

Living in Awe of God's Sovereign Grace

Section Three: "What God Has Done"

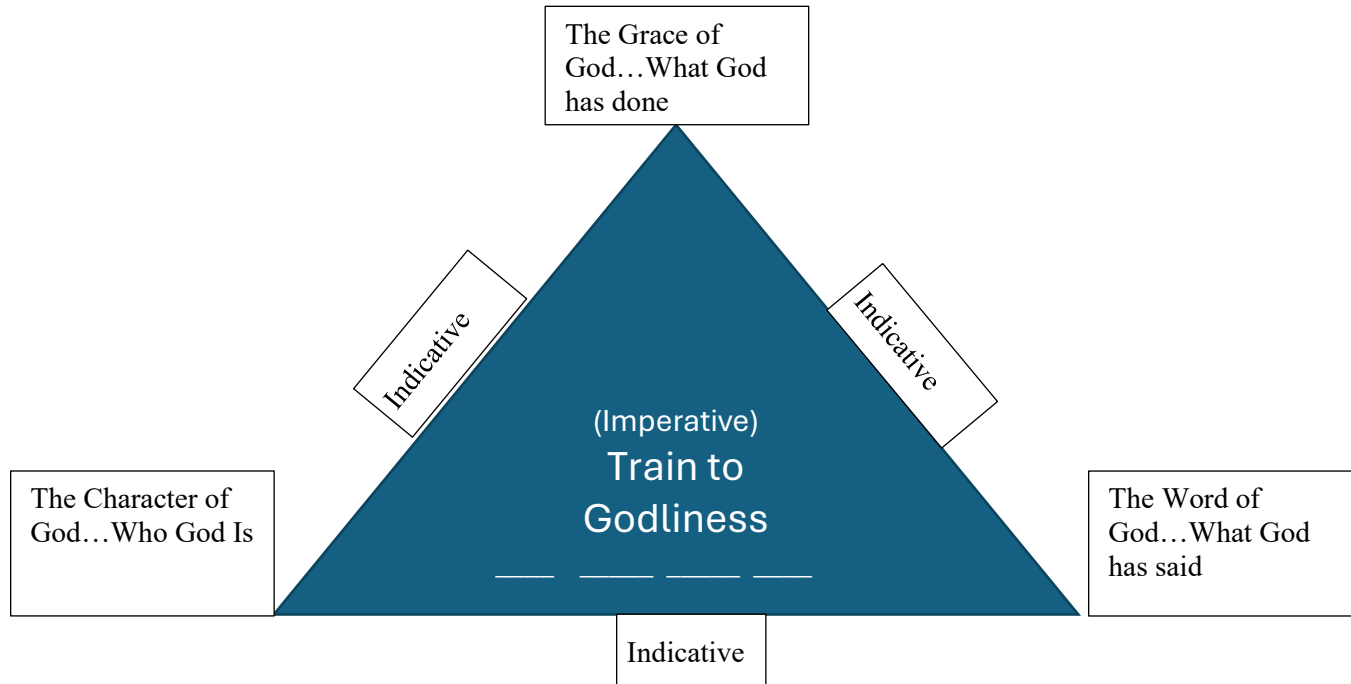
1 Tim 1:16-17

"It is unquestionably one of the tragic fruits of our fallen nature that we can grow in theological knowledge without growing perceptibly in appreciation of what that knowledge means. The head may be full, while the heart is cold. Truths maybe handled clinically without the affections becoming roused or kindled." Maurice Roberts in Thought of God, pg 79

"God has blessed us in this generation with a recovery of many glorious doctrines long buried under the rubbish of tradition and error. Our concern must be to 'improve' our privilege. Not to do that would be ingratitude to God. We owe it to Christ to be the best Bible-readers and the best hearers of sermons. We owe it to our families and to posterity to see that the church children of this rising generation see the best examples and receive the best instruction. Then let it be our heartfelt wish to stop up the leaks between the pulpit and pew, between the godliness of the father and son, between what we are in our creeds and what we are in our lives. It is a subject in which great issues are at stake." Maurice Roberts in Thought of God, Pg 152

"One of the beautiful paradoxes in God's wisdom is sovereign grace. The same grace that is unmerited is also unstoppable." Tony Reinke in John Newton on the Christian Life

"Sovereign grace has power alone to subdue a heart of stone; and the moment grace is felt, the hardest heart will melt." John Newton



