

Free and sovereign grace to sinners (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Pont, Philip

[0 : 00] The first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians chapter 15 and verses 9 and 10. The first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians chapter 15 and verses 9 and 10.

For I am the least of the apostles that have not made to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church of God.

But by the grace of God I am what I am. That his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain.

That I laboured more abundantly than they all. Yet not I. But the grace of God which was with me.

For I am the least of the apostles that have not made to be called an apostle. Because I persecuted the church of God.

[1 : 15] That by the grace of God I am what I am. And his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain. But I laboured more abundantly than they all.

Yet not I. But the grace of God which was with me. Amen. The dear apostle traces everything of his hope, his confidence, his religion, his preaching.

To that one source. The grace of God. And everything else that he speaks of in these two verses come from it.

And that my friends is the substance of the text really at this time. The grace of God.

We shall see as the Lord will unfold it to us. The effect of the grace of God. The first thing that must be said is this.

[2 : 32] That it is the sovereign act of God. To bestow grace upon his people. It is those who are his eternal choice.

And God never makes a mistake. The most unlikely are those who are the subject of it.

We would say the most unfit of characters are the subjects of it. We would say the most unlikely of characters are the subjects of it.

And those of the deepest eye. The most grace of sinners are the subject of it.

And it is divine sovereignty. It is God's eternal choice. And the very words that this man writes. Flows from the grace of God.

[3 : 37] Flows from the grace of God. I thought as we read that ninth verse. It just struck me as we started to read it. For I am the least of the apostles.

And there is the grace of God. Completely. My friends. This is what? This is the effect of grace. This is the fruit of grace.

This is the influence of grace. And this my friends should be found in us all. If we profess the grace of God. To be found here.

For I am. The least of the apostles. In a certain sense. This dear man could have said.

In fact he does say. In a few words. I labored more abundantly than nail. He might have said. I've been deeper told than some.

[4 : 36] He might have said. I've had a most remarkable conversion. In comparison with some. And he might have said. I'm more busy. Than some in the preaching of the gospel.

And I. He also might say. I'm more persecuted than some. But not so. Those things which were. Of grace.

Those things which were the works. The workings of grace. Not the works. A child of grace doesn't rest on works. But by the grace of God.

He might well. He might well. Point to all these other things. But he begins. Where he ought to begin. He begins. Where we ought to be found. The least.

Of the apostles. Not the least. In learning. Not the least. In the ministry. Not the least. In his. Journeys.

[5 : 35] Not the least. In his persecution. But the least. In himself. That's where the grace of God. Is seen. That's where it shines.

My friends. It shines in this. The humble. The unworthy. And indeed. The contrite sinner.

Remember what he wrote to Timothy. This is a faithful saying. And worthy of all acceptance. That Christ Jesus came into the world.

To save sinners. Of whom. I am chief. Of the chief. Of the sinners. The least. Of the apostles.

And the wonder of that grace too. That despite his. Previous life. As a Pharisee. Despite the persecution.

[6 : 30] That he. Here confesses. That he. Because I persecuted the church. Despite of that. Still this grace. Still this mercy.

Still this choice. I've often thought. You know. And we must be very. Very careful. As we speak. But. I've often thought.

As we come through the services. And through the weeks. Services. That the Lord. Has appeared. Despite. Despite what you say.

Despite all our faults. And all our failings. And despite. All our sins. And all our iniquities. Is. My friends.

This is grace. This is the wonder of grace. That once. In. Once found in the heart. Of. Of a soul.

[7 : 24] My friends. It rains. And it rules. And it can never be removed. Grace. Once. Known in the heart. Shall never be taken away.

In that. In that. Epistle. Which. Which. I forget. I forget. The name. At the moment. But he says this.

Unto me. Who am less. Than the least. Of all saints. Is this grace. Is this grace given. That I should preach. Among the Gentiles.

The unsearchable. Riches of Christ. Now. We have then. In these words. These ninth. And tenth verses. The beginnings of grace.

