

HOW TO LIVE OUT GOD'S GRACE IN A MANNER OF GRACE:

PART III: THE GIFT OF GOD'S GRACE

Isaiah 52:13-53:13

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I. INTRODUCTION:

A. C.S. Lewis:

During a British conference on comparative religions, experts from around the world debated what, if any, belief was unique to the Christian faith.

They began eliminating possibilities. "*Incarnation?*" Other religions had different version of gods appearing human form. "*Resurrection?*" Again, other religions had accounts of return from death.

The debate when on for some time until C. S. Lewis wandered into the room. "*What's the rumpus about?*" Lewis asked. He heard in reply that his colleagues were discussing Christianity's unique contribution among world religions. Lewis responded, "*Oh that's easy. It's grace.*"

Grace. Grace is altogether unique because grace is an undeserved gift.

B. *Saving Private Ryan*:

Many of you were perhaps touched by the movie *Saving Private Ryan*. I personally found the movie to be both enlightening and meaningful...except for the last 8 or 9 minutes. Toward the end the movie was taken in a wrong direction.

The movie begins with a powerful scene of rangers taking Omaha beach during WWII. But the story begins when a company of rangers receive a mission to go deep into enemy territory to save Private Ryan.

As they follow their orders to retrieve him, they hit skirmish after skirmish, and some of them are killed along the way.

They finally get to where Private Ryan is holed up, and they say, "*Come with us. We've got to save you.*"

He says, "*I'm not going. I have to stay here because there's a big battle coming up, and if I leave my men they're all going to die.*"

What do the Rangers say? "*We'll stay here and fight with you.*" They all stay and fight, and it's gory and hard, and almost everyone dies except Private Ryan.

At the end, one of the main characters, played by Tom Hanks is sitting on the ground. He's been shot and he's dying. The battle has been won.

If you recall that moment, Private Ryan, who is played by Matt Damon, leans over and Tom Hanks whispers something to him. What does Tom Hanks say? He whispers, "*Earn this.*"

You may not have been but I was personally taken back by that statement. Here's why? I can't imagine a heroic ranger saying, "*Earn this.*" Why, because the Ranger Motto has been to "*Lead the way.*" Moreover, one particular motto that describes the Ranger, especially championed by the 75th regiment but which has bled into the whole corps is the motto, is "*I chose this.*" In other words, "*I volunteered for this.*"

So, when Private Ryan bent down, if Tom Hanks was consistent with what a heroic Ranger is, he would have said something like "*Sua Sponte, 'I chose this. This is free. You don't pay anything for this. I give up my life for you. That's my job.'*"

And to be honest, there is no way that one can even repay such a gift of sacrifice. All you can do is live a life of utter gratitude.

Likewise, when you meditate upon Isaiah 52:13-53:12 the words that predicted the Messiah's suffering and His death for you, you do not see or ever hear from God, "*Earn this.*" You never hear Jesus say in the Gospels, "*Earn this.*" You never find the Apostles Paul, Peter, John, and Jesus' half-brothers, James and Jude say "*Earn this.*" He doesn't say, "*I've given everything for you. Now you need to gut it out for me.*" No, "*What he says is something very reminiscent to 'Sua sponte,' I chose this. This is my job. I lay my life down so that you may be free!'*"

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 gives us a graphic prophetic portrayal of our suffering Savior. He explains the glorious worth that He will undertake in order that the sin question might be settled forever to the perfect satisfaction of God, the infinitely Holy One.¹ Just as our soldiers have sacrificed their lives so that others may live and live free, Jesus Christ sacrificed his life so that we might spiritually live unto the glory of God for all eternity.

Grace essentially is undeserved favor. "*Grace is the favor of God in giving His Son and the benefit to men of receiving that Son.*"² "Grace is everything for nothing to one who deserves nothing but judgment and destruction."

What does grace do?

"*Grace humbles man without degrading him and exalts him without deflating him.*"

Transition:

Well, in our 4-message series titled, "*How to live out God's grace in a manner of grace,*" we began by focusing on our identification with Jesus Christ. We learned that we are in Christ and Christ is in us. Jesus not only redeemed us from the penalty and power of sin, but He even united himself to us by means of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

¹ H. A. Ironside, *Isaiah*, 296.