Godliness is devotion in action!
Duty + Delight = Devotion

Review: Last lesson we dove deep into Ephesians 2:1-3 and learned what Paul meant when he said unsaved man is “dead” in his sins and how that “death” correlates to being “separated” or alienated from God (Col 1:21). We saw that being dead in sins speaks directly to the heart condition of man and thus every aspect of man is utterly incapacitated and corrupted wanting nothing to do with God and His ways. Furthermore, we learned that Paul proves this point of man’s hopelessness by describing how a dead man lives and who a dead man follows as a slave of sin, the world, and even of Satan. We must not lose sight of the depth of our depravity apart from Christ. This quote by John Calvin highlights how we are often deceived by our own depravity...

“The human heart has so many crannies where vanity hides, so many holes where falsehood lurks, is so decked out with deceiving hypocrisy, that it often dupes itself.”
John Calvin, *Institute of the Christian Religion*, J.T. McNeill (1960), 3.2.10.

Therefore, in our previous lesson we grappled with how critical it is that we have a clear and correct diagnosis of man’s ultimate problem because if we do not, we will only offer man an insufficient remedy at best. We also saw how man’s inner corruption is complete and utter, totally impacting every ounce of his being which means man is in a place of total depravity and spiritual inability (Jn 8:34; Eph 2:1-3; Rom 3:10-18; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 4:17-19; Titus 3:3). Man, apart from Christ, is fully a slave to sin in how he thinks, in how he feels, and in how he acts (noetically, emotionally, volitionally). The Bible is clear that apart from sovereign grace man is utterly hopeless and helpless being enslaved in the kingdom of Satan (Col 1:13-14).

Now we are ready to start considering the power of God’s sovereign grace given through the gospel to break the shackles of sin and to set the believer free to live a life of godliness to the glory of God (Rom 6:1-14)! You must never forget that the roots of true godliness are entirely and completely a gift of God’s sovereign grace! Meaning an unmerited salvific work of grace that was unilaterally instigated and providentially accomplished by God alone. Remember the Ethiopian’s skin and the leopard’s spots of Jerm 13:23 and Who is the only one who can transform that which cannot be changed (cf. Jerm 31:31-34; 32:36-41)? This is the glorious truth of ***What God Has Done*** in the gospel that empowers us and compels us to be men who passionately train ourselves for godliness (1 Tim 4:7).

Lesson 15: (1) Now, let us return to Ephesians and see if we can grow even further in living in awe of God’s sovereign grace. Read Ephesians 2:4-5 and contemplate the colossal shift that is happening between the previous three verses (2:1-3) and verses 4-5. What are the first two words of verse 4 in the ESV? Look up and define for me the conjunction “but” so that you can better explain what it is being highlighted in this passage. As verse 4 begins with “But God” verses 1-3 are really all about or could begin with this phrase (you fill in the blank) “But _____.”

(2) Read these verses in the ESV (Gen 50:20; Ps 49:15; Acts 13:30; Rom 5:8; 1 Cor 1:27; 3:6-7) and tell me how they connect with and better help you understand what is being highlighted by the “But God” of Eph 2:4. Can you identify for me the similarities between Eph 2:1-6 and Titus 3:3-7? What words are repeated and what concepts are clearly interwoven through these two passages? Identify the *situation of man*, the *motivation of God*, the *foundation of salvation*, the *transformation* and *destination of the believer*.

3. Continue reading Ephesians 2:4-6 and explain what is being contrasted in this passage even as you read on through verse 10. How many points of contrast can you identify when you compare verses 1-3 with 4-6? Explain for me both who man is and what man does in verses 1-3 and now compare/contrast that with who God is and what God does in verses 4-6. See if you can fill in the blanks... While in death God brings _____; While in bondage God brings _____; While helpless God brings _____; While deserving wrath God delivers _____! This is sovereign grace! According to Scripture explain what grace is and how foundational it is to the believer's life and growth. (Ex 34:6; 1 Pet 5:10; Jn 1:14, 17; 1 Pet 1:13; Rom 3:23-24; 4:16; 5:15; 5:20; 6:23; 11:5-6; Eph 1:6-7; 2:5-9; 2 Thess 2:16; 2 Pet 3:18)? Write down at least three specific ways (with Scripture references) on how God's sovereign grace personally impacts you as you train yourself to godliness (1 Tim 4:7)?