. His Word contains, not just His mind and intelligence, but also His essence, His grace. His grace is the foundational basis upon which everything of His glory rests. His Glory is full of grace and truth, truth being His Word. His Words are Spirit and life. His Word, like His Grace, is spirit. Grace is the immaterial compositional make-up of God as Spirit, and His Word, which is spirit and life, is the means by which grace is communicated to men.

In a prior session we indicated that the goal of grace reception is the display of God's glory, i.e. the exact representation of His nature must be shown visibly to men. **Thus it is clear to see that, although you receive grace the instant you hear and receive the Word of God, it is when you obey the Word that the resident grace inherent within the Word exhibits the glory or character of God.** Grace is the substructure of glory. Glory is made apparent to the observer when the Word in which grace is contained and transported to the hearer, is practically obeyed. A measure of grace may be received through the hearing of the Word, but glory is put on display through the obedience of the Word.

The act of accurately hearing God's Word is critically important. Certain spiritual transactions take place via the means of HEARING the Word. For example, faith comes by hearing. Faith really is impartation of the underlying nature of God (the Greek term 'hupostasis') given to us in the act of hearing His Word. The effect of this is that we develop unswerving confidence and assurance in the capacity of His person and character to do whatever He has determined His will is to accomplish. Also, Jesus told His disciples that they are "already clean" through the Words which they hear. So cleansing can take place through hearing accurately. Similarly, when I hear God's Word, a measure of grace is already imparted to my spirit. Through the act of obedience, by which I demonstrate ultimate humility, I harness the fullest measure of grace intended to be imparted through that Word I heard, so that grace transforms to glory. Remember, grace attends humility, and if obedience reflects humility, then although some grace is received in the hearing of the Word, the fullest grace-potential is activated and becomes ignited to be operational in and through OBEDIENCE.

Remember, the whole intent of grace reception through authentic apostolic ministry, is widespread obedience in whole nations:

**Rom.1:5**      through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake

For the grace resident within the Word of God heard to be practically operative in your life so as to attain the fullness of its potential outworking, there must be obedience to the Word to manifest God's glory. Otherwise the received grace in the Word be received in vain. Paul said that he did not receive grace in vain, but that he 'worked' (1 Cor.15:10.ff.). In other words, having received grace, he practically obeyed the call of God in his life by doing something – i.e. obeying that grace-laddened Word.

I demonstrated in the previous session that grace attends humility, because **humility is most powerfully expressed when one can commit the representation of oneself to another party**. That another represents you accurately is only possible because you have invested yourself within them, in whom the requirement would for them be, to die to themselves, their own ambitions and inclinations. God committed the presentation of Himself to man. The lowly position of humility characterised by obedience to the point of death to self within us, is absolutely vital if we are to accurately represent His glory and become His reputation. He fills us with His grace via His Word spoken through His servants (e.g. spiritual fathers) sent to us.

**Humility in us attracts grace, when in us, there is total death to anything that might stand in opposition to His desire for us to represent Him completely.** The ultimate expression of humility within us would then be the actual enactment of obedience on our part to His grace-pregnant Word. Grace attends our humble disposition and desire to do His will obediently. As we obey, the resident grace within the Word, which provides the medium of

reception of the Divine essence in Spirit, now visibly portrays that nature before men in terms of Divine character in ways men might recognise as God. Again I stress, for all of this to take place, **humility expressed as obedience to the point of death to self, is essential.** It is pointless believing that one is humble and thus a candidate qualifying for the reception of 'greater' grace, when in fact you do not have any inclination to obey God - the actual ultimate indication of humility - and thereby showcase God's glory to the world.

**To Summarise :** Without humility, grace is inaccessible. Without grace, glory is impossible. Without glory, Divinity remains invisible. Costly and courageous obedience is the ultimate expression and evidence of humility, whose outcome of grace, manifests glory. Grace that attends humility manifests God's glory in the act of daring obedience.

### **THE CORPORATE EFFECT AND POWER OF SINGULAR OBEDIENCE**

**Rom.5:17-20** For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Adam's personal obedience brought unrighteousness and death upon MANY. Through the individual obedience of Jesus, He opened a means by which MANY could be made righteous. Do not underestimate the disobedience or obedience of ONE PERSON. It has an effect on a whole host of people. Achan's personal sin hampered the progression of the whole nation of Israel (Joshua 7). In obeying, realise that you are not just acting privately, but corporately. Refuse the temptation to disobey, because you highly apprise the corporate state and welfare of the people with whom you associate.