² Charles Ryrie, *The Grace of God*, 25.

And because we are in Christ and Christ is in us we are expected to walk in newness of life-to live a new kind of life, the kind of life that need not submit to sin's control. The same way we placed our faith in Christ for salvation is the same way we are suppose to live: The open arms of faith by trusting him, depending upon Him, obeying Him. As we abide in Christ in terms of communing with Him, we undergo a transformation. All resultant spiritual fruit belongs to Him.

Then in our second message we looked at what it means to be a grace killer; i.e., a legalist. After examining the two types of legalism we turned our attention to some of its fatal flaws by studying Jesus critique of the Pharisees in Matthew 23.

Tonight we will conclude our series by examining another abuse of God's grace: licentiousness.

The Apostle Paul writes:

You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; Galatians 5:13

Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.
Romans 13:13-14

So tonight we will look at what Scripture says about licentiousness and its fatal flaws.

Why focus on how to live out God's grace in a manner of grace. If you and I will seriously take ownership of God's grace and what that means, not only will we live lives of utter gratitude before our loving and holy God, you and I will make it easier for others to believe in Him for salvation.

Transition:

Now let's direct our attention to our third study on how to live out God's grace in a manner of grace. In this third message we will examine one of the most heart-wrenching but glorious portions of Scripture. It is heart-wrenching because it records in vivid language some eight hundred years before the event actually happened, the suffering and death of the Suffering Servant. It is glorious as well because it foretells that the Messiah would bring salvation to all who believe in Him.

II. EXPOSITION:

- A. As we turn to Isaiah 53:12-53:13, let me say three things about what we are about to study.
1. The over-arching theme of Isaiah is that the acknowledgement of God's sovereign rule is the key to a successful human life on every level: Individually, nationally, and historically.
 2. When you study Isaiah 40-66 you find that it is as close to being a systematic statement of O.T. theology as is the book of Romans to the N.T. It is so glorious. In fact, it is laid out in 3 sets of nine chapters: 40-48, 49-57, and 58-66. In each of

these three sets of nine passages, the focus is directed to the particular aspect of the person and work of God.³

a. Dr. Walt Kaiser writes:

Its majestic movement begins with the announcement of the coming person and work of John the Baptist, and spins to the dizzy heights of the suffering and triumphant Servant of the Lord by the time the middle of the second set of 9 chapters is reached. But this climax is again superseded by the concluding message on the new heavens and new earth.⁴

3. Now, as we look at perhaps the most central or decisive passage in Isaiah, I perhaps should say that this portion has caused tremendous problems for some proponents of Judaism. As I've shared my faith with Jewish people I've come across the argument/interpretation that the Suffering Servant is not the Messiah but is about Israel's suffering in a Gentile world. In fact, I own a copy of *The Jewish Study Bible*. I want to cite a portion of what they say about the identity of the Servant in Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

Many argue that the servant symbolizes the entire Jewish people. The passage, then, describes the nation's unjust tribulations at the hands of the Babylonians (and later oppressors) as well as the nation's salvific role for the world at large. Others maintain that the passage describes a pious minority within the Jewish people; this minority suffers as a result of the sins committed by the nation at large. (Bolstering these interpretations is the fact that the term 'servant' in Deutero-Isaiah generally refers to the nation as a whole or an idealized representation of the nation; (cf. 42.1-9n.; 18-23 n.; 49:1-13n). Other scholars argue that the passage is a specific individual (cf. 50.4-11 n.). *Targum* and various *midrashim* identify the servant as the Messiah, but this suggestion is unlikely, since nowhere else does Deutero-Isaiah refer to the Messiah, and the absence of a belief in an individual Messiah is one of the hallmarks of Deutero-Isaiah's outlook (in contrast to that of First Messiah).⁵

4. However, this is not always been the view. If you study the *Mishnah*, the *Talmud*, *Midrashim* and many others-all regard the Suffering Servant to be a Messianic Person.⁶

³ Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *The Promise-Plan of God: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, 183.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁵ *The Jewish Study Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 890-91. The "Deutero-Isaiah" theory is the claim that portions of Isaiah were written later than others. Specifically, this view proclaims that there are two-three individual authors, whose works were later compiled together under the name of the first author, the "real" Isaiah (known as Proto-Isaiah by adherents to the theory). Deutero-Isaiah ("Second Isaiah") was allegedly written around 545 BC and Trito-Isaiah ("Third Isaiah") around 500 BC.