And. The effect of grace. For I am. The least. Of the apostles. He is nobody. In his own eyes. He is the most.

[8 : 26] Well taught. And. The. Author of the epistles. More epistles. Than any one. Of the apostles. And.

And by the instrumentality. Of the holy ghost. Many souls. Have been blessed. Since the day. That he wrote. These epistles. And I believe.

That. Heaven itself. Will be the record. Of how many. Have been blessed. Under his word. Through the spirit's work. The least.

Of the apostles. For I am. The least. Of the apostles. Grace. Will show. Humility.

My friends. It will. Not that. False humility. That. That. The world. Often. Switch on. And switch off. As. They. May.

[9 : 22] Appear to. Take advantage. Of things. You. You look at the leaders. Of the land. When circumstances. Demand it. They can switch on.

Humility. And sympathy. That it. Touch. My friends. This is. Within the soul. This grace. This humility.

Is. Of grace. This nothingness. Is. The effect. Of grace. Because. For I am. The least.

Of the apostles. That are not. Meet. To be called. An apostle. Well if he lived. In days. Of John. Newtley. He would have agreed. With that lovely hymn. Wouldn't he. Amazing grace.

How sweet. The sound. That saved. A wretch. Like me. I once. Was lost. But now. I am found. Was blind. But. Now I'm.

[10 : 18] Now I see. That I'm not. Me. To be called. An apostle. Oh. It was. As if. That very grace. In the influence. Of it. In the soul.

Disclaimed. Any merit. Put away. Any possibility. Of. Of any. Self-glory. Rested.

Upon nothing. Of his endeavors. Nothing. At all. But he was not. Me. To be called. An apostle. In Romans 7. He speaks.

Or writes rather. Concerning. The feelings. Of his own heart. And he said. Oh. Wretched man. That I am. Who shall deliver me.

From the body. Of this death. Who taught him that. Who taught him that. My friends. Who teaches. Any. You or I. Those in the house.

[11 : 13] Of God. This morning. Wretched men. Wretched women. You won't mind me saying that. Those who know their. Inward wretchedness.

Their depraved state. By nature. The lust. And pride. The rebellious heart. The fallen condition. The worldly nature. The heart.

That goes after the things. Of the world. And so on. My friends. Who taught you. These things. For I am the least.

Of the apostles. That are not. Made to be called. An apostle. Because. I persecuted. The church. Of God. Wonderful mercy.

My friends. When you can stand. Alongside. Alongside Paul. And trace his religion. Down to grace. And the mercy of God. And the sovereignty.

[12 : 08] Of God. And the calling of God. Because. We must say. In the grace of God. The calling was effectual. I've often said.

When you sit under the truth. And there's no grace. In your heart. There's no effect. Of that truth. Resting upon your spirit. And it might be. The most.

Solemn of discourses. But it has no effect. But if the grace of God. Is in you. Then the hearing. Is tuned. To the word of God.

Then the desire. Of the spirit. Is tuned. To the word of God. We often. Use a phrase. I suppose. But. Let us not. Use it lightly. Because it's just.

A cliché. As it were. The Lord. Grants us the grace. To trace. That we got. An aching void. That the world.

[13 : 01] Can't feel. For I am the least. To the apostles. That are not meet. To be called. An apostle. No merit. He lived in a religion.

Before. The Damascus Road. Conversion. That rested on merit. His attainment was. On merit.

On zeal. He was. What he was. The chiefest. Of the Pharisees. He had. What you might call. A. A good pedigree.

Brought up a Pharisee. And he could point. To what he's done. My friends. All that was swept away. By grace. You read.

A third. Of the Philipians. You find this. What things. Were going to me. Those. I counted. Lost. For Christ. For I count. All things.

[13 : 59] But loss. For the. Excellency. Of the knowledge. Of Christ. Jesus. My Lord. For whom. I suffered. The loss. Of all things. But count.

Them. But dumb. That I may. Win Christ. And be found. In him. For I am. The least. Of the apostles. It is not. Me. To be called. An apostle. Because I.

