

*“Foundations of Faith”*  
**King of Kings Lutheran Church**  
**Cedar Rapids, Iowa**

**“Belonging by God’s Grace”**

**THE GOAL OF THIS CLASS**

The goal and prayer as we begin “Belonging by God’s Grace” is that you will fully understand in a real and personal way the acceptance, love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

This is called His \_\_\_\_\_. His grace for you is real and it is personal. Our nature tells us (incorrectly) that we somehow have to earn God’s love by being a good person. The truth is that no one can earn God’s love and forgiveness; no one is “good” enough.

**WHAT IS GRACE?**

Grace is the unconditional, undeserved acceptance, love, and forgiveness that Jesus has for you.

**WHY WOULD GOD LOVE ME?**

1) It’s not about you. It’s about God. It’s not about your worthiness. It’s about God’s \_\_\_\_\_.

**Zephaniah 3:17**, *“The Lord your God will take great delight in you, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.”*

2) There are two kinds of love.

- a) There is the kind of love that \_\_\_\_\_ value in its object. (Conditional love)
- b) There is the kind of love that \_\_\_\_\_ value in its object. (Unconditional love)

3) This second kind of love is called grace. It is what God has for you.

- a) God invites you to receive His grace right now; to trust what it says about you, to let it all the way in so that it can touch the hurting places, the wounded places, the doubting places, the frightened places, the unclean places, the rebellious places of your heart.
- b) Illustration: **Mark 1:40-41**, *“A man with leprosy came to Jesus & begged Him on his knees, ‘If you are willing, you can make me clean.’ Filled with compassion, Jesus*

*reached out His hand and touched the man. 'I am willing,' He said. 'Be clean.' Immediately the leprosy left him..."*

- Insight: Our tendency is to pull away from Jesus' touch. We feel ashamed, unworthy, afraid. However, note that with Jesus' grace it is in the touching that there is the healing. Stop pulling away. He loves you unconditionally.

**Hebrews 4:16** *"Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."*

### **THREE KEY STATEMENTS**

Our prayer for you is that you come to a place, by the power of the Holy Spirit working in you, where you believe and trust the following statements:

**Statement One:** Jesus wants me to \_\_\_\_\_ to His family!

**1 Peter 2:9,** *"You are a chosen people, a people **belonging to God.**"*

**1 John 3:1,** *"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called **children of God! And that is what we are!**"*

**Statement Two:** Membership in Jesus' family happens for me by God's \_\_\_\_\_ alone through \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus' death and resurrection alone for the forgiveness of my sins.

**Ephesians 2:8,** *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith."*

**Ephesians 2:13,** *"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ."*

***Jesus comes to us  
not because we deserve Him,  
but because we need Him!***

**Statement Three:** Jesus now calls me to \_\_\_\_\_ Him into a new and better life that will not end with the death of my physical body. Eternal life begins when faith believes God's promise of forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Your soul, the real you, will never die.

**Matthew 9:9,** *"Jesus saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collectors booth. 'Follow Me,' He told him, and Matthew **got up and followed Him.**"*

**1 Peter 2:9,** *"He **called you out of darkness and into His marvelous light.**"*

**1 John 5:12-13,** *"**He who has the Son has life.** I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that **you may know that you have eternal life.**"*

## HOW WELL DO YOU UNDERSTAND GRACE?

### Diagnostic questions:

*(Please write down your answer in the space provided under each question. No one will see your answer. However, it is very important to write it down, so that you will see how far God has brought you by the end of our class!)*

**1) If you were to die tonight, would you go to Heaven?**

**2) If God were to ask, “Why should I let you into Heaven?” what would you tell Him?**

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

The Bible is clear: in order for us to enter Heaven, we must be perfect, holy, and righteous just like God is.

**1 Peter 1:15**, *“But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”*

**1) There are only two ways for us to be considered perfect, holy, and pure:**

- a) The \_\_\_\_\_ way
- b) The \_\_\_\_\_ way (“Gospel” means “good news.” Gospel = grace.)

### Definitions:

- The law is what \_\_\_\_\_ do for God.
- The Gospel is what \_\_\_\_\_ does for me.

**2) What is the Gospel or Good News of Jesus, specifically?**

- Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ on the cross and \_\_\_\_\_ again for the \_\_\_\_\_ of my \_\_\_\_\_. He took on my sin and sinfulness and suffered and died in my place, giving me instead His perfection. I enter heaven because of His good works, not mine.

**3) Look at your answers to the questions on the previous page.**

Where does the emphasis of your answers lie; who is doing the work?

Is the emphasis on what **you** are doing, or on what **God** has done?

*Check one:*

My answer puts the emphasis on:

\_\_\_\_\_ What I have been doing to try to earn my salvation (*the law way*)

\_\_\_\_\_ What Jesus has already done to win my salvation for me (*the Gospel way*)

**The BIG question:**

On which person are you staking your eternity? Yourself or Jesus?

## LET'S INVESTIGATE THE LAW WAY – WHERE DOES IT GET US?

**Matthew 5:20**, *"I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the Kingdom of Heaven."*

### 1) What does all that mean?

"Righteousness" = able to get the law of God right all the time!