⁶ Fruchtenbaum offers the following argument why this passage must refer to the Messiah and not Israel:

1. This was the view of all the ancient rabbis

- b. In fact, the first person to claim otherwise was Rashi, who lived around 1050 A.D.
 - c. According to Arnold Fruchtenbaum, every rabbi prior to Rashi, without exception, interpreted this passage as describing the Messiah. When Rashi proposed this interpretation it sparked a huge debate among his contemporaries. Even the most famous Jewish scholar of the Medieval era, **Maimonides**, argued that Rashi was wrong.
 - d. However, it was not until Christians began using this passage, particularly around the early 1800's that a growing number of rabbis found this passage attractive.
 - e. In fact, in the public readings in synagogues today you often find that they jump from Isaiah 52 to Isaiah 54.
 - f. However, as we study this passage we will see that Isaiah's prophecy could not possibly be referring to the nation Israel-though we understand that they have greatly suffered under the Gentiles as individuals and as a nation.
 - g. Interestingly enough if you study Isaiah 49 it even says that the Messiah would at first be rejected by Israel but would eventually be accepted at some later stage.
- B. Now that I've given the central theme of the book and mentioned that chapters 40-66 is like the book of Romans in the N.T., and discussed the identity of the Suffering Servant, let's now turn to passage itself beginning in chapter 52:13.
- 1. This poem is divided into 5 stanzas of three verses each. It moves from an introduction (52:13-15) to the Servant's rejection (53:1-3), to his carrying "our" sins and transgression (53:4-6) to the result of that carrying (53:7-9) to a revelation of the atoning nature of the carrying (53:10-12).

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- 2. The distinctive pronoun we, us, our, must refer to Isaiah and his Jewish audience while the he, him, his refer to the Messiah.
 - 3. Throughout the passage, the Servant is portrayed as a singular personality and not a nation; there is no allegory or personification of the Servant as Israel.
 - 4. In verse 9, the Servant's suffering is voluntary, willing and silent, which has never been true of Israel.
 - 5. In verse 8, the Servant dies for 'my people'; Isaiah's people were the Jews; the Servant and Israel are therefore clearly distinguished.
 - 6. The Servant is an innocent sufferer (verses 4-6, 8-9), but Israel always suffers for its own sins as Isaiah himself stated in 1:4-8.
 - 7. The Servant suffers a vicarious and substitutionary death (verses 4-6, 8, 10, 12) while Israel does not suffer on behalf of the Gentiles, but because of the Gentiles.
 - 8. The sufferings of the Servant bring justification and spiritual healing to those who accept it (verses 5b, 11b) but Israel has not done this for the Gentiles.
 - 9. The Servant dies (verses 8, 12), but the people of Israel always survive.
 - 10. The Servant is resurrected (verses 10-11), but since the people of Israel have never passed away, they have no need for a resurrection. [*Messianic Christology*, 58].

- C. First stanza: 52:13-15 is a summary introduction of the 5 stanza poem.

***Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently;
He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.
Just as many were astonished at you,
So His visage was marred more than any man,
And His form more than the sons of men;
So shall He sprinkle many nations.
Kings shall shut their mouths at Him;
For what had not been told them they shall see,
And what they had not heard they shall consider.***⁷