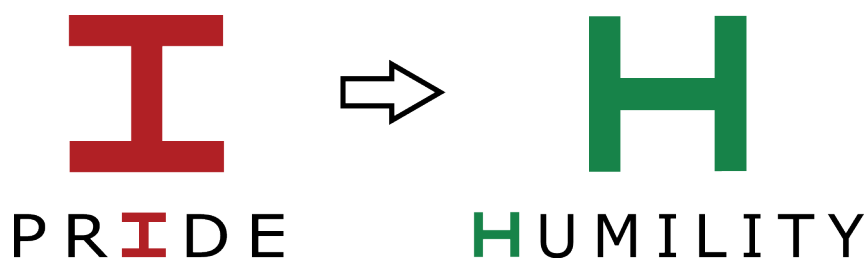
Failure to love God by not loving and obeying His Word has deep implications on your attitude towards your brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ.

**1 John 5:2-3** By this we know that **we love the children of God**, when **we love God** and **observe His commandments**. For this is the **love of God**, that we **keep His commandments**; and His commandments are **not burdensome**.

This text suggests that one does not love the Body of Christ - the family of God - your brothers and sisters in Christ - when you demonstrate a lack of love for God by disobeying His Word. Loving God and His Word is not a personal or private matter per se, since disobedience to His commandments provide evidence of a lack of love for God, and this disobedience adversely affects the community of saints to which you belong (cf. the negative affect that the sin of Achan had on Israel's success in warfare – Joshua 7).

To disobey is to be selfish. To obey will require selflessness. Disobedience is then indicative of pride and places the 'I' at the centre. Obedience indicates humility because it positions the corporate welfare of your brothers as a priority above your own inclinations, ambitions and comforts.

The letter 'I' in the centre of the word 'PRIDE' stands tall and arrogant. It becomes an 'H' when you lay it down on its side. It must bend, bowing down laterally to become the 'H' in Humility. May the 'I' in you and me bow low in self-humility to receive greater grace through our obedience to God and His Word. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5).



### EXAMPLES ILLUSTRATING THE EFFECT OF GRACE UPON SELFLESS, HUMBLE OBEDIENCE THAT BRINGS MANY INTO A STATE OF GLORY

#### ❖ JESUS

Jesus, full of grace and truth and the epitome of humility, humbled Himself by becoming OBEDIENT unto death on the cross.

**Phil. 2:8** Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Note: "He humbled Himself **BY BECOMING OBEDIENT**".

The NKJV frames it this way: "He humbled Himself **AND became** obedient"

**Becoming/Became = ginomai =** to begin to be, that is, to come into existence or into any state; to have come into existence or simply to be<sup>1</sup>.

Obedience is a state you come into. It is a state of being – a state of existence. It must be a constant state that we all seek to abide in and never move out from. This humility should be a permanent disposition by which we are to be characterised.

Humility is prerequisite to obedience and the proof of humility is obedience. WE can think that we are humble all we want to, but the litmus test of a humble heart is the degree to which you accept, agree with and actually practice God's principles or view of things in all aspects, but particularly when God's will requires of you A DARING and COURAGEOUS act of OBEDIENCE to the point of 'death' to self.

Obedience, whose expression evidences humility, is a willingness to obey God, **without any concern for the preservation of security, provision, self-interest, etc. Disobedience then becomes an indication and expression of PRIDE**, for he who disobeys God, places his view and desire above that of God's. When God requires courageous acts of obedience, the natural and carnal mind perceives the associated cost as resulting in loss. The prideful, self-centred individual fails to comply with God's expectation, simply because the need **to preserve SELF** and deal with **the fear of potential loss** ranks higher as a necessary **survival disposition** than the need to resign oneself with abandon to God's will.

When you think you are going to lose anything through an act of obedience to God, little do you know that the **act of obedience which costs you everything is actually the doorway through which you enter everything God has earmarked for your life**. From a human perspective, you may stand to lose much, but from a spiritual perspective, you gain all.

**Matt. 10:37,38**      "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

### Jesus Obeyed By Grace

There is something about the power of grace I want to emphasise here. Grace received through the Word of God is not only an impartation of the compositional, consistent and immaterial property within the God-head as a Spirit being. More than this, this grace is actually the principle power by which I can courageously obey a command of God, a command which may seem in the flesh to be very costly to me. You might think that it would be impossible for you to obey, but that is only because you view it naturally from a human perspective and based on what you are humanly capable of doing. But if you tap into and rely upon the grace you received by hearing the Word, that same grace will be the source of empowerment meant to spur you on to obey that Word. Jesus' humility attracted greater grace to His person. It was really the grace attendant with His humble heart that was actually the means He employed to obey His Father's will for Him to die on the cross. Recall in the garden of Gethsemane, from the weakness of His humanity, He

asked whether it was possible for the cup of suffering associated with the crucifixion to be set aside from Him. But He quickly adjusted His position saying to His Father, "Not my will but Thine be done" (Luke 22:42). He could say this because GRACE within Him arose to confront the matter of obedience to the point of death.

### JESUS 'TASTED DEATH' BY the power of the GRACE of God.

**Heb. 2;10,11** But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that BY the GRACE OF GOD, He might TASTE DEATH for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

Perhaps you are facing some requirement of God upon your life, something God is expecting you to do that may seem so difficult in your human strength. When you heard that command of God, in that command is not just God's **EXPECTATION** for you, but also in it, is God's **EMPOWERING** grace, which when you rely on, will cause you to obey God daringly and courageously.