Persecuted. The church. Or. If you look. Back. Sometimes. To your. Past. And wondered.

At the goodness. Of the Lord. Grace. Brings. A sinner. To pray. In ground. Friends. That's what grace.

Will do. To pray. In ground. Grace. Will bring you. As a needy. Poor. Dependent. How deserving. Sinner. To the mercy seat.

[14 : 57] All these. That you often. Hear spoken of. Characters. In the word. Of God. The publican. What brought him. Into that dark place.

What brought him. Into that distressing condition. What brought the woman. In the Pharisee's house. To weep over. Christ's feet. And so on.

We could. List them out. As it were. And. Beside all this. If it is in your heart. And mine. If it's in your pathway. And mine. If you can look back.

On the days. When the Lord. Began to deal with your soul. And brought you down. Brought you. Stripped you. Of all. Stripped you. Of all your merit. When you couldn't understand.

The poor people of God. Who. Cried and sighed. And. Groaned. And. Spoke of their distress. Respecting sin. I remember sitting in Hanover.

[15 : 55] And. I heard a good man pray. And he confessed his sins. In his prayers. And I sat there amazed. I didn't think he was as bad a sinner. As he said. But he felt it so.

But I know now. My friends. What he meant. For I am the least of the apostles. That are not made to be called an apostle. Because I persecuted the church.

But. Under the grace of God. My friends. He learned this truth. When he persecuted the church of Christ. He was indeed doing his will.

And doing Satan's will as well. He looked not upon that as an affliction. Or even as a sin. He looked not upon the persecution of the church of God.

As something that was wrong. But something that was right. He served his master well. But as he looked back also. Upon that day. Upon those times.

[16 : 54] Upon those depths of sin. That he came into. And. Of which he was the subject of. My friends. And. And. This truth. That the grace of God.

Didn't overlook those sins. But despite them. Called him by his. By. Was called by his grace. For I am the least.

You know. That's what makes grace so wonderful to a sinner. Never mind these. Up. Up. Up. Up. Up. Up. Up. Up. Up. Those who stand upright. And walk upright.

And seem to not put a foot out of place. Grace is more eminent. And more revealed. And more. God glorifying. My friends. In the persons. Of those who have walked contrary to God.

And godliness. those who look to their merits for their grace my friends are sadly deceived but those who can look back on a life of sin and iniquity and depths of sin which they are ashamed of and sins of thought, word and deed and of action and sins of birth and practice and so on and still the grace of God is seen in their heart and in their walk and pathway my friends that grace is far more glorious and brings far more praise to the God of all grace than these that have never stepped out of the way you look at the case of in that parable of the prodigal son two sons, both sons both were sons of the same father one spent his substance in riotous living and the other kept close to his father's house one went away, one stayed one was brought back repentant in confession but did not the father's love shine more glorious my friends, to the prodigal than to the elder brother they were both sons never make mistakes some people make all sorts of comments on those two characters they were sons but one had been left to fall into sin and to know restoring grace and to feel the love of his father still was towards him whilst he was yet a great way off how far a great way off is well if they're a child of grace my friends, I'll tell you how far it is glory to God they ne'er shall roam beyond the limits of his love that's how far off they'll go and the father's love still was upon him and when he came back in true repentance and confession he displayed the love to one so unworthy the elder brother of course found fault he served him all the days of his life he said and he never gave me a kid to share with my friends but the father said to him all that I have is thine that's his sonship that's his evidence is of his sonship but he didn't know the need of mercy like the younger son did and these characters like the apostle here my friends they desire to glorify the grace of God because despite their fallen state and their pathway which they have been delivered from still the grace of God rules and reigns for I am the least of the apostle that I am not made to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church but by the grace of God

