

The Light - Junior Series
Lesson 107

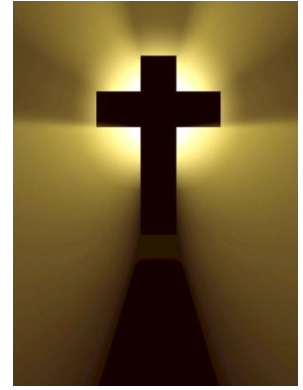
God Shed His Grace on Thee



2018

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

If YOU have never personally believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior; you have the opportunity to do so right NOW. Simply tell God the Father that you believe in His Son, Jesus Christ, who loved us so much that He came down from heaven and became a man to take our place and pay for the penalty for all the sins of all mankind. Jesus, the Savior died on the Cross for your sins and the sins of the whole world. Then Jesus was buried but He rose again and He is alive today seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. When you make the decision to believe in Jesus in simple faith based on His work on the Cross, you are now a believer and will always be a child of God. When you die, you will spend eternity with Him in Heaven. *(Acts 16:31) "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved." (John 3:16) "God loved the world so much that He gave is One and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."*



LESSON



"America"

*O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His GRACE on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!*

Let's begin by taking an honest look at our country this morning, kids. This is a subject that you probably care deeply for and maybe you are very concerned about.

If you've been raised in a Christian home and you have been taught the Word at home and in church and have been made aware of the things that are happening in our country today, you may be a little bit uneasy or even scared.



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Are you shocked about the direction our country is headed in? Are you shocked at her moral condition? Are you afraid for her future? We are moving away from almost everything our founding fathers wanted for our country!



The world seems to be out of control and now maybe America is, also. There are murdering terrorist thugs freely bombing and killing people everywhere. There is a real suspicion that a big part of the reason why they get away with all of this is because the United States of America is no longer respected in the world as it once was.

It seems that one of worst things about America these days is the debt our country is in! Our governing officials spend way too much money in this country thinking that it will solve all our problems. It will NOT!!! We are out of control!



Our moral and ethical standards are very low. You can see pretty much anything these days on cable television and in magazines...things you would never have seen in the past. We once had principles that would never have exposed you young people to such things before.

Our hearts yearn – they ACHE – for real heroes once again!!! It's harder and harder to find them in the

places we used to find them. Most of the stories about the personal lives of our athletes are shameful and depressing rather than inspiring.

Many, many of our politicians lack principles that were once held very high in our congress. Most wouldn't have been influenced by the many evil goings on that happen today.

Our academic institutions and our educational system have been overrun by doubt and lies and an ugly political correctness that destroys real learning.

And from every corner of our culture, from the corporations to the judges to the politicians to the professors comes the cry to send God packing, to keep Him out of every affair being carried out in this nation these days.



This is really terrible, kids.

Now I have some questions for you.

Looking at the condition of our nation... without kidding ourselves...

Is the United States of America a country that deserves the blessing of God?

Is America worthy of being blessed by God these days?

Does the country that was just described above deserve to receive blessing and kindness and prosperity?

Do we, the USA, deserve to be blessed by God?

NO, WE DON'T!!!!

Which is why the song says, "*God shed His GRACE on thee*" rather than "*God pays your wages to thee*"!

NO ONE deserves to be blessed by God because we are sinners and have lots of faults: we don't measure up to God, we do wrong, we fail, we fall short, we have tantrums, and if you're honest with yourself, you know you do exactly the thing you know you're not supposed to do like you're on auto-pilot to do wrong!

The Apostle Paul said it best in **Rom 7:24**
"Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" Yes, we are wretched people and we are a wretched country. When we finally realize that we ARE unworthy, then...



WHAT THEN? What is next? Where do we go with that? Maybe we try to fix the part of us that makes us unworthy in the first place...but if we've tried that and we're smart we realize that that way is a lot like what happened to the pink spot in The Cat in The Hat comes back!