To obey any of God's commands is **NOT HARD AT ALL**. Eradicate the thought that obedience is difficult. Banish that thinking from your mind.

### **Deut. 30:8-11**

- 8 And you shall again obey the Lord, and observe all His commandments which I command you today.
- 9 Then the Lord your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the Lord will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers;
- 10 if you obey the Lord your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.
- 11 "For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.

God will never ask you to do something, which He will not also enable you to carry it out in obedience, once He sees you are at least inclined to do it. The moment you position your spirit,

soul and body and incline your whole being to please God through obedience, God WILL endow you with supernatural grace-filled ability to execute the obedient intention, no matter how costly that obedient act is. He requires you to make the first step though.

**1 John 5:3** For this is the **love of God**, that we **keep His commandments**; and His commandments are **NOT BURDENSOME**.

Jesus obeyed privately, which brought many people into sonship with God, His father.

**Heb. 2:9b-10a** '... Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that **by the grace of God** He might **taste death** for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in **bringing many sons to glory ...**'

Jesus' singular and private obedience by the power of the grace of God brought many into an experience of that grace by their entrance into sonship. It is God's intention that people everywhere experience His grace. As the Scriptures indicate, grace must spread to MORE AND MORE people everywhere.

**2 Cor.4:15** For all things are for your sakes, so that the **GRACE** which is **SPREADING** to **MORE and MORE PEOPLE** may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God.

Honour toward God and spiritual fathers is expressed by obedience. If obedience is the evidence of humility, we can conclude that humility is thus prerequisite to any desire to honour. Grace attends humility –thus grace attends the one who honours another.

### **Eph. 6:1-3**

- 1 Children, **OBEY** your parents **IN THE LORD**, for this is right.
- 2 **HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER** (which is the first commandment with a promise),
- 3 **SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH.**

The phrase "obey your parents **IN THE LORD**" is a reference primarily to spiritual fathers. Paul, in describing his fatherhood over his spiritual son Timothy, used the same phrase '**IN THE LORD**'.

**1 Cor. 4:17** For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is **my beloved and faithful child IN THE LORD**, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.

A reminder of what it means 'TO OBEY':

**OBEY** = hupakouō̄ = from hupo (under/beneath), and akouō̄ (to hear)<sup>2</sup>

= To hearken.

= To listen to something, harken with stealth, stillness, or attention in order to answer.

To obey implies accurate hearing of the Word, and having heard, you consciously design an appropriate, obedient response. To obey implies attentive hearkening, compliance or submission to God's Word. When you and I obey, we bring ourselves under the covering of what we hear and of the one from whom you hear (namely our spiritual father). In the Greek, the word also implies a willing submission to what is heard and to obey God irresistibly<sup>3</sup>.

To obey is to willingly subject oneself to the Word of God contained within your spiritual father. By obedience, you bring yourself under that Word. This act of obedience brings to one blessings and promises attendant with that act of obedience. The Word of God embedded within the spirit of your spiritual father provides spiritual covering. As indicated, the literal meaning of obedience is to 'bring oneself under that which you hear and the one from whom you hear'. How does your spiritual father cover you? How do you get protection and immunity from the schemes of the enemy? By simply obeying that Word, you bring yourself under the protection of that Word. No man can cover another man. It is the Word of God within your spiritual father, which when obeyed, covers you. One comes under spiritual covering through obedience to the Word released by your spiritual father. That Word protects you. To disobey then places you outside of that covering and protection.

Biblically, sons who obeyed became the recipients of significant blessings, promises, breakthrough, new levels of spiritual revelation of the nature and purpose of God, etc. for ...

- (a) themselves,
- (b) their spiritual fathers
- (c) their brothers

Their active and willing obedience brought to their lives protection and immunity from very concerted attempts by the enemy to derail their destiny and ultimately destroy them totally.

Grace attends the humble person. Humility is expressed by obedience to God's Word. We must seek to live in a culture of obedience 'unto death', no matter the cost to us personally. As we do, **grace is not just attracted to us, but through us**, and will benefit a host of others. Our obedience to God's Word, vested in and through our spiritual fathers, will bring immunity and covering to us. Grace will cover you.

In our next session, we will examine how these principles play out in the life of Esther, a spiritual son to Mordecai, her spiritual father. She obeyed courageously and attained immunity and covering of great grace which worked mightily, not just in her but through her, and benefited an entire nation, whose existence and Divine purpose was preserved by her personal obedience which was foundationed on sincere humility before God and men.

May all grace and peace be multiplied to you.

Randolph Barnwell

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## **ENDNOTES**

1. Zodhiates, S. (2000, c1992, c1993). The Complete Word Study Dictionary : New Testament (electronic ed.), Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, #G1096
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