[21 : 05] I am what I am now what is it that you are well some of you are members of the church you have walked through the pathway of the ordinances of his house put on an open profession of the name of Christ confessed him before men the reality of it is dear friends it is by the grace of God and others are seeking their way they know they're full of the knowledge the knowledge they have is of their own sinful self it's everything to distress it's everything to weep over everything to mourn over it's the same grace now those too that have been a long time in the way that seek for a blessing they seek for Christ to be revealed they cannot be satisfied or content without that he himself shall be revealed to them as their redeemer and saviour and friend and that amongst that number that no man could number they seek to see that their name is found it's the same grace some of you have been brought out of the world the world was your home and by his mercy and goodness and eternal choice you're found amongst his people in his house under the gospel it's the same grace some of us have been brought up under the sound of the truth all the days of our life from childhood onwards we wouldn't want to tell you the pathway that we walked perhaps you wouldn't talk to us afterwards but here we are as monuments of his grace

I can sing with honesty that hymn in our book are but for free and sovereign grace I still lived estranged from God till Hallard proved the destined place of my deserved but dread abode my friends can you sing it from the heart wonderful hymn that is you know wonderful hymn in its simplicity we have a dear one that was chose that for a baptising hymn but oh amazed I see the hand that stopped me in my wild career a miracle of grace I stand the Lord has taught my heart to fear this is grace my friends this is sovereign grace but by the grace of God

I am what I am he didn't look to his labours as I said he didn't look to his ministry he didn't look to his writings his epistles many epistles that he wrote often from dark places he didn't look at the trials in the way nothing of the sort he didn't add up these advantages and disadvantages he was what he was by the grace of God but by the grace of God I am what I am but also what are you and I then by the grace of God who would you give the honour and the glory to if you're not in possession of the blessings that you long for in your own soul where did the exercise the desire the fervency of your prayers come from not from

Satan not from this barren soil of the flesh my friends it comes from grace grace in the heart the influence of grace you know it makes a lion a lamb grace does those many of us have to say that and prove it by the grace of God I am what I am grace when you come to the house of the Lord when you come to the throne of unchanging grace my friends when you bow your head before the Lord when you first began to pray for mercy it's grace when you first began to say Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldst dwell under my roof it was grace when Christ is everything to your soul whether he's absent or present it is grace my friends it's nothing else when he becomes when he comes when he is to you when he is revealed to you as the one thing that is needful the altogether lovely when Christ is first and Christ is last and Christ is all and in all it's grace in the soul that brings a sinner there when you suffer the contradiction of sinners against yourself when you suffer under sore temptations of the evil one when you write yourself off because of the deaths of sin that you are having revealed to you it's by his grace but by the grace of God

I am what I am now those who are under the grace of God then are the subjects of the love of the Trinity I say that carefully my friends many will say under the love of Christ as if that the father doesn't love or the holy spirit has no love those who are the subjects of the grace of God are the subjects of the love of the Trinity the father in that eternal choice that he made love and the choice was not resting upon future good it rested upon his love when his love was placed upon his people it was placed upon a people whom he chose he loved first and he chose those whom he loved love must ever come first when the holy spirit quickens every one of these that are under the eternal choice of the father it is because he has that upon that within him that he loves them as the father's choice and these that are the father's choice was given to the lord

[28 : 58] Jesus Christ for which for their cause and because they are his by gift and they are his by purchase he laid his life down for them all that has been spoken in these last two days on Friday and this day I'm sure wherever it is spoken truthfully and faithfully my friends there's one thing that must never be left out the scene of calvary and the preparation to it the judgment hall and the garden of gethsemane all displays one immortal eternal choice or one immortal eternal blessing my friends and this is the blessing that it was done in love and that was because of the grace of God but by the grace of God I am what I am every one of these characters are the subjects of his love the love of Christ is rich and free fixed on his own eternally greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends and this apostle writes speaking of the cross we quoted it I think Friday I am crucified with Christ and nevertheless I live and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the son of God who loved me and gave himself for me those under the grace of God are the subjects of his love for I am the least of the apostles they do not meet to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church of God but by the grace of God I am what I am let me ask a question to members of our church and members of the church how come do they come to be baptised how come it is tonight if we are spared we sit around that table of the Lord my friends the answer must ever be the love of Christ constraineth us but by the grace of God I am what I am first and foremost as a chosen vessel of mercy by the grace of God I am what I am what I am by the knowledge that grace gives in itself will send a person to where hope and mercy can never come grace will reveal the fallen state of your own nature amazed I see the hand that hand that stopped me in my world career now grace revealed that grace and the grace will reveal it the mercies that you pray for seek after long for desire search for reach out after by prayer and supplication grace reveals it to the soul grace is the cause of the exercise of the people of God that by the grace of God I am what I am then there's another not another side of grace but there is this grace also that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ

everyone whom God sends into the ministry is sent with this grace my friends a graceless ministry is an unprofitable ministry and of no benefit to the church of Christ but the grace that is the exercise of the soul that is called into the work of the ministry demonstrates I trust reveals this grace that lies within my friends he was by the grace of God a minister now that's a solemn charge my friends that is and that those who are not by the grace of God therefore are not ministers and should never be in a pulpit he was a minister of the gospel he was an apostle to the Jew and to the Gentile and he was so by the grace of God this calling is by the grace of God by the grace of God

I am what I am and you that know the plague of your own heart only know it because of the grace of God you that mourn over sin and cut yourself off as being cumbers to the ground are only so by the grace of God and you that have been raised up to a hope in the mercy of Christ are only by the grace of God raised up my friends there will be a day when the people of God shall be taken to glory they shall be taken to glory by the grace of God you say well surely they went to glory on the finished work of Christ you find a dear soul that's got heaven in their sights my friends it needs grace to say with the poet

I could from all things parted thee but never never lord from thee time things you know cling relationships loved ones they cling you know my friends they cling to the old flesh but this is where grace is needed this is where the dear psalmist I cannot recall the number of the psalm but this is where the psalmist came to the Lord delivered him out of trouble in his soul and he said thou hast loosened my bones my friends grace is needed to know that the bonds are loosened but by the grace of God I am what I am the future path thus far my God has led me on every child of grace has got a future path whether it's as far as tomorrow or another years however many my friends how are you going to walk them how have you walked them thus far well you say with shame not as I ought to have done you'll say with a sense of indwelling grief and pain not as I should have done my friends whatever the path lies before you whatever's in it what depths or heights lengths or breaths of tribulation loss or cross my friends you'll only walk it rightly as you walk it under the influence of this grace for by the grace of God I am what I am and grace is the gift of God it is a free gift bestowed upon whom he will and grace is needed in every part of the pathway

I often wonder my friends we should not make a difference but I sometimes feel we need more grace on Sundays than we do on Mondays but on the other hand my friends if we know ourselves and have to mourn over ourselves how much grace is needed to continue anyway the Lord puts you in the pathway of his people puts you among his people my friends you'll only you'll only walk according to the grace of God and not with anything else you know what dear Job said he was a very gracious character the Lord said of Job that he feared God and astute evil but then something else he loaded he permitted Job to be brought into deep trial but at the end of Job's troubles grace spoke through Job and he said this if I can quote it he abhorred himself in dust and ashes but now mine eyes seeth thee and I abhor myself in dust and ashes he couldn't get low enough

[38 : 33] I tell you where grace will be seen dear friends I thought of that place I looked the chapter out this morning the length of John I read it of those dear people at Bethany Lazarus and the two sisters and I thought of those and I thought my mind went to the 10th of Luke and the closing verses in the 10th of Luke this is where grace is seen one was found careful and troubled about many things and the Lord Jesus Christ was pleased to give her a little in the spirit of the gospel a little reproof but where was Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus listening to his word that's grace my friends what did it matter whether they fed or prospered or whatever my friends that's where she had a sister called

Mary which also sat at Jesus feet and heard his word which is a big question my friends have you ever sat there how great was how great a matter my friends is to sit at Jesus feet everything else falls into place then those necessary things of life that Martha was obviously engaged in where she was careful and troubled one thing is needful and when you and I are brought to see that there is but one thing needful my friends it's only by the grace of God for I am the least of the apostles that are not meet to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church but by the grace of God I am what I am and then grace my friends is this there be no boasting if ever there were a man could boast you know it was