1. This verse begins on a high note: ***See, my servant will act wisely, He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.***
2. All attention is now directed to the Servant: ***Behold, My Servant.*** This servant will act in such a way as to succeed. He knows exactly what to do in order to bring about the intended result. “*See, my servant, his wisdom prospers.*” In fact, because of the actions he will take, he will be “***raised...lifted up...and highly exalted***”, words that are only used of God elsewhere in this book (6:1; 57:15). Because of the Servant’s wisdom and effectiveness, he will be exalted with a dignity that is beyond what any other merits. It is difficult not be reminded of the resurrection, ascension, and glorification of the Lord Jesus Christ in those three words: raised, lifted up, and highly exalted.
3. This poem not only begins with a high note but, like book ends, it also ends on a high note. Chapter 53:12 states that God will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong.
4. It is important to see these two high notes, one at the beginning and one at the end, because nothing in the middle looks like a victory.
5. Consider what follows in verse 14:
6. People will be appalled at his appearance-so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness.
7. This blows our mindset what we think a leader looks like. Verse 14 points to the suffering humiliation the Messiah will experience. His body will be so badly disfigured that He will no longer resemble a man.
8. In view of the sufferings of Jesus Christ we would see this happening at His scourgings with a multi-strand whip with each strand having a nail or a piece of glass attached to it, thus literally lifting the flesh off the bones.
9. Though the Servant will terribly suffer and become horrifically disfigured, this Servant, whom many have not considered at all, will be appalled and silenced by Him. He will either startle them or perhaps redeem them. Perhaps they will be appalled that they had so miscalculated their situation so badly. Realizing their

⁷The New King James Version. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Is 52:13-15.

giant mistake, they will have nothing to say. Nevertheless, we do know is that he will eventually gain the silent attention of world rulers when they see Him exalted at His Second Coming; then will they finally understand and see clearly.

10. So, just in this summary introduction, just in this first stanza, the first three verses, we see that the Servant is guaranteed to win! He will do so by means of horrific suffering that will leave him beyond recognition. He will win and the world rulers will be silenced.

D. Second Stanza: 53: 1-3:

*Who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
²For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant,
And as a root out of dry ground.
He has no form or comeliness;
And when we see Him,
There is no beauty that we should desire Him.
³ He is despised and rejected by men,
A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;⁸*

1. But in the second stanza, in the first three verses of Isaiah 53 we begin our descent into the valley of rejection, suffering, and death; and it is in the midst of humanity's plight, that the gift of grace takes place. The descent begins with a question, a question that emphasizes the unbelief of Israel.
2. "*Who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?*" Why are they astonished? In Isaiah 40:10 Isaiah declares that the Arm will rule for God. He will bring His judgments and redemption. Isaiah 51:5 states that the Gentiles will trust in the Arm of the Lord; and in 52:10 the Arm will provide salvation. But now the identity of the Arm is revealed. The Arm of the Lord is no other than the Suffering Servant.
3. They are further astonished for the Arm of the Lord, the Servant will make his appearance on the earthly scene in an un-assuming way. We would not expect the arm of the Lord to grow like a tender shoot (53:2) or be a person who has no extraordinary beauty or striking appearance; we can't imagine the Messiah to appear ordinary, or be reared in a way that is typical. (53:2b).
4. Some take verse 2 to mean that he was always repulsive in appearance so that no one would even like to look upon Him. While confusing ordinary with ugly, it is not a question of physical characteristics, but because of the sufferings He faced, His appearance became marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.
5. In fact they cannot even imagine that the Messiah would choose to be leader that is characterized as a "Man of Sorrows", one whose people did their best to avoid

⁸The New King James Version. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Is 53:1-3.

him. Why would the Messiah choose a path whereby he would despised, rejected, be described as a man of sorrows, one who purposely took the path of pain (vs. 3)? This is not what we would expect in a leader! Moreover, we also know from the Gospels that people looked upon Him with scorn because “His teaching interfered with the lives that they loved to live.”⁹ Thus, men look upon Him with disdain. “But not to have the suffering means not to have glory [Robert McQuilken].”

6. But even though they tried to avoid him they come to acknowledge to some profound truths. Consider the third stanza, verses 4-6.

E. **Third Stanza: Verses 4-6:**

**4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows,
Yet we considered him stricken by God,
Smitten by him, and afflicted.
5 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.
6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
Each of us has turned to his own way;
And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.**

The bottom line of this third stanza is “*We are the sheep who have gone astray, but he is the one who received the punishment and the iniquity we deserved.*”