*(Being perfectly right as measured against the standard of the law of God)*

"Pharisees and teachers of the law" = professional good people

Matthew 5:20 paraphrased: "Unless your ability to get the law of God right surpasses that of the professional good people, you're not going to Heaven!"

### 2) What if we tried really, really hard, and got better than those Pharisees?

**James 2:10**, *"For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it."*

**Matthew 5:48**, *"Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."*

### 3) Let's try this line: "But I'm better than a lot of people!"

You are simply measuring yourself against the wrong standard.

**Isaiah 64:6**, *"All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags."*

### 4) The fact is, the more honest we are in really measuring ourselves against the standard of God's law, the more sin we become conscious of.

**Romans 3:20**, *"... rather, through the law we become conscious of sin."*

### 5) The HARD facts of the law way:

**Romans 3:20**, *"Therefore **no one** will be declared righteous [right] in His sight **by observing the law.**"*

## HERE IS HIS GOOD NEWS!

### 1) Jesus lived the \_\_\_\_\_ life we could not live.

**Matthew 5:17**, *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."* **Heb. 4:15** *For we do not have a High Priest (Jesus Christ) who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

### 2) Jesus took our \_\_\_\_\_ from us; and gave His \_\_\_\_\_ to us.

**2 Corinthians 5:21**, *"God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."*

### 3) Jesus received the \_\_\_\_\_ we would have received for our sins.

**Isaiah 53:5**, *"...the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed."*

4) Because your sins are now paid for in full, you are considered \_\_\_\_\_ with God, through simple faith in Jesus!

**Romans 3:21-24**, *"But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known... This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."*

5) So, through simply receiving His gift of forgiveness and righteousness the effects of the Fall are \_\_\_\_\_.

**John 3:36**, *"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life."*

- You are reconnected to God and His life.
- You receive His Spirit into your heart.
- You come back to life (*Jesus called it being "born again"*) spiritually and at the resurrection physically.
- You receive a new nature (*one like Jesus'*), *although the old one will still hinder you.*
- You are invited to start to do life with the Father again... every day and forever!

6) Finally, you can now trust that God is \_\_\_\_ you not \_\_\_\_\_you!

**Romans 8:31-32**, *"If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all – how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?"*

**Isaiah 49:15-16**, *"I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of My hands."*

#### **MY SINS ARE...**

- **Paid for:** *"But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed."* **Isaiah 53:5**

*"For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life..., but with the precious blood of Christ..."*

**1 Peter 1:18-19**

- **Washed Away:** *“But you were washed... in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” 1 Corinthians 6:11*
- **Forgiven:** *“...not counting men’s sins against them.” 2 Corinthians 5:19*
- **Forgotten:** *“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” Jeremiah 31:34*
- **Silenced:** *“For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony...” Revelation 12:10-11*
- **Removed Completely:** *“As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.” Psalm 103:12*

**One More Illustration:**

People (Sinful)

God (Holy)



Sin, death, devil

*“But your iniquities have separated you from your God.” Isaiah 59:2*

*“For all have sinned **and fall short** of the glory of God...” Romans 3:23*

*“God longs for all to be saved and understand this truth: That God is on one side and all the people are on the other side, and **Christ Jesus is between them to bring them together**, by giving His life for all mankind.” 1 Timothy 2:5-6 (LB)*

1) No effort of our own, no matter how good we think we are it is not good enough.

*For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*  
**James 2:10**

2) There is only one solution for this problem of separation. What’s His name?

\_\_\_\_\_ (Notice this is not **your** name!)

3) What did He do?

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ life and **died on the cross** and **rose from the dead** for the **forgiveness of my sins**.

### **NO WONDER THEY CALL IT “THE GOOD NEWS”!!**

*“Heaven goes by favor. If it went by merit, you would stay out and your dog would go in.” --*

*Mark Twain*

### **WHY THE PROPER DISTINCTION BETWEEN LAW & GOSPEL IS SO IMPORTANT**

1) Getting the law and Gospel right is the difference between being sure or uncertain, comforted or fearful, strong or weak, joyful or doubtful, victorious or bound up, because if salvation depends on me, I can never be sure I have it, but if it depends on God, I can always be sure!

2) Some church bodies rely on the **power of \_\_\_\_\_** to make people behave.

The Bible relies on the **power of \_\_\_\_\_** to change people’s lives (*which then changes behavior*).

3) We don’t follow God’s law in order to get saved, but *because* we are saved.

We don’t follow God’s law in order to get loved, but *because* we are loved.

We don’t follow God’s law in order to get accepted by Him, but *because* we are accepted by Him.

4) Getting the law and Gospel right gives Jesus His full honor.

**Galatians 2:21**, *“I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!”*

### **SUMMARY**

Salvation is not \_\_\_\_\_ but \_\_\_\_\_.

**Romans 9:16**, *“Salvation does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.”*

1) If you were to die tonight, would you go to Heaven?

2) If God were to ask you, “Why should I let you into My Heaven?” what would you tell Him?