Sooooo...we say, "I'll try harder"; "I promise not to do that again"; "I'll work on that"

Ri-i-i-i-i-ight...NOT!

Then we wake up and realize that there's pink everywhere OR maybe we try to drown our sorrows...just do things that make us feel better without solving the problem. Maybe we can just forget the whole thing.

Or else we can...go on hating ourselves and hating life and pointing out all the bad things and bad people around us...



Or **MAYBE**...maybe somebody comes along and **LOVES US**  **ANYWAY!!!**
GOD'S Grace is what comes after unworthiness!!!! **GOD**  **loves us!!!!**



He sent His One and only Son down to earth as the God-Man to **SAVE US** from the wretched people we are!!! Jesus agreed to come and save us. He loves us, too! He is **GOD!** **John 3:16** "For God loved the world (mankind) so much that He gave His unique Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." **Eph 2:8-9** "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is the gift of God;* (9) not of works, so that no one may boast."

His grace is the only thing that helps...the only thing that brings hope.

Grace is real. Salvation grace is REAL and grace in this life is REAL after salvation.



And so usually the hardest thing of all is letting God's grace into our lives. We have to accept His love and grace while being more and more convinced of our own unworthiness. And not making any promises to be better next time!

And when we let God's love called grace in, something supernatural happens. We start to discover, little by little, that we want to be a better because of that GRACE from God. That's what grace does. In fact, it's the only thing that can make us want to be better...to be holy because God is Holy! We are grateful and we start to want to please Him.

As a believer in Jesus, sin shall not be master over you, because you are under grace. The grace of God appeared, teaching us to reject doing bad things (ungodliness). Getting grace in gets in the ONLY thing that can possibly change us for the better.

The young thief surprised by a carpenter's grace By Mark Ellis



This is a picture of Pete Capone holding his grand-nephew, Joey.

When a young man tried to steal tools from a Pete's shed in a suburb of Detroit one night, he had no idea his unsuccessful attempt would teach him a life-long lesson about the mercies and grace of God.

"We had a storage shed that was attached to our house," says Mike Capone. "My dad used to keep his tools in there."

Mike's father, Pete Capone, was a carpenter, and also a helper in his church.



One night, Ernie, a teenager who lived next door, undid the lock, broke into the shed, and was in the process of stealing some of Pete's tools.



Pete was awake and heard a suspicious noise, so he went outside to investigate.

He surprised Ernie and suddenly they were face-to-face. Immediately, Pete recognized Ernie, his neighbor's son. The boy froze, a look of terror flashed through his eyes.

"Ernie, you don't have to break into here if you need to use the tools," Pete said

gently. Then the older man did something very unusual, son Mike recalls.

"Dad reached into his pocket and pulled out his key ring. He located the key for the shed and took it off the ring. He extended it to the boy and told him, 'Here, if you need to use the tools in the future, use the key.'"



Ernie took the key and quietly left.

"That incident left an impression on Ernie," Mike notes. "He never broke into the shed again and he never used the key."

But Ernie kept the key he came to cherish on a string, hanging from his mirror, as a reminder of someone who had trusted him and given him a second chance.

"Ernie said that day changed his life," Mike says. "Ernie ending up going into the carpentry field and he actually hired me for my first job."

Getting grace in gets in the ONLY thing that can possibly change us for the better. A little grace goes a looooooong way!

Remember: because of His great love with which He loved us...

So, let's look at a few things about God's grace and as we consider these things, let's keep our country in mind...



Grace means undeserved favor, kindness shown to undeserving people, something given freely.

It means that even though there is no merit in people – and actually the opposite is true, there is none righteous, and these people are helpless, ungodly, sinners, God's enemies – even though we deserve

nothing from God but His anger, God in His great kindness nonetheless shows favor toward us. Grace is favor and blessing toward the completely undeserving. Eph 2:4-10 "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, (5) even when we were (spiritually) dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), (6) and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, (7) so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (8) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; (9) not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. (10) For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

Grace is God acting freely, according to His own nature as Love, with no promises or obligations to fulfill; and acting of course, righteously – in view of the cross.