1. Verse 4b reveals that Israel considered the Servant’s sufferings to be punishment from God. He was seen to be suffering for His own sins.
2. But verse 4a states, “*Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows.*” Therefore, the nation which formerly rejected the Servant acknowledges that He suffered vicariously. They realize that He was not suffering for his own sins, but he was suffering for theirs.
3. Look closely at verse 5: They now see that “*he was wounded for our transgressions, was bruised for our iniquities. His death was substitutionary but it was by his stripes that we are healed. He, who was innocent, received the punishment of sin...a punishment that should have gone to the guilty.*”
 - a. Here they recognize that his substitutionary atonement brought forth reconciliation and healing for He paid the penalty with his life. He wasn’t suffering for His own sins, for verse 6 reveal: “**And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.**”
4. Mind you, if you look at the pronouns here, Isaiah is talking not about the Gentiles, but the Jews; he is talking about a Jewish nation when he says, “we...our.” However, this is applicable to us because of the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant and the Apostle’s Paul’s writing (cf. Romans 1-3).

⁹ Ironside, *Isaiah*, 299.

- a. So many times we focus on the physical pain our Lord and Savior experienced. But we also have to realize that the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all! Thus, the suffering was not merely physical it was spiritual too, because He took our sins upon Himself

This also makes it clear that the Suffering Servant can't be the Jewish nation.

But in this third stanza, we see so profoundly the grace of God. Once again, what is the grace of God? "*Grace is the favor of God in giving His Son and the benefit to men of receiving that Son.*"

Take a moment and ponder God's O.T. plan and the realization of the plan in the person and work of Jesus Christ:¹⁰

- a. God does not condone our sin, nor does he compromise His standard. He does not ignore our rebellion nor does he relax his demands.
- b. Rather, he dismisses our sin by assuming our sin, and incredibly, sentences Himself.
- c. God's holiness is honored and our sin is punished and we are redeemed.
- d. God does what we cannot do in a way that we cannot even imagine.

F. Fourth Stanza: 53:7-9:

- 1. In the fourth stanza, 53:7-9 Isaiah gives more details about his suffering, death, burial, and innocence.

***7 He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth;
He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent,
So he did not open his mouth.
8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away.
And who can speak of his descendants?
For he was cut off from the land of the living;
For the transgression of my people he was stricken.
9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked,
And with the rich in his death,
Though he had done no violence,
Nor was any deceit in his mouth.***

- 2. Servant, now compared to a sheep, submits without protest.
 - a. Taken from one place to another we know that Jesus case was heard but no one spoke up for Him. Though it was contrary to law, God allowed it. Even Pilate wondered greatly at His silence. "Herod tried to make Him speak, yet brought as a lamb to be slain and like a sheep dumb before her shearers, so He opened not His mouth. With no complaint He gave

¹⁰ Adapted from Max Lucado, *In the Grip of Grace: You Can't Fall Behind His Love*, 55.

Himself into the hands of wicked men to be crucified because there was no other way whereby guilty sinners could be saved.

3. I think it is powerful to note that this metaphor deals with sheep, the animals of sacrifice.
 - a. Notice verse 8:
 1. He is deprived of justice as reflected in the statement, “**by oppression and judgment he was taken away.**”
 2. Verse 8 goes on, “**And who can speak of his descendants?**”
 3. In other words, he was killed in the prime of his life.
4. The verse continues, “**For the transgression of my people he was stricken.**” The word “transgression is a word for sin which emphasizes the breaking of a law. This one, who is the Messiah, will be killed because of the sins of Israel.
5. Some scholars (e.g., Oswalt) look at verse 9 as being an another insult when it says, “**9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked, And with the rich in his death.**”
 - a. Why is it an insult to be buried with the rich?
 - b. Well, earlier in Isaiah (5:8), Hosea, and Amos, riches were all too often obtained by violence and deceit.
6. Other say since he was executed as a criminal, we would expect him to be buried in a criminal’s grave. Instead, He is justly laid in a place of honor: in a rich man’s tomb. Jesus was indeed taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb of a rich man, Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57-60)

G. Fifth and last stanza: Isaiah 53:10-12:

*10 Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer,
And though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering,
He will see his offspring and prolong his days,
And the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.
11 After the suffering of his soul,
He will see the light of life and be satisfied;
By his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many,
And he will bear their iniquities.
12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,
And he will divide the spoils with the strong,
Because he poured out his life unto death,
And was numbered with the transgressors.
For he bore the sin of many,
And he made intercession for the transgressor.*

1. Why have these things happened to the Servant? By God's design; it was intention. Like John 3:16 says, "**For God so loved the world, that He sent His son...**"
2. What good father could wish for his son to be crushed? It is only possible if there was some unquestionable greater good to be obtained? But what greater good could possibly justify the crushing of his son?