Paul you go to the second epistle and you read that account of his thorn in the flesh troubles me sometimes we you know pride can creep in so silently and so deviously into the heart of a believer into the natural heart of a believer and you can soon become proud of your blessings and you can soon start to emphasize the depths of these blessings and the revelations of them and the effects you know and before long you begin to become quite proud of your experience if you find an ear to pour it in you would do so my friends the blessings of the lord are indeed without repentance he'll never remove them but may the blessings of the lord rather humble us than lift us up then they'll need■■■■ love above measure there was given unto me a thorn in the flesh a messenger of Satan to Buffet the Lord put ballast in your life you'll need grace grace to fall under it grace to submit to it as that dear apostle evidently needed that grace because he did what we all

I suppose would do in the circumstance he went to the throne of grace to pray it away now the Lord put a crook in your lot dear friends he'll need that crook in your lot and you'll walk according to his grace and not according to your prayers that lovely word so short yet so effectual I sat on a bedside in a hospital ward many years ago now two people I went to see and I never got an opportunity to talk very closely to one but the second person sat up in bed and he was telling me about a blessing and the blessing was in those words that the Lord spoke to the apostle and he said unto me my grace is sufficient and the influence of that grace my friends you will bear every cross and you'll bear every loss and you will indeed be found submitting to the ballast that the Lord puts in your pathway the crook in the lot who can make straight what God has made crooked not one man my friends but submission comes from grace and not from the heart of the natural man for I am the least of the apostles and am not me to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church of God but by the grace of God

I am what I am I said a moment ago what my friends is before us we do not know thus far we've been brought and mercifully spared and kindly supported and provided for and so on what dies what about that hour and article of death what about that time when the doctor shakes his head and the consultant says he can do no more my friends what about that time when you face a never ending eternity and all life is over as far as you're concerned what grace is needed but by the grace of God I am what I am and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain but I laboured more abundantly than they all yet not I but the grace of God which was with me one more thing and we sit down the pathway of a child of God costs something if you don't lose something for being a Christian then I wonder whether you're a Christian because a Christian's pathway is one of separation and they can't do the things that they used to do and they can't walk the ways they used to walk there's to be a losing there's to be a separation my friends you think that's easy

[46 : 15] I'm not talking about reformation that people could keep talking about as if that was a grace where they leave this off and leave that off my friends the pathway of a child of God the Lord will give the grace and you'll see the need of it to walk that path for I am the least of the apostles and not need to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church of God but by the grace of God I am what I am and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain one more thing comes to my mind when the Lord directs you to do what you don't want to do when he shows you a path which he has appointed and not what you want when it crosses your exercises your natural exercises when it is appointed for you a path that you are called to walk by divine direction and not by natural inclination when like the dear apostle just for a moment the time's gone but just for a moment you read in the

Acts of the Apostles when he assayed to go into Bithynia and the spirit suffered him not and another place too but then there was a vision in the night grace and there stood a man of Macedonia saying come over into Macedonia and help us grace is then needed my friends to do what the Lord's will is you know a lot of people say God willing and I hope they mean it but when the will of the Lord crosses yours and mine my friends as much grace to fall under it is needed to fall under it whatever thy sacred will ordains oh give me strength to bear and let me know my father reigns and trust his tender care you will need grace to walk in obedience to a path that you wouldn't have chosen but by the grace of God

I am what I am Amen The notices this week are as follows God willing Mr.

Izzard will preach tomorrow evening at 6.30 there will be a prayer meeting on Wednesday and our pastor will preach next Lord's day the amount collected from the building fund pops at the door for the month of March was £95.90 pen to sing our last hymn 283 Tis a point

I long to know I long to know do I love the Lord or no am I his or am I not if I love why am I thus why this dull and lifeless frame hardly sure can they be worse who have never heard his name or sing from verse 3 hymn 283

[51 : 29] I pledge all right for where you play, then find your love to saviourst naught.
you The End The End
The End