You see, freedom isn't free. Millions have suffered and died so you and I can have our freedom in America. Our gratitude pours out to our military always. Freedom isn't free.

But GRACE IS free. Rom 5:15 "But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many."



Grace is also matchless. No debts to be paid, no waiting for man to fulfill conditions, grace can act however it pleases. It is independent of mankind.

To believe and agree to be loved while being unworthy is the great secret. **Rom 5:1-2** "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (2) through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this **grace** in which we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God."



Real devotion to God comes not from our trying to produce it on our own but from the discovery that God blessed us while we were still unworthy and not devoted to Him.



Titus 3:4-8 "But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, (5) He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, (6) whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, (7) so that **being justified by His grace**

we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (8) This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in **good deeds.**" The discovery that we are truly the object of God's grace makes us **humble** because we are brought to know our own absolute unworthiness.

In my flesh dwells no good thing...and yet, I find that God is happy to bless me, just as I am! Amazing!!!! That is love...God's LOVE for us.

To be disappointed in yourself is to have placed your faith in yourself. To be disappointed in your country is to have placed your faith in your country. Do you see that it means you are not placing your faith where it is supposed to be placed...**in God** who sheds His grace on you and your country?

Grace is going to finish what it started! 2 Tim 1:8-10 "Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, (9) who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and **grace** which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, (10) but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel..."

Grace doesn't save us only to set us back on our feet to face temptation, to battle desire, to advance toward holiness, to develop Christ-like virtues, to produce fruit, and to perform good works ON OUR OWN. Unfortunately that is all too often taught in churches today.



You need to know that we all will suffer at times in this life but God pours out His blessings to us through His amazing GRACE and Peter reassures us about this when He says in 1 Peter 5:10, "After you have suffered for a little while, THE GOD of ALL GRACE who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will HIMSELF perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish you." TO GOD be authority forever and ever. Amen!

America is an exceptional nation. The United States is a special place. The United States of America is special, because God shed His grace on it.

Sometimes we get the wrong idea about that. Some people think the United States is a special place because our founding fathers were such special people. There is the fairytale that somehow our forefathers EARNED God's grace for this country. But no one EARNS God's grace. No one...NOT ONE.



Some think that we have been blessed as a nation because of how great the Christians are in the USA. We have never been blessed by God because of something good about us.



But you see we are a great nation because God shed His grace on it. Were our founding fathers special people? Yes. Do we have a great legacy of Christianity in the United States? Yes. Those things are what happened **BECAUSE God shed His grace on us.**

Sometimes we get it backwards. But getting it backwards gets grace backwards. The Lord decided He wanted to have a special place on the planet called the United States of America. HE moved. Then people followed. HE graced people out. And those people let the overflowing stream of His grace carry them to the United States...carry them to freedom...carry them to the gospel...carry them to churches who are preaching Christ...carry them to prosperity...carry them worshipping the Father **in Spirit, in grace, and in truth.**

That's what grace is all about. That's what God is all about. When we were dead in our trespasses in sins He made us alive in Christ. **Eph 2:8-9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; (9) not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."**

If God is through with the USA then He is through. And there will be plenty of people who rejected Him that He gave over to their depraved minds in the process. But if God is NOT through with the USA, then guess what? He is not through! He will still pour His grace on us and His word will not come back to Him empty.

And if He wants to He can raise up people to praise Him from the rocks and stones all across the land! He can pour His Spirit on dry and parched land and make it into a garden.





Who gets grace? The UNDESERVING! The UNWORTHY! What kind of people does God grace out? The kind of people who live in the United States these days!

What if the most important thing about the United States of America was this: that it just pleased the Father to have a United States of America that He could shed His grace on. What if it still

does? Blessing the United States of America is God's work from start to finish.

Maybe it's time to dwell less on our country's failures, and more on our God's kindness. His magnificence. His grace.

God shed His grace on thee!

Close in prayer.

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