***11 After the suffering of his soul,
He will see the light of life and be satisfied;
By his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many,
And he will bear their iniquities.***

The second half verse 11 reveals that when the life of the Servant is offered as a sin offering that God's purpose in bringing him to this place is realized; he will prosper.

3. But there is another factor that is revealed in verse 10 Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer,

***And though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering,
He will see his offspring and prolong his days,***

Ladies and gentlemen: Verse 11 reveals the resurrection. He will be raised from the dead. The Messiah will see the success of His mission and because of that, "***the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.***"

If the Servant is killed, how can it be that he will see His offspring and prolong his days? Was he not killed in the prime of his life?

***11 After the suffering of his soul,
He will see the light of life and be satisfied;
By his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many,
And he will bear their iniquities***

4. His offspring will be those who are justified. Like a father who loves his children, Jesus will take upon Himself their iniquities.
 5. Look at verse 11 again: ***He will see the light of life and be satisfied;*** From the Servant's point of view, saying that when his life has been offered up for others, the Servant will "*see it*" and "***be satisfied.***" The pain of being the Lamb of God was worth it.
 6. Because the Servant knows God ("by his knowledge" in intimate relationship, he will in turn be able to make many people righteous. How? By bearing their "iniquities" which is what the "*suffering of the soul*" was about.
- H. Then everything is summarized in verse 12:

12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,

*And he will divide the spoils with the strong,
Because he poured out his life unto death,
And was numbered with the transgressors.
For he bore the sin of many,
And he made intercession for the transgressor.*

Why does God reward the Servant? “*Because he, who was reckoned as a sinner, but was not, he was able to “pour out his soul unto death.”* He was able to bear the punishment and make intercession for the rebels. Thus, if there were any question about how the Servant will bring salvation to the world, the verse settles it.

- I. In summary, what does this poem teach us?
1. Messiah would be born in natural circumstances with no striking characteristics.
 2. Messiah’s First Coming would be characterized by horrific suffering.
 3. Messiah would be rejected.
 4. Messiah would experience a legal but unjust trial and be condemned to death.
 5. Messiah would not protest.
 6. Messiah would be executed.
 7. Messiah would be buried in a rich man’s tomb.
 8. Messiah would be resurrected.
 9. Messiah’s horrific suffering and His death was substitutionary in nature. He took our place.
 10. He would bring salvation to those who believe in Him.

III. HOW SHOULD WE THEN LIVE?

- A. There are many applications we could make on how to live out this gift of grace in a manner of grace.
- B. We could talk about the realization that when grace is not practiced, bitterness develops. When grace is embraced, forgiveness flourishes.
- C. We could immerse ourselves in the amazing details of grace and because of the grace we have received, the more likely we are to give grace to others.
- D. We could also talk about how the gift of God’s grace frees us to be honest with God, each other, ourselves. There is no longer a need to deceive.
- E. We could ask ourselves why we continue to run away from God’s grace even though we realize that the further we run and the longer we run, the more desperate is our acknowledgement for the need of grace.
- F. we could take about how God’s grace has released us from selfishness: No longer does everything have to be re-directed to me, myself, and I.
- G. we could consider how God’s gift of grace translates into peace with God. It is in His gift of grace that we have a profound realization of our significance, value, and purpose. He suffered, died, and rose again-for you and for me!

- H. We could even contemplate the issue of God's forgiveness. Since Christ has forgiven us, we can forgive not only each other but also forgive ourselves.
- I. We could talk about how the cross of Jesus Christ, His substitution for our sins, changes everything. Do not ever let a day go by that you do not think about it.
- J. Instead of pursuing any of these seven applications, let me take the time to state what is perhaps the most comprehensive application I've ever considered, one that really reflects an attitude of gratitude in view of receiving a gift we can never, ever repay. After I give you this application I will close with prayer. So, here is the application I would like to make:

Let this mind be in you. Let this mind be in you. Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2:5-11.